MAKING EUROPEANS: PAN-EUROPEAN TELEVISION

AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

by

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B.A. (Honours), The University of Windsor, 1991

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Department of Political Science)

We accept the thesis as conforming

to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

March 1993

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Date _March 24, 1993_

DE-6 (2/88)

ABSTRACT

In the early 1980s, the European Community adopted the objective of complementing economic and political integration with the building of a nation-transcending "Europe of culture." This led to efforts to encourage pan-European television broadcasting through measures such as "Europa TV," the "Television Without Frontiers" directive and the MEDIA programme.

The EC's interest in television was in part stimulated by technical innovations which facilitated the transmission of broadcast signals across national borders. But above all, Brussels subscribed to the notion advanced by many communication- and integration models that communication in general and electronic mass media in particular could help undermine ethnic consciousness and enhance the "identitive power" of supranational institutions.

A few years later, however, most pan-European television channels had floundered or redirected their services to a national or monolingual audience.

The demise of pan-European broadcasting can partially be blamed on wanting language skills, inadequate translation techniques and obstructionism by national governments. At the same time, it signifies that efforts to sway audiences towards a denationalized "European perspective" have remained futile, despite Brussels's claim that an overarching European identity has its origins in a legacy of medieval cosmopolitanism.

Instead of guiding Europeans towards greater cultural unity and closer identification with supranational institutions, the EC's cultural policies have caused anxieties among national governments and a wider public alike. While some governments resisted their formation and implementation (for example by limiting the Community's expenditures in the "cultural sector" and by obstructing the distribution of pan-European television signals on their territories), the ratio of Europeans who sense the preservation of their national identity incompatible with their country's involvement in European integration grew.

I conclude by arguing that the failure of pan-European television is but one sign that the EC's cultural policies in their current form are bound to do more harm than they can hope to create stability. A consociational strategy, aimed at strengthening the cultural autonomy of the EC's member states by assigning all powers in the cultural sphere to the national or sub-national domain, could better consolidate the European project in its economic and political dimensions.

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TWO PARADIGMS OF INTEGRATION

Models which seek to delineate the formation and maintenance of integrative structures between two or more national communities can be divided into two broad categories. The first approach - I will call it the conventional paradigm - includes the "federal" model of Etzioni and, with some qualifications, the social communications model of Karl W. Deutsch. The second approach is represented by the consociational model by Arend Lijphart.

Both models entail very different conclusions about the role of communications in general and television in particular in the context of inter-ethnic integration. As such they provide a framework to analyze the television policies of the European Community.

THE CONVENTIONAL PARADIGM

Models of integration which fall under the conventional paradigm presume that two or more national communities can be integrated into a stable and lasting entity if processes of integration unfolding in the economic and political spheres are accompanied by a parallel development in the socio-cultural realm. An at least partial merger of identities among the populations affected by the integration process is deemed necessary so as to support, on the one hand, a change of their attitudes towards each other - leading to the improvement of mutual perceptions, increased responsiveness and the rise of communal sentiments - and, on the other hand, to a transfer of loyalties towards emerging supra-ethnic institutions, strengthening what Etzioni calls their "identitive power"[1] and contributing to their legitimization.

In its extreme, the demand for cultural integration culminates in a form of "nationalism at the regional level,"[2] presuming the merger of two or more national

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[1] Amitai Etzioni, *Political Unification: A Comparative Study of Leaders and Forces,* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965).

[2] See Donald J. Puchala, "Of Blind Men, Elephants and International Integration," *Journal of Common Market Studies,* Vol. 10, No. 1, 1972.

communities into a single nationality, i.e. the complete eradication of all criteria upon which national differentiation may once have grounded. Most integration models which fall under the conventional paradigm, however, acknowledge that collectivities and individuals can hold multiple identities - and are thus capable of reconciling loyalty to supranational (or supra-ethnic) structures with the preservation of an identity rooted in a differentiated ethnic sub-group. They nevertheless presuppose, however, that processes of unification which unfold in the economic and political realms must be accompanied by some measure of socio-cultural integration so as to create and maintain the over-arching loyalties necessary to secure the durability of the integration project.

Conventional theories of integration often traced the process of cultural unification to two sources. First, they predicted it to grow as a by-product of increased economic and social interaction between the national communities involved. Often influenced by a tradition of Marxist or liberal cosmopolitanism, they treated ethnicity as a "comparatively ephemeral phenomenon, to be shaped, and eventually destroyed, by the forces of modernization."[3] Social interaction and economic linkages between different ethnic groups were seen to lead to "enhanced familiarity, responsiveness and mutual identification, as well as emergent in-group/out-group consciousness."[4]

The connection between social communication and ethnic assimilation was explored thoroughly in the writings of Karl W. Deutsch.[5] Distancing himself from the crude equalization of economic modernization with the eradication of ethnic consciousness which characterized some other models within the conventional paradigm,

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[3]Saul Newman, "Does Modernization Breed Ethnic Political Conflict?" *World Politics*, Vol. 43, No. 3. April 1991, pp. 453-454.

[4]Puchala, "Of Blind Men," p. 271.

[5]Karl W. Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication*, (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1966).

Deutsch emphasizes that the rate of assimilation depends on the maintenance of a delicate balance between social mobilization and the integrative capacities of supranational and supra-ethnic institutions. For ethnic assimilation - rather than increased differentiation - to occur, the rate of assimilation must not lag behind the pace of social mobilization.

At the same time, however, Deutsch points out that the process of unification entails a constant "race between the growing rate of transactions among populations ... and the growth of integrative structures and practices among them."[6] Rather than seeing heightened amalgamation as necessarily leading to increased stability, Deutsch argues that "it is the volume of transactions, political, cultural, or economic, which throws a burden upon the institutions for peaceful adjustment or change among the participating populations."[7] Consequently, a premature leap into a state of amalgamation can be counterproductive to the establishment of stable integrative structures; "pluralistic security communities," within which the participating nationalities remain unamalgamated - and whose building and maintenance requires a lower transaction volume - are often more stable than amalgamated entities, for their construction and maintenance entails less danger of conflicts to emerge and imposes less stringent demands upon shared structures.

Despite these qualifications, however, Deutsch's social communications model falls firmly within the conventional paradigm of integration. As did other approaches, it traces the emergence of a communal identity in the long run to processes of economic transactions and social communications. Once initial functional linkages between separate communities had been established, Deutsch envisions that such "ties in trade, migration, mutual services ... generate flows of transactions between communities and emesh people in transcommunity communications networks. Under ap-

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[6]Karl W. Deutsch, *Political Community at the International Level: Problems of Definition and Measurement,* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1954), p. 39.

[7]Deutsch, *Political Community,* p. 40.

propriate conditions of high volume, expanding substance, and continuing reward, over extended periods of time, intercommunity interactions generate social-psychological processes that lead to the assimilation of peoples, and hence to their integration into larger communities. Such assimilatory processes are essentially learning experiences of the stimulus-response variety."[8]

The second impetus for cultural unification was perceived to emanate from the efforts of national elites to enhance and accelerate the emergence of common sentiments among their subjects. On the one hand, it was believed that governments could advance assimilative tendencies indirectly: By promoting social and economic interaction between different ethnic groups, they were seen to initiate a movement towards greater integration in the cultural realm, as is discussed above. On the other hand, it was postulated that governments could also aid the cause of cultural assimilation directly, by enlisting the tools of mass-education and communication in an effort to undermine ethnic consciousness and promote loyalty to and identification with the symbols and institutions of the multi-ethnic state.

Conventional Integration Models and Television

By noting the importance conventional theories of integration allocate to the role of elites in promoting the emergence of communal sentiments and loyalty shifts towards supranational institutions, we have reached the subject of television. Throughout the 1950s and 60s, many writers accorded almost infinite powers to electronic mass media in swaying the affections, identifications and allegiances of their audiences. Development models such as those advanced by Lerner and Schramm, for example, claimed that electronic mass media could act as a "magic multiplier." By

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[8]Donald J. Puchala, "Integration Theory and the Study of International Relations," in Richard L. Merritt and Bruce M. Russett (eds.), *From National Development to Global Community: Essays in Honor of Karl W. Deutsch,* (London: George Allan & Unwin, 1981), p. 156.

"replacing personal experience as the font of new ideas,"[9] radio and television were attributed the potential to promote economic development and social change in underdeveloped regions and accelerate the erosion of pre-modern ethnic ties while promoting loyalty shifts towards supra-ethnic institutions.

But in some industrialized states, too, confidence in the metaphor that nations can be united in front of their television sets led to attempts to use radio and later television as a nation-building tool. This, for example, has been the case in Canada where the Broadcasting Act of 1968 required that radio and television "actively [contribute] to the flow of exchange of cultural and regional information;" "contribute to the development of national unity and provide for a continuing expression of Canadian identity" and "safeguard, enrich and strengthen the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of Canada."[10] To reinforce the role of broadcasting in bringing together the two linguistic groups, the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission demanded that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation "maximize cooperation and exchange between relevant and appropriate programming between the English and French television networks as a means of achieving the cultural objective of interchange between Canada's two founding cultures ..."[11]

In Britain, likewise, the founders of the BBC wanted broadcasting to play a "fundamental role in promoting national unity at a symbolic level, linking individuals and their families to the centers of national life, offering the audience an image of itself and of the nation as a knowable community, a wider public world beyond the

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[9]Robert L. Stevenson, *Communication, Development, and the Third World*, (New York: Longman, 1988), p. 21.

[10]Quoted in Government of Canada, *Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy*, (1986), p. 165.

[11]Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, *Current Realities, Future Challenges: Decision CRTC 87-140 Renewing CBC television network licences*, (23 February 1987). p. 86.

routines of a narrow existence, to which these technologies give symbolic access."[12] Lord Reith, founding father of the British Broadcasting Corporation, even argued that broadcasting could "make the nation one man."[13]

Doubts Regarding Conventional Integration- and Communication Models

By the early 1970s, validity of the conventional paradigm of integration had come under substantial doubt. It was nourished above all by the observation that the attempt to confirm advances in the process of unification by means of detecting a growth in communal sentiments among the affected populations often encountered little success. Within the European Community, for example, the identity mergers predicted and deemed necessary by conventional integration theories could, despite a growing economic interconnectedness and the careful extension of supranational structures, not be ascertained - even as researchers, "convinced that assimilation simply had to be a component of contemporary international integration, worded and reworded survey questions until 'regional nationality' did at last emerge in poll results, irrespective of whether it existed in respondent's attitudes."[14] As a "European identity" failed to evolve, the expansion of EC beyond the stage of a common market was often held back by fears of a loss of national identity.

Within many multiethnic states, too, the hypothesis that cultural assimilation is bound to follow the direction of unification processes in the political and economic spheres often became refuted by reality, as increased economic and social interaction between ethnic communities, and efforts "from above" to propel the emergence of communal sentiments were frequently accompanied by a rise instead of a decline in ethnic strive. Even where most tangible criteria of ethnic differentiation (such as lan-

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[12]David Moreley and Kevin Robbins, "Spaces of Identity: Communications Technologies and the Reconfigeration of Europe," *Screen*, Vol. 30, No. 4, Autumn 1989, p. 31.

[13]Quoted in Moreley et al., "Spaces of Identity," p. 31.

[14]Puchala, "Of Blind Men," p. 272.

guage) had disappeared - and where the process of assimilation thus seemed to have succeeded - nationalist sentiments often resurfaced nevertheless, as they became "reinvented" to fuel secessionist demands.

After conventional integration theories had proven unable to explain the persistence and/or the re-surfacing of ethnic sentiments on a national as well as on an international level, many critics sought to trace their failure to the manner in which they had approached the issue of ethnic identity. For one, they criticized traditional integration models for having treated ethnic identity - based on the insight that national differentiation often grounds on subjective criteria - as a dependent variable, bending to changing economic and political configurations and moldable by manipulative efforts of political elites. Furthermore, as most conventional theories had assumed that peoples would shift their loyalties to supranational institutions once it had turned out that they could satisfy their welfare needs most efficiently, they appeared to have overestimated the role of material incentives in guiding human behaviour.

It was not only the notion that material rewards and expanding economic and social interaction were bound to curb ethnic consciousness, however, which fell into disrepute; questions were also shed on the ability of mass communication in general, and radio and television in particular, to serve as the assimilatory devices earlier integration- and communication models had believed them to be: While the latter had perceived electronic mass media as a "hypodermic needle" through which the cultural identifications of viewers could be manipulated at will, newer theories no longer saw audiences unprotected against manipulative ploys of electronic image providers. Instead, they stressed that intertextual dynamics lead viewers to decode and demystify television images in relation to other messages supplied through vernacular channels of communication linking them to their own "interpretive communities" which pro-

vide a code of interpretation to guide the demystification process.[15] Especially if transmitted in a trans-cultural context, the manner in which television images are decoded by their recipients cannot be determined according to a simple stimulus-response model.

Echoing prevailing doubts about the ability of mass media to alter the cultural identifications of those exposed to them Walker Connor cautioned against attempts to "telescope" "assimilist time" through augmenting inter-cultural communication, and "analogizing from the fact that increased communications and transportation help to dissolve cultural distinctions among regions within what is fundamentally a one-culture state, to the conclusion that the same process will occur in situations involving two or more distinct cultures."[16] Accordingly, it "tend[s] to have one impact in a one-culture situation, and quite a different impact in a variegated culture area."[17]

Not only, however, was it discovered that exposure to electronic mass-media can fail to have the assimilative impacts predicted by earlier models; in some instances it can result in the pure opposite. As the "status of the viewer has been upgraded regularly during the course of communications research,"[18] one came to the conclusion that

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[15]René Jean Ravault, "Défense de l'identité culturelle par les réseaux traditionnels de 'Coerséduction,'" *International Political Science Review*. Vol. 7, No. 3, July 1986, p. 277.
  A deviation from the "critical audience" approach places more emphasis on the process whereby audiences seek gratification by bending "the text in any way [they] see fit - indeed, virtually to abolish the text ..." The gratification approach, however, has come under criticism from both sides of the debate. From the social control tradition, it has been countered with the argument that the needs which viewers seek to gratify are, in the final analysis, determined by the media themselves. Those who focus on the importance of vernacular messages in the decoding process, in contrast, could argue that viewer's needs are to a large extent conditioned by the "interpretive communities" to which they belong. See Tamar Liebes and Elihu Katz, "On the critical abilities of television viewers," in Ellen Seiter et al. (eds.), *Remote Control: Television, Audiences, and Cultural Power*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 204.

