communication

Michael Kunczik

Media giants
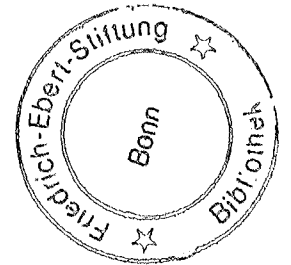
Ownership concentration and globalisation

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Foreword

This Communication Manual is not to regurgitate the "old" media and culture imperialism debate, although that has to be touched on at the beginning to make the current discussion, which keeps referring back to it, understandable in context. This work focuses mainly on newer developments and also analyses European experiences and strategies in warding off American media imperialism.

The global media scene has changed completely since 1995. In the USA there was a regular merger mania. It dramatically altered proprietary conditions and with that the structure of the media transnationals. For a while Walt Disney was the world's largest media enterprise after it acquired ABC/Capital Cities. But since then the takeover of Turner Broadcasting (including CNN) by Time-Warner has been approved, so that Disney has dropped to second place. Inter alia in 1995 Seagram acquired 80% of the MCA shares. A new globally operating company, DreamWorks SKG, was founded. Microsoft is cooperating with NBC, Westinghouse has bought CBS. In Europe in 1996 Bertelsmann and the Cie. Luxembourgeoise de Teledifusion (CTL) have merged. In other words, in 1995-96 the media industry went through unprecedented changes. This has created many almost incomprehensibly complex conglomerates of software, communication technology and media companies, many of which are characterised by very intricate participations and strategic cooperations. In many cases reliable data were impossible to obtain.

This book attempts to treat unprejudicially the theme of media and culture imperialism, which to many has negative connotations. That is not to say, though, that the author does not take a stand. We are moreover aware that in some regions of the world there are certainly more important problems than the subject addressed here. Let two examples suffice:

1. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) stated in Addis Ababa in September 1995 that every second African can neither read nor write. Accordingly 56% of the people in the countries south of the Sahara are illiterate. Illiteracy is described as "Africa's Enemy Number One". Related to our subject, this also means e.g. what does the introduction of a new software, such as Windows 95, mean for the many people who cannot even access a telephone? In such a situation the only answer can be increased development aid, which would then, however, be decried again by some authors as cultural imperialism.

2. Another problem region is southern Asia. More than 1,000 million people live in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka, of whom 400 millions, or four out of 10, cannot read or write, and two thirds of those are women; 950 millions are without drainage, 300 millions live in absolute poverty and 280 millions have no access to clean drinking water. The former finance and planning minister of Pakistan, Mahbub-ul-Haq, gave the figures in February 1996 in an address in New Delhi. He does not put the situation down to lacking money, but to the lacking political will to tax mighty groups and to make sure they pay. Moreover, military budgets are bloated, Pakistan and India spending more than 20,000 million U.S. dollars a year on arms. These aspects are certainly more important to the development of the regions mentioned than possible negative effects of media and culture imperialism.

Technological developments since the early 90s have destroyed millions of jobs in the socalled developed countries. Those whose work has not been taken over by computers have to work harder and more than ever before. The societal inequalities in income distribution have grown in the USA, for example. All of this at the outset of the socalled information age has resulted from the survival struggle of enterprises under global deregulation. Since the 80s the buzzword in economic policy has been unrestricted global competition.

Just as the invention of the cotton gin by Eli Whitney in 1793 turned the life of society upside down in the Industrial Revolution, information technology has already influenced the lifestyles of millions, if not billions of people. And if not yet, then certainly soon. Media economic aspects are of central importance to the theme addressed here. All the same, this is no media economics text book. Economic concepts are explained only inasmuch as they need to be to make concentration processes understandable, for example. Just the mere intensive discussion of various forms of media concentration and their assessment by different criteria would mean a separate book. Moreover, it is argued here that many of the current developments in the media sector, especially the mergers in the USA, cannot be explained in media economic terms. Rather, it is obvious that in many cases purely personal motives – personal preferences and dislikes, power hunger, etc. – were of central importance.

A very difficult problem was the selection of enterprises, that is where to draw the line. With Robert Maxwell it was quite simple. The enterprise has collapsed and Maxwell is dead. It is more difficult with such enterprises as Tele-Communications Incorporated and its Chief Executive Officer, John Malone. Although this enterprise trades mainly in the USA, its influence can be felt globally. It was attempted here to put the globally relevant aspects under scrutiny. In the cases of Silvio Berlusconi in Italy and the German Kirch group, as well as Havas (France) it was decided pragmatically that these are enterprises trading almost exclusively in Europe. No or very little information could be obtained about certain persons or enterprises. Typical of this are the activities of Sondhi Limthongkul and his Manager Group Company Ltd. which publishes the Asia Times. Sondhi, who characterises the West as the master of cultural imperialism, wants to contain Western media influence in Asia.

In conclusion, some references to sourcing and citation methods. Given the new technological developments, research in data banks has become self-evident, which means that the number of accessible sources has exploded. In addition, because of the topicality of the subject many "unscientific" sources have also been used (newspaper reports, television news, news agency despatches, personal communications, interviews, grey literature, i.e. also unpublished papers, publications of the European Community and Council of Europe, seminar works, etc.) whose exact documentation would have cost much space. If every reference made in this book had been documented, the annotations would have been more voluminous than the actual text. Sourcing was deliberately kept brief so as not to overload the manuscript with footnotes and to use source references sparingly. Just two examples to demonstrate: for the information that Murdoch gave up the online service Delphi in May 1996, the following source would have to be given: cf. Borchers, Detlef, Besser Fernsehen, in: http://muenchen.bda.de:80/bda/int/zeit/archiv//daten/BULK20.TXT. 19960610.html,10.5.1996. The information that DreamWorks SKG produced the single Jesus for a Child with George Michael would have needed: cf. Farley, Christopher, J., Are they worth all the cash?, in: http://pathfinder.com/@@ BjAoNUA ooqeaet/time/magazine/domestic/1996/960129/ entertainment.html., 29.1.1996.

The following difficulties must also be taken account of in working with Internet sources: 1. there are no page references; 2. references to time and location of text generation are often lacking; 3. sources can disappear after some time or reappear under different addresses.

Research for the manuscript was completed on 30 May 1996. But I tried to cover events that occurred after then. I should be very grateful for criticism and suggestions. Although I have tried to research data most thoroughly I request to be informed of any mistakes that might be in the manuscript.

1. Introduction to the cultural imperialism debate

1.1 Historical roots of the cultural imperialism debate and current trends

The debate about cultural imperialism or the issue of one culture superimposing itself on another can be traced back to the 18th and 19th centuries in both its roots, the linguistic philosophical and the economic. In the 18th century German language philosophers argued against the French culture superimposing itself over the German and put forward theories why the influence of the foreign culture had to be warded off (cf. Kunczik 1993, 199ff). Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) in his 1771 *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache* laid one of the decisive theoretical foundations for German nationalism. According to it language is always the expression of a particular way of thinking that has been shaped by the different life experiences and national characters of various peoples. Language was something alive and of central importance to people's identity. Language brings together things and events with the feelings they generate. Hence Herder regards language as the decisive characteristic of a nation. He argues that the existence of a language entitles the people to whom it belongs to their own, sovereign state. The speaking of a foreign language would be tantamount to a nation's destroying its own culture. If one forgot one's mother tongue and its original characteristics, one was condemned to live an *artificial life*. A people that gave up its language in favour of the language of another people lost its character and could no longer preserve its own ways. Herder turns in sharp polemics against the tendency of his German contemporaries to ape the French language and culture. The current French culture policy to ward off cultural superimposition by the USA, respectively the English language, is driven by precisely the same considerations as those Herder developed against superimposition by French culture (cf. Chapter 2.2.2).

The second root of the cultural imperialism debate is to be found with the German national economist, Friedrich List (1789-1840) who drew attention to the socio-cultural aspects of economic activity and demanded protective tariffs for Germany (cf. Kunczik 1993, 175ff). These tariffs were to protect industry against the superior might of foreign countries and enable training for better utilisation of productive forces.[1] By some detours, in which especially the fas-

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1 Only then would free trade be of advantage to everyone.

cist Romanian economist Mihail Manoilescu[2] played a part, this thought influenced the Latin American cultural imperialism debate of the 50s, 60s and 70s. Daniel Chirot and Thomas D. Hall argue that even the "father of dependency theory", Argentinean Raúl Prebisch, is influenced by List via Manoilescu.

Especially intense in the 60s and 70s, the cultural imperialism debate focused mainly on the USA. The term cultural imperialism degenerated in connection with this debate to a slur word. Especially neo-Marxist authors proceeded from the premise of a targeted and coordinated action by the U.S. military-industrial complex. They held that the mass media were to serve to impose on peripheral societies values, behaviours and particularly consumption patterns and thereby to improve the capital utilisation of transnational enterprises. The solution to the problem often suggested was for the developing countries to uncouple and to find and go their own way. This older debate, in which the mass media were perceived as an ideological apparatus of Western imperialism, will not be addressed anew here since it has been extensively dealt with elsewhere (Kunczik 1993, 195ff).

But the "old" cultural imperialism debate of the 70s is not yet over. For example in the anglophone Caribbean it is continuing very intensively, as the reader by Hopeton S. Dunn, *Globalization, communications and Caribbean identity*, makes plain. It is argued in the Foreword that developments in telecommunications technology have not only created a new world society and a new form of international politics (1995, IX): "Accompanying homogenization of ideas and behaviour patterns reduce cultural diversity. This is particularly evident in young people who are the most exposed to the global media, the least immune, and who consequently exhibit a remarkable similarity in taste and consumption patterns." Rex Nettleford states in *Inward Stretch Outward Reach. A Voice from the Caribbean* (1993, 129): "The hijacking of the region's media, the invasion of the Caribbean people's intellectual space, and the cultural bombardment of the entire region by every means possible from North America are the *weapons of war* used by those who would wish to save the region from itself."

It must be noted in this connection that one of the most influential people in the American media industry, Herbert A. Allen (cf. Chapter 3.4.2) said in an interview after merger mania had broken out in the USA that the entire world was becoming one single culture. He said we all watch the same things, all dress alike, all speak the same phrases – and bore each other to death. To Allen this is no exaggeration, but certainty.

