European Media,
Cultural Integration and Globalisation

Reflections on the ESF-programme
Changing Media – Changing Europe

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European integration and European cooperation are already very high on the political agenda in most European countries. No matter what we think and feel about the EU, the European question is already deeply imbedded in our public life, in our media culture and in our everyday life. The strong emotional reactions for and against questions of European integration and culture and to the processes of globalisation as such, are, however, an indication of one of the problems facing cultural and social globalisation and European integration. We do witness an overall process of homogenisation on different levels, but there is also an underlying differentiation and regionalisation within the national cultures which are undergoing globalisation and European integration.

We still live and think very much as local and national citizens and not as the European and global citizens we are also slowly becoming. The rising gap between the A-team of globalisation, the global elites of politics, finance and media, and the B-team of ordinary national citizens is already very visible around the beginning of this new millennium which will most certainly mean a rise in virtual technological globalisation and a cultural and social globalisation in real time. The media culture and the cultural industries are already among the globally strongest sectors of growth, and the fight between large companies and the vertical integration of all media sectors has long been very fierce,

resulting in a stronger pressure against the well-known European public service model and traditional cultural institutions and politics.

European Culture: A Living Paradox

European media, traditional print media, film, traditional broadcast media as well as the new interactive media such as computers, the Internet and the world wide web, play an important role in this development towards an increasingly technologically integrated media culture operating to a still greater degree beyond the nation state and in relation to both a European and global market. However, data from several European countries show that, despite access to 30-100 channels in most of the European nations, the loyalty to the national channels (public service, hybrid-channels or commercial channels) is still very high[1]. In Denmark, for instance, the *two public service channels*, DR-TV and TV2, and their sub-channels, DR2 and TV2 Zulu (aimed at the younger segments), command about 70% of the viewing time, and *newer commercial channels* like TV3 and TVDanmark 1 & 2 cover around 20%, but with certain programmes (sports programmes, reality-TV such as *Big Brother*) taking a much bigger share, whereas the various foreign *satellite channels* have very little impact.

However just looking at the nationality of the channels does not tell the whole story; we also have to look into content. But also here the key national products, that is: children's programmes, national films and fiction-series, documentaries and news &

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The *Changing Media – Changing Europe* project was launched on January 1 2000 and will run for five years until January 1 2005. The project is financed by the European research councils for the humanities and social sciences under the European Science Foundation (ESF) in Strasbourg. The programme is a comparative, interdisciplinary, cross-European research project, co-directed by Professor Ib Bondebjerg, University of Copenhagen, Denmark and Professor Peter Golding (University of Loughborough, UK), representing media research in the humanities and social sciences. The project organises approx. 60 researchers from 18 European countries (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Denmark, United Kingdom, Finland, France, Greece, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and Sweden) organised in four research teams, each headed by a team leader:

- *Team 1. Citizenship and consumerism: media, the public sphere and the market*. (Team Leader: Professor Jostein Gripsrud, Norway, e-mail: jostein.gripsrud@media.uib.no).

- *Team 2. Culture and commerce: media policy between culture and commerce.* (Team Leader: Professor Els de Bens, Belgium, e-mail: els.debens@rug.ac.be).

- *Team 3. Convergence – fragmentation: media and the information society*. (Team Leader: Professor Jean-Claude Burgelmann, Belgium, e-mail: jcburgel@vub.ac.be).

- *Team 4: Homogenisation-diversity: media and cultural identities*. (Team Leader: Professor William Uricchio, Netherlands/USA, e-mail: w.uricchio@let.uu.nl, uricchio@mit.edu).

The teams meet twice a year for *workshops*, where they develop and discuss their research themes and the publication and reporting of the results. The programme will have three *plenary conferences* where all the teams meet and to which outside researchers and speakers will be invited. The first conference was held from August 24-27 2000 at Il Ciocco, near Pisa in Italy. The theme was *European media in transition: global and comparative perspectives*. The second conference will be held in April 2002 in Copenhagen, where the theme will be: *European media, cultural identities and cultural politics*, and the third and final conference will be in December 2004 at Cote D'Azur in France on *Old media – new media: Europe and the global information society*. The programme also includes a modest but important *Young Scholars grants scheme* allowing young scholars (doctoral or post-doctoral) to participate in workshops and conferences for a limited period or in other ways be linked to one of the teams. The programme will, during its lifetime, produce *working papers* (on the programme's *website*) and other *publications* and will result in one or two final volumes from each of the four teams. More information on the programme is available from the programme's website: http://www.lboro.ac.uk/research/changing.media/index.htm.

current affairs have a very high profile among the national audiences. Besides the national programmes, programmes with US-origin dominate, not least in entertainment formats such as TV-fiction series, talk shows and reality-TV formats.[2] Especially on the national, commercial channels we can hardly speak of national content, since more than three quarters of the programmes on TV3 and TVDK in Denmark are American. On the public service channels, the national programmes together are above 50%, but American films and series take a larger part of the fiction output – simply because of a much stronger financial competition profile. One thing is, however, very common for all chan-

nels and all forms of programme output: the percentage of European programmes is very small. It is almost not visible on the commercial channels, but somewhat stronger on public service channels, especially the British import of series, documentaries and films.