[16]Walker Connor, "Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying?" *World Politics*, Vol. 24, No. 3, April 1972, p. 347.

[17]Connor, "Nation-Building," p. 347.

[18]Liebes et al., "On the critical abilities," p. 204.

"the media can be consumed oppositionally ... and not only hegemonically."[19] Exposure to programmes can come to play a role of "provocation rather than seduction"[20] and induce a "boomerang effect" which mobilizes those at the receiving end against the messages relayed to them - and ultimately against the source of transmission itself. The conditions for such a backlash are especially favourable if a vernacular code of interpretation leads to the branding of foreign messages as propaganda, or as part of a "cultural flood" perceived to threaten and violate the values and identities adhered to by the "interpretive community" in question.

THE CONSOCIATIONAL APPROACH

The consociational model explored by Arend Lijphart[21] grounds on two premises. First, it recognizes that while the ethnic assimilation predicted and deemed necessary by conventional integration models is often unattainable, increased economic and social interaction between different national groups does not inevitably lead to renewed ethnic tensions either: While some multiethnic states did fall apart, others, such as Switzerland, seem to have secured a relatively conflict-free coexistence of their nationalities.

Second, the consociational approach differs from earlier integration models in that it sees a high degree of economic integration - which goes well beyond the scope of Deutsch's "security community" - compatible with an equally high extent of cultural separation; indeed, it purports that the granting of cultural autonomy to the national communities embroiled in the unification process represents the condition for their willingness to participate in the maintenance of integrated economic and political structures. Assimilative pressures resulting from increased economic integration

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[19]Liebes et al., "On the critical abilities," p. 204.

[20]Ravault, "Défense de l'identité culturelle," p. 276.

[21]Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

can be eased if each ethnic segment is granted a high degree of cultural autonomy, and if the cultural homogeneity within each ethnic group's territory is protected through rigid and largely impermeable cultural boundaries.[22]

To protect ethnic segments from assimilative pressures, the consociational model proposes a form of government which avoids dominance by one ethnic group over another and by the center over the periphery. This can be accomplished through an indirect - and thus less imposing - form of democracy, the granting of a mutual veto to each ethnic group and by applying the principle of proportionality in allocating federal funds and governmental appointments.

At the heart of the consociational model, thus, lies the principle of detaching the cultural from the economic and political spheres. Unification processes which unfold on a political and economic level should not, as was demanded by conventional integration theories, become replicated in the socio-cultural realm. As Lijphart argues, the consociational model entails the likelihood "to make plural societies more thoroughly plural. Its approach is not to abolish or weaken segmental cleavages but to recognize them explicitly and to turn the segments into constructive elements of stable democracy."[23]

In many respects, the consociational model reflects neofunctionalist assumptions regarding the centrality of elites in propelling the process of economic and political integration and the potential for preserving cultural heterogeneity in the context of growing economic and political interconnectedness. Instead of arguing that shared cultural values on a broad popular level must be created so as to sustain overarching

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[22]The consociational model further presupposes that supranational structures can be legitimized without the mergers of identity called for by conventional theories of integration, and that the emergence of cognitive loyalties towards supranational institutions, which are stimulated by an instrumental cost/benefit analysis, is compatible with a continuously close affective identification with demarcated and culturally separated national communities. This in turn implies that identity- and loyalty sentiments are more flexible and divisible than was presumed by conventional integration theories and the conflict model alike.

[23]Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies*, p. 42.

economic and political structures, neofunctionlists envision that such structures can be deepened and consolidated through a process of gradually expanding ties on an elite level which centre around economic and political issues. While their elites advance the integration process, broader populations remain segmented and culturally heterogeneous.

The relationship between decentralization in the cultural sphere and integration in the economic realm shines through in the comparison between Canada and Switzerland. The former differs from the latter in that Switzerland accepts a decoupling between nationality and citizenship. The federal constitution limits the cultural powers of the central government to the provisions of Article 116, which argues to the effect that "the recognition of a national language implies a guarantee of its continuance within the limits of its traditional terrain, and hence a corresponding federal power to act for its preservation."[24] Cultural policies outside the strictly defined task of promoting minority cultures (and hence encouraging continued division rather than assimilation) fall under the jurisdiction of the cantons and localities.

Whereas the Swiss federal government largely refrains from interfering in matters of language and culture, its powers to intervene in the economic realm are greater than is the case in Canada. Unlike its Canadian counterpart, it has succeeded in keeping domestic trade barriers relatively low. The center's involvement in the economy, moreover, encounters little resistance by Switzerland's diverging cultural

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[24]When the central government does become involved in cultural matters, it mostly aims at strengthening cultural minority groups *within* their respective regions, mainly through grants to Italophone cultural projects in Ticino and Romansch institutions in Grisons. Such subsidies are either given to cantons which determine their allocation within the objective specified by the federal government, or directly to the linguistic groups themselves. See Kenneth D. McRae, *Switzerland: Example of Cultural Coexistence*, (Toronto: The Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1964), p. 52-56.

communities, for they sense their identities sufficiently protected by the principle of cultural decentralization.[25]

The Consociational Model and Television

From the premises of the consociational model, finally, it flows that the role it allocates to mass communications in general and television in particular is fundamentally opposed to that envisioned by those models of integration which fall under the traditional paradigm: While the latter prescribe a strategy of using television a tool to foster cultural integration, the consociational model - in accord with its demand that cultural separation between economically and politically integrated communities must remain intact while cultural homogeneity *within* these units should be strengthened - seeks to promote cultural cohesion *among* rather than *between* different ethnic groups.

There are few systematic enquiries into the media policy in consociational democracies. A short glance at the practice of broadcasting in Switzerland and in Belgium, however, can provide some guidance: In accord with its overall strategy of fostering cultural separation, Switzerland strives to employ both radio and television broadcasting to accentuate rather than homogenize cultural differences. Instead of trying to use television to encourage cultural integration, it merely ensures that "three complete and equal programme services be offered."[26] Accordingly, the three national networks (one for each of the main linguistic regions) produce programmes which are kept separate in form and content,[27] and all three have a strong regional fo-

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[25]See Jean Laponce, "Canada, Switzerland and Talcott Parsons," *Queen's Quarterly*, Vol. 99, No. 2, Summer 1992.

[26]McRae, *Switzerland*, p. 43.
The policy of linguistic separation was originally devised for radio broadcasting but it was extended to television with the arrival of the medium.

[27]With the advent of cable, Swiss viewers watch more foreign broadcasts than they spend time viewing broadcasters from other linguistic regions, if only for reasons of lacking language skills.

cus.[28] This trend was further enhanced by the fact that the German-language network airs an ever-increasing share of its programmes in Swiss-German dialect, which renders them incomprehensible to most French- and Italian-speaking Swiss.

In Belgium, likewise, increased linguistic decentralization was accompanied by a heightened separation of broadcasting. In 1960, two separate broadcast institutions were created to serve the two major linguistic communities.[29] Before the advent of cable television, the signals of both broadcasters could not be received outside their linguistic territories as they adopted two different television norms: Whereas Wallonia used the 819-line format which enabled it to receive channels from neighbouring France but not from Flanders, the latter adopted the 625-line norm which allowed reception of signals from the Netherlands, but which was incompatible with the norm adopted by fellow Belgians across the cultural divide.[30]

In 1971, in the course of constitutional decentralization, television policy became subject to community parliamentary control. In 1979, the two regional governments were granted exclusive control over most aspects of broadcasting.[31] Meanwhile, the installation of the world's most dense cable system permitted Belgians to watch each other's television channels, but the ratings for foreign channels (i.e. from

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[28]Swiss radio and television networks have resisted rare attempts by the federal government to use broadcasting as a integrative device. During the Second World War the central administration "issued a directive calling for a weekly broadcast on the duties of patriotism," but the French service refused to comply, arguing that "hardworking people had a right to a radio service of entertainment and relaxation." At the same time, the French network was defending the principle of autonomy and non-intervention, preventing the federal government from using broadcasting for national objectives. McRae, *Switzerland*, pp. 45-46.

[29]Radio Télévision Belge de la Communauté Française (RTBF) serves the French community, while Belgische Radio en Televisie (BRT) was instituted to serve the Flemish one. In addition, in 1977, a broadcast station was created for the small German-language community in Belgium. See Eli Noam, *Television in Europe*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 176.

[30]George H. Quester, *The International Politics of Television*, (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1990), p. 211.

[31]Noam, *Television in Europe*, p. 176.

France and the Netherlands respectively) are much higher within the corresponding linguistic region than are those for each other's broadcasters.[32]

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[32]In Belgium, the decentralization of broadcasting was not guided by cultural concerns alone. Its impetus came from the "quest for absolute control over the broadcasting medium by the dominant political parties on either side of Belgium's cultural barrier." See Jan Drijvers, "Community Broadcasting: A Manifesto for the Media Policy of Small European States," *Media, Culture and Society*. Vol. 14, 1992.

ORIGINS OF THE EC'S TELEVISION POLICIES IN THE EARLY 1980S

THE RISE OF BRUSSELS'S CULTURAL AMBITIONS

Between the time of its founding and the early 1980s, the European Community displayed few cultural ambitions. In 1973, the summit of Copenhagen referred for the first time to a perceived need to foster the emergence of a European "cultural space,"[33] but due to a lack of enthusiasm among member states the issue was soon laid to rest. It surfaced again in 1977, when the European Commission called for "Community action in the cultural sector." After the Council - preoccupied with economic aspects of integration - had even refused to examine the issue,[34] however, the matter of complementing economic and political integration with a "cultural dimension" was postponed until the following decade.

In the early-to-mid 1980s, Brussels's earlier lack of cultural ambitions was replaced by a sudden activism. Its origins can be traced to the acceleration in the process of European integration in its economic and political dimensions, notably the signing of the Single European Act in 1986, which committed Community members to establish a common market for goods, services, capital and labour by the end of 1992. While the latter was still a primarily economic venture, it held out the prospect for the gradual extension of a political super-structure, reinvigorating the process of political unification which had slackened after the Luxembourg Compromise in 1966.

Even before the Single Act had been concluded, the "Europhoria" which accompanied the sudden acceleration of European integration spilled into the cultural realm: In 1984, arguing that the "European Union which is being constructed cannot have economic and social objectives as its only aim, however important those objectives may be; [it] also involves new kinds of solidarity based on belonging to Euro-

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[33]Hugues Dumont, "Les compétences culturelles de la Communauté Européenne," in Jacques Lenoble and Nicole Dewandre (eds.), L'Europe au soir du siècle: Identité et démocratie, (Paris: Éditions Esprit, 1992).

[34]Dumont, "Les compétences culturelles," p. 201.

pean culture ...,"[34] the European Council established an ad hoc committee for a "people's Europe" (known as the Addonino Commission) to which it gave the task of suggesting "ways of strengthening the identity and improving the image of the Community."[36]

But although the European Commission declared the "relaunching of a cultural European Community" as "both a political and a socio-political necessity for the completion of the large internal market in 1992 and the development of the People's Europe into a European Union,"[37] the insistence of some members (mainly Denmark and the UK) that cultural affairs should remain off-limits to Brussels caused many of the EC's measures in the "cultural sector" to be of largely symbolic character, complementing rather than replacing existing national cultural policies. They ranged from the designation of "European cities of culture," the financing of a pan-European symphony orchestra, the sponsorship of joint European sports teams and "walks for Europe," to a common European symbol to be worn by athletes at the Olympic Games.[38] In addition, the EC advanced European "unity symbols" by declaring May 9th "Europe Day," encouraging the frequent playing of the "European anthem" and, in 1986, by adopting a European flag. Moreover, after it had taken "some ten years to agree on its colour and format" EC members finally began to issue a common European passport.[39] By far the largest share of attention, however, came to be devoted to television.

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[34]Commission of the European Communities, "The European Community and Culture," *European File*, 10, 1988, p. 3.

[36]Ernest Wistrich, *After 1992: The United States of Europe*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 86.

[37]Commission of the European Communities, "European Community and Culture," p. 3.

[38]Wistrich, *After 1992*, pp. 86-87.

[39]Wistrich, *After 1992*, pp. 87-88. The "Europassport," however, is of only symbolic value for an internationally recognized European citizenship does not yet

REASONS FOR THE PROMOTION OF PAN-EUROPEAN TELEVISION

As will be argued, Brussels's focus on television as a primary instrument of advancing its cultural ambitions based on economic, political and technical considerations. But above all, it was grounded on two assumptions about the role of communications in general and mass media in particular: First, the EC shared the faith held by the "nation-builders" in Britain, Canada and many developing nations that communication could promote the cause of cultural integration. Seemingly convinced that "all that communicates is good,"[40] the Commission even declared parts of the communications sector as prosaic as digital telephone lines and computer networks as "new highways for the European market."[41]

Second, Brussels's attraction to television was propelled by its belief that the alleged "national outlook" of conventional domestic media posed an obstacle to the emergence of a "European consciousness" among national audiences. For example, Pieter Dankert, president of the European Parliament, argued:

> For various reasons, an increasing need for European programmes exist. For European politics, it is of enormous importance to be represented by journalists on [a] European level and also to be able to present oneself direct [sic] to national audiences. But there are so many more interests - social and cultural - that are from a European standpoint, crying for more intensive and more extensive communication. ... There is a lot of work to be done, by politicians and journalists in the first place, as *Europe does not exist yet in the national publicity.*"[42]

While Brussels insisted that enhanced communications in general and common television channels in particular could "play an important part in developing and nurturing awareness of the rich variety of Europe's common cultural and historical

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exist. As it specifies the nationality of its bearer, the document amounts to little more than a national passport with a European symbol on its cover.

[40]Dominique Wolton, *Éloge du grand public: Une théorie critique de la télévision,* (Paris: Flammarion, 1990), p. 233.

[41]Commission of the European Communities, "Telecommunications: The New Highways for the European Market," *European File,* 15, 1988.

[42]Quoted in George Wedell, "The Establishment of the Common Market for Broadcasting in Western Europe," *International Political Science Review,* Vol. 7, No. 3, July 1986. p. 295. (emphasis added).

heritage ... [and thus] do much to help the people of Europe to recognize the common destiny they share in many areas,"[43] there is little doubt that it wanted pan-European television to do more than to teach Europeans that they were different from each other: From the very outset, Brussels's "unity in diversity" rhetoric could not conceal its fondness of equating Europeanization with denationalization. This, as will be discussed below, surfaced in attempts to employ Europa TV not merely as a vehicle to make Europeans from different countries watch more of *each other's* productions but instead to diffuse programmes which mirrored a "non-national" (and thus supposedly "European") point of view. It also shined through in its fostering of audiovisual coproductions between as many European countries as possible so as to stimulate the use of and familiarity with a denationalized "European" format.

