ASIA MEDIA SUMMIT 2005

Promoting Peace and Prosperity In a Globalised World

ASIA-PACIFIC INSTITUTE FOR BROADCASTING DEVELOPMENT

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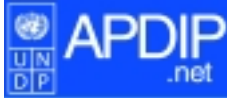**FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG**

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Promoting Peace and Prosperity In a Globalised World

Asia Media Summit 2005

Edited by
Sucharita S. Eashwar

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Welcome Address

Javad Mottaghi

On behalf of the organising committee, our partners and our sponsors, I bid you all welcome. We have present here 400 media professionals from 64 countries, representing 187 national and international organisations. You bear witness to the importance of this gathering.

There are about 50 languages represented among us in this Summit. This reminds us of the strength and beauty of our unity in diversity, and the great richness of the human community to which we belong.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Asia Media Summit is no longer limited to Asia. It is a Global Media Summit, meeting in Asia.

We focus on what brings us together - the great conversations of culture and of faith. Others might see our diversity as a problem. We see it as an opportunity and a foundation for growth, an opportunity to accept one another and share our visions and understanding rather than asserting our separate rights.

Accepting the rights of others is the key to communication and to liberation within the global community. We share both the right to speak and the right to listen, which enables us to think together and to delight in life together.

Wisdom is a shared joy not a private possession and, in the information age, we are continually reminded of the importance of inspiration. Truth comes out of shared understanding, as do security and peace. Thus we celebrate our differences and various points of view. They give us joy and they make us strong.

So, I thank you all for coming and for your contributions. I thank our sponsors and supporters for making it all possible. I thank my colleagues at AIBD for their endeavours. And, I thank Kuala Lumpur for its peace and harmony.

I wish you all well.

Javad Mottaghi is the Director, Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD)

Keynote Address
Dato' Seri Mohd Najib Bin Tun Abdul Razak
Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia

Malaysia is truly a melting pot of cultures, ethnicities and religions. We are home to many major religions such as Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and various races such as Malays, Chinese and Indians. Malaysia could be called a microcosm of Asia - "Truly Asia " as our slogan goes. Nevertheless, we are also open to other cultural influences, such as from the Middle East and the West. There are about 60 ethnic groups, large and small, in Malaysia. While Malays make up 54 percent of the population, the Chinese constitute a solid quarter of the country's population, and Indians constitute another eight percent. Other indigenous groups form the remaining population.

One could argue that society can be divided into two groups - one that perceives diversity as a threat and the other that sees diversity as an opportunity and an integral component of growth. In this respect, the Asia Media Summit is well established to redefine diversity and to improve dialogue between these two groups in contemporary society. Hence, the goal of such an important media gathering is to nurture a dialogue which is both preventive of conflicts - when possible - and inclusive in nature. The path to coexistence is nothing but "thinking together", and the path of "thinking together" is nothing but the path of "having dialogue with each other".

Participation in a dialogue is the same as "playing together" and not "playing against each other". Any individual school of thought or civilisation that acquiesces in dialogue would be a winner and the prime need of the information age and living in a "network society" is that everyone be a winner. Dialogue is necessary for global security. The key to the survival of humankind is being together, going along with each other and talking to each other. It is through reaching common understanding that we will be capable of generating collective efforts, and it is through collective efforts that we will be able to develop our socio-cultural sphere. Dialogue is a collective search aiming at a better mutual understanding, the prerequisite to gain knowledge as well as to live in harmony . Dialogue knows no geographic, cultural or social boundaries.

However, the present world has come under the threat of certain anti-dialogue forces and anti-dialogue atmosphere, which breeds disillusionment, hatred and violence at the national, regional and international levels, causing insecurity, despair and hostility to become integral parts of the life of contemporary human beings.