Globalisation of channel-supply has taken place, but does not have a strong foothold among the viewers in Europe. Globalisation has certainly also taken place on the level of content and programmes. In news, documentaries and other factual programmes our outlook has become much more global, no matter where the individual programmes are produced. We have become global witnesses

and voyeurs to politics, everyday life, disasters and national and human-made catastrophes, but we do not have an adequate national, European or global forum in which this new European or global experience can be imbedded and debated in a proper democratic way. We still, to a very large degree, see the global environment from our national and local perspective: our mentality is split between the concrete closeness of a familiar world and the fascinating, but abstract closeness of a distant global world. In the area of fiction and entertainment we seem to prefer our local cultures and the stories and structures closest to our daily experience and history, but, at the same time, American products in particular are accepted as a totally unproblematic and natural part of media consumption. Although "the American threat" has been on the agenda of European cultural and political elites for almost a century, the mass audience does not care, but simply accepts the American way of life and its culture as something fundamental and well known. American narratives are the lingua franca of cultural globalisation.

For the European cultural and political elites this makes the project of European integration and European culture a living paradox: we live in a local and national culture with global dimensions and we inhabit an American global culture as a natural part of our national and local culture. But a European culture is at best a fragmented reality, and in reality a non-existing live culture – at least outside European Football Championships and European Song Contests. Although most Europeans travel the European countries and thus experience the different aspects of their culture, and although European cultural history has a much stronger and longer tradition, well known to most of us – at least as part of an educational curriculum, a modern European culture has no clear mental structure or existence for the average European citizen. And on the political agenda, Europe is almost always experienced as something strange down or up there: not "us", but "them", not a democratic vision but a bureaucratic monster. No matter how weak, we do have a mental place called the national "us", perhaps not a flagged, national identity, but certainly one which we live (Billig, 1995). On the European level, only a flagged European "nationality" seems to exist as a forced symbolic identity (our passports, our license plates, the official blue flag from institutions), but a European identity is not vital for most European nationals.

European Media Research: Interdisciplinarity and Perspectives

When you want to study European media culture in its more global context and in relation to each of the individual, national and regional cultures, you have to apply a comparative, interdisciplinary research strategy and you have to adopt a problem-oriented contextual perspective rather than a single media research focus. You have to study and compare general structural aspects of the media culture, you have to be able to draw on and develop huge amounts of quantitative data on technological, cultural, political and economic indicators and on the European audience or media content in key areas. You also have to go into qualitative analysis and case studies of particular genres or themes and the way audiences relate to and use the media in their daily lives. Comparable quantitative data on a European level do not exist in such a form that we can easily use and interpret them, nor do we have very many qualitative studies on a European level. A mapping of the most important media developments and media characteristics in Europe therefore needs not just to join and develop our quantitative and qualitative empirical data on a cross-European basis, but also to bring together theories and methodologies from the social sciences (sociological, economic, technical, political etc. aspects) with perspectives from the humanities (cultural analysis, psychology, aesthetic analysis, rhetoric and language, etc) on media in general, in particular key media genres and key themes in European media. The analysis should focus on institutional aspects and production culture as well as on aspects of distribution and reception.

The founding text for the programme on *Changing Media – Changing Europe* therefore focuses very much on *change* and the fact that the shaping and development of Europe very much depend on media and communication. Europe in itself is a changing concept and the media operating in Europe, in the individual states, between regions in states, and between countries, expand and change. At the same time, Europe is part of a changing global scene, a scene which individuals in Europe to a large degree experience through media which are themselves influenced by the global flow of money and culture. The development of media is part of the modernisation and globalisation of society.

A study of the changing media in Europe, therefore, is indeed a study of the changing Europe. The

research on media is closely linked to questions of economic and technological growth and expansion, to questions of public policy and the state and more broadly to social, economic and cultural issues. From the historical birth of traditional print-based mass media and the rise of visual media such as film and television, we are right now entering a new phase in which the information society and interactive media are setting a new agenda. At the same time, all European countries are experiencing great changes, where traditional national regulations are being challenged and changed.