But despite the EC's claim that pan-European television could "by appealing to a large audience ... help develop a peoples Europe through reinforcing a sense of belonging to a Community composed of countries which are different yet partake of a deep solidarity,"[44] Brussels could not ignore that much of Europe's past had neither been unified nor marked by deep solidarity. This meant that it had to "shift [its] historical perspectives back far ... to find shared European projects and identities unspoiled by the inconvenient outbreaks of mass slaughter that have been so important a part of European history since the Middle Ages."[45]

It was indeed the Middle Ages from which the EC's cultural projects came to draw their inspiration. They reflected a desire to return to a time when "horizontal stratifications were more important than vertical ones ... [when] religious, political, military and cultural elites circulated freely across the continent, sharing language,

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[43]Quoted in Moreley et al., "Spaces of Identity," p. 12.

[44]Commission of the European Communities, "Towards a Large European Audio-Visual Market," *European File.* 4, 1988, p. 4.

[45]Richard Collins, *Television: Policy and Culture,* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990), p. 209.

religion, ethnicity, in short the attributes of a nation."[46] By invoking a medieval legacy as an inspiration for a future "Europe of culture," Brussels was in the tradition of some early founding fathers of the European movement who "tended to look back to the imperial myths of the Carolingian and Ottonian Holy Roman Empire and to the medieval urban civilization centered on the Rhine as their models of a 'golden age' of European Christendom."[47]

Brussels's longing to recreate a "Europe of culture" along pre-Westhpalian lines shined through in efforts to forge a nation-transcending European identity not only through a "Europe of viewers" but also through such initiatives as the designation of "European cities of culture," the promotion of "sister cities" across national borders and even, as part of the MEDIA programme, the sponsoring of a television series on medieval pilgrimages.[48]

The EC's claim that Europe's cultural revival could base on its medieval legacy, and its insistence that "Europe's cultural dimension *is there* in the collective consciousness of its people,"[49] made the task of fostering an over-arching European identity appear more promising than if it had concluded that a "Europe of culture" would have to be constructed anew. Due to the notion that Europe had already been unified before it became divided along national lines, that Europeans already shared a "rich heritage," a "deep solidarity" and a nation-state transcending "collective con-

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[46]Collins, *Television*, p. 209.

[47]Anthony D. Smith, "National Identity and the Idea of European Unity," *International Affairs*, Vol. 68, No. 1, 1992, p. 74.
Not all "founding fathers" of European integration, however, embraced medieval cosmopolitanism as an example for a future integrated Europe. In *The Progress of International Government* David Mitrany argued that Europe's medieval unity "was dispensed from above upon a world that was generally unconscious of it." See Jaap De Wilde, *Saved From Oblivion: Interdependence Theory in the First Half of the 20th Century*, (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing Company, 1991), p. 192.

[48]Collins, *Television*, p. 209.

[49]Commission of the European Communities, "European Community and Culture," p. 3. (emphasis added).

sciousness," a coherent European identity would not have to be created but merely "*relaunched*."

The second aspect of the EC's quest to encourage the Europeanization of broadcasting related to the first: Brussels perceived the "relaunching" of a "Europe of culture" not only in terms of amalgamating national cultures within the confines of the Community but also as a task requiring the protection of a "European identity" from perceived cultural threats originating from the *outside*, primarily from audiovisual imports originating in the United States. Although US productions did not account for more than 10% of combined European television programming,[50] the EC's warnings against the alleged cultural peril from overseas acquired an ever greater urgency throughout the 1980s, leading it to identify the creation of a pan-European production sector sufficiently strong to compete with American imports as "one essential step if the dominance of big American media corporations is to be counterbalanced."[51]

While Brussels's "unity in diversity" rhetoric denied the potential for conflict between its pan-European ambitions and the cultural identities of smaller Community members, it depicted the cultural standing of Europe vis-à-vis the outside world in sheer Darwinian terms, a perception which was shared by some national governments as well: As early as 1982, French Minister of Culture Jack Lang called for a crusade "against financial and intellectual imperialism that no longer grabs territory, or rarely, but grabs consciousness, ways of thinking, ways of living."[52] In 1988, similar rhetoric was adopted by the European Commission which warned that "while satel-

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[50]Michael Tracy, "Popular Culture and the Economics of Global Television," *Intermedia*, Vol. 16, No. 2, March 1988, p. 11.

[51]Quoted in Collins, *Television*, p. 152.
The fact that the quota debate occurred within the framework of the TWF Directive was also caused by the EC's fear that commercially operated non-national broadcasters, eager to obtain inexpensive and popular programming input, would turn to American sources.

[52]Quoted in Tracy, "Popular Culture," pp. 16-17.

lites are ready to overwhelm us with hundreds of new television channels, Europe runs the risk of seeing its own industry squeezed out and its market taken over by American and Japanese industrialists and producers ... [given] the clear interaction between technical progress, the opening up of frontiers and programme content, a European response is required ..."[53]

Brussels's warnings against American television imports often reflected, in content and style, the arguments advanced on a national level in the decades before: While it had traditionally been British, French or Italian culture which became defended against an alleged onslaught of American influence by their national governments, it was now a "European identity" whose survival was perceived to depend on Brussels's intervention. Just as national public service broadcasters had the mandate to further national cultural objectives,[54] the EC hoped that pan-European broadcasters would do the same for "European culture." As will be discussed, even concrete cultural policies pioneered on a national level, such as import quotas for foreign programme productions, government-sponsored film boards and television festivals became imitated by the Community.

Finally, whereas the main motives behind the promotion of pan-European television were cultural, these were often linked to economic objectives. In particular, the European Commission hoped that an integrated European television market, encompassing more than 300 million viewers, would help European electronics industries keep pace with their US and Japanese competitors in the development of a new high definition television standard (HDTV), programme digitization techniques and a new satellite transmission norm.

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[53]Commission of the European Communities, "European Community and Culture," pp. 5-6.

[54]For a comparison of national content requirements in several European countries, see The European Institute for the Media, *Towards a European Common Market For Television: Contribution to the Debate,* Manchester, The European Institute for the Media, 1987.

Calls to promote pan-European television as a means of strengthening European electronics industries, too, were accompanied by dire warnings that Europe was at danger of being overwhelmed by foreigners. In 1986, justifying the MEDIA programme discussed below, the European Commission contended that "[the] economic and cultural dimensions of communication cannot be separated. The gap between the profilation of equipment and media and the stagnation of creative content production capacities is a major problem for the societies of Europe; it lays them open to domination by other powers with a better performance in the programming content industry."[55]

President Mitterrand's synthesis of economic and cultural dangers led him to even direr warnings linking the future of television to the fate of the Community itself: Expanding on his previous laments that a *laissez-faire* attitude by the EC would inevitably lead to the point where Europeans would be watching only American films on Japanese-made television sets, he cautioned in 1989 that "American images, together with Japanese technologies, greatly dominate the European market ... if we do not attack now, the cement of European unity will start to crumble."[56]

TECHNICAL, LEGAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS FAVOURING THE EUROPEANIZATION OF TELEVISION

While the progress in European integration and the EC's rising cultural ambitions prepared the stage for Brussels's promotion of pan-European television channels, the latter would not have occurred without fundamental changes in the technical and economic nature of television broadcasting itself. They promised to lead the medium towards denationalization and thus made it seem attractive as a vehicle for Brussels's cultural ambitions.

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[55]Quoted in Collins, *Television*, p. 207-208.

[56]Quoted in R. Negrine and S. Papathanassopoulous, *The Internationalization of Television*, (London: Pinter Publishers, 1990), p. 176.

For one, television broadcasting was affected by *political decisions* taken on a national level during the previous years: Throughout the 1970s and 80s, most EC members had undermined their traditional public service monopolies by allowing commercial broadcasters to enter the market.[57] In 1980, the European Court of Justice, in recognition of the commercial dimension television had acquired, declared broadcasting to meet the Treaty of Rome's criteria of a "service" and it required EC members to allow unhindered access to broadcasts originating from anywhere within the Community, provided these complied with the regulations prevailing in their country of origin.[58]

Technical transformations, too, were expected to push television towards Europeanization: By the early 1980s improvements in transmission technology had accelerated at a fast pace.[59] The evolution of low, medium and high powered broadcasting satellites facilitated the diffusion of television signals over large geographical areas, either for reception by private satellite dishes, whose size and price had declined sharply, or as feeders of local cable systems.[60] Once installed, cable was bound to facilitate the transmission of channels from abroad.[61]

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[57]Exceptions to the public service monopoly model had been few: In Italy, a Supreme Court decision in the early 1970s legalized private television on local level. In Luxembourg, a monopoly was granted to a private broadcaster, while Britain, Finland and Monaco maintained public-private duopolies. The former two countries, however, imposed tight restrictions on private broadcasters so as to not endanger the dominant position of their public service competitors. For a comparative treatment of domestic broadcasting policies in Europe see Noam, *Television in Europe.*

[58]Wedell, "Establishment of the Common Market," p. 288.

[59]See Negrine et al., *Internationalization.*

[60]Likewise, the refinement of cable technology helped overcome spectrum shortage, which had often served as a pretext to limit the number of television channels.

[61]Moreover, by the mid 1980s, optical fiber cable technology had replaced copper cables, and it became possible to digitalize television signals which in turn multiplied the number of channels that could be transmitted through cable lines. The potential to overcome terrestrial frequency shortages was further enhanced by converting some frequencies from military to civilian use and by utilizing frequencies in the microwave spectrum. See Noam, *Television in Europe,* p. 43.

The new possibilities opening up in the technical field, combined with commercialization on a national level, subjected television broadcasting to a new *economic dynamic* which raised expectations that it would soon take on a pan-European dimension: Commercial television is either financed through advertising revenues or through subscription fees, and the revenue obtained from either form of funding tends to increase in proportion to the size of the audience a channel reaches. A profit-maximizing broadcaster expands the range of its signals until the marginal cost of doing so equals the marginal revenue it can attain from it. As broadcasting involves no physical mass the incentive for channels to expand their geographical reach is strong. Besides the need for stronger transmission equipment and higher costs of programme input,[62] reaching additional viewers entails no additional marginal expenditures.

A further push towards Europeanization was expected from the fact that as the number of entrants into the television market rises, so does their tendency to engage in programme differentiation, the endeavor to reach specific audience segments and to take advantage of previously neglected market niches through "narrowcasting," i.e. by creating "thematic" programme contents (e.g. all-news, all-music, or all-film). The more fragmented a channel's audience becomes, i.e. the smaller the *proportion* of viewers to which it appeals, the greater its incentive to beam its signals across national borders, hoping to compensate for the loss of audience *share* by increasing its audience *reach*.[63] As a general rule, the more channels compete in a given market, the higher is diversity of programming they offer, and the greater is their incentive to target a larger audience by diffusing their signals over a wider geo-

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[62]The purchasing price of programme input usually increases proportionately to the number of viewers as given channel reaches.

[63]For example, if a channel's audience share declines from 20% to 10% but the number of viewers able to receive its signals doubles, the channel's total audience size (i.e. the number of people actually watching it) remains constant, provided its appeal does not diminish among the additional audience.

graphical area. In sum, in the absence of political, linguistic and cultural obstacles, *commercialization breeds Europeanization.*[64]

These political, technical and economic dynamics coincided with the EC's quest to encourage cultural integration, and they were purported to justify its involvement in television broadcasting: On the one hand, the "de-culturization" of television introduced within some member states (in the form of commercialization) undermined the claim traditionally advanced by some member states that television broadcasting was a cultural activity and should therefore remain off-limits to intervention by Brussels. It opened a niche for the EC to enter the realm of broadcasting policy under economic rather than cultural pretenses. On the other hand, the technical ability to transmit signals across national boundaries, and the economic incentive to do so, gave rise to the EC's claim that signals which could be *dispersed* throughout the Community had to be *regulated* on a Community-wide basis as well. As it turned out, the EC's measures to regulate pan-European television aimed primarily at its promotion.

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[64]The internationalization of broadcasting in Europe was further expected to benefit from the following factors: The invention of scrambling and decoding technologies created the potential to offer individual channels for a monthly fee (subscription television) or "charge admission" to single programmes (pay-per-view or pay-per-minute television). This transformed television signals from a public (non-excludable) good into a private (excludable) good, and it gave broadcasters the opportunity to exploit different demand elasticities through "segmental discrimination," i.e by offering the same programme to different audiences at different times, through different means of transmission and at different prices. This, in turn, benefits the specialization of programming and therefore, as was discussed, the dispersion of broadcast signals over wider geographical areas.

The trend towards specialization (and thus internationalization) is enhanced as clearly defined audience segments are more attractive to advertisers and thus more profitable, and subscription and pay-per-view television channels are only likely to be successful if they specialize in types of programming which viewers cannot expect to obtain from "free" television airing more general programming formats. In the United States, the surge of thematic channels has demonstrated that commercialization, if combined with technologies which allow broadcasters to expand their geographical reach and tab into alternate sources of funding (e.g. subscription television), can increase pluralism and diversity of programming: Although many U.S. cable and satellite channels appeal to only a minuscule proportion of the audience, they are economically viable nonetheless. On the economics of television broadcasting see Noam, *Television in Europe.*

MEASURES BY THE EC TO ENCOURAGE THE EUROPEANIZATION OF TELEVISION AND THE RISE OF PAN-EUROPEAN BROADCASTERS

The EC's efforts to promote pan-European television consisted of three components: First, Brussels sought to encourage "negative integration" (i.e. the removal of obstacles to Europeanization) by eliminating barriers to the flow of television programmes between member states. This, it hoped, would allow market- and technology-induced forces towards Europeanization to fully unfold. The other two aspects of the EC's television policy were of a "positive" nature, seeking to *promote* (rather than merely remove obstacles to) integration in the audio-visual field; they led the EC to support a non-commercial Europe-wide channel and to sponsor trans-European audiovisual coproductions.