There is a great temptation to insist on a one-size-fits-all model for all countries. Unfortunately, this approach demonstrates little regard for the history and the unique characteristics of different socio-political climes. It ignores the need to adopt systems to local peculiarities and characteristics and, therefore, creates more problems than it solves. Managing societies with many cultures, ethnic groups and religions is an extremely complex task, especially if the foundation of these societies is not yet secured. Our approach in Malaysia is inclusive, empowering all ethnic and religious groups by giving them a share in decision-making, a say in collectively charting the future of their country.

Media are both the vehicle and the product of dialogue. "The World needs Words, not Wars", man needs words, not wars and the media are the way for mutual understanding, not war. It is through the media that one can truly settle dialogue, and it is through the process of carrying out dialogue that media, while borrowing significantly from "common meanings", gain the capability of sharing meaning and taking part in the various collective efforts of individuals as well as communities. The media can make one's voice familiar to the others and can thus become channels for the development of tolerance and compassion.

By and large, the mainstream media have done very little to foster better understanding among different cultures. I am afraid that the news media thrives on conflict. "If it bleeds it leads", says the dictum. The lead story for most news programmes is typically the most recent crime or disaster. It is assumed that the sensation that conflicts produce will attract viewers, listeners, and readers to the media. And large audiences are crucial to the financial success of media outlets. Therefore, it is often in the media's interest to not only report conflict, but to play it up, making it seem more intense than it really is. Long-term, ongoing conflict resolution processes such as mediation are not as dramatic and are often difficult to understand and report.

A true example is that there is no doubt that in the interface between Islam and the West lies one of the greatest challenges confronting humankind today. The media have not played a positive role in this respect.

In Muslim countries and in Asia in particular, people are of the opinion that some of the media in the West have contributed heavily to the negative image of Muslims. The association of Islam and violence is a common misconception that some of the Western media have developed about Islam. This "radical Islam", a stereotype common to Western thought, portrays Muslims as potential terrorists.

On the other hand, the Islamic world views the West as imperialist regimes trying to suppress Islamic propagation and values. The invaluable culture, history, rules, regulations and management system in some countries in the West along with many lessons that could be appreciated and learnt, are being undermined through media in some Islamic countries.

There are many commonalities between Islamic thought and various strains in Western philosophy. The media, both Western and Muslim, have given very little emphasis to these shared values. Neither have they sought to make Muslims and Westerners aware of the significance of these values to their lives and to the contemporary world.

Undeniably, there are also significant differences between the two civilisations. If the media have failed to highlight commonalities, they have also made no progress in explaining the differences between Islamic and Western cultures. In both the West and the Muslim world, segments of the media have instead chosen to project the differences as a way of proving that it is only their own position that is right and legitimate while the position of the other is wrong and illegitimate. Why have the media not been able to meet the challenges of improving relations between Islam and the West? This is a question that has to be addressed in the deliberations at the Summit.

Asians, in general, are peaceful people. That is not to shut our eyes to the conflicts between religions and regions. We have to accept that there are conflicts: we should be realistic. However, we must also accept that dialogue is the most peaceful way of resolving the conflicts.

The media play a major role in this. While media have been used for propaganda, to orchestrate alarm, to arouse fear and hatred and ultimately, to lead trusting people to unnecessary wars, the media also have the potential to provide true understanding. The media have a catalytic role in shaping opinions, in leading the thought of citizens, in constructing consensual solutions. The media practitioners who are here today are the prime movers of this power. You have so amply demonstrated the power to do good in canvassing such massive support in mitigating the impact of the recent tsunami. So there is no doubt about the capability of the media to do good.

Towards this end, I have some requests that I would like to make.

First, to the western media: Please do not make all Muslims appear as terrorists or fanatics. Please accept that there are religious fanatics and terrorists of many other shades also.

Secondly, to the Islamic media: let us not throw away all that is western just because some aspects of western society are not acceptable to us. There are some aspects of western society that we should adopt or at least adapt. We should be open minded about it.