Given the new technological developments (e.g. digitalisation of television) the American media concerns are striving to secure all the world's markets for themselves. Peter Crawley of the consulting firm International Creative Management came to the conclusion that in addition to Europe, Hollywood will in future also need China and India, Southeast Asia and Latin America as markets. But such dimensions could only be coped with by an all-encompassing media enterprise with the necessary resources and creative talents. In March 1995 TIME characterised the situation as follows: "Today, and tomorrow, any ambitious entertainment outfit must be an all-purpose, universal-joint conglomerate – for two big reasons. First, the media in the U.S. are converging, one on top of the other, even as the computer, phone line and TV screen are converging into the brave new integrated system of tomorrow. Second, the globalization of the U.S. entertainment industry is roaring forward unabated, making Hollywood an exhilarating, sky's-the-limit export factory."

In relation to our topic, the present is characterised by two central trends in technology and media policy. The argument advanced by Eric Hobsbawn in *Industry and Empire* (1968, 13) that the Industrial Revolution marks the most fundamental transformation of human life since history has been held in written documents is no longer valid. We are seeing a technological change without precedent in human history. The new communication and information technologies will probably have much more dramatic consequences for human life. We are quite obviously in a situation William F. Obgurn (1922) called *cultural* lag. Various areas of life are changing in complex societies – e.g. technology, law, education, science, religion – at varying speeds, with the changes in the technical sector happening fastest. The rest of culture is slower and has to adapt to given situations; even communication science cannot keep up. The argument can be continued as follows: if science has fallen so far behind the development of technology, how then can rational planning or policies in the media sector be possible? The new situation created by the fusion of communications and computing to information technology is so complex that only one thing is certain: simple and ever valid recommendations or prognoses cannot be made. In the face of this there is a tendency among politicians to withdraw in resignation and to leave the responsibility to technology and the free play of market forces.

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2 The *Theory of Protection and International Trade* was published in 1929.

Which brings us to the second trend bearing on national and international media and communication policies. A worldwide trend to deregulation is discernible. The communication sector, which for a long time was subject to regulation, has become a free area in many states. Media transnationals operate globally and with their activities set media policy markers that national governments often can only react to. Rupert Murdoch with his News Corp. (cf. Chapter 4) is no unique case because a merger mania has broken out in the USA that peaked in 1995 and brought into being ever larger media conglomerates (cf. Chapter 3). The aim of the mergers is clear. Especially vertical integration is to ensure that the enterprises do not go under in the merciless race for the right places in the beginning information age. One of the main reasons why these mega mergers have become possible is that in the USA the ban on mergers between television networks and production companies (e.g. film studios) has been dropped (cf. Chapter 3.3). But there are other enterprises now operating globally that need to be looked at here. Suffice it to name Bertelsmann (Germany), Globo (Brazil) or Televisa (Mexico).

Alvin Toffler, the internationally known prophet of societal developments, takes the view that the conventional categorisation of the world into capitalism v. communism or North v. South has been overtaken. A third wave[3], he suggests, set off after World War II, marked by computers, satellites, new information systems such as the Internet and Cyberspace, had swept up humankind. Instead of the muscles, the brain was now being potentiated, an era of knowledge was beginning. The new raw material was knowledge. A polarisation was coming about between cognitariat and proletariat. Toffler sees a new splitting of societies into "the fast and the slow". The new economic form of the 21st century "will work at nearly real-time speeds" (1990, 35f): "The acceleration effect, by making each unit of saved time more valuable than the last unit, thus creates a positive feedback loop, that accelerates the acceleration." The result will be, if Toffler is right, the assertion of a new economic imperative, "Survival of the fastest".

It will be one of the most important future tasks of politics to observe whether the megatrend posited by Toffler actually happens. Moreover, the prophecy of societal trends can develop its own dynamic, i.e. it is possible that a *wrong* definition of the situation, a wrong prognosis, causes a behaviour which makes the *wrong* perception reality. Robert K. Merton (1967, 146) has pointed out that the deceptive correctness of the *self-fulfilling* prophecy eternalises

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3 The first wave began eight to ten thousand years ago and led to agrarian culture. The second wave was set off by the Industrial Revolution and led to the potentiation of muscle power through technology.

the rule of error. Conversely, a correct definition of the situation can also lead to a self-stultifying prophecy. People's behaviour changes so strongly vis-a-vis the course of events that would have taken place without the prognosis that the prophecy does not become reality. The Toffler prognosis already influences American policymaking because the opponent of President Clinton, Newt Gingrich, who also cultivates(d) close contact with Murdoch, even regards Toffler as his chief philosopher, as it were. The William I. and Dorothy S. Thomas' (1928, 572) famous sentence is still valid: "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences."

1.2 Definition of terms: culture, nation, imperialism, media imperialism

Culture encompasses a people's entire societal heritage, i.e. all notions, opinions, values and norms shared by the members of a society. The definition made by Edward B. Tylor (1981, 1) is still usable for this book. According to Tylor culture is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society". The anthropologists Alfred L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn (1952, 157), who subject 164 definitions of culture to critical analysis, come to the conclusion: "...we think culture is a product; is historical: includes ideas, patterns, and values; is selective; is learned; is based upon symbols; and is an abstraction from behavior and the product of behavior." This broad definition of culture will be adhered to in the following since the current debate about the *"clash of civilizations"* also proceeds from such a definition. Samuel P. Huntington (1993a, 24) perceives civilisation as a cultural entity and regards culture as "defined both by common objective elements, such as language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of the people".

No differentiation is made here between high culture and mass culture. A telenovela and a piece by Shakespeare are treated in principle as cultural products of equal value which can be assigned to different "taste cultures" reflecting the given societal conditions (e.g. levels of education, income and origin) existing in a heterogeneous society. The term nation is used in the definition of the French scholar of religion, Ernest Renan, who delivered a famous speech about the term at the Sorbonne on 11 March 1882. In it he defined nation as a large, solid connectedness strong enough to produce the wish to continue life together. Renan uses a metaphor to explain the existence of a nation. It was a plebiscite taking place from day to day, just as the existence

of an individual was an ongoing confirmation of the principle of life. National cultures[4] have often been formed artificially. In *Nationalism and its alternatives* Karl W. Deutsch (1969, 3) quotes a European saying that precisely meets this possibility: "A nation is a group of persons united by a common error about their ancestry and a common dislike of their neighbors." Rituals, symbols, etc. are devised to create new loyalties and/or destroy old ones, to delineate new territories and to assert ideas. Often these are "invented traditions" (Hobsbawn and Ranger 1993).

Nations are no homogeneous entities, as Benjamin Disraeli observed already in 1845 when he argued that a nation can consist of two nations: the Privileged and the People. Disraeli (Sybil, bk. II, ch. 5) describes the relationship between the Nation of the Rich and the Nation of the Poor: "Two nations; between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy; who are as ignorant of each other's habits, thoughts, and feelings, as if they were dwellers in different zones, or inhabitants of different planets; who are formed by a different breeding, are fed by a different food, are ordered by different manners, and are not governed by the same laws." This formulation, unfortunately, can still be applied to many present-day nations.

The term imperialism is characterised by its mainly being associated with negative emotions, having a highly insecure definition of meaning and mostly being used as if everyone knew what it meant. Here cultural or media imperialism, which are used synonymously, refer to a situation in which a country's media, respectively the ownership of the media, the contents they disseminate or the distribution structures for certain contents, e.g. films, videos, satellite or cable television, are dominated by another country without the country concerned exercising a reciprocal influence (Boyd-Barret 1977, 17). That is to say, media imperialism is perceived as a structural characteristic, whereby it must not be overlooked that totalitarian regimes without respect for human rights like to use the term to shift attention away from their own misdeeds.

The cultural imperialism debate almost always had and has nationalistic, respectively anti-colonial traits. The starting point of the debate is everything alien, whose damaging influence has to be warded off. Foreign cultures are

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4 No further attention is to be paid here to the question of whether there are different national characters and connected with that different national cultures, since this has already been done elsewhere; cf. Kunczik (1990). It is assumed here that people of different races, respectively nations, are equal in principle but that there are differences between societies and cultures.

regarded as a kind of illness that consumes the identity of one's own nation, e.g. Westtoxication. The authors who campaign against cultural imperialism do not take into account that there is much proof of mutual fructification of cultures. In the Mediterranean region, for example, especially such cultures as the Greek and Roman that were open to foreign influences were the most dynamic and vital. However, it is often asked whether the transfer of our electronic media technologies to the Third World does not pose the danger of our media culture being adopted selectively and at the end of the day having a destructive effect on grown cultures and communication structures. Oliveira (1993, 119) notes in respect of Brazil that because of the success of TV Globo (cf. Chapter 5.2) "the days of cultural imperialism are numbered". Especially the Latin American telenovela has become a kind of reverse media imperialism. But Oliveira (1991, 204) has also accused TV Globo of adapting its programme contents to those of American telecasters: "Overall the media tend to stimulate the adoption of Western life-styles among those who can afford them, and induce frustration among the rest."

1.3 Cultural identity: modernism and postmodernism

Identity encompasses three dimensions: the relationship to history, social and political categorisations and expectations of the future. Personal identity means all elements, aspects and factors allowing a person to say I which convey to that person an awareness of self. Correspondingly cultural identity means everything enabling a group to say we. The anthropologist Jonathan Friedman posits four poles, each determined by the relationship to nature and culture, which define the cultural space of modern capitalist societies, namely modernism, postmodernism, traditionalism and primitivism. That results in the identity space, depicted here according to Friedman (1994, 93):

Modernism, a result of enlightenment, is defined as a mental attitude that puts the individual at the centre but denies the creature component of the human being as well as nature. Nature has to serve economic progress. Culture is no value as such but merely an organisation principle subordinated to the needs of the individual. Society is secular and the belief in progress dominates. At the middle level Friedman posits traditionalism and primitivism. Traditionalism, which reflects the need for a fixed place in a continuously changing society, is perceived by Friedman (1994, 92) as a conservative, respectively neo-conservative mental attitude in the context of modernism: "It is the aspect that is represented by culture, defined as a system of rules and etiquette peg-

Illustration 1: Identity space according to Friedman (1994, 93).