"TELEVISION WITHOUT FRONTIERS"

In 1983, the Commission of the European Communities released a report to the Council, titled *Trends in Broadcasting in Europe: Perspectives and Options*. It "marked the starting point for involvement on part of the European institutions in audiovisual policy."[65] It was followed, in 1984, by a green paper titled "Television Without Frontiers" and, in 1986, by a draft directive on broadcasting, known as the "Television Without Frontiers Directive" (TWF).[66]

TWF's main objective was the removal of all barriers to the free flow of television signals within the Community so as to make way for market forces, propelled by technological inventions and economies of scale, to push television beyond the confines of the nation state. To deprive national governments of justifications to obstruct the reception of foreign signals on their territory, the Directive also sought to harmonize regulations pertaining to violent, racist and pornographic material[67] and it laid

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[65]Matto Maggiore, *Audiovisual Production and the Single Market*, (Luxembourg: Commission of the European Communities, 1990), p. 32.

[66]Maggiore, *Audiovisual Production*, p. 33.

[67]Maggiore, *Audiovisual Production*, p. 34.

down meticulously devised rules on advertising. Article 16 of the directive, for example, mandates that advertisements "shall not directly encourage minors to persuade their parents or others to purchase the goods or services being advertised."[68]

TWF was designated as an economic measure so as to honour the EC's preclusion under the Treaty of Rome from intervening in the cultural affairs of its members. Brussels took little effort, however, to conceal that it promoted pan-European television channels with cultural objectives in mind: In 1985, Commission President Jacques Delors argued that since, under the Treaty of Rome, "the EC does not have the means to impose a cultural policy, ... [it] will ... have to tackle the problem [of broadcasting] from an economic point of view."[69] Likewise, the European Parliament proclaimed that the EC's involvement in broadcasting policy had to occur under an economic rather than cultural banner, for this could "set limits to the efforts of those lawyers who might try to deny us any powers to act on it."[70]

Due to its cultural dimension, TWF was disputed from the outset and it managed to pass only with a qualified majority; Belgium and Denmark voted against it.[71] Denmark, the most consistent critic of the EC's cultural ambitions, argued that

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After much controversy between member states, an original plan to impose binding content quotas against non-European imports was dropped, mainly due to lobbying by Britain which feared trade retaliations by the United States. The final version of the Directive issued in 1989 merely demanded that preference be given to European productions "where practicable." Quoted in Negrine et al., Internationalization, p. 90.

Due to German pressure the definition of "European" was extended to all members of the Council of Europe (which included its "linguistic allies" in Switzerland and Austria) and to productions from Eastern Europe. The Commission also accepted France's contention that imports from Quebec should be considered European, too.

[68]Council of the European Communities, "EC Directive on Broadcasting," (3. October 1989), reprinted in Maggiore, Audiovisual Production, p. 171.

[69]Quoted in Negrine et al., Internationalization, p. 67.

[70]Quoted in Wedell, "Establishment of the Common Market," p. 286.

[71]Vincent Porter, "The Janus Character of television broadcasting," in Gareth Locksley (ed.), The Single European Market and the Information and Communication Technologies, (London: Belhaven Press, 1990), p. 62.

the EC should not interfere in the cultural affairs of its members, even if such intervention took place under the guise of economic liberalization. Belgium was anxious that it would lose its power to restrict the carriage of foreign programmes on its extensive cable system. This, it feared, would damage its fragile domestic audiovisual industries.

EUROPA TV

In its efforts to encourage television channels with pan-European reach, the EC did not rely on market forces alone; in 1986, it participated in the launching of Europa TV, a publicly funded non-national channel. It was initiated by a consortium of European public service broadcasters from Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands and Portugal[72] and it was financed through contributions from the European Commission, the Dutch government, participating broadcast organizations and through advertising revenues.[73]

Europa TV was pan-European not only with respect to its geographical reach but also in its programming content. Its programming formula "was intended to meet the following criteria: it had to be European, complementary, independent, universal and original ... and it was to "reflect European culture and [contribute] to it."[74] Europa TV's mission was to create programmes in a "denationalized" format, i.e. to report news and current affairs not from a national but from a "European point of view." Europa TV's news team, for example, "was carefully structured to avoid the dominance of any single national group," and a "non-national perspective was encouraged by all available means."[75]

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[72]Maggiore, *Audiovisual Production*, p. 71.

[73]The European Cultural Foundation and the European Institute for the Media, *Europe 2000: What Kind of Television?* (Report of the European Television Task Force), Manchester, The European Institute for the Media, 1988, p. 98.

[74]European Cultural Foundation et al., *Europe 2000*, p. 99.

[75]Maggiore, *Audiovisual Production*, p. 71.

To overcome language barriers, Europa TV's visual image was transmitted alongside several sound channels, with simultaneous translation schemes enabling audiences to receive the channel in their native tongue. Moreover, subtitles were provided through teletext.[76]

After an initial phase during which Europa TV had only been available in the Netherlands, it expanded its reach to 4.5 million households across Europe, including 1.5 million in Portugal where it was transmitted through terrestrial means.[77] Europa's initiators predicted that the channel would soon conquer a sizable trans-European audience and expand its reach to more than 30 million homes,[78] thereby demonstrating the viability of trans-European broadcasting and inducing commercially operated pan-European broadcasters to emerge. As is discussed below, however, the experiment was short-lived.

SUPPORT FOR EUROPEAN AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTIONS

The second component of the EC's efforts to promote "positive integration" in the audiovisual sector involved "consistent action in support of European programme production."[79] In 1985, the European Commission proposed a plan to help fund drama co-productions involving three or more producers from different member countries. This, however, was rejected by the Council of Ministers "because of the opposition of certain countries [mainly Denmark] which refused to admit either the competence of the Community in the cultural sphere, or any systematic public involvement in the cultural industries."[80]

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[76]European Cultural Foundation et al., *Europe 2000*, p. 99.

[77]Negrine et al., *Internationalization*, p. 176.

[78]European Cultural Foundation et al., *Europe 2000*, p. 99.

[79]Maggiore, *Audiovisual Production*, p. 32.

[80]European Cultural Foundation et al., *Europe 2000*, p. 89.

Despite such objections, Brussels managed to push through several initiatives to aid the emergence of a pan-European audiovisual market, most of which were launched under the umbrella of the MEDIA (Mesures pour encourager le développement de l'industrie audiovisuelle)[81] programme. MEDIA supported enterprises such as BABEL (Broadcasting Across the Barriers of European Languages) to refine technologies for dubbing and translation schemes; SCRIPT to promote the writing of European film scripts; EURO-AIM to support independent film producers; the European Film Distribution Office (FDO) and even a fund to aid European cartoon productions. In 1988, moreover, the EC sponsored a "European Cinema and Television Year."[82]

Support for non-national broadcasters was not MEDIA's only objective as it also supported coproductions between domestic public service channels and the circulation of films shown in movie theaters. But as the EC deemed the fact that 80% of all audiovisual productions in Europe never left their borders[83] an obstacle to the development of a audiovisual market sufficiently large to provide Europe-wide channels with European-made programming content, it expected the enlargement of pan-European programme production to come to the aid of non-national broadcasters by furnishing them with suitable (i.e. European-made) - and thanks to direct and indirect subsidies cheaper and more plentiful - programming input.[84] Moreover, the EC

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[81]Negrine et al., *Internationalization*, p. 74

[82]Commission of the European Communities, "Towards a Large European Audio-Visual Market," p. 3.

[83]Jean-Claude Burgelman and Caroline Pauwels, "Audiovisual Policy and Cultural Identity in Small European States: The Challenge of a Unified Market," *Media, Culture and Society*, Vol. 14, 1992, p. 176.

[84]Furthermore, some MEDIA-initiatives were targeted at strengthening cultural industries in smaller European countries. Due the EC's eagerness to encourage productions suitable for a Europe-wide audience, however, MEDIA's priority turned out to be the funding of productions in larger countries in more widely spoken languages. They had greater chances of appealing to a pan-European audience and of competing internationally against US, South American and Japanese productions,

hoped that widespread exposure to European coproductions - even if initially shown more in movie theaters and on domestic channels than on pan-European TV - would induce viewers to adapt to a denationalized programming format whose acceptance was essential for the success of pan-European channels.

THE RISE OF PAN-EUROPEAN BROADCASTERS

By the mid-to-late 1980s, many obstacles to the Europeanization of television broadcasting had thus been removed. The way seemed paved for economic forces, propelled by enthusiastic support by the European Community, to expel television from its national fold. The outlook for pan-European broadcasting was so favourable that large publishing houses, encouraged by permissive anti-trust legislation on a national as well as European level, began to invest large sums in non-national channels:

In 1984, after it had secured cable transmission rights in Britain, Norway, Austria, Germany and the Netherlands, the UK-branch of the Murdoch publishing group set up Sky Television,[85] which transmitted entertainment-oriented programmes to viewers across Europe. In 1987, 14 British ITV companies launched rivalling Super Channel, which beamed an equally entertainment-dominated fare through cable and satellite across the continent. The inauguration of Sky Television and Super Channel was accompanied by the founding of several other channels which tried to conquer market niches by specializing in areas such as film, sport coverage, financial news, "lifestyle reporting," the "women's market" and children's TV. Even devotees to erotic fare were catered to by Dutch-based Radio Television Veronique which beamed its signals via the Astra satellite.[86]

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thereby recovering parts of their production costs. See Burgelman et al., "Audiovisual Policy," p. 176.

[85]Noam, *Television in Europe*, p. 141.

[86]Veronique's signals were originally unencrypted and could be received by all those whose satellite dishes were adjusted to receive Sky Television, which was beamed from the Astra satellite, too. After much lobbying by the British government, which argued that the channel violated British broadcasting regulations calling for the

Some pan-European channels were financed through advertising, others through subscription fees or a combination of both. As for Sky Television and Super Channel, their initiators hoped that advertisers, eager to seize the opportunity to disperse their messages to a Europe-wide audience, would provide a plentiful source of funding. The prospects for non-national broadcasters to earn sufficient advertising revenues to cover their operating costs and render a profit looked especially good as the European advertising market had remained underdeveloped in comparison to that of the United States, which shared comparable socioeconomic characteristics.[87]

Mirroring the optimism which prevailed among pan-European channels and advertisers alike, the advertising agency Saatchi and Saatchi predicted that by 1995, "new powerful satellites will have become established with, we estimate, around 35 per cent penetration of UK television households" and that "satellite broadcasting across national frontiers - [p]an European services ... will predominate and be the key dynamic in our business."[88]

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preservation of "taste and decency," Veronique began to encrypt its signals. See Negrine et al., *Internationalization*, p. 4.

[87]In 1985, Europeans spent the equivalent of 5,000 million US-dollars (for a combined population of 355 million) on advertising, while American advertisers dispersed more than $ 20,000 million to cover 240 million consumers. Moreover, since most public service monopolies had severely restricted television advertising or even prohibited it altogether, European advertisers were expected to be eager to catch up to US-levels once outlets for their messages had become available. See Negrine et al., *Internationalization*, p. 119.

[88]Quoted in Collins, *Television*, p. 63.

THE FAILURE OF PAN-EUROPEAN TELEVISION

Neither the advent of technical and economic conditions favourable to the Europeanization of television, nor the efforts of the EC to promote it, led to its success. The extent to which non-national television failed to attract viewers becomes apparent by examining (1) the fate of Europa TV; (2) the popularity of commercial pan-European broadcasters among audiences who could receive their signals; and (3) the pace at which the technical infrastructure necessary to transmit and receive pan-European channels grew.

THE FATE OF EUROPA TV

The plight of Europa TV was among the earliest signs that non-national television would not encounter the success predicted and hoped for by the European Community. Despite early estimates that the channel was bound to conquer a sizable transnational audience and soon attain financial self-sufficiency, it ceased operations in November of 1987.

Europa TV's short life was marked by political quarrels, such as Portugal's insistence that it should broadcast not only in English, German and Dutch but also in Portuguese. This caused expenditures for translation facilities and multiple sound-tracks to eat up half of Europa's budged.[89] Most of Europa's financial problems, however, reflected the channel's minuscule audience appeal and its resulting inability to attract advertising revenues. Even after Europa TV had begun to offer commercial slots free of charge to draw the attention of advertisers, the latter did not use it as an outlet for their messages.[90] In the end, a 720.000 Pound emergency grant offer by the EC could not save the channel.[91]

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[89]Negrine et al., *Internationalization*, p. 176.

[90]Negrine et al., *Internationalization*, p. 177.

[91]Negrine et al., *Internationalization*, p. 177.

In 1988, after Europa TV's demise, the European Commission pondered whether it should fund another Europe-wide broadcaster, "provided it combines the following characteristics: a broadcasting organization which is multinational within Europe, multilingual broadcasts; a multinational audience within a wide European area; European programme content."[92] Moreover, Brussels toyed with the idea of sponsoring a European News channel to counter US-based Cable News Network with a "European point of view."

Until the launching of "Euronews" in January 1993, however, Europa TV's fiasco had spelled an end to further attempts by the EC to set up non-national channels. Instead, the EC downscaled its ambitions to more modest endeavours; it established a training center for European journalists[93] and it concentrated on initiatives to sponsor European coproductions, mainly through the MEDIA programme. Yet Brussels continued to hope that the private sector would succeed in doing what it had failed to accomplish on its own: to push television into the age of pan-Europeanization and create a "Europe of viewers."

AUDIENCE RATINGS FOR COMMERCIALLY OPERATED PAN-EUROPEAN CHANNELS
In Britain

Contrary to expectations that market forces and technical inventions would provide an irresistible pull towards denationalization, commercially funded pan-European channels fared as poorly as had Europa TV:

Britain provides a clear illustration for the low popularity of pan-European broadcasters, especially so since the British market was considered the easiest for them to penetrate: First, as pan-European channels operated primarily in English, language barriers posed no obstacles for British viewers. Second, most pan-European

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[92]Commission of the European Communities, "Towards a Large European Audio-Visual Market," p. 4.

[93]Maggiore, *Audiovisual Production*, p. 72.

channels were based in Britain and carried a high proportion of British-made content. Although the latter were often deprived of a national context so as to make them accessible for a transnational audience, the dominance of programmes made in the UK should have caused cultural barriers to be lower in Britain compared to anywhere else in Europe. Finally, since viewers in the UK had only a modest range of domestic channels to choose from, and since Channel 4 and BBC 2 had the reputation of being "high culture" channels with limited mass appeal, British audiences were thought to be receptive to the entertainment-oriented fare offered by pan-European broadcasters.