For almost a decade now, a European media policy, film policy and an expanding cultural agenda have been developed to meet the challenges of deregulation and greater global competition. One aim has been to support and develop a European media and film sector in both production and distribution, to create the infrastructure and conditions for a single market development of a united Europe. Another aim has been to focus on IT and new media and the perspectives of digitalisation of culture for all aspects of future culture, education, work etc. The big question still is how, for instance, the proud tradition of the European public service culture will survive and meet the challenges of a new global, digital world where broadcast media will no longer exist as they do today. The future points towards a public service culture that has to function more like an interactive producer and library of products for more individualised segments of the audience and with real-time broadcasting as a mere side business. But traditional broadcasting will probably exist also in the future, just as electronic publishing has not killed the book and videos and dvds have not killed cinema and concert halls. But a variety of distribution and access forms will be easier when the technological speed increases and equipment becomes cheaper and easier to use.

Network Society and 'Glocalisation': A Changing European Media Culture?

The project's focus on the development of the European media culture is not just a question of the changing media policy and cultural policy or the technological and economic aspects, but also a question of relating to the much larger question of European integration and the gradual fragmentation of national cultures and identities in the light of globalisation and the network society. In his book on the Network Society (Castells, 1996/second edi-

tion 2000) Castell talks about "the culture of real virtuality" in chapter 5 where he describes the change from a traditional national mass society with a marginal global imbeddedness of mass media to the "interactive society". In this new interactive network society the media have both local and global possibilities. Despite other tendencies towards global concentration and dominance, the Internet and multimedia are very flexible media, difficult to control and homogenise. And the network society in many ways means the decline or transformation of traditional organisations and institutions and the rise of a more complex structure of sub-networks for the individual, based on other criteria than national identity.

In his book *Runaway World. How Globalisation is Reshaping our Lives* (Giddens 1999), based on his BBC Reith Lectures, Anthony Giddens defines the focal point of globalisation as being related first of all to the mediated process of compressing time and space and the effects of that on our new concepts of risk, tradition, family and democracy. In the chapter on tradition, his main point is that the globalised and mediated society to a greater degree than ever in history loosens the ties between the individual and those traditions and institutions which before gave a certain solidity and predictability to the individual's development. Individuality and self identity, therefore, are no longer more or less given or at least framed by a foreseeable number of likely possibilities, but have to be recreated and reshaped in a lifelong perspective. The traditional dependency of the individual has resulted in a more wide-ranging form of individual freedom, which, on the other hand, can be seen as more demanding and insecure than older forms of tradition. A more reflexive form of modernity and individual identity is a vital part of the new network society and its media culture, which may explain the recent strong interest for privacy, role-playing and almost voyeuristic tendencies in new forms of reality-TV.[3]

And what has happened on the individual level is, of course, also happening on an institutional and national level to the norms and ideologies associated with nation states and regional cultures, and norms and ideologies associated with globalisation. Giddens, therefore, points to a second conflicting pole of globalisation: the conflict between a cosmopolitan worldview and fundamentalism in any shape or form. Fundamentalism is tied to the fanatic defence of traditions that bind the individual to national or religious paradigms and stories, whereas cosmopolitanism is the ideology of

globalisation, expanding the ideas of human rights and equality across national and regional borders and mental structures.

This does not mean that all of a sudden national cultural identities and local cultures are disappearing or losing power. But it does mean that the normal nation-state-based culture and its institutions and media are under attack from both above and below. It becomes much easier to establish regional interest-based global networks outside the jurisdiction of the nation state and it becomes much easier for global players to enter the national market, because individual choice and interactivity will challenge the regulation of media and communication at a national level. This has, in many of the debates related to globalisation and Europeanisation, been seen as a threat and a problem, but the weakening of national institutions can also be seen as a potential democratic strengthening of regional cultures and of cross-national cooperation and cultural and political integration. In Castells' words, a virtual, symbolic network becomes real and this integrated digital and global communication system weakens the power of traditional institutions and nation states:

> The inclusion of most cultural expressions within the integrated communication system based in digitized electronic production, distribution, and exchange of signals has major consequences for social forms and processes. On the one hand, it weakens considerably the symbolic power of traditional senders external to the system, transmitting through historically encoded social habits: religion, morality, authority, traditional values, political ideology. Not that they disappear, but they are weakened unless they recode themselves in the new system, where their power becomes multiplied (....) On the other hand, the new communication system radically transforms space and time, the fundamental dimension of human life. Localities become disembodied from their cultural, historical, geographical meaning, and reintegrated into functional networks, or into image collages, inducing a space of flows that substitutes for the space of places. (Castells, 2000: 406)