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                         Modernism
                      – culture   – nature
                             |
                             |
   + culture                 |              + nature
   Traditionalism ───────────┼──────────── Privatism
                             |
                             |
                      + culture   – nature
                         Postmodernism
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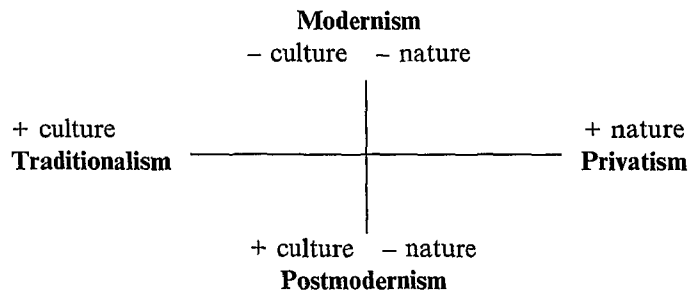
ged to a totalistic cosmology that provides ultimate meaning to existence, defining man's place in the universe as well as the significance of all activities."

The primitivism juxtaposed with traditionalism embraces nature at all levels, while traditionalism is repressive towards human nature. Both traditionalism and primitivism harmonise with one parameter of modernism each. In the case of primitivism it is the negative attitude towards the culture and in the case of traditionalism the negative attitude towards nature. Each is in opposition to modernism in one parameter. In primitivism it is the attitude to nature, in traditionalism the attitude to culture.

Postmodernism contrasts with modernism (Friedman 1994, 93): "It emphatically challenges the obliterating effect of modernity on culture while, via its absolute relativism, it praises the value of all culture and all nature. From this position modernism is denatured as well as decultured. Postmodernity represents a return to both, a return to the concrete." Postmodernism accentuates differences. The other possesses value as such. Postmodernism contains the notion of the relativity of identity and truth. It is a way of thinking that attempts to overcome the monistic thinking and contrasts between cultures as well as between culture and nature (ecology).

In Friedman's concept it is these four poles that mark out the space within which identities constitute themselves in modern societies, with heterogeneity of identities being characteristic of modern society. The individual can simultaneously move towards varying identity poles in various areas of life, with heterogeneity being able to appear both synchronously and diachronically. Such a notion of identity space avoids the pinning down of societies to a single identity. Although the testing of such an identity space by empirical

research is likely to be difficult, this offers a frame of references enabling the concept of identity to be made more precise by several dimensions. Perhaps one can monitor changes in values and tensions within societies.

The vagueness of a term does not make it socially irrelevant. The robbery or destruction of another nation's cultural heritage can strain relations between states for decades, even centuries. For example, Russia, in breach of international law, still refuses to repatriate cultural goods robbed from Germany in World War II, e.g. the treasures of Troy. On the other hand, Germany had the fortune that after the war 24 American Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives Special Officers signed a manifesto already on 7 November 1945 in the American occupation zone by which they protested successfully against German works of art being taken to the USA. It was morally untenable, they argued, because the war was over. The manifesto held further that no historic injury is as longlasting and causes as much justified bitterness as taking away part of a nation's cultural heritage.[5]

The events in the Balkans are impressive examples of the impact of the destruction of other cultures. A prospectus published in German in 1994 by the Croatian tourism promotion agency, "Croatia – A small country for a big holiday", says: "Croatia is still struggling to defend the achievements of Western civilisation against the barbaric aggression from the Orient." In the course of this "defence" the Croats destroyed the world famous Stari Mostar, the bridge over the river Neretva, built during the reign of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificient. Without doubt an act of barbarism. The cultural heritage of the enemy, described as barbarian, was destroyed. The Council of Europe called this "cultural cleansing", a deliberate destruction of cultural heritage like churches, mosques, etc. One of the most revolting incidents was the attempt of the Serbs to destroy Dubrovnik. It is estimated that about 250 Orthodox churches and more than 500 Catholic churches and monasteries were destroyed or severely damaged in Croatia, while nearly 1,500 mosques are said to have been destroyed in Bosnia. The aim of such crimes against humanity, according to the 1954 Hague Convention, is to destroy the cultural identity of people and to make them desperate, to convince them that they have lost their cultural roots and their motherland.

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5 The initiator of the manifesto was awarded the Grand Cross of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany for this in 1996. Because of the protest, works of art already taken to Washington, including the bust of Nefertiti, Rembrandt's Man with Golden Helmet, Botticelli's Venus, Ruben's Andromeda and Cranach's Rest on the Flight into Egypt, were taken back to Berlin on orders from President Truman.

1.4 Evolution of societies: Western democracy as the end product?

1.4.1 Boundless optimism: the West is Best

The notion that the final conditions of societal development could be prognosticated or proved is traditional in Euro-American sociology. The idea of a state ruled only by objective criteria was already developed by the founding father of sociology, Saint-Simon (1760-1825) who believed in the possibility of a classless society shaped by the moral of a general duty to work and in which the biggest importance accrued to industry. In the perfect industrial system of the classless society government changes from power over people to administration of things. This corresponds to the ideal of the classless, communist society or the pure meritocracy. In this society there was to be obedience by the incompetent to the competent. European sociology believed in the rational development of society. Even Karl Marx argued in the *Foreword* of *Das Kapital* that the natural laws of capitalist production would assert themselves worldwide. According to Marx (1966, 12) the industrially developed country shows the less developed country its own future. Herbert Spencer, the famous English sociologist, also thought he had recognised the end of societal development. He believed that English society had reached a point at the end of the 19th century at which reason in the form of acceptance of the laws of nature determined human behaviour. Talcott Parson (1964), one of the most influential postwar sociologists, argued that democracy with elected leaders and general suffrage was the end product of societal evolution. Daniel Lerner, finally, in The *Passing of Traditional Society* (1958) saw the West overall as the trailblazer of a supposedly globally operating modernisation process in which the mass media played a decisive part. Lerner's book decisively influenced the media policy of UNESCO and many developing countries. UNESCO proceeded from a boundless and actually unfounded optimism in regard to the effective power of the media. It was thought that the media would spread modern, western thinking and democracy around the world. The logic that governed development aid in the media sector was that the mass media would form modern personalities able adequately to fulfil their vocational roles in modern institutions, for example factories. This would bring on economic growth. It was thought that the *vicious circle of poverty* could be broken. Economic growth, one hoped, would lead to greater political stability and the formation of democratic systems.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Francis Fukuyama in 1989 spread his hypothesis about the alleged *End of History*. According to it, world history has changed fundamentally. There has been a *triumph of the West, of Western values*. The term End of History means that Western, liberal democracy represents the end point of the ideological evolution of humankind. Fukuyama, too, is a dreamer. The present looks different. Ethnic and religious affiliation is again of great importance to conflicts and not just in the Balkans but also in Asia and Africa (e.g. Rwanda and Burundi). Apparently immigrations also produce new hybrid ethnicities with quite new cultural identities. A new term for mass murder and expulsion has become normal usage: ethnic cleansing.

1.4.2 The clash of civilisations?

Samuel P. Huntington, professor for international relations at Harvard University, has reignited the debate about the problems of a world culture with his essay, *The Clash of Civilizations?* (1993a). Huntington (1993b, 192) regards the possibility that there might be a world culture in the near future as unlikely: "A universal civilization can only be the product of universal power." Related to the issue of cultural imperialism that means that apparently the media do not change the central values of different cultures. No globalisation came about. Huntington holds (1993a, 25): "Civilization identity will be increasingly important in the future..." World politics is entering a new phase. In the past 40 years one had thought in the Cold War paradigm in analysing the political situation. *Clash of civilizations* means according to Huntington that the central aspect of global politics in the coming years is "that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflict of global politics will occur between nations and different groups of civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future." There had always been the awareness of belonging to a certain civilisation but that had been pushed aside by the global constellation of the Cold War.

In line with this concept, all conflicts so far have been first and foremost conflicts within western civilisations. Huntington (1993a, 23) speaks of "Western civil wars" – without doubt a greatly constricted world view. Huntington (1993a, 24) states: "Arabs, Chinese and Westerners, however, are not part of any broader culture. They constitute civilizations. A civilization is thus the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species." He

names these different civilisations (1993a, 25): "Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and possibly African civilization."

Huntington (1993a, 25ff) sees six reasons for future conflicts occurring along the cultural fault lines:

1. Differences among cultures are not only real; they are basic.

2. The world is becoming a smaller place; increasing interactions intensify civilisation consciousness. Whereas the policies of the United Nations proceeded from the assumption that improved communication had a conflict dampening effect, here the opposite is claimed: improved communication exacerbated conflict.

3. Processes of modernisation and social change throughout the world are separating people from long standing identities; they also weaken the nation state as source of identity. In much of the world religion has moved in to fill that gap. Fundamentalist movements will give orientation aid. The demystification of the world[6] prophesied by Max Weber will not come about and there will be a new mystification, a return to the irrational and the rule of priests, and a decline of the intellectuals.

4. The awakening of the "civilisation consciousness" was driven by the West which had reached the pinnacle of its power. At the same time there was occurring in the non-Western civilisations a "return to the roots phenomenon". Although the elites of these civilisations had hitherto been linked to the West, the masses of their populations had remained rooted in their traditional cultures. There was a will to shape the world in a non-Western way, for which the necessary resources were also available (Asianisation in Japan, Hinduisation in India, re-Islamisation of the Middle East are named as examples).

5. The central values of a culture are stable and cannot become the subject of compromise, as was usual in political conflicts. In ethnic conflicts the ques-

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6 Max Weber (1964, 317) discusses the practical consequences of intellectualist rationalisation by science and scientifically oriented technology and concludes that demystification is the fate of our world: "The increasing intellectualisation and rationalisation does not mean an increasing general knowledge of the conditions governing one's life. It means something else: the knowledge of or belief in that if only one wanted to one could experience it at any time, in other words that there were no mysterious, unpredictable forces, ... that, rather, one could dominate all things, in principle, through calculation. But that means demystification of the world."

tion was, "What are you?" Even more strongly than ethnic affiliation, religion discriminated between people with exclusivity claims. Although one could be half French and half Arab, one could not be half Moslem and half Christian.

6. Economic regionalism was on the advance. The significance of regional economic zones such as the European Community, based on European culture and Western Christianity, or the North American Free Trade Area would increase, wherein the growing together of the Mexican, Canadian and U.S. American cultures was important. Japan would get difficulties because it was a unique culture. Common cultural foundations, on the other hand, favoured the economic growing together of China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and other Chinese communities abroad.

The clash of civilisations is said to be happening on two levels. At the micro level groups are fighting which collide along the fault lines between civilisations over the control of territories and over who dominates whom. At the macro level states from differing civilisations fight for military and economic power, for the control of international institutions and the dominance over third parties, trying all the while to assert their political and religious values (Huntington 1993a, 29). The decisive dividing line in Europe is seen at the eastern frontier of Western Christianity in the year 1500. Huntington (1993a, 31) takes the view that "the Velvet Curtain of culture has replaced the Iron Curtain of ideology as the most significant dividing line in Europe".