The presence of circumstances favourable to the success of pan-European broadcasters in the UK, however, did not lead to their success. In December of 1987, British cable households watched Sky Television 7% of the time, while Super Channel's rating was 1.5%.[94] Other non-national channels received even less attention by cable viewers: The Children's Channel attained 4.2%, and Screen Sport received 2.5% of all viewing time. The music channel MTV obtained a rating of 2.4%, while the Lifestyle Channel achieved 1.2%.[95] As pan-European satellite channels fared poorly, the traditional British terrestrial broadcasters, BBC 1, BBC 2, ITV and Channel 4, retained the lions share of viewing time with 71% combined among viewers in cable households.[96]

It is important to note that the above ratings were measured in households *which had been willing to pay for cable connections in the first place* and were thus more favourably disposed to additional television channels. As in most other large West European countries, they represented only a minuscule proportion of the audience.

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[94]Richard Collins, "The Language of Advantage: Satellite Television in Western Europe," *Media, Culture and Society*. Vol. 11, No. 3, 1989, Table 4.

[95]Only the movie-channel Premiere achieved relatively high audience ratings. The latter, however, targeted a primarily British audience and can thus be classified a domestic rather than pan-European programme provider.

[96]The exact breakdown for terrestrial channels is as follows: ITV: 36.7%; BBC 1: 25.1%; Channel 4: 4.8%; and BBC 2: 4.4%. See Collins, "Language of Advantage," Table 4.

Had pan-European channels been accessible to a cross-segment of the population, their ratings would likely have been significantly lower.

On the Continent

Outside the UK, the popularity of pan-European broadcasters was lower still: Even in countries with dense cable distribution and a high fluency rate in English (such as the Netherlands), the audience share of non-national broadcasters not only remained low but it even *declined* over time.

In the Netherlands, whose competency rate in English is 44% and thus among the highest in Europe,[97] Dutch terrestrial services received 78% of viewing time among those who had also access to satellite broadcasters in 1985, as opposed to 10% for satellite channels (not all of which were pan-European). The remainder of time was spent watching domestic services from neighboring countries, mainly from Germany and the UK. One year later, in contrast, the novelty value of non-national broadcasters had worn off, as only 7% of viewing time was still devoted to satellite television, while 84% was spent switched back to Dutch terrestrial services.[98] The fact that pan-European channels failed to divert the loyalty of Dutch viewers away from their national broadcasters demonstrated that "[anything] made in the Netherlands [has] always [been] very popular. Dutch products always draw more viewers than similar products from abroad."[99]

In larger European countries the popularity of pan-European channels was lower still. In Germany the viewing share in 1987 for all satellite channels combined was 30% among those who could receive them. But the lion's share of satellite view-

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[97]For statistics on language abilities in different European countries see Pam Mills, "An International Audience?" *Media, Culture and Society*, Vol. 7, No. 4, October 1985, Tables 2 and 3.

[98]Of all satellite channels available in the Netherlands, Sky Television conquered the lion's share of viewing, ranging from 6% to 8%. Collins, "Language of Advantage," pp. 359-360.

[99]Quoted in Collins, *Television*, p. 217.

ing was devoted to SAT-1 and RTL-Plus, two German-language channels which target a German-speaking audience in Germany, Austria and Switzerland and feature mainly imitations of US game-shows and low quality films.[100] Sky Television, in contrast, received only 2% of the viewing share whereas Super Channel secured only 1%.[101] In the 1988/89 period little had changed: German cable households spend 61% of their viewing time with German domestic broadcasters and a further 34% with German satellite services. Only 5% of all viewing time was devoted to foreign language broadcasters of which only a fraction benefitted non-national (as opposed to neighbouring domestic) channels.[102]

While it varied slightly from one country to the next, the popularity of Europe-wide broadcasters was equally low in France, Switzerland, Austria Italy, Spain, Portugal Belgium, Denmark and Greece.[103]

Towards the late 1980s, as cable penetration increased in some countries and satellite dishes became smaller and more affordable, Europeans devoted more time to viewing satellite broadcasts. In Germany, RTL-Plus and SAT-1 further augmented their audience share and became the most successful satellite broadcasters in Europe.[104] In France, Canal Plus (which is partially encrypted) and TF-1, a former pub-

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[100]Collins, "Language of Advantage," Table 3.

[101]Collins, "Language of Advantage," Table 3.

[102]Negrine et al., *Internationalization*, p. 160.

[103]Of all non-national broadcasters only the music channel MTV, which specialized in predominantly US-made music video clips, could boost some success among European viewers: Its aggregated viewership tripled between 1989 and 1990. MTV's success was particularly striking in Germany, where its viewership increased ninefold within the same year. That achievement, however, seems more modest if one considers that the channel's boost in absolute audience *share* (i.e. share of viewers actually watching it) was accompanied by an increase in its *penetration* (i.e. the number of households which had access to its signals) through a spread of cable connections and satellite dishes. Elena Bowes, "Europe's Satellite TV Viewers Soar," *Advertising Age*, Vol. 61, No. 38, Sept. 24, 1990, p. 39.

[104]"Satellite TV on the Rise in Europe," *Broadcasting*, August 21, 1989, p. 50.
    In parts of Germany, RTL-Plus is also transmitted through terrestrial means, which has further contributed to its success.

lic service channel privatized by the Chirac government,[105] could attain economic viability. All the above channels, however, had in common that they catered to a single language community; the popularity of pan-European channels remained so low that the expected "take-off phase," during which more viewers could have attracted more advertising funds which could have bought more attractive programmes which in turn would have further boosted audience ratings never set in.

PENETRATION OF PRIVATE SATELLITE DISHES AND CABLE

As suggested earlier, the audience ratings for pan-European channels provide an inflated account of their popularity. They pertain only to those viewers willing to obtain cable or satellite reception equipment in the first place, often at considerable expense, and were thus more receptive to additional channels than the average viewer.

Rather than merely examining the popularity of non-national broadcasters among those who *could* access their signals (which in countries with low cable and satellite dish penetration remained a small minority), the pace at which the infrastructure necessary to receive Europe-wide broadcasts (i.e. cable and satellite dishes) has spread depicts the popularity of non-national channels among European audiences more accurately.

Satellite Dishes

In markets with (1) a low fluency rate in foreign languages[106] (and thus little demand to watch domestic broadcasts transmitted from other countries via satellite); and (2) the absence of domestic broadcasters (or channels broadcasting in their own language) beamed through satellite, the desire to receive non-national channels is vir-

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[105]Since TF-1 is not transmitted through satellite, it does not qualify as a satellite channel. But its status is equal to that of satellite-diffused "domestic" broadcasters such as SAT-1 and RTL-Plus.

[106]For data on language abilities in Western Europe see below.

tually the only reason for viewers to obtain satellite dishes: In other words, the demand for the latter is nearly congruent with the desire to receive pan-European channels.

Throughout Western Europe, the penetration of private satellite dishes has remained low, despite the fact that their cost and size has declined sharply throughout the 1980s, and that many national governments have loosened restrictions on their ownership. By 1990, only 1.9% of all European households possessed a satellite dish, and even the most optimistic predictions foresee that by the year 1995, the number of satellite households will not have exceeded 11.2%.

Not surprisingly, countries which relatively low cable penetration rates tend to have a higher share of satellite households: In 1990, Britain topped the list with a satellite ownership rate of 7.2%, followed by Norway with 6.5%. As will be shown, however, cable and satellite penetration are not always inversely related: While Italy had a cable penetration rate of 0%, its share of satellite households was near zero, too.[107]

Cable

The figures pertaining to cable penetration are more difficult to interpret. Many countries which installed extensive cable systems during the 1970s did so *for reasons other than to receive pan-European broadcasters* which, at that time, had not yet come into being. Countries in the latter category share in common that they have (1) due to their small size and/or a fragmented domestic market a modest production capacity; and (2) either a shared language with one or more neighbouring states (as in Switzerland and Belgium) or a high competency rate in the language of a neighbour whose signals can be received through cable (as in the Netherlands).

In most larger predominantly monolingual countries with high domestic production capabilities and relatively low proficiency rates in foreign languages, in

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[107]Maggiore, *Audiovisual Production*, Table I.1.7.

contrast, the extent of cable penetration mirrors the demand for non-national broadcasts more accurately, as the incentive to watch neighbouring channels is much lower than it is in smaller states:

Following the above logic, cable penetration in 1990 was highest in those countries in which cable had been installed for *reasons other* than the reception of pan-European channels. In Belgium, 99.8% of all households were connected to cable,[108] followed by the Netherlands with 79% and Switzerland with 75%. In larger countries, however, cable penetration rates remained modest: In the western part of Germany only 22.3% of all households were hooked up to cable, despite efforts by the federal government and the German PTT to promote cable installations. In the UK, likewise, only 1.4% of all households had cable, notwithstanding the expectation of the Conservative government that deregulation would boost it. France did little better, with a cable penetration ratio of 1.4%. For Italy, no statistics were available for 1990, but cable penetration in that year likely resembled that of 1987 when it was close to zero. The forecasts for the growth of cable installations by 1995 are equally modest: In Britain it is not anticipated to exceed 7.1%; in France the projected percentage is 9.5%.[109] Only in Germany is the rate of cable penetration expected to rise to 56.1% due to massive financial commitments by the federal government.

In sum, the high degree of cable distribution in countries with small domestic production capabilities and high proficiency rates in the languages used by neighbouring countries, and the correspondingly low rate of cable penetration in countries with a large domestic market and a low fluency rate in foreign languages suggests that rather than blaming an underdeveloped technical infrastructure for the poor

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[108]Jay G. Blumler "Vulnerable Values at Stake," in Jay G. Blumler (ed.), *Television and the Public Interest: Vulnerable Values in West European Broadcasting*, (London: Sage Publications, 1992), Table 3.2.
The exact percentages for cable distribution vary somewhat between surveys, but these deviations are only within a few percentage points.

[109]See Maggiore, *Audiovisual Production*, Table I.2.3.

showing of pan-European broadcasters, the low demand by audiences throughout Europe to receive non-national channels is largely responsible for the slow development of infrastructure required to receive them. If audiences in Germany, France, Italy and the UK had been as keen to obtain the signals of pan-European broadcasters as had their counterparts in smaller countries (such as Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland) had been eager to access neighbouring domestic channels, the rate of cable development in the former would have resembled that in the latter, assuming that governments and/or cable companies in larger European democracies are no less responsive to popular demand than are those in smaller ones. The sluggish development of the infrastructure necessary to receive the signals of pan-European broadcasters is therefore another sign for their low popularity.

THE DECLINE OF PAN-EUROPEAN CHANNELS

By the late 1980s, Europa TV was not the only pan-European broadcaster which had faltered: Due to a combination of low reach and low audience appeal, the two major commercially operated pan-European television channels had failed to attain economic viability.[110] In 1989, Super Channel lost 1 million Pounds per month with little prospect for improvement.[111] Its major competitor fared equally poorly: By 1990, Sky Television had lost the equivalent of 600 million dollars (US)[112] with little chances of attaining a sufficiently large audience to survive as a pan-European channel in the long run.

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[110]If one combines the above statistics on audience share on the one hand, and cable and satellite dish penetration on the other hand, the failure of pan-European broadcasters looks dismal indeed. In the UK for example, Super channel received an audience rating of 1.5%, but only among a total potential audience (i.e. cable plus satellite households) comprising less than a tenth of the population (thus less than 6 million people had access to cable or satellite television). In other words, Super Channel scored not more than 0.15% of all viewing time combined.

[111]Collins, "Language of Advantage," p. 364.

[112]Noam, *Television in Europe*, p. 142.

Consequently, both broadcasters have relinquished most of their pan-European aspirations and now target a primarily British audience. Although Super Channel is still carried on most European cable systems, it has closed its advertising sales offices on the Continent.[113] The Swiss-based European Business Channel, which had started operations in 1988 and specialized in providing financial news, encountered an even harsher fate: In 1990, large financial losses forced it to close down permanently.[114]

In sum, neither the efforts of the EC to help set up a non-national channel in the form of Europa TV, nor the reliance on technical and economic drives towards transnationalisation brought about the effect the EC had anticipated and hoped for. While the advent of satellite television and new technologies "undoubtedly provoked changes in viewing behaviour, ... these are best understood within the terms of national or, strictly, linguistic markets. The transnationalisation of television, dissolution of national identities ... have yet to be realized. ... The future of satellite television

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[113]Collins, *Television*, p. 69. A lack of advertising revenues was the immediate cause for the faltering of commercially operated pan-European broadcasters. Despite expectations that the availability of pan-European advertising outlets (in the form of pan-European channels) would entice advertisers to disperse their messages Europe-wide and notwithstanding predictions that the creation of a common European market would homogenize the tastes and preferences of Europeans sufficiently so as to lower the need to maintain differentiated product lines and tailor advertising campaigns to national or regional markets, the evolution of a common European advertising market has been sluggish. As consumer preferences continued to diverge from one country to the next, the number of "European products" (i.e. identical goods that sell under the same name throughout Europe) remained low: Of over 2000 products distributed by the multinational Unilever corporation in Western Europe, for example, only 20 are distributed under the same label. As producers continue to tailor their product lines and advertising campaigns to national and/or monolingual markets, they choose national over pan-European advertising outlets. Consequently "we seem ... to be experiencing a form of revisionism among the advertisers .... in their retrenchment to strategies more closely adopted the linguistic divisions across the continent." See Petra Höfer, "Advertising in the Euro-market," *World Press Review*, September 1991; Noam, *Television in Europe*, p. 300; Moreley et al., "Spaces of Identity," p. 28.

[114]Noam, *Television in Europe*, p. 193.

is conditional on the nature of national (or monolingual) markets rather than a transnational European market."[115]

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[115]Collins, *Television*, p. 71. The trend observed in the area of television was replicated in the print-media sector as well: Apart from a few elite publications such as the *Economist* and *Le Monde*, the circulation of journals and newspapers across European frontiers has remained modest and largely follows the pattern of television signals: Small countries which limited domestic production capabilities import a relatively large amount of print material from neighboring countries with which they share a common language. For Europe as a whole, however, the transnational circulation of print-material is small. In the early 1980s The *Economist* sold 31,100 copies in 15 European countries, compared to 68.600 in Britain where it is published. The international edition of the French-based weekly *L'Express* sold 60.800 copies in 15 European countries as opposed to 545.000 copies at home. Likewise, UK-based *Women's Weekly* sold 17% of its copies outside Britain, while German-based *Burda Moden* made 28% of its sales abroad. These numbers are heavily skewed as they include the purchases by tourists and foreign residents of publications originating in their home countries. The only weekly specifically targeted at a pan-European audience, *The European* launched by the Maxwell group, experienced the same fate as did pan-European channels: Due to a lack of readers, it teeters along the edge of bankruptcy. Ironically, the European edition of *Time* outdistanced all its European competitors by selling 400.000 copies in 16 European countries. See Claude-Jean Bertrand and Miguel Urabayen, "European Mass Media in the 1980s," in Everett M. Rogers and Francis Balle (eds.), *The Media Revolution in America and Western Europe*, (Norwood: Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1985), p. 41.