Despite the possibilities of a new and more integrated European culture, the expansion of the nation-state culture to a European culture has not been very successful, a fact often connected to the dominance of American media and global concentration. But the cliché of blaming the Americans is also a cover for the problems of integration and use of the actual social and cultural potentials for which only the lack of an integrated European policy and the fragmentation of Europe into separate markets and nations are to blame. So far what we have seen is that, despite the improved conditions of, for instance, a European film industry and film market through joint EU-policies, it is still very difficult for European films and other media products to cross European borders and thus get hold of the potentially huge European audience, an audience even bigger than the American. Europeans do not seem to read newspapers aimed at a European audience and they do not particularly tune into European news channels on radio and TV or European Internet services. The European elite may read the *Financial Times* and *The European* but they do not attract the ordinary national, European citizen, who prefers national newspapers, just as *Euronews*, *Eurosports* and *Arte* are marginal channels compared to national channels, and even to more global channels like *CNN* and *BBC World* (Richardsen & Meinhof, 1999).

The average dominance of American films in European cinemas is still 70-80%, with some of the larger countries having a somewhat larger national section. But European films until the mid-90s have virtually not had any success in other European countries or the US for that matter. The same is true of European television programmes. In the 1999 report from the Eurofiction group (Buonanno, 1999: 22) the national origin of the total fiction output in one week in 1997 showed remarkable figures and internal national differences:

Figure 1. *National Origin of Total TV-fiction Output in One Week 1997 (percent)*

Country	Domestic	US	EU
England	51	36	0
Germany	29	60	5
France	25	58	14
Italy	17	64	2
Spain	12	62	5

A living European audiovisual culture seems to belong to the realm of science fiction. The national culture is much stronger than the total European visual culture, no matter how small the particular country. In most European countries, national fiction gets the highest viewing figures and determines the national agenda in quite another way than the also fairly popular American series[4].

Culture, media, communication and IT are, however, part of the strongest growth sectors (culture, education, entertainment, information) of the new economy of the network and information society. Major global players are fighting for power over programmes, channels, newspapers, music, computers and the Internet; a strong vertical integration is taking place. The development of a European media and cultural policy is placed between two tendencies: on *one side* the liberalisation and homogenisation of a European market for media, communication and culture that allows more free flow of products and players, also allowing European conglomerates to develop into power-players on a global level; on the *other side* the strong tradition of public support and protection of a cultural art tradition and a public service culture that has, so far, been a national obligation, with EU support schemes as an additional mechanism, trying to create synergy and networking in the production and distribution of European media products and know-how. Culture, media and communication are no longer just niche production for leisure; they are big business and create a lot of profit and employment in a situation where traditional production is shrinking. Therefore, the media, communication and culture sector is both a challenge for a joint European cultural and business policy, and for the development of a European media sector in a new highly digitalised network society.

Extending traditional national policy (public funding of cinema and TV) to a European level may already be lagging behind the tendencies described by Castells as virtual realities and 'glocalised' cultures. New technologies may change the former power balance on a global scale, and a new economy of a 'glocalised' communication sector may not be utopia. Small scale can be large scale through global networking; globalisation is not necessarily a one-way street. Recent tendencies in Danish film production and distribution are good examples of new tendencies. Earlier, Danish films existed almost only on a national and maybe a Nordic market, with distribution to Europe and the rest of the world as an absolutely marginal phenomenon. But low-budget films from the Danish Dogma-films[5] have managed not only to beat American big-budget films on the national market, but also to get a large European audience and a growing American market. So smaller national films or European films with some co-financing have reversed the normal process of globalisation and, in a way, demonstrated that the word 'glocalisation' is a living process. Global and local tenden-

cies are merged and work against the process of homogenisation as a cultural and financial one-way street. This has resulted in a change of funding, where traditional artistic-quality funding through The Danish Film Institute has been supplemented with private money and business financing to a much larger degree, because films are now considered a profitable sector to invest in and because films, through new digital techniques and cameras, can more easily produce international production quality, even on a very local level.

This may be an indication of a stronger European film culture both in production and distribution terms and in terms of popularity with the general European audience. If film can be taken as an indicator of the whole media sector, then perhaps what we are witnessing is the breakthrough of a new European cultural awareness and mentality that may lead to a stronger European market and European public sphere. We may be witnessing the first steps of a stronger cultural integration, although scepticism towards Europe as a political union and European integration seems to be very strong in some member countries and among the average voters. But just as the concept of national culture has changed from a more mono-cultural to a more multi-cultural concept, European culture cannot be seen as a unified identity block comparable to American or Asian cultures. The development of a globalised communication culture will increase the possibilities of the internationalised networks, both on a European and more global level. The Danish cinema 'revolution' is also clear on this point: the dogma concept has been exported to Europe, Asia and the US, and through this new global cultural breakthrough for a small national cultural product, new large-scale economic cooperations are taking place between Danish, European and American partners.