The struggle between Arabs and the West had peaked in the Gulf War when in 1990 the USA defended a number of Arab states against the aggression of another Arab state. Since then NATO has focused ever more strongly on this region. According to Huntington (1993a, 32) the struggle for the new world order emanates from the Moslem world. The orientalist Bassam Tibi (1995) also puts the conflict between Islam and the West down to geographic proximity. The two civilisations had always been in contact, changing between friendship and hostility. Europe took over from Islam the heritage of ancient Greece; the Renaissance in Europe was unthinkable without the highly developed Islamic civilisation of the Middle Ages. Conversely, in the 19th century Islamic intellectuals tried to learn from Europe. Now Islamic fundamentalism was again trying to make the Mediterranean a frontier. In these endeavours Islam was quite as missionising as Christianity was and still is in parts.

Tibi argues that Western culture is the only one to have become a world culture, i.e. it was able to expand beyond its original civilisatory framework.

Christian missionising and colonial expansion was followed by secular Western universalism, i.e. the struggle for democracy and human rights. But these values were opportunistically ignored in the West whenever that was advantageous. Actually, Western politicians were hardly disturbed at all about there being no democracy and human rights in oil states. After the end of the Cold War and after the West's self-doubt was also carried to the Islamic world by the mass media, the differences had become visible again. Now Islamic fundamentalists were openly claiming the leading role held up to now by the West.

Huntington (1993a, 35) holds that countries of the same civilisation support each other. This kin-country syndrome was replacing "the ideology and traditional balance of power considerations as the principal basis for cooperations and coalitions". The present is characterised as the West versus the Rest. Huntington sees the West currently at an extraordinary peak of power in relation to other civilisations. Decisions in the UN Security Council or in the International Monetary Fund reflected the interests of the West (1993a, 39): "The very phrase *the world community* has become the euphemistic collective noun (replacing the Free World) to give global legitimacy to actions reflecting the interests of the United States and other Western powers." Huntington (1993a, 40) argues further, and quite correctly (cf. Chapter 1.4.3): "Western ideas of individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, the rule of law, democracy, free markets, the separation of church and state, often have little resonance in Islamic, Confucian, Japanese, Hindu, Buddhist or Orthodox cultures." The efforts of the West to assert such values in other civilisations were generating a reactionary force against a "human rights imperialism", the turning to traditional values and/or religious fundamentalism. Huntington (1993B, 188) cites as an example the confrontation at the Vienna Human Rights Conference between the West "denouncing *cultural relativism, and a coalition of Islamic and Confucian states rejecting *Western universalism*".

Whereas from the technological resources (communication and transport) the world could be turned into a *global village,* according to Tibi the civilisations are drifting apart. Structural globalisation and cultural fragmentation were happening simultaneously. Tibi (1995) writes: "The more the Europeans question their own values and deny themselves, the stronger will become the civilisatory awareness of the others who regard the West as decadent and bankrupt and hence also want to replace it in world leadership." The alleged decadence of the West is taken for a fact in Asia (cf. Chapter 2.3.1). Tibi (1995), who regards globalisation as our destiny, argues that given the global migrations, the conflict of civilisations is also happening within the West: "The multicultural society is no magic formula because it amounts to the West's giving

itself up." Tibi, too, sees the West becoming weaker but sees no solution in Islamic hegemony: "The solution has to be in building bridges between the two civilisations on the basis of mutual respect and trust." However, this "solution" amounts to empty words if it is not spelt out more precisely.

The vision of conflicting civilisations is the counter point to Fukuyama's concept of the end of history. Huntington represents a cultural pessimism rooted in the tradition of historical cyclic theories (civilisations coming and going; e.g. Oswald Spengler, Arnold Toynbee) and mass psychology. Huntington's world view seems to stem from the period from the end of the 19th to the early 20th centuries. He is in the tradition if Rudyard Kipling, who wrote in 1889: "Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet."

1.4.3 Individualism versus collectivism: Western values worldwide?

The writer and novelist, V. S. Naipaul, who is known throughout the world, has argued that Western civilisation is the "universal civilisation", that "fits all men". The sociologist, Daniel Bell (1976, 16) defines the essential characteristic of Western civilisation as follows: "The fundamental assumption of modernity, the thread that has run through Western Civilization since the 16th century, is that the social unit of society is not the group, the guild, the tribe, the city, but the person." Quite along the same lines is the argumentation of the social psychologist, Harry C. Triandis (1990, 42): "Perhaps the most important dimension of cultural difference in social behavior, across the diverse cultures of the world, is the relative emphasis on individualism vs. collectivism." I will not differentiate further here between the various forms of individualism and collectivism. Moreover, Triandis uses oversimplification. He maintains, for example (1990, 45): "Individualists must conquer frontiers ... in order to feel they are good people, whereas collectivists are satisfied to cultivate their own habitat." Among the collectivists are counted Islamic peoples, Japan and China, however, who by no means restricted themselves to cultivating their own habitats.

Collectivism means that loyalty to a group (e.g. family, tribe, nation) is rated higher than one's own personal interests. People who live in cultures that differ in this dimension exhibit some marked differences in their views of themselves, the views they hold of others and the relationship between the two. Hazel Rose Markus and Shinobu Kitayama (1991, 226) have depicted the independent view of self and interdependent view of self graphically.

Illustration 2: Conceptual representation of the self (A: Independent construal. B: Interdependent construal), according to Markus and Kitayama (1991, 226).

A. Independent View of Self   B. Interdependent View of Self
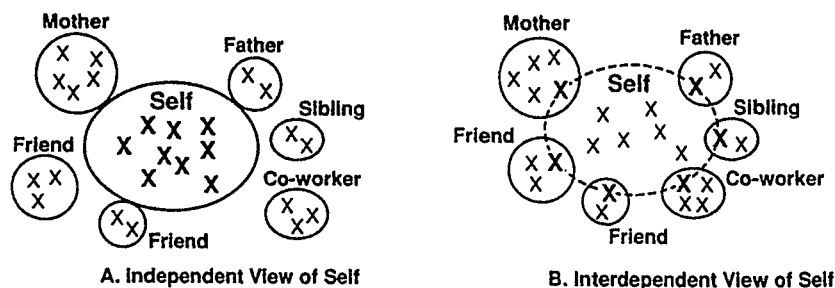
In many Western cultures belief in the independence of various persons dominates. Satisfaction of individual needs, development of own personality, etc., serve as indicators of this. This independent construal of the self is depicted in Plate 2A. The large circle represents the self and the other circles represent certain other persons. The crosses represent the various aspects of the self in relation to others. The interdependent construal of the self (Illustration 2.B), by contrast, bases on the assumption that people are inter-connected (fundamental connectedness). One perceives oneself as part of a longer-lasting social relationship, as dependent on others and the others dependent on oneself and others. Appropriate social relations hold the highest rank. One's own behaviour is not driven by individual needs but by the anticipated expectations of the others and the norms. Thus the Japanese word for self, jibun, means "one's share of the shared lifespace" (Triandis et alii 1990, 1,007).

In collectivistically oriented cultures behaviour is governed predominantly by the norms of the ingroup and the hierarchical structure of social relationships is emphasised. Triandis et alii write (1990, 1,007): "Usually the father is the boss and men superordinate women. ... Furthermore, harmony and saving face are important attributes in collectivist cultures. ... Collectivists tend to think of groups as the basic unit of analysis of society. Individualists tend to think of individuals as the basic unit of analysis of society." In other words, in the West people focus on other people; in the East people focus on other groups.

In respect of the effect of mass media, Triandis et alii (1990, 1,008) maintain: "Exposure to the modern mass media also increases the shift from collectivism to individualism, because most television programs are produced in the indi-

vidualistic cultures." That impermissibly construes a direct link between content and effect. Such speculations about media effects are popular and can even be found in standard works on research into developing countries. I need only refer to the learning and work book, *Entwicklungspolitik,* by Franz Nuscheler, in the fourth edition of which (1995, 184) it is claimed without reference to empirical findings: "Anyone who has experienced television in the Third World is no longer surprised at the 'rising expectations' resulting from a constant and aggressive manipulation of desires." No data is presented to substantiate this. It must be made clear that no conclusion can be drawn from contents about the effect of the mass media. The constant consumption of Dallas does not turn recipients in Africa, Asia and Latin America into a whole lot of Jrs, whereas series peopled with such repulsive characters might lead to a negative image of the USA.

In *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation* 1989 Triandis reviewed more than a hundred cross-cultural studies of individualism and comes to the conclusion that differentiation between individualism and collectivism is the key to understanding the differences between various cultures. The social psychologist pithily summed up his findings to the New York Times (December 25, 1990, 41): "In short, the values that are most important in the West are least important worldwide."

2. Globalisation of culture?

2.1 Definition of globalisation

Globalisation is a term that has dominated discussion for some time as a catchword in respect of world economic processes, cultural superimpositions and so on. It is by no means a new term. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote in 1847/48 in the Manifesto of the Communist Party (1848, 44): "Modern industry has established the world market... This market has given an immense development to commerce, to navigation, to communication by land. This development has, in its turn, reacted on the extension of industry; and in proportion as industry, commerce, navigation, railways extended, in the same proportion the bourgeoisie developed, increased its capital ... ." According to Marx and Engels (1848, 45) the bourgeoisie "resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom – Free Trade". Marx and Engels describe the consequences of globalisation (1848, 46f): "The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. To the great chagrin of Reactionists, it has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood. All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilized nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. In place of the old wants, satisfied by the productions of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material production, so also in intellectual production. ... National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature."

A century and a half have passed since Marx and Engels made their diagnosis and the worldwide interlinkages have become much more intensive. The

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, a leading German daily newspaper, noted on 23 March 1996: "The volume of world trade is currently five times what it was at the end of World War II. Globalisation means not only expansion of trade between countries, but the intensive division of labour is showing more and more in production factors wandering, especially the mobile capital. Economic location competition is developing between countries. Globalisation in the economic sector describes a development which moves the world economy closer to the theoretical ideal of perfect markets, i.e. competition no longer takes place only within the framework of national states. The OECD (Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation) perceives globalisation as a process through which markets and production in various countries are becoming more and more inter-dependent, because of the dynamic of trade in goods and services and the movements of capital and technology. The new form of economic globalisation, compared to the 19th century, is that not just trade, but the enterprises themselves are crossing borders. National states become *hosts* (Kiel Institute for World Economics) who have to entice the mobile capital. Economic globalisation is not a process that has to happen but rather the result of a coordinated policy of liberalisation and deregulation of the leading industrial states.