WHY DID PAN-EUROPEAN TELEVISION FAIL AND WHAT ARE THE
PROSPECTS FOR A REVERSAL OF ITS FORTUNE?

WHAT MADE IT FAIL?

Before pondering the significance of the failure of pan-European television for
the EC's cultural ambitions, it is worth exploring the reasons for why it did not suc-
ceed. They can be separated into cultural, linguistic and political obstacles.

Cultural Barriers

The claim that cultural barriers have contributed to the failure of pan-Euro-
pean television amounts to somewhat of a truism. After all, if it had not been for pre-
vailing cultural differences - i.e. if Europeans had been assimilated already - there
would have been little point in the EC's cultural initiatives in the first place. At any
rate, the demise of pan-European broadcasting suggests that its promoters un-
derestimated the resistance of cultural obstacles and, conversely, that they had too
much faith in the ability of television to help ensure its own viability by contributing
to the cultural assimilation of its viewers.

Audiences are often reluctant to accept programmes either produced for a for-
eign market or, in case of many programmes shown by Europe-wide broadcasters,
created in a "generic" and denationalized format so as to appeal to an international
audience. Such resistance led to the concept of "cultural discount" to illustrate how "a
particular programme, rooted in the culture, and thus attractive in that environment,
will have diminished appeal elsewhere, as viewers find it difficult to identity with the
style, values, beliefs, institutions and behavioural pattern of the material in ques-
tion."[116]

Because of cultural barriers, Europa TV's endeavour to provide its audience
with a non-national perspective carried little appeal; viewers found it hard to relate to
a reporting style which was deliberately removed from national contexts and even

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[116]Quoted in Moreley et al., "Spaces of Identity," p. 27.

journalists "tended to retain their national point of view, and the news style was not homogeneous."[117]

Linguistic Obstacles

Although linguistic obstacles were not the only impediments to the success of pan-European programmes (as is demonstrated by the low popularity of pan-European television in markets with a high fluency rate in English such as Britain and the Netherlands), a short glance at the language abilities of West Europeans reveals that the linguistic obstacles faced by pan-European broadcasters are substantial indeed:

Most West Europeans are not bilingual and they lack a *lingua franca*. Instead, French, English, German and Italian can claim roughly comparable numbers of native

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[117]Maggiore, *Audiovisual Production*, p. 71.

It is difficult to establish why cultural screens pose less of an obstacle for some kinds of programmes than for others, and why resistance by English as well as non-English speaking European audiences to imports from other European countries is often higher than for material produced in the United States; indeed, some have argued that US producers have come closer developing a pan-European format than any country in Europe. Conventional explanations trace the popularity of American programmes to the American "invention of a cultural form that is the closest to transnational acceptability of any yet contrived." In many instances, American imports have had a much longer time of exposure among European audiences than those from other European states. Instead of providing a satisfactory answer, however, such explanations merely describe the symptom as they fail to explain why American cultural imports found such a degree of acceptance in the first place.

More convincing reasoning focuses on the strength and relative diversity of the US domestic market which allows for the production of more attractive programmes and, at the same time, forces US producers to make programmes which carry the widest possible cross-cultural mass appeal. Still other explanations emphasize the attraction American cultural imports have traditionally exercised for European working class audiences which preferred US entertainment to the "elitist" and "educational" fare offered by domestic producers.

Even the popularity of American imports, however, has often been overestimated, nourishing rhetoric by national governments and later by the EC as to an alleged need to repel an "American flood:" In 1983, US imports represented the single largest share of programming imports in Europe, but since all imports combined - counted for only 30% of over-all programming, US imports made up for not more than 10% of total transmission time. Overall, European audiences continue to prefer nationally produced programmes above foreign productions, even if they come from the US. See Collins, *Television*, p. 215; Colin Hoskins and Rolf Mirus, "Reasons for the US Dominance of the International Trade in Television Programmes," *Media, Culture and Society*, Vol. 10, No. 4, October 1988; Moreley et al., "Spaces of Identity;" Tracy, "Popular Culture," p. 11.

speakers in Europe (although German has a substantial lead). English, however, dominates as a second language which explains why all Europe-wide channels to date (except Europa TV and Euronews which embraced a multilingual format) have adopted English as their primary language of operation.[118]

While 88% of the inhabitants of Luxembourg can understand a television programme in a language other than Luxembourgese, 60% of Dutch viewers can comprehend broadcasts in a language other than Dutch.[119] The percentage of the population able to understand more than one language is also high in the multilingual countries of Belgium and Switzerland. In larger European countries, however, language capabilities are more modest: In Germany, only 20% of the population have sufficient knowledge of a second language to understand a foreign television programme. In France, the ratio is 26%, while it is 19% in the UK and 17% in Italy.[120]

Whereas the above figures pertain to proficiency in *any* second language, the proportion of Europeans able to understand English, the *lingua franca* of all non-na-

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[118]English is the most widely understood second language as 45% of all West Europeans living in the EC and EFTA member states speak English either as their first or as a second language. French and German follow with 31% each, and Italian trails with 19%). *Reader's Digest Eurodata - Executive Summary*, (New York: The Reader's Digest Association, 1991), p. 12.

[119]Mills, "International Audience?" Table 2.

[120]Mills, "International Audience?" Table 2. The percentages of language proficiency vary between sources, depending on the criteria of measurement. *Reader's Digest Eurodata* indicates that knowledge of English is generally higher (e.g. 58% for Norway, 44% for Germany, 31% for France). See *Reader's Digest Eurodata*, p. 12.
  Not surprisingly, knowledge of a second language is, on average, higher among more educated Europeans as compared to the population as a whole: In France, 56% of the more educated population can follow a foreign language programme, as compared to 26% of the population combined. In the UK, the gap between total population and more educated segments is 27%, followed by Germany with 23% and Italy with 22%. For pan-European television channels, the correlation between education level and language proficiency is of ambiguous value: on the one hand it may be to their detriment as television consumption tends to be inversely related to education level; on the other hand, better educated segments of the population wield, on average, higher disposable incomes. As advertising rates are determined not only by the size of a channel's audience but also by their ability to spend, having a multilingual (and wealthier) audience may therefore come to a channel's economic benefit.

tional channels to date, is lower still: Norway is the only non-anglophone country in Europe where knowledge of English spans, with 52%, more than half of the population. Denmark and the Netherlands follow with 44% each while Sweden has 40%. Among the larger West European countries, Germany leads with an English competency rate of 19%, followed by France with 10%, Spain with 6% and Italy with 2%.[121]

As discussed earlier the EC has sponsored initiatives to overcome language barriers in broadcasting through simultaneous translations schemes and it is possible to have multilingual soundtracks accompany the same visual image. Moreover, pan-European broadcasters have recognized linguistic obstacles and specialized in types of programming in which visual components overshadow linguistic ones (such as sports and music). In its press package, Super Channel promised that it would "[take] into account that most viewers are not native English speakers. Presenters speak clearly, comedies and documentaries are selected for their visual content while music and sports programmes have a universal appeal."[122]

Such solutions, however, have not compensated for the absence of a commonly understood language, as was demonstrated by the low appeal of Europa TV's simultaneous translation services and by the fact that the need to lower language barriers by deemphasising linguistic elements has imposed severe limitations on the type and quality of programming international channels can hope to specialize in. While programming subjects such as music, sports and pornography are more suitable for consumption by multilingual audiences for they do not rely heavily on linguistic elements, most other areas of specialization require a degree of language proficiency which, in most parts of Europe, does not exist.[123]

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[121]Mills, "International Audience?" Table 3.

[122]Quoted in Collins, "Language of Advantage," p. 365.

[123]But even those viewers who have mastered the language of a foreign "thematic" subscription channel are less likely to subscribe to it than if the channel

Resistance by National Governments

Cultural and linguistic obstacles were not the only factors which inhibited the success of pan-European television. It was further hampered by the fervent resistance of some national governments against the EC's cultural policies in general, and its television initiatives in particular. As will be argued, their refusal to abandon their role as audio-visual "gatekeepers" denoted their apprehension towards the EC's use of television as a cultural instrument.

First, European governments raised the costs of entry and operation for non-national channels by curbing competition in the satellite market. For example, when a U.S.- Luxembourgian consortium (Coronet) sought to launch its own satellite, undermining the *de facto* monopoly held by the PTT controlled European Telecommunications Satellite Organization (Eutelsat), some European governments lobbied against what the French minister in charge denounced as the "Coca Cola satellite" undermining "our linguistic and cultural identity."[124] Eventually, French pressure became so strong that Luxembourg was forced to abandon its joint venture with a non-European partner. Such resistance occurred despite the fact that some of the transponders of the new satellite would likely have been leased out to *European* channels and that the resulting competition in the satellite market would likely have forced Eutelsat to lower its transmission rates, possibly inducing new pan-European channels to enter the market.[125]

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aired in their first language. Their decision as to whether to subscribe is determined by two counteracting forces: On the one hand, if the channel's field of specialization appeals to them, and if no channel of equal or similar specialization is available in their first language, they will be tempted to subscribe. On the other hand, the "thematic advantage" of the channel in question is partially offset by the "linguistic discount" attached to it (i.e. the depreciation of audience appeal it experiences by not broadcasting in the viewer's first and preferred language). Whether a potential subscriber will pay to receive the signal depends on factors such as the availability of substitute channels in his or her first language and the cost of subscription.

[124]Quoted in Noam, *Television in Europe*, p. 302.

[125]Some governments also obstructed the emergence of pan-European television channels by occupying scarce satellite frequencies for their own "cultural channels," such as France's La Sept and the German-language 3-Sat, (a joint project of

Second, some cable companies (which are mostly operated by government-owned PTTs or otherwise subject to strict government supervision) extract "carriage fees" from foreign broadcasters. In Wallonia, for example, foreign channels are required to contribute BFr. 10 million for each 100,000 viewers they reach. These revenues are then used to subsidize the local film industry. A similar rule was instituted in Flanders. The Belgian levies were imposed despite a ruling of the European Commission which declared them illegal.[126] The Netherlands had in place another form of "broadcast toll;" it required pan-European broadcasters to locate some of their production facilities to the Netherlands in exchange for gaining access to local cable systems.

Finally, many governments discouraged the operation of private satellite dishes by charging "licence fees" to their owners and by imposing arbitrary technical norms on satellite reception and decoding equipment.[127]

Such efforts by national governments to circumvent the spirit and often the letter of the TWF-Directive disadvantaged pan-European channels by rendering their operations more expensive, thereby diverting resources they could otherwise have used to offer more attractive programming and possibly lure more viewers.[128] By doing so, they helped prevent non-national broadcasters from experiencing a "take-off" phase during which more viewers could have attracted more advertising funds

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German, Swiss and Austrian public service broadcasters). Besides a reputation for esoteric content and minimal audience appeal (3-Sat became famous for its week-long coverages of poetry conventions), these channels have in common that they occupy scarce satellite transponders that would otherwise be available to pan-European broadcasters.

[126]Noam, *Television in Europe*, p. 182.

[127]Many of these impediments, however, were gradually relaxed throughout the 1980s.

[128]The fact that most countries prohibited private companies from competing with national PTTs in uplinking a channel's signals to the satellite provided a further barrier of entry for potential pan-European channels. So far, only the UK has introduced competition in this field, which is a major reason for why even non-English language "regional" satellite channels are headquartered in Britain. See Collins, "Language of Advantage."

which could have bought more attractive programmes which in turn would have boosted audience ratings. Moreover, measures which curtailed the *reception* of pan-European channels, (i.e. charging licence fees to owners of satellite dishes), reduced their chances of compensating for their lack of audience *share* by reaching more potential viewers, thus diluting the economic and technical thrusts towards Europeanization discussed earlier.

Besides obstructing the implementation of the EC's television projects, national governments also ensured that their financial backing remained modest. Whereas the supranational Commission pursued its cultural ambitions with great eagerness, the European Council and the Council of Ministers, forced to accommodate the staunch resistance by some members (most frequently the UK and Denmark) to any form of cultural expenditures by the EC, often diluted the Community's cultural projects or blocked them altogether. As a result, the EC's audiovisual initiatives remained underfunded compared to the financial backing enjoyed by domestic audiovisual industries and public service channels. For example, the complete operating budged of Euronews (which will be discussed below) is 50 million ECU - a fraction of the billions in licence revenues which accrue to public service broadcasters in Britain, Germany and France on an annual basis.

COULD PAN-EUROPEAN TELEVISION COME TO BE WATCHED?
Prospects for Overcoming Language Barriers

Having explored why pan-European television fared so poorly, it is time to investigate the chances for a reversal of its fortunes. Before considering the potential for a lowering of cultural barriers, I will focus on the prospects for linguistic and political obstacles to recede.

Language barriers, it was noted, are difficult to overcome. The EC has initiated several programmes to encourage language learning within the Community (such as the Lingua programme). Just as its television initiatives, however, these pro-

grammes encountered resistance by some member states and have so far remained relatively modest in scope. At any rate, their impact could only become tangible in the long run. If pan-European channels want to attract a larger audience in the foreseeable future, they will thus have to improve the quality of their translation techniques.

An example of what may well prove a more successful strategy of luring multilingual audiences is represented by Euronews, the latest pan-European television project supported by the EC. Headquartered in Lyon and operated by (mostly public) broadcasters from Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, France, Belgium, Finland, Monaco, Cyprus and Egypt, Euronews reaches a potential audience of more than 40 million households through satellite and cable.[129]

Euronews's chances of survival look more promising than that of its predecessors for it seeks to avoid many of the mistakes which led to the downfall of Europa TV and which hampered the pan-European ambitions of commercial broadcasters. For one, rather than repeating Europa TV's failed strategy of seeking to cover national events from an elusive "European point of view," Euronews limits itself primarily to featuring original productions contributed by participating broadcasters which are dubbed in each of the channel's languages. Own productions are aired only if they pertain to the coverage of European institutions.

Second, Euronews refrains from using simultaneous translation techniques i.e. it does not show the same visual image accompanied simultaneously by different audio channels. Instead, programmes are produced separately for each language. This eliminates the discrepancy between visual and acoustic images that had proven so unpopular with Europa TV and adds a "national feel" to Euronews's emissions.