Thirdly, to the Asian media: Let us use the power of the media to create harmony and peace, which is so necessary for prosperity of our nations. Let us use it to evoke participation of the people in the public sphere. Let us use it to fight poverty, illiteracy and other ills of society.

It is possible for us - Asians, Africans, Arabs, Europeans, and Americans - to live in harmony and peace, in spite of our differences, if only we respect our differences and rejoice in it. Malaysia is a good example for this kind of unity in diversity. If we can have peace, harmony and prosperity in a country with such diverse populations living in such close proximity to each other, I am sure the world can also coexist harmoniously.

Malaysia's experience is that a strategy of inclusion, participation, respect for the legitimate rights of all ethnic, religious and cultural groups is the best formula to manage its diversity. As has been the lesson elsewhere, we in Malaysia have found that economic growth and, more importantly, the equitable sharing of the fruits of such growth, has a positive impact on the stability of multicultural societies. It provides an environment conducive to social harmony. Three decades of economic expansion have been especially critical to our nation-building efforts. We have been able to avoid the kind of difficult economic conditions that breed hostility and confrontation between groups.

I am thankful to AIBD and its partners for taking the initiative to open a dialogue between broadcasters from different parts of the world. Initiatives such as the first Arab-Asia Dialogue and the first Afro-Asia Media Dialogue will contribute to better understanding among media leaders who are opinion makers at the global level. Let us create better knowledge and understanding of the rich African culture for our children. Let us stop attaching violence and discrimination with the rich culture of the Arab world. Let us create better relations among people in Europe, Asia and North America. Let us put an end to hostility and hatred created by people who have nothing to do with religious beliefs. We are all God's creations and we should be able to live with one another in harmony and mutual regard. The key is to accept and respect other people with other forms of cultures, beliefs and traditions. The beauty of a garden is the beauty of its so many colourful flowers.

The media could put Cultural Dialogue at the head of their agenda by institutionalising the culture of dialogue with a view to settling existing differences and conflicts at the national and regional levels. Media could become the meeting place for public dialogue, where all citizens are welcomed and considered equals to promote diversity, mutual understanding and tolerance. Media can initiate public debate and common ground talks between policy makers, academics and media professionals to counter social constraints and build up consensus on matters related to the good of the public.

Media can consistently demonstrate the ability to become society's voice and act as people's networks, people's voices, by upholding the principle of impartiality and by developing pluralistic programme structures of interest to all groups of society. The media can create a better understanding of various religions and remove misunderstanding, misinterpretation and monopolisation. The media can maintain credibility of information and news. The strength of Public Service Broadcasting is its credibility.

The media can create a coalition for peace by avoiding war, violence and occupation as a key to uprooting international terrorism. The dialogue of cultures and coalition for peace are the means to end the current atmosphere of hostility in the international community.

Coalition for peace - this is something no one can do better than the media. Let us remember that the world information society can sustain and grow only in times of peace and prosperity. This is what broadcasters can offer as their contribution to the World Summit on Information Society at Tunis in November 2005.

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Cultural Challenge to Globalisation

The Cultural Challenge to Globalisation

Shashi Tharoor

Is there a challenge to globalisation, and is it a cultural challenge?

More than forty years ago, in 1962, the United Nations' then Secretary-General U Thant warned that an explosion of violence could occur as a result of the sense of injustice felt by those living in poverty and despair in a world of plenty.

Why do I recall this today? Today, both the risk and the potential for a solution have increased. Nowhere is globalisation more apparent than in the mass media. Television, radio, newspapers and magazines bring to our living rooms, and even our breakfast tables, glimpses of events from every corner of the globe. Any doubt I might have had about the reach and influence of global mass communications was dispelled when I happened to be in St Petersburg in Russia for a conference and was approached by a Tibetan Buddhist monk in his robes, thumping a cymbal and chanting his mantras, who paused to say "I've seen you on BBC!"