Whereas the economic concept of globalisation is quite clear, the term globalisation is also used in many other contexts (cf. e.g. Featherstone et alii 1995). Friedman (1995, 69) distinguishes between two versions of the globalisation theories. The first "has focused on globalization as a recognition of what is conceived as increasing worldwide interconnections, interchanges, and movements of people, images and commodities". The second is the global systems approach that is characterised as "a kind of global historical political economy ... which has ... begun to tackle questions of culture and identity in global systemic terms". However, both concepts strongly overlap each other. Robert Robertson (1992, 8) argues: "Globalization refers both to the compression of the world and to the intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole".

This corresponds to the notion, respectively the slogan, of Marshall McLuhan of the global village. According to McLuhan (1962, 47) the new communication media have created a global village. This author sees us living in just one compressed space resonating to jungle drums. The spatial dimension had disappeared, the world had shrunk to the format of a village, in which "everything happens to everyone at the same time" (Carpenter and McLuhan 1967, XI). The global village was again putting the oral experience that had been characteristic of pre-literal societies back into the centre. Participation rather than passivity was demanded. Through simultaneous participation in experi-

ences a tribal world culture was to be created. Whereas every medium so far had used a particular sensory channel most, the electronic media (television) were so designed as to convey a minimum of information while at the same time demanding a maximum of involvement of the senses. McLuhan holds that the medium is the message. Contents were basically meaningless because the media had the power to determine our forms of absorption. I will not here address further the speculations of McLuhan which he makes without reference to empirical study, but a global simultaneous dissemination of certain information is no longer anything unusual. For example, after the 1994 elections in South Africa millions of people around the world experienced Mandela's success live, as they previously had his release from prison (1991). The fall of the Berlin Wall was also a global media event.

Concepts such as global, international, transnational, multinational, etc. often overlap. Globalisation means processes of social change that have effects on humanity as a whole, in which borders no longer play more than a subordinate role. In the communication sector globalisation at the present time means that an oligopoly of offerers is dominating the scene. Globalisation does not mean the formation of a kind of global governance in the sense of a world information order developing by consensus.

Nor is globalisation a synonym for homogenisation of societal conditions or for political integration. Globalisation is no unidimensional process but can happen asymmetrically and contrastingly (e.g. it can lead in some fields to a strengthening of national state structures). The present discussion of globalisation has been strongly influenced by Immanuel Wallerstein's (1979, 155) world-system theory which states "that social action takes place in an entity within which there is an ongoing division of labor, and seeks to discover empirically whether such an entity is or is not unified politically or culturally... ." The assumption that there is a society in the traditional sense is dropped within the framework of this neo-Marxist theory. That, by the way, is not a privilege of this approach. Margaret Thatcher characterised the economic globalisation trend as follows: "There is no such thing like society, there are only individuals." Wallerstein does not regard individuals but systems as the analytical unit. Culture theories assuming a worldwide homogenisation process (convergence theories) are often closely related to cultural imperialism concepts, e.g. when they posit a worldwide Americanisation (Coca-Colonisation[7],

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7 The French communist party warned in the late 40s of a Coca-Colonisation after the Coca Cola company had applied for a filling licence in France. The party also tried to get a law passed by the national assembly aimed at banning Coca Cola as a poison; cf. Pendergrast (1994, 242).

McDonaldisation) and the dominance of a mass consumer culture connected with that.

Globalisation is a process happening on many levels. It encompasses the mobility of people (emigration, tourism, guest workers, etc.), the fast world-wide spread of new technologies, the world-spanning finance market and, of course, the worldwide flow of information and entertainment by which also certain ideas, respectively ideologies, can be disseminated worldwide (e.g. the idea of environmental protection) (cf. e.g. Appadurai 1990). In some cultural fields (youth culture, esp. pop culture) it is possible to speak of a worldwide standardisation. The fact is that Western pop culture which, in addition to film, television and music, also includes fast food, cigarettes, jeans and so on has spread worldwide. U.S. Americans can move worldwide in an environment of soft drinks, Big Macs and jeans familiar to them, at the same time consuming American entertainment (film, television, pop music) and informing themselves from American media (e.g. CNN). (That is not to say that there is no more to the culture of the West than these aspects.) Stevenson (1990, 5) hits the mark: "Probably more people around the world know Michael Jackson and Rambo than know who is the President of the United States, maybe even the leader of their own country."

But the number of people who can be regarded as true cosmopolitans is very small. Although masses of people move about as tourists, their travels are restricted mainly to certain enclaves. Cosmopolitans are diplomats and comparable vocations as well as cosmopolitan oriented intellectuals. Moreover, the world market has spawned a few new professions working internationally, such as lawyers, finance consultants, entrepreneurial consultants and so forth. Centres of the global (capital) markets are places like Tokyo, Singapore, New York, London, Zurich and Frankfurt. Prototypes of these new global actors are people like Nicholas Leeson, who ruined Britain's oldest private bank, Barings, with speculative trading at the Singapore International Monetary Exchange, losing 827 million pounds Sterling. Or George Soros, who in autumn of 1992 attacked the Bank of England, speculated on a falling Sterling value, keeping his rate despite support buying by the Bank of England and with that earning a billion dollars in a very short time and at the end of the day pushing the United Kingdom out of the European Monetary System. Global cultural centres are, for example, Hollywood for film and Paris for fashion. English has become the world language. When representatives of various cultures, e.g. Japanese and Europeans, communicate they do so mostly in English (or what they think is English).

2.2 Examples of the struggle against cultural superimposition

2.2.1 The Asian debate: the decadence of the West

The debate about the alleged decline of the West is especially intensive in Asia. Lee Kuan Yew, the former prime minister of Singapore, argued in 1993 that many Asians have come to reject "the American view" that "out of contention, out of the clash of ideas and ideals, you get good government" and a healthy economy. The Malaysian education minister, Najib Tun Razak stated in 1995, "We certainly do not want to reach a stage of living in a decadent society, like in the West."

The inferred decadence of the West was also the theme of an interview the prime minister of Malaysia, Mahatir Mohamad, gave the German weekly news magazine, Der Spiegel (34/1995) in August 1995. Mahathir at that time had already been the country's head of government for 14 years during which time it has experienced rapid economic upswing. Mahathir pilloried the alleged decline of the West and its moral and economic decomposition. Firstly, the prime minister, to put it mildly, has a somewhat distant relationship to journalism. He once said, for example, that the best thing to do with journalists is to shoot them dead. He characterised the Western media as "a many-headed hydra which sours everything on which it breathes". In response to the journalists' remark that he was an autocrat, the prime minister answered, "I am a democrat. Do you think there is only one form of democracy and only one authority who may interpret it – the West?" Asked whether he wanted to redefine human rights to take more account of Asian values the prime minister replied, "In an Asian democracy you have to respect the wishes of the majority. While you can give freedom to minorities and also the individual, such freedom must not be exercised so as to negate the rights of the majority. We still think that we should show respect for old people, for our families, for the entire community." In response to the interviewers' suggestion that that was, after all, a Western position, Mahathir said, "I am sorry to say, but you do not regard the family as important any more. We still have intact extended families."

Replying to the contention of the journalists that families were not intact in Asia (e.g. because three quarters of all husbands in Thailand went to prostitutes, more than two thirds of all Chinese regarded extramarital affairs as acceptable and the divorce rate in Malaysia was as high as in the West), the prime minister said: "But we would never allow men to marry men and women women. Even incest does no longer seem taboo in your countries. One

day, fathers will marry their daughters and mothers their sons." Asked where he got his information from, he said, "I watch CNN, Star TV..." – satellite programming his citizens were not allowed to watch, interjected the journalists – "...this is where they show all those so called liberal discussions. And where I learn that in Germany you allow people to kill the Turks and burn their houses." These remarks make clear that one of the most influential men of Malaysia lives at least partially in a pseudo-world constructed by television; a world of literary images that has nothing to do with reality.

The prime minister went on to suggest that some aspects of the human rights convention needed rethinking. "Europeans and Americans always seem to think of themselves as the better people. We are tolerant, too – to a certain degree. In this country anybody who decides to walk around naked will be arrested. You, however, let them get away with it. What gives you the right to set the standards for the entire world's behaviour? We cannot accept that a minority terrorises a majority on the basis of what you call human rights. If they undermine wealth and stability, why should we welcome them?"

In respect of the advance of Western mass culture ("Don't Malaysian young people play with a Macintosh, eat at McDonald's, dance to Michael Jackson?") Mahathir replied that if he ate a hamburger it did not mean he changed his value system overnight. To prevent the collapse of values, he said, Malaysia promoted healthy activities for young people like sport, mountain hiking, music making. It wanted to instil fundamental values in them and to make clear to them that the decline is due to the loss of values, that the rights of the individual did not rank over those of the community, but the contrary.

In many ways the discussion of Asian values is the attempt to save the past of the closed, traditional society with clearly identifiable hierarchical structures. Gangloff (1995) reports the efforts of Asian countries (including Japan) under no circumstances to allow themselves to be stripped of their cultural identity by Western TV and film wares. Dominant themes therein are sex and violence. But even an animated drawn film like Dennis the Menace (the horror of adults) was banned in China because it undermines the traditional respect for elders. So how threatening must Beavis and Butt-head of MTV be?[8]

The imputed decadence of the West is also a popular theme with some Islamic authors. The book by Sayid Mujtabi Rukni Lari, *Western Civilisation through Muslim Eyes,* (Guilford 1977) is almost a parody of anti-Westernism. Everywhere only the collapse of morals is seen: crime, love of animals, alcoholism, other drugs, sexual promiscuity. Emancipation becomes a symbol of prostitution. Prostitutes had been driven bankrupt because emancipated women now did the business for nothing.