Interdisciplinary Media Research in Practice

The project *Changing Media – Changing Europe* was given that name specifically because we want to focus not just on the present structure and the historical background of a European media culture, but also to study contradictory tendencies that point to possible new emerging tendencies in a new and even more globalised world. This is perhaps most clearly demonstrated in the fact that the theme of each of the four teams' work is precisely formulated as a dynamic tension between opposing trends in European media culture and as dynamic

research trying to integrate humanities research and social science research. The aim is to overcome the differences between qualitative approaches and more quantitative approaches or between 'hard core' economic and technological research and 'softer' issues of language, aesthetics, psychology and culture.

Besides the merging of theories, methods and basic questions asked, the comparative aspect is also extremely important. Much media research has generated data on the national specifics of structure, content and form and consumption of cultural goods. Comparative analysis will require reconciling data sets based on differing calibration approaches and often rooted in different intellectual and policy foundations and traditions. Superficial and misleading generalizations are, for example, frequently made about national differences in media content or consumption, which, on closer inspection, reflect the artefacts of data categories or the construction of variables. The programme will further our critical understanding of how better to arrive at reliable and valid comparative data, based on both quantitative and qualitative methods.

In view of the importance of the interdisciplinary work and the open agenda for the study of not just actual tendencies but also future trends, the teams are organised around a research agenda which is based more on general problems rather than being a specific and very narrowly focused working plan. This is both a problem and a challenge, but is needed in order to produce new approaches and real interdisciplinary research. The teams are, therefore, defined in relation to tensions and processes and they are urged to focus both on common discussions and to subdivide the area into more specific sub-themes. The common discussions and problems addressed in each of the four teams are at the same time the focus of the three major conferences moving from globalisation and European integration in general terms to questions of cultural identities and the transformation from traditional communication and media to the new media and the network society and its influence on democracy and culture.

In *Team 1: Citizenship and consumerism: media, the public sphere and the market* the focus is on the relationship between citizenship as a public sphere category and consumerism as a market category. The problem is tied to the changing relations between media, the public sphere and the market, and the challenges facing media policy and the public service media in a Europe with shifting boundaries in cultural values, hierarchies and

norms. The work of this group focuses on the institutional aspects of the transformation from a regulated, national or European mass media strategy to a network society strategy in a more globalised interactive culture. But also related to that is the question of Internet-based journalism, public debate and the development of a new form of democracy and public sphere, no longer tied only to the communication structure of the traditional print media or the public service radio and television.

The challenge from commercial and international channels is only the first phase in a much more fundamental challenge from broadcaster to publisher in a multimedia environment. The group is working towards a possible triangular group of themes: 1) comparative studies of public sphere, public service and democracy; 2) new forms of Internet-based journalism and new forms of reality-TV and infotainment and the development of print media; 3) diversity and difference in for instance the high-low dichotomy in cultural forms and the aesthetics of cross-over products in films, audiovisual culture and other media and cultural areas.

The whole team has for the first year been developing their agenda, but they have also engaged in a pilot study of changes in the public European agenda between 1960 and 1990. It is a very selective study of the content of two different newspapers for one sample week in 1960, 1980 and 2000 (one leading serious morning paper and one tabloid paper) in each of the participating countries. The comparative study will show what was on the socio-political and cultural agenda in different European countries, the main topics and forms of public debate, the relationship between regional/local, national, European and global perspectives in news and other genres of the newspaper in question. The focus will also be on reviews of books, cinema, television and the programmes in radio, television, cinema and theatre as reflected in the newspapers. The study will probably show dramatic changes over time and dramatic differences between east and west, north and south and between serious journalism and tabloid journalism and thus between elite and popular culture. This very rudimentary analysis is made in order to establish a joint historical platform and agenda on the basis of which further research into the more focused studies can be developed.

The *Second team* deals with *Culture and commerce: media policy between culture and commerce* and will also focus on some of the basic aspects of institutional changes of the public sphere, the dichotomy and relationship between culture and com-

merce, and the conflict in a media policy caught between culture and commerce. The specific aim of the team's work is to analyse media policy in a European perspective including economic, political, legal, ethical and socio-cultural perspectives and a mapping and analysis of media competition, concentration and the question of diversity in the media. Both national governments and European institutions have found themselves uncertain as to the proper direction of policy in relation to the media. On the one hand they wish to protect national culture (itself a problematic concept), and intervene for the protection of vulnerable groups from 'harmful' material. On the other hand they are anxious to liberate the market in order to foster economic growth, especially of newer media industries, or to protect embryonic new industries from the gargantuan competition of multi-national players from the USA or Japan. The emergence of cross-national ownership of media industries poses new questions for the role of the state, and acute difficulties for regulation and intervention at European level. The team will focus on conceptual frameworks for contemporary communication policies in a historical perspective in order to find the roots of the public purposes of communication in relation to communication policy and democracy theory.