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[129]It has a budget of 50 million ECU of which about 20% is to be provided by the European Community, 55% from participating broadcasters, 25% from advertising and sponsoring. It broadcasts 20 hours a day in English, French, German, Spanish and Italian. At a later date Euronews is also expected to begin broadcasting in Arabic. See "'Euronews' Gestartet," Neue Zürcher Zeitung, January 8, 1993, p. 23.

Chances of a Lowering of Political Barriers

In the political realm, too, many obstacles which spoiled earlier attempts to establish pan-European television channels are likely to recede. First, with the continued expansion of supranational structures and the corresponding decrease in powers by national governments, the latter are bound to lose much of their former capacity to undermine the implementation of the EC's cultural initiatives. Thus, their ability to act as cultural "gatekeepers" and "shield" their populations against Brussels's cultural measures is bound to decline.

Second, a tipping of the balance of power between the (supranational) Commission and the European Parliament on the one hand, and the (multilateral) European Council and the Council of Ministers on the other hand in favour of the former would likely enable the Commission and/or an invigorated European Parliament to channel more resources into the "cultural sector." Such a tendency could become reinforced if the EC adhered to the principle of a "two-track" strategy of integration contrived in the context of the Maastricht Treaty and its aftermath: While granting reluctant members such as Denmark and the UK further opting out provisions, this would also weaken the opposition of the two members most skeptical towards the EC's cultural policies and clear the way for Brussels to impose its cultural ambitions all the more vividly on those member states which remained on the "fast track."

Regarding television the EC could, for example, attempt to come to the aid of pan-European broadcasters by pressuring national governments to provide for their transmission through terrestrial means in addition to cable and/or satellite distribution (thereby increasing their audience reach). This is the case with Arte, a bilingual Franco-German "culture channel" whose signals are transmitted terrestrially in France.[130]

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[130]Hervé Michel and Anne-Laure Angoulvent, *Les Télévisions En Europe,* (Paris: Presse Universitaires de France, 1992), p. 39.

In sum, judging the potential of pan-European television to find an audience in the future would require one to isolate the contributions of cultural and linguistic barriers from the significance of political obstacles. Since it is possible that the reduction of political impediments (which would express itself, for example, in better funding) and an improvement in translation techniques could enhance the attractiveness of pan-European channels even if cultural and linguistic obstacles remained initially the same, it is appropriate to enquire into the potential ability of television to assimilate and, by extension strengthen the "identitive power" of the European Community *if it were to find an audience.*

WHAT IF PAN-EUROPEAN TELEVISION FOUND AN AUDIENCE?

This section will examine two questions. First, if pan-European television itself came to attract larger audiences, would it further the cause cultural integration as is presumed by the European Community? Second, if such a gradual cultural homogenization were to transpire, would it strengthen loyalties to and identification with pan-European institutions?

Evaluating the potential of pan-European television to assimilate Europeans requires above all a separation of cause and effect: While the EC values the medium for its alleged ability to lower cultural barriers, a scenario in which it came to be watched more widely would also seem to indicate that cultural barriers already *had* been reduced. As was suggested, however, other factors such as better funding and more sophisticated translation techniques could enhance the attractiveness of pan-European channels in the short run - even in the absence of an *a priori* lowering of cultural or linguistic barriers.

Little is known how widespread exposure to cultural imports in general and television programmes in particular affect the cultural identifications and loyalties of those exposed to them. While it is clear that mass-media can be consumed oppositionally, i.e. that the stimulus-response model advanced by earlier communication- and integration models is inadequate, it is also evident that exposure to media imports does not always result in a "boomerang effect:" A large share of American imports hardly triggered a rise in widespread anti-American sentiments.

Different explanations were advanced to account for such varying possible outcomes: Karl W. Deutsch, as was argued, focuses on the transaction-integration balance; others (e.g. Connor)[131] hold the *pace* at which a strategy of assimilation is pursued as the determining factor: The slower and more unnoticeable a strategy of ethnic homogenization is implemented, the likelier is it to achieve its goal without provoking backlashes which lead to increased differentiation rather than assimilation.

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[131]See Connor, "Nation-Building."

Finally, if one conceives of integration as a primarily elite-driven process, or if one adheres to the notion that mass-attitudes towards integration are ultimately shaped by elite preferences, one would have to evaluate the impact of pan-European television on the formation of elite attitudes regarding the EC.

In order to relate these models to the possible impact of transnational television in Europe, one would have to identify the impact of the medium on the transaction-integration balance and the over-all volume of interaction. Moreover, it would likely depend on a multitude of other exogenous variables - such as the strength of cultural affinities, the pertinence of shared historical memories prone to become "reactivated" and so forth.

It is on the latter count that the prospects for pan-European television to succeed in its cultural mission appear more doubtful still. As Anthony Smith points out, the task facing the European Community is not comparable to that of governments in multi-ethnic states which seek to assimilate diverging ethnic groups into an *already existing* dominant culture. Instead, the emergence of a pan-European identity would require the merger of diverging national cultures into a larger whole.

The paradoxes arising from the attempt to "create" a denationalized pan-European culture, however, resemble those that confront the emergence of any culture not anchored in a specific national context: The latter "must be consciously, even artificially constructed out of the elements of existing national cultures. But existing national cultures are time-bound, particular and expressive. They are tied to specific peoples, places and periods. They are bound up with definite historical identities. These features are essentially antithetical to the very nature of a truly cosmopolitan culture."[132]

The difficulty which stands in the way of the EC's cultural ambitions, then, is that appeals to a medieval heritage as a basis for a shared nation-transcending iden-

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[132]Smith, "National Identity," pp. 66-67.

tity could not compensate for the lack of unifying myths and experiences on which such an identity would have to ground. The legacy of a few decades of a common market, preceded by generations of fervently pursued national differentiation, have not furnished a basis which could sustain the EC's cultural ambitions. As the Community lacks "a pre-modern past - a 'prehistory' which can provide it with emotional sustenance and historical depth" it has not been able to "combine 'affect with interest.'"[133] In this sense, the wanting appeal of pan-European television is but one illustration that, despite the "absurd spectacle of a retreat to the middle ages for a coherent vision of European identity,"[134] a pan-European culture, apt to rival and eventually supersede those that have emerged in a national context has remained an elusive concept.

The second possibility to consider is that even if the EC *could* manage to assimilate Europeans in terms of eradicating tangible criteria of differentiation such as language, religion, customs and consumption patterns through television and other means (for example by using television as a tool to influence elite attitudes which in turn would gradually reflect onto a consciousness-level of a wider population), the emergence of increased cultural conformity could be accompanied by rising instead of declining ethnic anxieties.

As was argued, the eradication of discernible criteria of ethnic differentiation does not necessarily stimulate increased identification with and loyalty shifts towards supra-national institutions. Even where differences in language and/or customs have largely disappeared - and where assimilation thus seems to have taken hold - nationalist sentiments often resurfaced nevertheless (i.e. Scotland).

What engenders a re-creation of ethnic identities in the absence of tangible criteria of differentiation is not clear. While some writers focus on the distribution of

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[133]Smith, "National Identity," p. 62.

[134]Collins, *Television*, p. 219.

economic resources and the potential for emerging elite rivalries, others emphasize psychological factors.[135] At any rate, as is the case with the claim that increased communication would inevitably lead to heightened assimilation, there is little to suggest that a culturally homogenized Europe would automatically be a politically more stable one; even if European television programmes came to be watched by large segments of the population, and even if this led in the long term to a gradual homogenization of consumption patterns, customs and - in the very distant future - even language, it is far from certain whether the Community itself would experience an increase in its "identitive power" as a result.[136]

Having proposed that the possible benefits of the EC's cultural policies are uncertain at best, it is worth exploring whether the risks they entail could be greater than their potential rewards.

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[135]See Newman, "Does Modernization Breed Ethnic Political Conflict?"

[136]Conversely, of course, the Swiss model suggests that supra-ethnic institutions can acquire a high "identitive power" under conditions where assimilation has not only been absent but even *discouraged*. This weakens Brussels's contention that some measure of cultural integration is indispensable to secure the persistence of European Unification in its economic and political dimension.

THE DANGERS OF THE EC'S CULTURAL POLICIES

Whereas the potential of pan-European television to find a viewership and assimilate Europeans is hard to estimate for it depends on a multitude of exogenous variables, evaluating the impact of the EC's cultural policies in general and its television initiatives in particular on popular attitudes towards European unification faces similar obstacles. To some degree, the shift in public opinion described below could have been caused by heightened awareness of the existence and the significance of the European Community in the wake of the publicity generated by the Single European Act and Maastricht.

Moreover, establishing a link between the EC's cultural ambitions and its standing in popular opinion is rendered difficult because some of the Community's most controversial "cultural policies" were not devised for the "cultural sector" at all. The proposal to create a common currency, for example, became disputed not only because of its economic relevance but due to the emotional attachment felt towards the national currency in many member states. Likewise, Brussels's fondness for standardizing national norms into "Euronorms" was, although motivated by economic considerations, often perceived to aim at the heart of "national culture."

Political, economic and cultural policies are thus often hard to separate; the EC's cultural policies cannot be treated in isolation to its economic and political actions. Even if the EC renounced all its cultural ambitions as they relate to the strictly defined "cultural sector," European integration would in many regards remain a cultural undertaking; some apprehensions would prevail.

Despite these qualifications there is little doubt that the EC's cultural aspirations - in the broad sense of the term - did not reflect well on popular attitudes towards it: As the EC became more visible and outspoken on its ambitions to complement economic integration with a "cultural dimension," (a desire of which its television initiatives were but one manifestation) it triggered increasing apprehensions and

experienced a decline in its popular standing.[137] Such tendencies manifested themselves in two ways:

First, as many national governments undermined the EC's cultural initiatives with great fervour and ingenuity (as was demonstrated, for example, by their resistance against Brussels's television policies) they not only acted as "cultural shields" which reduced the exposure of their subjects to the Community's cultural measures. Such governmental resistance must also be understood as an *expression* of broader popular anxieties towards the EC's cultural aspirations. Indeed, it is unlikely that governmental obstructionism could have been sustained had it not reflected deeper apprehensions on a popular level.

In the case of Denmark, governmental opposition towards the EC's cultural policies proved to reflect popular attitudes towards the Community accurately. After the Danish government had voted against the TWF-Directive on grounds that cultural affairs should remain off-limits to the EC, similar anxieties played a major role in leading Danish voters to reject the Maastricht Treaty some three years later. The same congruence between popular attitudes and governmental behaviour can be observed in the UK.[138]

Second, growing popular resentments towards the EC also expressed themselves directly: Beginning in the mid-1980s, the Community's standing in opinion polls began to decrease.

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[137]There is evidence that many Community-citizens are capable of differentiating the functions they wish the EC to assume from those which they want to see fall under the jurisdiction of national governments. While 78% want the EC to be in charge of cooperation with developing countries, 73% of science and technology and 69% of environmental protection, only 41% want Brussels to be involved in broadcast and press regulation and only 34% in education policy. *Eurobarometer*, No. 36, December 1991, pp. 28-31.

[138]In France, by contrast, popular resistance against Maastricht was more surprising. The French government had often been at the forefront of promoting and defending the EC's cultural ambitions. In Germany, too, a generally approving stance at the governmental level towards the EC's cultural ambitions contrasts with rising popular skepticism regarding the EC.

As late as 1988, 85% of Community citizens responded positively to the question "[a]re you in general for or against efforts being made to unify Western Europe."[139] In Germany, it were 73%, in Italy 83% and 58% in the UK. But between 1983 and 1988, the popularity of the EC had already begun to stagnate on average: While support had been up from 5 years previously in France and Italy, it had declined in Germany and Britain.

Whereas in 1988 the perception of *European integration in general* was relatively favourable, opinion of the EC itself was significantly lower. In France, 48% of the population indicated that they would feel either "indifferent" or even "relieved" if they were "told tomorrow that the European Community ... had been scrapped." The numbers were similar in West Germany (52%) and Italy (49%). They were highest in the UK where 76% wouldn't have mourned the EC's demise.[140]

As skepticism towards the European Community rose, so did the conviction that it would threaten one's national identity. In 1990 26% of Germans feared their "germanness" threatened by the European Community; two years later, 47% had become anxious.[141] An increase in the proportion of those who sense European integration and national identity as incompatible was registered throughout the Community. As early as between 1987 and 1988, the percentage of Europeans who feared that if "one day the countries of Europe were really united, this would mark the end of our national historic, cultural identity ..." increased, while the share of those who

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[139]Joseph I. H. Janssen, "Postmaterialism, Cognitive Mobilization and Public Support for European Integration," *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 21, page 450.

[140]Janssen, "Postmaterialism," page 451.
Some of the discrepancies between support for European integration in general and the European Community in particular can be explained with widespread ignorance regarding the EC and its functions. But they nevertheless indicate that while public support for European integration *per se* remained relatively high, regard for the European Community itself declined on average from the late 1980s onwards; not all opposition against the EC derived from a rejection of European integration in general.

[141]Dieter Wild, "Europa Patria," *Der Spiegel*, Vol. 46, No. 44, October 26, 1992, p. 36.

purported that the "only way of protecting our national historic cultural identities ... is for the countries of Europe to [become] truly united" diminished during the same period.[142]

While the EC's cultural ambitions caused anxieties and lowered its standing in popular opinion, there is no evidence that either pan-European television or any other cultural initiative succeeded in instilling a "European consciousness" into the citizens of the Community. When asked in 1988 "[does] it ever occur to you that you are not only (nationality) but also a European?" only 16% answered that they "often" considered themselves European while 44% "never" felt that way. Since 1988 these numbers have remained relatively constant. In 1989, 14% felt European often, compared to 15% in 1990 and 16% in 1991.[143] Whereas the share of "Europeans" in 1991 was highest in Spain (24%), France (21%) and Germany (20%) they were rarest in Britain where only 11% felt European "often" while 69% "never" did so.

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[142]*Eurobarometer*, No. 29, June 1988, p. 10.

[143]*Eurobarometer* No. 33, June 1990, p. 2; Eurobarometer No. 36, December 1991, p. A 27.

THE CONSOCIATIONAL MODEL AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE EC'S
CULTURAL POLICIES TO DATE

The uncertain foundations of the EC's cultural policies and their potentially damaging impact provide the backdrop for exploring the consociational model as an alternative to the strategy of cultural Europeanization which the EC has pursued so far. As it turns out, subjecting the EC to consociational principles would entail more than the reversal of the Brussels's cultural policies as such; it would also impact on how the Community came to be contrived in the political and economic realms.