The image of the decadent West is also cultivated in the Chinese culture. Thus in a revelation of the Chinese god Shang Di (whatever priests or interest group may have been behind it) the following vision was announced in Taiwan in 1977 (quoted from Antes, 1994, 20f): "I see that on this earth the Chinese nation is the country where rites and music are cultivated, the state in which real culture exists. This is why China from the past to the present day could not be dominated by another nation. People nowadays only ape the European and American lifestyle. Fathers and sons don't love each other. Husband and wife do not live together in harmony, older and younger brothers fight each other. Masters and servants are without uprightness, there is no reliability among friends. ... Marriages are entered and are divorced again. When such conditions are spread generally, how could the true tradition of the Dao be restored? Regard the following examples: in the European and American nations it is such that when people are old and at the end of their lives, one only waits for them to close their eyes and die. One calls this the new culture. Incessantly one researches feverishly for weapons to destroy humankind. One calls that the new morality! It is dreadful! And we Chinese, we go and give up our own culture and morality that we have taken over from our ancestors to adopt the socalled New Culture and New Morality of other people. If one continues like this, our Chinese nation will soon have disappeared."

Here the tried and true old method is used to glorify the past and hold it up as the model. In truth, though – the good old days, they were terrible. The film of the Taiwanese director, Tsai Ming-Liang, Rebels of the Neon God (1993), which won awards at festivals in Turin, Tokyo and Nantes, shows how degraded Chinese culture has become under the influence of Western culture (immorality, cultural collapse, punks, love hotels, video hire). TIME magazine (January 8, 1996, 16) reports that Christmas celebrations have become fashionable among the urban set in China. The ministry of public security reportedly identifies Christmas as a day for potential unrest because the celebrations bring groups of people together. The government-owned Workers' Daily criticised the Christmas craze and gave a stiff warning to youths who "madly go after Western life-styles".

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8 Sometimes coincidences also play a part. For example, *The Simpsons* have no chance in Japan because they have four fingers which in Japan is the hallmark of members of the Yakuza gangster clan.

The information minister of Malaysia, Yb Dato'Mohamed, does not regard the discussion of Asian values as anti-Western but as "reassertion of traditional values by a newly confident Asia that is thriving economically and culturally". He said in a speech in 1995: "In fact, there are many in the West who subscribe to these Asian values – such as the strength of the family unit and the campaign against pornography and violence in the media." Seen as a whole, however, it can be assumed, especially in regard to Asia, that a new self-confidence is widespread which involves at least a partial rejection of Western values.

2.2.2 The cultural Maginot Line[9]

In Europe, the debate about losing cultural identity under the influence of American mass culture has been particularly intensive in France, although France itself puts considerable effort into exporting its own culture. When after World War II Coca-Cola wanted to return to the French market the advertising slogan "Buvez Coca-Cola" was used, i.e. without the proper definite article "le" or "la". Grammar-conscious French howled that the lack of the article was a violation of the French language (cf. Pendergrast 1993, 241).

The high rank given to the language is already shown in Article 2 of the constitution: "La langue de la République est la francais." In January 1996 a socalled Toubon law (Loi Toubon), which is to help keep the French language pure, was used in France for the first time. Law No. 94-665 of 4 August 1994 was introduced on the initiative of the then French culture minister, Jacques Toubon.[10] Twenty-four articles regulate the use of French in public life. According to it, among the things that must be in French are awards, receipts, guarantees, inscriptions, advertising, official documents, certificates and contracts. It goes without saying that French is the language of science and teaching. Radio and television must broadcast in French. It was argued that the law was needed because the cultural identity of the people depended on the

language and that cultural values were more important than the laws of the market. This is an initiative against international levelling and the use of anglicisms distorting French. Of course there was derision and mockery in France. People cracked jokes about a word police and vocabulary inspectors. Under the law all product descriptions and user instructions must also be in French. In January 1996 a cosmetics store in Chambéry was sentenced to a 1,000 franc fine because the labels on some of the products it was selling had not been translated from English into French. The action had been brought by an association for the defence of the French language. I also mention in passing that in Algeria, a former French colony, war is being made on the French language.

Since 1 January 1996 French radio stations broadcasting mainly English-language music to compete for young listeners have had to abide by a quota ruling enacted by the French government, for which not only culture minister Toubon but also communication minister Carignon are responsible. Under the ruling 40% of the music programmes broadcast between 6.30 a.m. and 10.30 p.m. are to consist of French products. Furthermore, French musical talent is to be promoted. Half of the 40% airtime is to be reserved for young talents, i.e. not only such established artists as e.g. Johnny Hallyday (perhaps he will soon have to frenchify his name because it sounds so English!), Patricia Kaas, Patrick Bruel or Jean-Jacques Goldman are to be played. But no-one knows where to draw the line between old star and newcomer. The implementation regulations of the culture bureaucracy are not available yet. The media authority has a broad range of sanctions for non-compliance at its disposal, from fines to withdrawal of the broadcasting licence. It is unclear, however, how the culture purists are going to deal with French Rap singers who mix English and French. Jacques Rigaud of the Luxembourg media enterprise CLT, which operates RTL, RTL2 and Fun Radio in France, describes the quota regulation as absurd and laughable. "Quotas is as if you wanted to make all radio the same". A backer of the quota idea, by contrast, is the old chanconnier, Charles Aznavour, who regards such regulations as unavoidable. He says it is simply a question of survival of the French culture.

Jacques Chirac, who allowed atom bombs to be tested at Mururoa Atoll despite worldwide protests and a loss of image by France, is inspired by the idea of preserving and strengthening his country's grandeur by defending the French language worldwide. Although one of the worst strike waves for a long time was rolling across France, Chirac flew to Cotonou, Benin, in December 1995 to pronounce to the 6th francophone summit attended by

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9 The "Maginot Line" was an elaborate defensive barrier in northeast France constructed from the 1930s. Named after its principal creator, André Maginot, war minister from 1929–31, it consisted of a series of strong points interconnected by rail, with support positions, the entire complex either underground or protected by heavy concrete. The line covered the French-German frontier, but not the French-Belgian, through which the Germans attacked successfully in 1940. In a symbolic sense the term Maginot Line is used in Europe for „futile defence".

10 He later became minister of justice.

heads of government of 49 countries with French-speaking populations[11] a new political dimension of francophony. Chirac called for creation of a joint "political identity" of the French-speaking countries. He said the francophony budget, to amount to 5.3 billion francs in 1996, would not be cut.[12] At the next summit in Hanoi in 1997 a secretary general for francophony is to be elected who "will make the French voice ring in the world". Chirac also wants to become active on the data highways and fight against the predominance of the English language. The participants in Cotonou pledged in a resolution "to defend the French language in international organisations". In 1995 a total of 105 million people spoke French regularly and another 55 million occasionally. It is these people Chirac wants to protect from the "monoculturalism of the American type". Chirac wants to stop the process of "décadence".

On the history of the francophone summit it has to be noted that General de Gaulle, who was himself sceptical about the francophony project, in February 1969 allowed the passage of the Bourgiba-Senghor project aimed at an institutional union of the francophone countries. The initiative had been launched by the culture minister (and novelist and art historian) André Malraux. In 1970 the Treaty of Niamey was signed and the agency for cultural and technical cooperation (Agence de coopération culturelle et technique, ACCT) set up. In 1986 the first "sommet de la francophonie" took place in Versailles. Chirac, then prime minister under Mitterand in the first cohabitation, created the post of a state secretary for francophony. Chirac is a "Pompidou pupil". Pompidou espoused the following theoretical basis for the idea of the "unité francophone": "The soul of our people finds its immediate expression in the French language. We cannot conceive of any historical greatness that is not in the very first instance a spiritual one. The cooperation with the francophone countries enables us to bring together all peoples using French across the barriers of race, social condition, political regime and economic system." How strongly such language philosophy can impact on media policy was made clear by President Chirac in December 1995 with his answer to the question, "Are you worried about American cultural imperialism?" "No, not all, because the Americans do fantastic things in many cultural domains. However, I do not want to see European culture sterilised or obliterated by American culture for economic reasons that have nothing to do with culture. That is why I am for the cultural exception, and especially for production and

distribution quotas. I am very firm on that point." This position is not left unchallenged even in France. The Catholic intellectual, Jean-Marie Domenach, for example, contended, "There is no more 'French thought', as we called it thirty years ago when Sartre, Camus, Malraux and Mauriac expressed a vision of man and the world that was both French and universal. No quotas will compensate for the anemia of French creation. Maginot lines are meant to be skirted and the best defence remains a good offence."

The culture minister in 1982, Jacques Lang, also voiced fears of American cultural imperialism, arguing that it "no longer grabs territory or rarely, but grabs consciousness, ways of thinking, ways of living" (Cantor and Cantor 1985, 511). That statement is clearly relativised when one considers that France has never much restrained itself in its policy to spread the French language and culture (e.g. Nyamnjoh 1988). According to Nyamnjoh "France can claim some amount of success in its desire to monopolise Francophone Africa". France not only exports very many television programmes to francophone Africa (and also to Quebec), but, according to Cantor and Cantor (1985, 517) also the export of American television programmes to French-speaking countries: "marketing reality for... U.S. producers is that nations such as France stake out certain television territories as their own. Though they do not put matters in the language of cultural domination or hegemony, they know that they cannot sell programs directly to French-speaking African nations. Rather, they must sell the programs first to the French, who then dub them for resale to francophone nations." The French also dominate in television news, television stations in French-speaking West Africa receiving daily a news transmission from Paris via satellite for re-transmission. Only about 10% of this telecast is news footage from Africa itself (Keune 1981).

2.3 Globalisation in the media sector

2.3.1 Globalisation versus segmentation

Media enterprises operating globally also take account of the fact that publics are segmented. To reach smaller, homogeneous segments of the public the media are diversifying more and more. Manfred Harnischfeger (1990) of the German media transnational Bertelsmann has argued that the supposition that in the 90s the growing together and globalisation of markets would lead to only a few media enterprises staying competitive worldwide, leaving them controlling the global development of the communication media, is too undifferentiated. Although globalisation had occurred in some sectors (film, music,

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11 Some countries are members that one could only guardedly recognise as French-speaking, such as Bulgaria, Moldavia and Vietnam.

12 Figure provided by the assistant of the state secretary of the francophony ministry, Margie Sudre. Contributors to the budget are various ministries such as foreign relations, education and economic cooperation.

encyclopedias, scientific books and specialised literature), there was also further "fragmentation if styles". There are limits to internationalisation of contents. Harnischfeger contends that the more specifically markets are planned, the greater the chances of transnational media offers are. In this context digital television cannot only mean that the carriage capacities of cable and satellite increase eight-fold, thereby reducing the hire costs of individual transmission places, but also that smaller target group programmes can also become profitable.