The team is already working in a fairly focused manner on four sub-groups and sub-themes: 1) Conceptual framework for communication policies; 2) Contemporary politics, contemporary media; 3) Media competition, innovation and diversity; 4) Public policies in Europe regarding the audiovisual sector. The group thus works clearly with a media policy agenda, but also with an interdisciplinary conceptual framework and with concrete, interdisciplinary studies of, for instance, programming strategies and diversity in public service media with a comparative, European perspective.

The *Third team* focuses on *Convergence – fragmentation: media and the information society* and deals with the problems of convergence and fragmentation, continuity and discontinuity in relation to the development of media technology and the information society on a global and European level. The team will deal with the concepts of the information society, the network society etc, and focus on new media such as the Internet and multimedia and the impact of these new media on society, culture and our work, education and everyday life. A rough sub-division of the group's work has taken place in five sub-groups working with: 1. quality of life (e.g. identity, cohesion, time and space, mobility); 2. e-commerce, employment, work; 3. politics,

governance, citizenship; 4. education, learning, knowledge; 5. media changes (i.e. as element of a larger cultural sphere, including the question of a new digital aesthetic and communication form). The question of convergence vs. fragmentation will be studied from three basic and interrelated perspectives: first, at the level of economic and organisational structure, the growing horizontal and vertical integration of media companies, and their integration into wider corporate structures; secondly, at the level of social institutions, the convergence of communications with other spheres – work, education, family life, leisure, and thirdly, on the level of aesthetics, and the new forms and genres of multimedia, the Internet and other interactive forms of communication. In each of these areas, the contradictory tendencies of convergence (implying a similarity and increasing unity of experience) and fragmentation (implying a growing differentiation of experience) will be tied to general aspects of this development and the question of whether we are moving into a new information society or a network society. The key underlying question will be to what degree this society is a continuation of the present one, a radical break up or if it contains elements of both. The term 'Information Society' calls for theoretical and analytical clarification and we do need a great deal more information about these changes across Europe, not least the range of more or less possible changes in our culture and norms.

The *Fourth team* deals with *Homogenisation-diversity: media and cultural identities* or the question of whether the globalisation process will lead to more homogenised cultural identities or to more diversified and flexible forms of cultural identities crossing well-known local and national patterns, interests and social and cultural traditions. The theories of postmodernity have indicated a far-reaching fragmentation of a coherent identity and perception of reality followed by a hybridisation of generic forms of communication and a development of a virtual reality or hyper-reality. However, this radical break with traditional sociological and cultural theory has been challenged by different forms of more empirical-based globalisation theories setting a new framework for the understanding of the changing boundaries of cultural identity in a network society. Within sociology, much attention has been given to the replacement of identities forged in the sphere of production (primarily class) by those derived from consumption (sectoral cleavages, habitus and so on). But studies of gender and generation have also been at the centre of a number of debates, suggesting that behind common recep-

tion patterns we also find different styles of reception in use and preference of media and media content and, thus, a diversity of consumption along gender, age, ethnicity and other lines.

There is no doubt that the media as a whole, and seen in a larger historical perspective, have contributed to the homogenisation of cultures, and that global centres of production, mostly located in America, have had an impact on cultural identity formation all over the world. However, at a time of apparent homogenisation of cultural distribution (the 'coca-colonisation' of everything) the evidence of resilient local, regional, and ethnic identities seems compelling, while analysis of the hybridisation that results from these trends is, as yet, elementary. Equally, in a European context, the role of transnationalisation is important: the transnational impact of a global culture, and the fluidity of European boundaries (both geo-political and cultural) confront strong and resilient local and regional cultures and modes of expression in which the role of the media is critical. The impact of changing patterns of work, family structure, urban living and income distribution have all made inroads into a range of social and cultural behaviours, including identity formation and expression, life style, political behaviour and association etc. In all of this, media act at the same time as both resources of symbols and ideas and as important sites of debate – a role complemented by their absorption of people's time and resources.