Globalisation and the digital divides

New communications technologies have shrunk the world, and - in a real sense - made it all one: one market, one audience, one people.

And yet this new world is not yet a safer or a more just world. There are many reasons for this, but one important element is that the information revolution, unlike the French Revolution, is a revolution with a lot of liberty, some fraternity, and no equality. What we have at present is a digital divide - an enormous gap between those with access to the benefits of this brave new world, and those without access.

The digital divide has many aspects. There is a technological divide - the enormous gap in access that means that seventy percent of the world's Internet users live in the 24 richest countries, and that the 400,000 citizens of Luxembourg can count on more international bandwidth than Africa's 760 million citizens.

There is a gender divide: Women and girls are yet to gain full advantage from changes that could ultimately redress the inequalities of centuries. And there is a governance divide. Many people, companies and governments in the developing world feel they have little control over these new phenomena that they know could have a powerful influence on their lives... and they are correct.

The content divide

But there is also a content divide. The global media of the twenty-first century reflects the interests of its producers. Whether we take television, radio or the Internet, what passes for global media is really the media of the developed West. There is an occasional third world voice, but it speaks a first world language. As far back as the first Congo civil war in the 1960s, the journalist Edward Behr spotted a TV newsman in a camp of violated Belgian nuns, going around with his camera and calling out, "Anybody here been raped and speak English?" In other words, it is not enough to have suffered: one must have suffered and be able to express one's suffering in the language of the journalist. Inevitably, the globalised media has few authentic voices from the developing world.

Let me briefly outline for you just how pervasive developed world preoccupations are.

If I were to ask almost anyone who views the world through the global media what the most important political issue on the international agenda over the past two years was, I suspect that almost all would answer that it was events in Iraq.

And yet, when the Secretary-General Kofi Annan was in Addis Ababa in July 2004 for the African Union summit meeting, he had dozens of conversations and meetings with African leaders and he observed a strange thing: "Iraq didn't come up, terrorism didn't come up, weapons of mass destruction didn't come up." There were urgent and important subjects on people's minds other than the ones dominating the media's attention.

In recognition of this, the UN has launched an annual list of the top 10 stories the world should know more about. We didn't want to call them "under-reported" stories, because we aren't trying to criticize the media; we merely encourage them to devote more time and space to other parts of the world that don't easily impinge on their consciousness - but which should weigh on their consciences.

Cultural disconnect

We could well ask: Is it despite, or because, the world has grown smaller that a large part of today's intercultural conflicts are a result of perceived cultural humiliation?

Whether or not there is a cultural challenge, there is certainly a cultural disconnect. Once upon a time, what the West knew about the rest was not much - travelers' tales and dispatches from a handful of foreign correspondents stationed in places where a Western government had an interest. And what was known of the West amongst the rest, was even less. One of those two has changed. But it is not the former.

Too many people in the world feel that the global media dismiss their most urgent - indeed life threatening - concerns as side issues, sum up their culture as curious but peripheral, their religious beliefs as quaint, or deeply flawed or downright threatening, and their life-and-death issues as remote and irrelevant.

In a world where people fear a clash of civilisations, the need for understanding, for dialogue across countries has never been stronger. The Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia has stated that the world could be divided into those who see diversity as a threat and those who celebrate it.

Do the global media have a role to play in conveying the message that it is ultimately diversity that gives the human species its splendour and that diversity has enabled humanity to make progress through learning from different experiences? I believe it does. Because, consciously or otherwise, television is the world's foremost educational tool, even when it is not trying to educate - and the other mass media are not far behind.

A world in which it is easier than before to see or hear strangers at our breakfast table through our daily dose of media, must also become a world in which it is easier than ever before to see strangers as essentially no different from ourselves.

The alternative may be the violence and terrorism which have so dominated our headlines. If terrorism is to be tackled and ended, we will have to deal with the ignorance that sustains it. We will have to know each other better; learn to see ourselves as others see us; learn to recognise hatred and deal with its causes; learn to dispel fear and, above all, just learn about each other.