2.3.2 Worldwide soap culture

Although the emphasis is on violence and sex when the dangers of Western entertainment are debated, telenovelas and soap operas are the most watched television entertainment worldwide. The term soap opera was coined in the USA in the 1930s to describe a new genre, namely daytime serialised drama broadcast over radio, targeted at housewives and mostly sponsored by soap companies. The term was later taken over into daytime television series and later still to prime time series like Peyton Place, Dallas and Dynasty.

Western television entertainment has certain stereotype content structures that are the reasons for its success (Bosshart 1979). They lay the emphasis on such goals or ideals as love, success and safety, with the latter standing for rescue, protection, security and health. Men as a rule are self-confident, dominant, independent and aggressive. Women are generally domestic, emotional, striving for security and quite self-confident in the action contexts assigned to them. In the TV series the people interact with each other in a limited number of locations in such ways as to make ongoing developments unavoidable without the personnel having to be changed fundamentally. The figures must have close relations (family, neighbourhood, working life). It is important to keep tension going, which is why the relatively few protagonists are subjected to a veritable flood of fateful occurrences (love affairs, illness, failure, accident, abduction, etc.).

American series also dominate on foreign TV markets and have served there as the models for many national productions. The narrative structures of television series have been shaped worldwide by American examples. The No. 1 theme is love in all its variations. The most watched TV series worldwide in September 1995 was *Baywatch*, a surf, beach and lifesaving saga the American TV network NBC took off the air again after only one saga (cf. Mitchell 1995). In Germany the series airs as *Baywatch*, in France as *Alerte a Malibu*,

in Venezuela as *Guardianes de la Bahia*, in Hebrew it is called *Ha-mifratz*. In India, from where Star TV has aired it since 1993, *Baywatch* is one of the five top English-language series. The series was sold in 1995 to television stations in 103 countries and reaches 2.3 billion viewers outside the U.S. (where it also came back on air). Emily Mitchell suggests it is successful because "It offers watchers the momentary pleasure of escape into a mirage of glorious beaches, bronzed gods and goddesses in small crimson swimsuits and heroic beach guardians who pull off at least one daring rescue in every episode. Ah, if only life were really like *Baywatch.*" That short summation of content explains why the series is also ridiculed as Babewatch – you can watch it without concern even with little children or even let them watch it on their own.

David Hasselhoff, the leading man and one of its executive producers, argues that "If people are in a place with turmoil or have trouble on a personal level, they can turn on *Baywatch*, and it's a world they can dream about like a boy dreams about a first kiss, or a girl about a first boyfriend". In Italy alone every Thursday about one and a half million people flee into the illusory world under the Californian sun, where instead of violence there are love, passion, adventure and intrigues. And very important: sex is restricted to looking at beautiful bodies in bathing suits. According to TIME magazine, not even Lebanese government censors see cause to reach for their scissors. TV critic Alain Plisson of the newspaper, *L'Orient-Le Jour*, argues, "It is healthy and clean. There's no hanky-panky. You can let your kids watch it." For the Indian TV critic, Amita Malik, the programme represents "the sheer health of American youth" and the characters "are the gorgeous products of a hardworking and affluent society".

The female lead in *Baywatch*, blonde Pamela Anderson, even became the subject of a competition in Germany in 1995. More than 2,500 German blondes vied to be found looking most like Pamela (Pamela look-alike contest; concluded 5.9.1995). When Britain's Prince William moved into Eton he took a Pamela poster with him. The *Baywatch* cast are also available as Barbie dolls. The red swimwear of the company that supplies it for the *Baywatch* stars is selling well, especially the model Pamela wears. In 1996 *Baywatch* perfumes were due to come on to the market. *Baywatch* Man and *Baywatch* Woman is offered in bottles shaped like surfboards.

Probably the most watched kind of television is the telenovela that originated in Latin America (McAnany and La Pastina 1994). It dominates prime time in Latin America and helped to make TV Globo (cf. Chapter 5.2) and Televisa (cf. Chapter 5.3) successful. Where telenovelas reign supreme, U.S.

American media imperialism in the TV entertainment sector is no problem. Brazil is the first developing country to have succeeded since about 1970 to displace imports from the USA by programming of its own (Straubhaar 1991). Globo-TV has its own telenovela department and exports to about 100 countries. Worldwide *Globo-TV* is the broadcaster with the highest proportion of its own productions. Wang and Singhal (1992) estimate that in Brazil the typical prime time telenovela is watched by 60 million viewers.

Emile G. McAnany and Antonio C. La Pastina re-analysed 26 studies on telenovelas carried out in Brazil and Spanish-speaking Latin America. They found that telenovelas are aired in prime time and aimed at the largest possible audience. The authors (1994, 831) conclude that "This popularity results in many Latin Americans seeing the genre as a symbol of what is wrong in their societies...". However, no data is presented to substantiate that hypothesis.

Forerunner of the telenovelas were the *radionovelas* produced in the 40s; these were serial novels broadcast on radio. In Latin America, too, U.S. American soap, toothpaste and food companies sponsored the radionovelas to secure their sales (cf. Frey-Vor 1990). According to Armbruster (1986) the first Brazilian telenovela was introduced by *Colgate Palmolive*. The reason was that this genre had previously been used successfully in other Latin American countries. Telenovelas cannot simply be equated with north American or European soap operas. They are a genre in themselves which differs in aims, themes and duration from the soaps (cf. Rogers and Antola 1985, 24ff). Claudius Armbruster (1986, 331) writes on the Brazilian telenovela that it merges novel, theatre and screenplay texts with a number of television, film and theatre techniques. "Its specific characteristics are the open, potentially endless form, the daily presence and its markedly national, Brazilian character."

This author contends that since the mid-60s Brazilian telenovelas have reflected Brazilian reality. Armbruster (1986, p. 334) writes: "The nationalisation of the television narrative is the cause of the success of the telenovela genre. It coincides with the Brazilian 'economic miracle' ... which is swelling the market and the advertising budgets and is demanding a professional commercial television." The modern Latin American telenovela has more typical characteristics:

- it airs daily,
- is interrupted several times by advertising,
- ends with a cliffhanger,
- mostly after a few months finishes with a happy end and
- works with a socalled multiplot.[13]

In Brazil typical telenovelas comprise 150 to 200 episodes, i.e. aired daily, a broadcasting duration of six to nine months (Frey-Vor 1990). Mexican telenovelas are of similar length (180 episodes on average), although in one case 800 episodes were reached. The essential difference between Brazilian and Mexican telenovelas is that the end of most Brazilian ones is still open when shooting begins so as to be able to respond to viewer opinion (Klindworth 1993, 537).

The telenovelas are about the same themes as the soap operas – love, intrigues and so on, the clash between good and evil, with the good winning in the end. At the centre are mostly highly complicated love relationships ("love triangles") or a seemingly impossible love because of class differences. This *Snow White plot* usually tells the story of a poor girl who after all kinds of difficulties finally gets to marry a rich man (Armbruster 1986). Other popular themes, according to Armbruster (1986, 337) are "persecuted innocent, just revenge, the return of people thought dead, mysterious ancestry, swapped identities, mistaken identities, separated twins or siblings, orphan in search of his/her parents, wrong testament..."

Given the success of soap operas and telenovelas it has to be asked whether a global culture is going to become a culture of the trivial? The answer has to be a yes, which by no means means cultural pessimism. These are contents which touch the majority of people. Here are just a few examples of their success: "In 1980, 400 million people around the world tuned in to *Dallas* for the episode that saw J.R. Ewing felled by a bullet" (TIME, September 25, 1995, 74). TIME goes on to report that *The Bold and the Beautiful* has a viewership of 200 million people, spread across more than 80 countries, including Egypt where it was a hit for three years. According to TIME, when the show was aired between 9 p.m. and 10 p.m. Cairo's gridlock eased, but Moslem fundamentalists fumed, blaming the series for undermining public morality. They forced the show off the air. A censored version, minus steamy bedroom scenes, came back. "So now the B&B faithful use satellite dishes in order to view the uncensored broadcasts by Israeli, Turkish and Italian stations." The television soaps, called *musalsalat,* are highly successful in Egypt. Abu-Lughod (1993) assumes that the audience might include a majority of Egypt's people.

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13 A multiplot consists of various subplots supporting a central plot. That makes it possible to take further or end individual plots without having to end the entire series.

Soaps are also a big success in India (cf. Chapter 6.3). The same holds for China. China launched its first national soap opera in 1990 (Wang and Singhal 1992). *Ke Wang* (Aspirations) was the first domestically produced, long-running soap opera. The series was highly popular and had a viewership of at least 550 millions. Ke Wang's main purpose was to entertain, but it was also to convey values like social morality, familial harmony, appropriate role for women, preservation of traditional culture and so on. Kazhak television has been showing a soap aimed at "gently putting Kazhaks in the right mood for capitalism".

2.3.3 MTV: global youth culture

MTV was the pioneer of global specialised TV and according to Sumner Redstone, the owner of Viacom (Video and Audio Communications, cf. Chapter 3.8), in April 1996 reached 270 million households. Introduction of MTV in 1981 (in Europe in 1987) was a watershed event in the development of media music offers. For the first time there were round the clock video clips and advertising as programming. The purpose was to sell music and products offered in its environment.

Warner Communications and American Express in 1981 invested $20 million in Music Television (MTV), the first non-stop TV format for video clips. After two years the venture was making a profit. That was largely due to pop star Michael Jackson[14], whose album/video *Thriller* became the most successful MTV product in December 1992. On the video Jackson dances fast and angularly; a top class audiovisual pop performance. Because of financial difficulties of the whole enterprise, Warner sold MTV, although it was returning profits, to Viacom in 1985. Viacom in turn was taken over in 1987 by the National Amusements Inc (NAI) of the multi-billionaire Redstone.

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14 Jackson also stands for another product of American culture, Pepsi-Cola. According to Blount and Walker (1988, 148ff) Jackson was paid $5.5 million for a commercial. Jackson insisted that his face be shown in it for no longer than two seconds. Later Lionel Richie and Don Johnson (*Miami Vice*) and the Rock legend, Glenn Frey, also advertised Pepsi. In 1987 Pepsi brought out a spot with two more mega stars, David Bowie and Tina Turner. That same year another Michael Jackson spot was produced. Blount and Walker (1988, 155) write: "Jackson's second deal is rumoured to have cost the company more than $10 million." Pepsi also sponsored Jackson's tour of Japan. In 1986 Pepsi-Cola paid Jackson $15 million to appear in two advertising spots with a total duration of 180 seconds and for consulting on a third spot. It was known that Jackson would not hold a Pepsi bottle, much less drink its contents. Clark (1988, 23) estimates the cost of producing and airing the spots at more than $65 million. All this to sell a drink whose taste barely differs from that of Coca-Cola.