Globalisation can be seen from a national and regional perspective as a threat to national and regional identities. But at the same time the strengthening of regional cultures could be seen as the result of the need for a new kind of national and regional culture reflecting and responding to globalisation in different ways. The already mentioned term 'glocalisation' indicates that there is not a simple relationship between the global and the local, but rather a complicated relationship where the local can develop global tendencies and vice versa. Team 4 has, in the initial phase of the group's work, focused on this 'glocalisation' of cultural identities and local and global processes in Europe through a number of exploratory workshops and studies of regional cultures: the Basque region and its culture and media, Sicily and its culture and media, and ethnic diasporas inside greater European cities. The team will, through a series of concrete pilot studies of regional European cultures, develop a coherent strategy for the study of homogenisation and diversity in contemporary European media culture, focusing both on generation, gender, ethnicity and social and cultural aspects of everyday life and media.

Globalisation and Cultural Identities in a Changing Media Culture

Processes of cultural identity were formerly less directly influenced by the flow of global communication and culture and more closely tied to the traditional and national institutions of family, schools, religion, national public service monopolies etc. But by now, as Castells puts it, with reference to Alain Touraine, a more dynamic and floating concept of identities is visible. This creates a reflexivity and constant focus on identity through media and in everyday life, a reflexivity, that can both be a challenge and produce counter reactions to globalisation in the seeking of ethnic purity, but can also produce and sustain a more truly cosmopolitan attitude:

> People increasingly organize their meaning not around what they do but on the basis of what they are or believe they are. Meanwhile, on the other hand, global networks of instrumental exchanges selectively switch on and off individuals, groups, regions and even countries, according to their relevance in fulfilling the goals processed in the network, in a relentless flow of strategic decisions. There follows a fundamental split between abstract, universal instrumentalism and historically rooted particular identities. Our societies are increasingly structured around a bipolar opposition between Net and Self (...) In a postindustrial society in which cultural services have replaced material goods at the core of production, it is the the of the subject, in its personality and its culture, against the logic of apparatuses and markets, that replaces the idea of class struggle. (Castells, 2000: 3 and 22)

This idea of a new reflexive modernity in which the cultural identity and participation in many different networks and communicative structures undermine a traditional forming of identities should, however, not be seen as a postmodern negation of a functional social and cultural dimension and a coherent set of identities. But the development of a network society increases the possibility of the forming of new social and cultural platforms of collective and individual forms of communication and organisation along other lines than national and traditional demographic patterns.

Globalisation is, of course, on the one hand related to problems of *dominance (not least American), homogenisation and commercialisation*, but on the other hand, they do more optimistically point to *hybridisation, creolisation* and thus a more peaceful co-existence and exchange between global forces and local and national cultural traditions. Or, as Salman Rushie put it: "Melange, hotch potch… a bit of this and a bit of that is how newness enters the world".[6] Rushdie's words point to world culture as a cultural melting pot and not just a big-business one-way street of dominance. In this global, cultural melting pot, media play an important role in shaping and negotiating this meeting of cultural trends.

Neither globalisation nor the concept of cultural globalisation is a new concept but the main agents of cultural globalisation have historically changed significantly. What is new about cultural globalisation in contemporary society is the role of mediated communication in processes of globalisation and the intensity with which images, symbols and cultural imaginary worlds are expressed and circulated through, for instance, modern television, films and the Internet. But although national cultures have already been living for a long time with heavy global interactions, there is often a very strong feeling against globalisation, which is seen as a threat not only to the nation state and cultural identities, imagined or real, but also to the quality and diversity of cultural output.

In media theory we have seen a shift away from the very strong dominance of a *cultural imperialism and homogenisation paradigm* towards more *complex models and theories which stress the hybridisation* or even the creolization of cultural interactions, and which stress differences in audiences' use of media products, rather than direct effects. In an article by Sreberny-Mohamaddi on globalisation, "The global and local in international communication", she has somewhat ironically caricatured these to positions as in the following:

> One position is that of the happy postmodernist, who sees that many kinds of cultural texts circulate internationally, and that people adopt them playfully and readily integrate them in creative ways into their own lives, and that cultural bricolage is the prevailing experience as we enter the twenty-first century. Another is the melancholy political economist who sees the all-pervasive reach of the multinationals and wonders how long distinctive cultures can outlast the onslaught of the western culture industries. [7]

Most researchers probably have at least a little of both aspects in their attitudes to globalisation. In her concluding remarks Sreberny-Mohamaddi at least seems to take a more cautious, pragmatic middle position, stressing that cultural globalisation is complex and has several potential strands of development. Cultural dominance and control of cultural production, channels and media business in different sectors are still very much on the agenda and should cause concern. But still the gloomy Huxley-Orwell picture that can come out of this is not very productive either.