More players in the global game

I am not calling for a prescriptive approach to what new communications technologies should deliver. Rather, I believe that pluralism - what some call cultural diversity - is the answer. The development of local, national and regional media will bring new perspectives and voices into the globalisation discourse. So I am not calling for less globalisation but for *more* players in the global game. I would like everyone to be free to get themselves into the information age. Only this will bridge the content gap.

Bridging the content divide is not going to be easy. The barriers are many. But it must be done. This global media summit in Asia is an important contribution to this process. We can do a lot now to shape this new global information society. For decades the great challenge before our world was to make the world safe for democracy. That objective has largely been realised. Let us now work together to make the world safe for diversity.

Dr Shashi Tharoor is the Under-Secretary-General, Department of Public Information, United Nations.

Broadcasters and Cultural Challenge to Globalisation

Richard Sambrook

The aftermath of September 11, 2001 still dominates today's geopolitical agenda. We live in a violent and uncertain world: another suicide bombing in the Middle East; a bomb attack in Madrid, Istanbul or Bali; the Beslan siege; or the continuing carnage in Iraq. Such events are a grim reminder of the violence, mistrust and hatred that flourish in many parts of our world.

The roots of this hatred run deep - bound up as they are with politics, religion and history. At a time when globalisation is pulling our world closer together, these forces are pushing us further apart. For the **BBC Global News** division, it is this dangerous and unstable environment which sets the context for our activities over the next few years.

Mutual understanding

Accurate and impartial information available freely is going to be needed more than ever if any form of mutual understanding is to be achieved. Today, many Muslims feel they are losing out in the new world order, while many in the West are fearful of Islamic militancy.

The media cultivate a fertile breeding ground for mistrust and suspicion when:
- they give a distorted picture in the quest for higher audiences via sensationalism
- they have a political axe to grind
- they want to pander to their audiences' prejudices and fears.

However, the threat of terrorism is not the only factor that is making the world a more uncertain place. Some of the big global issues such as HIV/AIDS, trade and the environment are often ignored by the media because (to use a phrase I loathe) they are not thought to be "sexy enough". The end result is that many people, particularly in developing countries and especially the young, feel their views are not being heard.

In this world, what is the role of the media? And in particular what should the BBC be doing to bridge the divides that ultimately feed global instability?

Media revolution

Technology is fuelling an information revolution and that, in itself, is having a major impact on the way governments and institutions operate.

It was not that long ago that we worried that there wasn't *enough* information in the world. For many, shortwave radios, unofficial newspapers and word of mouth were the primary sources of reliable news.

Today that information famine has turned into a feast.

Digital broadcasting and the Internet are sweeping away the limitations of the analogue world and weakening the grip of many, though not all, repressive regimes. But before we get carried away by the idea we are about to enter some form of digital paradise, we must remember that there is still much to concern us all; for example:

- The Russian elections saw many broadcasters taking an unashamedly pro-government line
- In post 9/11 America, audiences are increasingly served up a patriotic, one-sided view of the world
- Around the world we are seeing increased opportunities for those bent on fostering prejudice and harnessing hate.

BBC values

It is against this backdrop of growing distrust and rapid technological change that I see the BBC's international role taking on a new and greater significance.

It was UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan who said, 'The better informed you are, the greater our chances of success. And those who provide you with clear and honest information are our best allies.'

The war in Iraq and, indeed, events since 9/11, have demonstrated one key fact about our audiences. Our audiences are hungry to know about the world and to try to understand it - to get some grasp of how it works and why their lives are being shaped by global events - events that are often taking place thousands of miles away.

As a public service broadcaster I would argue that we have a duty - a mission - to bring that world view to our audiences. Authoritative and impartial news and information, trusted for its accuracy, editorial independence and expertise - these values must be non-negotiable.