MTV specifically targets young people whose media consumption is different to that of adults, that is to say that there is an international youth media culture. The first sentence to air when the broadcaster started in 1981 was, "Ladies and Gentlemen, Rock 'n Roll!" The first video shown in the USA was "Video killed the radio star". The programme planners see their main task as reflecting "the spirit of Rock 'n Roll" (MTV Global Fact Sheet, October 1994). In the 50s and 60s this form of music was a symbol of the rebellion against the world of adults and has become the international symbol of youthful vitality. The target group are the 16 to 34-year-olds. MTV tried to overwhelm with a flood of colours, forms and sounds. According to Kemper (1995) it has about a billion young viewers who tune in for an average of one hour a day. MTV is the window to the pop culture; the virtual reality of being hip, with zapping increasing the likelihood that viewers will stick with MTV. In Peter Kemper's formulation MTV is "the televisionary central organ of the Nintendo generation".

In the mid-90s MTV was the fastest-growing international telecaster whose success formula is as simple as can be: global presence combined with a product targeted at regional markets. Chairman Tom Freston told Newsweek (April 24, 1995, 45), "The container's the same. The content is different."

In an interview with the weekly German news magazine, Der Spiegel, Redstone put the success of MTV down to certain products, for example the Unplugged concert series, being aired internationally. Redstone does not see borders changing people's musical tastes. Of course it was good to love one's own country, he argued, but MTV was just as much part of the world. In MTV's self-perception it not only brings culture into a country from outside but "it also takes music and culture from your country and exposes it to others". In the USA, however, hardly any foreign music gets a run. Only exceptional phenomena, respectively super groups like *U2* from Ireland, are aired. For MTV Europe the line is, "Continental bands are welcome – but groups such as Sweden's Ace of Base, which MTV Europe helped propel to stardom, would get scant air time if they sang in their native tongues".

In 1995 MTV comprised the following separate broadcasters, transmitting in seven languages (Newsweek April 24, 1995):
MTV USA (from 1.8.1981; English; c. 60 million households; it is planned to split MTV USA into smaller units – MTV Boston and MTV Pittsburgh are being planned – to give more space to local music and contents.
MTV Internacional (from 15.7.1988; English and Spanish; c. 13 million households in Argentina, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, USA, Chile, Ecuador, Panama, Paraguay)

MTV **Europe** (from 1.8.1987; English; c. 61 million households)
MTV **Brasil** (from 20.10.1990; Portuguese[15]; c. 7.5 million households)
MTV **Japan** (from 1.12.1992, Japanese and English; c. 1.1 million households)
MTV *Latino* (from 1.10.1993, based in *Florida*; *Spanish and English*; 13 million households in Central America, Mexico, the Caribbean, USA and South America without Brazil)
MTV **Asia** (from 21.4.1995), there are two stations behind this, namely **MTV Mandarin** and **MTV India**
MTV **Mandarin** (broadcasts in Mandarin and can be received in Taiwan, China and Singapore; c. three million households)
MTV **India** (broadcasts in English and Hindi); no audience data; competitor is **Channel V**, a subsidiary of Murdoch's Star TV; **Channel V** is also a competitor in China; in January 1995 Warner Music Group took over 50% of **Channel V; MTV Asia** now cooperates with **PolyGram.**
MTV **South Africa** is in planning and is later to reach all of Africa.
MTV stations are also planned for **Russia** and the **Middle East.**

Brent Hansen, President of MTV Europe, describes the entrepreneurial philosophy as wanting to be a kind of friend. A friend one can visit whenever one feels like it. The presenters consciously hold themselves back (with the exception of Ray Cokes). The system banks on a worldwide commonality between young people who understand each other without a language barrier through the code of pop culture. According to Hansen youngsters in Germany, Spain and Great Britain have more in common with each other than with their parents. Reports and debates are about the struggle against racism, AIDS, unemployment and destruction of nature. MTV Europe even claims to be a pacemaker for European union. Newsweek (April 24, 1995, 46) quotes an MTV representative as saying, "No one exposures the ideal of a united continent more fervently than MTV Europe. ... All those politicians are sitting in stuffy old buildings talking about how to unite Europe. We're doing it."

The music video has to be regarded as a new art form. At least they have changed the advertising scene. Music publishers invest enormous sums in producing the clips. A three-minute clip by Madonna cost more than $1 million. Certain clichés dominate in the clips: beautiful African women, beautiful Japanese men, motor cycles, leather jackets (black) and mini skirts (red). MTV, the visual radio station, has evolved a specific style. Kim Cleland writes (1995, 51): "Quick cuts. Layered graphics. Quicker cuts. Loud audios.

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15 The Brazilian version of it.

Multiple message. Frenetic bursts. Random segues. Crazy movement. The sum could only mean one thing: MTV." Music television is more than "just" television. MTV is used as an alternative music medium to radio and is important for the youth sub-culture. Information is collected about music and its artists. Television tends to be used more or less as only a by-product. The comic figures Beavis and Butt-head have become part of youth culture.

MTV is one of the most important players in the music industry. Without a doubt there is a connection between placings in a hit parade and clip advertising. MTV has become an important marketing tool of the pop culture and large parts of the leisure industry. The scenarios are casual and relaxed. Despite the reporting mentioned above, very little information is transported and discussion goes on. Entertainment is the thing. Most clips also include references to trade mark articles (drinks, cigarettes, sports shoes, leather jackets, baseball caps, etc.) which can become central elements of a new lifestyle. MTV airs mainstream Rock with jolly, mostly good looking people. Kemper sees a simple message – the world would be OK if everyone were in the right "groove". Very little data has been published about the effect of MTV.

Since 17.7.1994 MTV has had a place in the World Wide Web of the Internet called *MTV Prime Time Online.* In July 1995 four interactive programmes consisting of pictures, texts and chat groups were offered online (MTVO). MTV Vjs (video jockeys) present a programme called *"Butt-heads with Kennedy"* in which a particular subject is discussed for a whole week. Virtual dating takes place in another show, *"Singled Out Online". "Go to the Matt"* is a game show in which one can win MTV advertising products. *"The Love Doc"* addresses love and partnership.

MTVO is planning a large number of other shows and formats to be aimed at a global audience. *Viacom* itself runs a great number of other online activities, e.g. interactive CD and card shops. Also part of *MTV* is *VH-1 (Video Hits I),* which has been receivable throughout the USA since 1.1.1985 as a second broadcaster of the *MTV* network. From 30.9.1994 there has been *VH-1* for Great Britain and from 4.5.1995 for Germany. *VH-1 is MTV* for adults. VH-1 Germany targets music fans in the 25 to 45 age bracket. It plays classics from the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s. The presenters speak German and the emphasis is on the German music scene. *Nickelodeon,* the MTV for children, has also operated in Germany since December 1995. The programming is exclusively aimed at and about children, with extremely fast and hectic cuts dominating here, too.

The great impact *MTV* can make was shown when it started up in India in 1991. The broadcaster created contact with a Rock 'n Roll environment unknown until then. Videos were shown for 24 hours. Indian youth in the towns, not exactly pampered with entertainment, more or less overnight took on board the *MTV* fashion. Culture pessimists saw the end of Indian culture coming. But it turned out differently. Because of contractual agreements with *Star TV*, which beams to 52 countries, Viacom withdrew from *Star TV*. *Star TV* created a replacement given the name *Channel V* and meeting Indian tastes. The most popular programme is *The Great Indian Manovigyanik Show*, a celebrity showcase. About a third of the time no Rock music is aired. Instead, clips from Hindi movies are shown because 80% of the music sales in India comprise Hindi film music. Peppy presentation has created slogans that at least for a short time were used in everyday speech, such as the catch-phrase, "You are a nonsense person". *MTV* itself has been back on the Indian market since October 1995 via a tie-up with Doordashan.

MTV is also making a discernible impact on Latin America. Although a single language, Spanish, is spoken in the transmission target area, there are very diverse musical traditions in it so that only a few musicians made supra-regional breakthroughs. *MTV Latino* supported a new style of music, Latin Rock, which according to Newsweek (April 24, 1995) had the following consequence: "Today, heavy play on *MTV Latino* has made *Los Fabulosos Cadillacs*, from Argentina, one of Mexico's hottest acts, while Mexican groups like *Caifanes* are gaining popularity in South America." In other words, MTV contributes to an homogenisation of the cultures.

"That's how this world lives. The big people who have access to 2, 3, 4, 8 million homes are playing leverage against each other." (Rupert Murdoch)

3. Merger mania

3.1 Definition of multimedia

The term multimedia has become a kind of magic formula. Politicians, social scientists, entrepreneurs, trade unionists, etc. use the term when they try to characterise the future, the 21st century. Mostly the term is used as if everyone knew what it meant. But there is no unequivocal and generally recognised definition of multimedia. Thomas Middlehoff, a member of the executive of the German media conglomerate Bertelsmann AG, notes on the debate about markets and societal consequences of multimedia products (1995, 2): "There is a lack of secure knowledge and realistic estimations." Despite this the world's third-largest media enterprise assumes that in 2005 half the entrepreneurial growth will come from the media business and that strategies have to be developed to address that.

The consulting agency, Booz-Allen & Hamilton, in a report to the office for the assessment of technological consequences of the Bundestag, the German House of Representatives, has characterised multimedia as a generic term for a wide variety of new types of products in the computer, telecommunication and media fields. The fundamental multimedia characteristics according to this report are interactive usage, the integration of various media types and digital technology. Interactive usage means that the user is not only a recipient but by using the relevant channels can feedback and thereby change contents, respectively trigger actions. Integration of various media types means that e.g. video and audio sequences can be combined with texts and data. Digital technology is used both for storage and later processing of the data on which the media are based.

Examples of such multimedia usage are teleshopping, the calling up of films from video banks (*video-on-demand*), homebanking, *picture telephone*, multimedia newspapers; research in multimedia data banks (e.g. libraries). Multimedia are differentiated on the personal computer by the kind of usage into offline and online. Offline means that the PC is not connected to a tele-