In much the same way, David Held (et al.) in their conclusion in a chapter called "Globalisation, culture and the fate of nations" warn against both happy relativism and gloomy pessimism, and the too early dismissal of national cultures and nation states. Held et al. also demonstrate how globalisation creates new hybrid forms of cultures in nations and regions and how indeed all national cultures through history have been strongly influenced by wave after wave of different forms of globalisation. But speaking of the present phase of globalisation, following the forming of nation states from 1700 onwards, they point to the fact that a new cultural cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism, despite years of European integration, seems far away. If globalisation marches forward in economic terms, and nothing seems to indicate the opposite, then a new cultural identity of a cosmopolitan nature and a sustained and permanent multiculturalism seems a logical answer. However, so far, cosmopolitanism is an identity of 'elites' not of the national popular audiences, although they often live in a mediated, global environment. Held et al. point to the fact that globalisation is met with 'localisation':

> The cultural context of production and transmission must always in the end encounter an already existing frame of reference in the eyes of the consumer or receiver. The latter involves a process of great complexity – simple notions of homogenisation, ideological hegemony or imperialism fail to register properly the nature of these encounters and the interplay, interaction and cultural creativity, they produce. However it is not clear at all that these hybrid cultures and transnational communities have made significant inroads into mainstream national cultures and national identities.[8]

It is of course very unclear to what extent the global-local-national hybridisation has so far had any very strong or significant influence on mainstream

production and distribution of global, cultural products. The complexities are there, but they do not always turn up in general statistics. Studies of the reception of American soaps worldwide indicate that reception varies with cultural, social and national background and that the dystopia of wall-to-wall Dallas in Europe is far from correct.[9] In fact, many national films and television products easily compete with American products, and studies of national products will also tell an interesting story about how hybridisation on a global level takes place. Hollywood has always been good at integrating European formats and aesthetic forms and often tries to buy up good European directors. Likewise European films and television transform American forms in quite innovative ways.

Such processes of cultural globalisation are important, but they do not appear if media research just sticks to the analysis of economic globalisation and quantitative data or to textual analysis. That is why we need cooperation between qualitative and quantitative studies and between humanities and social sciences in film and media studies. One of the great benefits of a project like *Changing Media – Changing Europe* is that both humanities and social science can meet to analyse and interpret complex processes such as, for instance, cultural globalisation and European integration, through focused case studies. By studying the changing of media in such an interdisciplinary way and with regard to both the problematic and positive aspects of globalisation and European integration, the programme will hopefully also help the changing of a Europe where cosmopolitanism replaces fundamentalism.

Notes

1. See for instance *Nordic Baltic Media Statistics 1998* (Nordicom, 1999) or the data from the Audiovisual European Observatory in *Statistical Yearbook 2000* and *European Film on European Televisions* (2000). Data can also be found on European public channels' audience share in *TV i Norden, Europa och världen. En statistisk översikt. Medienotiser.* Nordicom Sverige, nr. 2. 1999, p.16)
2. Special focus on national fiction is found in Milly Buonanno's *Eurofiction project*, see Buonanno (ed. 1998,1999 and 2000).
3. This new form of reality-TV, for instance the global success of *Big Brother*, which is mainly a TV-phenomenon for young people, can be seen as a kind of collective social and cultural identity play, reflecting the new forms of identity and individual freedom in a globalised and mediated world where tradition and individuality have changed places.
4. This popularity of national fiction is documented not just in viewing figures but also in more qualitative reception studies and cultural studies, for instance Bondebjerg (1993), Höijer, (1992 and 1995) and Anne Hjort, (1985).
5. The concept of Dogma films refers to the Dogma Manifesto from 1995 issued by Lars von Trier and Thomas Vinterberg, created to change the direction of Danish and international cinema away from Hollywood big budget towards smaller more realistic and contemporary films made without advanced filmic technique and electronic manipulation. Three Danish films: Thomas Vinterberg's *The Celebration*, Søren Kragh-Jacobsen's *Mifunes last song* and Lone Scherfig's *Italian for beginners* won several international prizes and were distributed worldwide with great success.
6. Quotation from Salman Rushdie *Imagined Homelands* (1991: 394).
7. Quote from Annabel Sreberny-Mohamaddi "The global and local in international communication", in James Curran & Michael Gurevitch (ed.): *Mass Media and Society.* Edward Arnold, 1996: 199.
8. Quotation from Held et al., *Global Transformations. Politics, Economics and Culture*. Polity Press, 1999: 374).
9. Examples of cross-national studies of reception include for instance Jostein Gripsrud (1995): *The Dynasty Years* (Routledge), with studies of the Dynasty reception in Norway, and Katz & Liebes (1993): *The Export of Meaning. Cross-cultural Readings of Dallas.* (Polity Press).

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