That is why, year after year, we have continued to invest in our newsgathering network - even when that has meant making some very tough decisions elsewhere.

New relationship between broadcasters and audiences

The nature of the relationship between broadcasters and audiences is changing. The new technology in this information age now provides an immediate, informative, intelligent, interactive platform for discussion and debate.

The contrast of this audience-broadcaster relationship with the days of linear, direct "push" broadcasting is dramatic. Today's international broadcasting is now very much a two-way dialogue of interactivity - a global arena for the exchange of views.

The scale of some of this is daunting.

The Iraq war vividly brought home how fast these changes are transforming the whole relationship with audiences. At the outbreak of war, there was a sudden, dramatic increase in audiences getting in touch with us because they wanted to tell us what they thought and they wanted us to broadcast their views. In the first three weeks, we received 250,000 emails and 1000 text messages a day. And the text messages came, not as might be expected, from Europe and North America, but from Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda.

The phenomenon tells us a lot about what motivates today's audiences - and about the role that the BBC can play as a leading facilitator of this global dialogue.

We believe that this type of debate can really help to achieve greater understanding, openness and dialogue. The **Talking Point** programme on **BBC World** television and **BBC World Service** radio was the first to combine an international phone-in with online debate.

In the week of 9/11, the programme opened up with a woman in New York, who had lost a relative in the Twin Towers, talking to a caller from Saudi Arabia. I can't think of any other broadcaster in the world who could have done that.

The programme also brings the world's most powerful leaders to account. President Putin of Russia, Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom, President Karzai of Afghanistan and President Musharraf of Pakistan have been among the guests. The format has now been extended to Arabic and African English language programmes.

Global conversation

The BBC has been tackling subjects such as racism in the Arabic world, which no other broadcaster would touch and now the concept of the interactive World Forum is taking off. The first special online site, **Islam and the West** in English, Arabic, Persian and Urdu, gives users a chance to offer their perspective and hear world leaders and experts answer their questions. It is part of this idea of the Global Conversation which is now at the forefront of the **BBC Global News** division's strategy for this decade.

It is a global conversation that gives individuals a chance to rigorously test opinions and arguments, hold leaders to account, and to express themselves and to test those views against accurate, impartial information they can rely upon. This is a conversation which can promote genuine understanding, genuine dialogue, breaking down barriers of mistrust, ignorance and hatred.

In the last century, the BBC was founded with the motto "Nation Shall Speak Peace Unto Nation". In this new century, we have a unique opportunity to allow the people of the nations to speak to each other and maybe - just maybe - to make the world a more peaceful place.

At a time when commercial broadcasters, at the behest of the advertisers and shareholders, are becoming ever more skilled at targeting their programmes at the audiences which advertisers want to reach or audiences who can afford high subscription payments - I would argue that creation of wide public interactive fora is becoming a new and increasingly important role for the BBC and for public service broadcasters everywhere.

As the market fragments and niche broadcasting grows, audiences are increasingly only going to hear about things with which they are familiar. They are only going to be exposed to views they are comfortable with. It is important for a well-informed, well-educated and fully functioning democratic society that audiences are able to come up against the unexpected and the uncomfortable, that they don't just hear what they would like to hear.

In a world awash with information, there is even more need for a place where people feel they are being told the unvarnished truth; where they can rely on impartial analysis to make sense of that sea of information and where they can listen to and take part in a debate in which all voices can be heard.

Richard Sambrook is the Director of World Service and Global News at the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

The Cultural Challenge to Globalisation

Erik Bettermann

My perspective on culture and globalisation is determined by my work in broadcasting for an international audience. Therefore, I intend to concentrate on the relationship between mass media, culture, globalisation, and the challenges in this field.