As was argued earlier, the consociational model differs from earlier integration approaches in that it considers a high extent of economic integration compatible with an equally high degree of cultural separation. The granting of cultural autonomy to the national communities affected by the unification process sustains their readiness to participate in the maintenance of integrated economic and political structures, and assimilative pressures resulting from increased economic integration can be reduced if each ethnic segment is granted a high degree of cultural autonomy and if the cultural homogeneity within each ethnic group's territory is protected through rigid and largely impermeable cultural boundaries.

If the EC adopted a consociational strategy, it would thus above all entail the pursuit of policies aimed at strengthening rather than eroding the cultural autonomy of its member states. Concretely, it would require the following measures:

First, the EC would exempt all goods and services which fall into the "cultural sector" from its free trade provisions. National (or subnational) governments would be allowed to subsidize and otherwise promote national cultural "industries" at their pleasure, and they would retain the authority to restrict the inflow of "cultural imports," including foreign television programmes, in any way they saw fit.

Second, a consociational strategy would mandate the territorialization of all matters relating to language and culture. As have Swiss cantons, nation-states would retain exclusive jurisdiction in determining the extent of cultural pluralism encouraged on their territory (a power which they could in turn delegate to their ethnic sub-

units). As long as these decisions conformed to basic norms of human rights and freedom of expression (i.e. the European Human Rights Convention), they would not be subject to overrule by supranational political or judicial bodies.

The only conceivable exception to the Community's ban from entering the cultural realm would enable the EC to aid minority cultures in danger of bowing to the assimilatory pressures that occur as a byproduct of economic integration. Such aid would preferably be given indirectly i.e. channeled via state or regional governments which would then determine their ultimate allocation (for example to national or subnational television channels). This could preempt the impression that the EC used the pretext of backing minority cultures to pursue cultural ambitions on a grander scale (as was the case with the MEDIA programme).

As the cultural realm interacts with the political and economic fields, adopting a consociational strategy would have effects beyond the narrowly defined "cultural sector;" it would impact on how the Community came to be constituted in its political and economic dimensions:

First, a consociational Community would be an inconspicuous one: Rather than seeking to strengthen its "identitive power" by assuming a high visibility and entering the lives and consciousness of as many Community-citizens as often as possible - be it through European commemorative days, flags, anthems or television channels - European institutions would seek to act discreetly so as to not interfere with the role of national governments as the primary units of political identification for their citizens. To the same end, they would execute their powers mainly *through* national or sub-national governments rather than parallel to them.

While a consociational EC would hence abstain from pursuing policies aimed at enhancing its "identitive" power, this would not preclude the emergence of shared symbols. The Swiss example illustrates that common political and economic institutions can come to draw affective loyalties and acquire "symbolic value" even if they remain limited in scope, assume a low visibility and are organized around the

principle of cultural separation. As they are drawing affective loyalties, such institutions can become associated with derived symbols such as flags, anthems, rituals and memorial days.

The utility of shared symbols in the European Community, however, is conditional on two factors. For one, the degree to which they could strengthen cohesion among different national communities depends on their *complementarity* to national identities, i.e. that they not be perceived as threatening. Furthermore, for shared symbols to acquire the status as broadly accepted (rather than merely designated) symbols in the first place, they must emerge parallel to and in step with the deepening of integrative structures; as was argued earlier, they must be embedded in a context which provides them with significance and meaning. Attempting to "create" and disperse symbols "from above" - be it through television or other means - in the hope that political and economic integration will automatically benefit as a result would thus be to put the cart before the horse; in order to be "effective," European symbols would have to arise parallel to the political and economic structures for which they stand.

Second, a shift in the balance of power away from the (multilateral) European Council and the Council of Ministers to the (supranational) European Commission and/or an invigorated European Parliament would only be permissible if it strengthened the latter's competences in securing the free flow of goods and services and in enforcing compliance with other Community provisions pertaining to the economic realm. Likewise, the assurance of a mutual veto to each member state - as opposed to majority (or qualified majority) rule - would help minimize national anxieties of being "ruled by Brussels" as well as fears by smaller members of domination by larger ones.

It flows that modeling the Community's governing structures more closely after those of the nation-state (e.g. by instituting the office of a popularly elected European prime minister or president) would be incompatible with the consociational imperative of consensus rule and low visibility for supranational institutions. Moreover, the emergence of an over-arching political culture required in such an under-

taking (e.g. in form of pan-European political parties) could be purported by the EC to justify its entering the cultural realm once again, arguing - perhaps rightly so - that state-transcending political traditions sufficiently strong to sustain Community-wide majority rule can neither emerge nor be maintained outside a socio-cultural context.

But even if the limitation of the Community's powers and the granting of cultural autonomy to its member states could minimize cultural apprehensions, a consociational EC would have to remain one of compromise; such would be required not only between competing levels of government but also in addressing the diverging demands of the economic and cultural realms: As many decisions affect the cultural, political and economic spheres alike, a consociational EC would have to reconcile economic needs of abolishing boundaries and ensuring permeability with cultural imperatives that these borders remain secure and impenetrable.

Addressing the needs of the cultural sphere without jeopardizing the development of the Community in its economic dimension would be not always be easy. For example, it would require the separation of "goods and services" that are of a cultural nature - and are thus exempted from all free trade provisions - from those that are not. Moreover, the Community would be called upon to modify many economic policies so as to minimize their cultural repercussions. Regarding the proposal to establish a common currency, for instance, a solution which might be able to address economic and cultural needs simultaneously would be to introduce a single European currency but retain different names for it.

WHICH STRATEGY IS THE EC LIKELY TO ADOPT?

There is little to suggest that the EC is about to reverse its cultural policies to date in favour of adopting a consociational strategy. For one, new projects such as Euronews - and the continuation of established ones such as the MEDIA programme - imply that Brussels has not abandoned its cultural ambitions.

If the Maastricht Treaty is taken as a guide to the EC's cultural intentions one arrives at the same conclusion: Employing the EC's customary "unity in diversity" rhetoric, the treaty states that "La Communauté contribue à l'épanouissement des cultures des États membres dans le respect de leur diversité nationale et régionale, tout en mettant en évidence l'héritage culturel commun."[144] Concretely,

> L'action de la Communauté vise à encourager la coopération entre États membres et, si nécessaire, à appuyer et compléter leur action dans les domaines suivants: L'amélioration de la connaissance et de la diffusion de la culture et de l'histoire des peuples européens; la conservation et la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel d'importance européenne, les échanges culturels non commerciaux; la création artistique et littéraire, y compris dans le secteur de l'audiovisuel.[145]

While the above passages imply that the EC has remained unwilling to assign the "cultural sector" to the exclusive domain of national governments, other provisions of the treaty could be taken to suggest that the Community's cultural ambitions have lost some of their earlier fervour. Accordingly, a new section 3 d was added to article 92 of the Treaty of Rome, specifying that, under some conditions, state subsidies for cultural products can be exempted from section 1 of the same article which prohibits governments from engaging in unfair competition by granting state subsidies to industries.[146] Exempt from the Community's free trade and anti-subsidy provisions are "les aides destinées à promouvoir la culture et la conservation du patrimoine, quand elles n'altèrent pas les conditions des échanges et de la concurrence dans la Communauté dans une mesure contraire a l'intérêt commun."[147]

The treaty does not elaborate, however, at which point the common interest will override the legality of exempting cultural goods from free trade principles and it

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[144]Conseil des Communautés Européennes, Commission des Communautés Européennes, *Traité sur l'Union Européenne*, (Luxembourg: Office des publications officielles des Communautés européennes, 1992), p. 48.

[145]Conseil des Communautés Européennes et al., *Traité*, p. 49.

[146]Dumont, "Les compétences culturelles," p. 217.

[147]Conseil des Communautés Européennes et al., *Traité*, p. 22.

does not define cultural goods in any more detail (it remains unclear, for example, how it would pertain to the audiovisual sector). Article 94 merely states that interpretation of Article 92 is to occur with a qualified majority by the European Council upon proposal by the Commission and after consultation with the European Parliament.[148]

Their artful ambiguity renders the EC's policy statements of limited value in reckoning the course of the Community's cultural policies in the future. This, moreover, is nothing new; even the MEDIA programme was justified with the aim of strengthening minority cultures. Therefore, rather than taking the EC by its word, its behaviour in the future will reveal more accurately whether Maastricht represents a change in direction or merely a verbal concession to appease widening cultural anxieties.

QUESTIONS ON CONSOCIATIONALISM

The most potent argument for adopting a consociational strategy in Europe is that it likely represents the less harmful alternative to the policy of cultural integration which the EC has pursued so far: If it were carried on, it would be bound to inflict more damage than it could hope to cause stability. And yet, it would raise new questions too:

While the consociational model emphasizes the need for elite cooperation, no consociational arrangement can be upheld in the absence of broader overarching loyalties towards shared political structures - regardless of how limited and invisible they are (a fact which is also acknowledged by Lijphart). Such sentiments are nourished by the desire of diverging groups to sense themselves part of a larger nation-transcending community or, to use Charles Taylor's term, to form one moral agent. As he argues, "pour qu'un projet démocratique réussisse, que les gens y mettent du leur, qu'ils acceptent une discipline, et les sacrifices qui souvent leur sont imposés, il

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[148]Conseil des Communautés Européennes, et. al., *Traité*, p. 22.

faut que ils se sentent liés dans une projet commun, avec une certaine solidarité concrète avec certaines gens et pas avec d'autres."[149]

In Switzerland, as Schmid[150] has shown, a strong sense of "Swissness" is transmitted early in the process of political socialization and encompasses all cultural groups to an almost equal extent. It does not suffer in strength from the fact that the condition of "being Swiss" likely carries different connotations depending on the cultural community to which one belongs. Indeed, if the loyalties of Swiss citizens towards their shared institutions would mirror those held by Community citizens towards common structures so far, the prospects for the country to remain an example of successfully practiced consociational democracy would look bleak.

But whereas the Swiss example suggests that overarching loyalties can emerge in the absence of cultural integration - indeed, that they may have never arisen if such a strategy *had been* pursued - it gives little indications as to whether and how they could take hold in the European Community. Although the consociational model purports that the granting of cultural security represents a *condition* for the willingness of diverging national groups to remain politically and economically integrated, common bonds between them are unlikely to emerge merely *because* they are kept culturally separate. Likewise, crediting economic motives alone with generating shared sentiments would be to follow conventional integration theories in exaggerating the impact of material incentives on human behaviour. In the unlikely event that the emergence of such sentiments could be attributed merely to the passing of time, finally, adopting the Swiss formula of waiting several hundred years would likely exceed Brussels's patience.

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[149]Charles Taylor, "Quel principe d'identité collective?" in Jacques Lenoble and Nicole Dewandre (eds.), *L'Europe au soir du siècle: Identité et démocratie*, (Paris: Éditions Esprit, 1992), p. 60.

[150]Carol L. Schmid, *Conflict and Consensus in Switzerland*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).

To account for the emergence of shared bonds between different groups, one must thus likely venture beyond the scope of the integration models invoked so far. According to Taylor, the process by which diverging communities come to see themselves as part of the same moral agent has its origins in their mutual *recognition*, a principle which lies at the heart of individual and collective identity alike. If such recognition is absent or insufficient, or if a group perceives itself recognized as less than equal by others, it will seek to disengage from a common political undertaking with those communities by which it feels ill-recognized.

At the same time, just as the formation and sustenance of identities can only unfold in relation to others,[151] their mutual recognition, too, cannot occur in isolation; by definition, it grounds on dialogue. For individuals and communities alike, the "dialogical relationship" with others is "the key loci of self-discovery and self-affirmation"[152] and - as recognition can only emerge through dialogue and mutual awareness - it is essential to generate and sustain their willingness to participate in a shared political project.

In this context, Brussels's declared objective to employ television as a means of making Europeans more aware and appreciative of their cultural differences is well conceived. It has been weakened, however, by the fact that many of the Community's cultural policies so far have aimed more at eradicating cultural divisions than at promoting awareness of them.

At any rate, encouraging an inter-cultural dialogue is not a task which the Community should take upon itself: Just as efforts to cultivate a "European consciousness" "from above" - be it through television or other means - have remained futile, there is little to suggest that Brussels could "make" Europeans recognize each

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[151]As Taylor puts it, we "define our identity always in dialogue with, sometimes in struggle against, the things our significant others want to see in us." Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition*, (Amy Gutmann, ed.), (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1992), p. 33.

[152]Taylor, "Politics of Recognition," p. 36.

other; there is, moreover, no applicable model which could guide it in this effort. Instead, the impetus for such a process would have to emanate primarily from the national and subnational communities themselves.

In strengthening national identities against the assimilative repercussions of economic integration while, at the same time, enhancing mutual awareness between them, television, too, could play its part. While the medium should remain a tool of national expression, it could - on a European-wide scale - provide a forum for the exchange (rather than the merger) of national viewpoints. To that end, for example, national governments could encourage the transmission of foreign programmes in a subtitled instead of a synchronized format so as to preserve the notion of foreignness attached to them outside the cultural environment in which they were created.[153] Also, Euronews's strategy of providing a forum for the exchange of national perspectives rather than (as did Europa TV) for the promotion of an artificial "European" point of view could be a step in the right direction.[154]

But maintaining the balance between strengthening national cultures against assimilative tendencies emanating from the economic realm while, at the same time, promoting a process of inter-cultural awareness and recognition necessary to sustain the European project in its political dimension will not be easy: Especially within smaller Community members, fears that a cultural interchange could heighten assimilative pressures will likely remain strong. As was argued, these apprehensions have been aggravated by the EC's cultural policies, as they combined verbal affirmations of the need to strengthen cultural diversity with measures aimed at eroding it.

In this light, the arguments for adopting a consociational strategy in Europe seem all the more persuasive: Once the European Community has renounced its intentions to act as a "nation-builder," abandoned references to a "medieval heritage"

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[153]Wolton, *Éloge*, p. 300.

[154]As discussed, however, the channel resembles Europa TV in that it is pan-European.

and delegated all cultural powers - including those pertaining to television - to the exclusive domain of national or subnational governments, the cultural anxieties it has caused will likely recede. Its members could then consolidate their union without fears of sacrificing their identities in the process. As a result, the deepening of European integration in its economic and political dimensions would find greater acceptance among the national communities involved.

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