Globalisation of the media and of communication in general is already a fact. However, the debate still continues on whether globalisation poses a threat to society. Does the trend away from cultural diversity and towards homogeneity and the "Americanization" of culture in a globalised world threaten our own identities and our own cultures? These questions still remain largely unanswered.

What we are witnessing today is the emergence of a global culture in which information and access to information will be the factor that determines who acquires power and prosperity. It is a global system that transcends national borders and institutions and which allows people to gain knowledge simply by pressing a button on their computers.

Let me briefly outline the three main trends of globalisation as I see them:

1. Globalisation of the media

In 1999, people around the world were confronted with a global debate on globalisation. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) Summit in Seattle saw the first massive protests against the organisation's rules on world trade. It was a turning point. Suddenly, within a few days, globalisation had become the symbol for a threat to employment, to national security and even to cultural identity.

Globalisation of the media is an even older development. Thirty years ago, some developing countries started criticising news agencies like Reuters for controlling the global flow of news and information. Western countries were afraid that the US-dominated media and film industry had too much commercial influence on popular culture.

2. Dominance of English as a global language

We find a certain Anglo-American dominance in four sectors:

i) information-based technology, especially computer technology (e.g. Microsoft)

ii) popular culture (e.g. Hollywood, Steven Spielberg)

iii) language (English)

iv) news (e.g. **BBC World, CNN**)
Estimates show that one in four people worldwide is capable of speaking or understanding English: UN peacekeepers in Kosovo speak English, the employees of Bertelsmann in Germany speak English and Japanese businessmen in Latin America also speak English.

Moreover, there are only few really global print media groups: **The Economist,** the **International Herald Tribune** and the **Financial Times.** Broadcasters **CNN** and **BBC World Service** are present in every corner of the globe. These are all British or American media. Further, the most important news suppliers - Reuters and Associated Press - are also of American or British origin. Their success lies in the economy of scale: only they are big enough, only they are able to run a worldwide network of correspondents, to tap information sources, and maintain bureaux. Only they are capable of financing and maintaining a global system of satellites and computer networks.

European networks have been a little late in using the worldwide presence of English for the dissemination of European ideas, values, beliefs and images. If we want a fruitful exchange in these areas we are forced to acknowledge that we need a language that is understood in many countres and regions of this world.

3. Culture and globalisation

Keeping all this in mind, we certainly face some major cultural challenges resulting from globalisation. There are two different views on how globalisation influences culture. One is that globalisation is necessary for creative development because only free markets allow ideas to flow freely between societies. The other view is that culture is vulnerable to globalisation because globalisation swamps cultures and makes them increasingly homogeneous.

This is a challenge for broadcasters. As I see it, media organisations with global operations, especially international broadcasters, are faced with the task of preserving cultural diversity and supporting democratic development wherever this is necessary. Only in societies where people have free and widespread access to information, can the media play their role as watchdogs and foster good governance and human development.

Broadcasters meeting the challenge

Broadcasters must meet the challenge to give a voice to those who are in danger of not being able to defend their cultural rights.

I believe that the right to have a free flow of and free access to information is a basic cultural right of humankind. At the same time, we have to support and give a voice to diversity: the diversity of peoples and cultures is a treasure which benefits all humankind. As I said earlier: globalisation can be a threat to culture, especially when it leads to - as I call it - the "economisation" of different areas of daily life. So we have to do what we can through our programmes to foster the dialogue between cultures and to offer platforms where people can present their views.

Erik Bettermann is the Director General of Deutsche Welle, Germany.

Is Globalisation Opposed to Cultural Diversity? The Choices Before Us

Manfred Kops

In economic terms, globalisation is the (special) expansion of markets, the transformation of small, local, regional, or national markets into supra-national, preferably world-wide, markets. New technologies and institutional and political changes have promoted globalisation. With the onset of digitalisation technologies, the media markets have been globalised rapidly and will continue to be globalised further.

Globalisation: Higher Efficiency - Higher Welfare

This expansion of the markets increases the optimal output of media companies, decreases the minimum average cost of media products (e.g. per newspaper copy or per television programme hour/viewer), thus raising both the media consumers' surplus and the media companies' profits. For the successfully globalised media companies and for the countries where these companies reside, globalisation also means higher turnovers, higher profits, and new jobs.

From this perspective globalisation is a positive and legitimate strategy to the benefit of companies and customers. Promoters of free trade, like the World Trade Organisation (WTO), therefore support attempts to treat the media and audiovisual industry like other industries for which the WTO rules for the protection and expansion of worldwide free trade are valid: the General Agreement on Tariffs (GAT) and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

However, the media have some economic peculiarities. The most important one is that there are no incremental costs of additional consumption of the same product, i.e. once a first copy exists, additional users can be supplied without additional costs. For programme producers and broadcasters this implies the risk that high first copy costs cannot be refinanced if the audience of a programme is too small; it also includes the possibility of high profits once a programme has passed the break-even number of viewers.

Table 1 illustrates this by means of a hypothetical example. If the production of a television programme costs $4 million, the costs per viewer are $4 if one million viewers watch the programme. With two million viewers, the cost per viewer is $2;

with four million viewers the cost is $1; with 10 million viewers it is $0.40, etc. If the revenues per viewer (either from pay TV or from commercials) are $1, with one million viewers, the company will lose $3 million; with two million viewers, it will lose $2 million. The break-even point is reached with four million users (no loss, no profit), and thereafter, the profit increases progressively.

Table 1: **Consumption of TV Programmes Costs per Viewer Fall and Profits (Total Net Benefit) Increase**

TV Programme	Audience (in Mill)	Total Costs (in Mill $)	Costs per Viewer (in $)	Revenues per Viewer (in $)	Net Benefit per Viewer (in $)	Total Net Benefit (in Mill $)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	1	4	4,00	1,00	-3,00	-3
	2	4	2,00	1,00	-1,00	-2
	4	4	1,00	1,00	0,00	0
	10	4	0,40	1,00	0,60	6
	20	4	0,20	1,00	0,80	16
	100	4	0,04	1,00	0,96	96

More market power and more political power

With the globalisation of the media, media products per unit become cheaper and more competitive, thus benefiting companies through rising profits. However, this can also be to the benefit of the television viewers, if this results in smaller subscriptions or fewer commercials. On the other hand, the increasing output size of the media companies leads to a reduction in the number of media companies, i.e. fewer and fewer companies produce larger outputs (more newspaper copies, more television programme minutes, more websites etc.).

This trend towards concentration is inherent to the media industry, and it goes back to the earlier characteristics of media products. With the cost functions as shown in Figure 1, for a TV family drama for instance, the optimal output would be about 230 million television households in the year 2000; if the total world market for the programme type would consist of 1000 million television households, more than four broadcasters could share this market. With globalisation driven by technology and economics, the cost function in 2005 would have altered, with lower average costs and a larger size of the optimal output (of about 450 million television households). In 2005, less than three broadcasters would remain in the market (instead of more than four in the year 2000); in 2010, with even lower average costs and an even larger optimal output size (of 800 million television households), only one monopolistic broadcaster could serve the whole market!

As in other industries, such a concentration of suppliers has disadvantages for the consumers: oligopolistic and monopolistic corporations can abuse their market power as the competition between the suppliers is weaker than in perfect markets. Higher prices or/and lower quality may be the consequences for the media consumers. Furthermore - and differently from other products and services - concentration of ownership in the media industry has the additional, and probably even worse, consequence that economic power can be combined with journalistic and political power, as it enables the media companies to broadcast biased, non-balanced opinions by which the public can be manipulated to share particular attitudes, especially political opinions. The media then become central actors for the political system, both for authoritarian and for democratic states ("media democracies"). In spite of having this potentially influential role, media companies in most countries are not controlled by the public. As private companies they are considered no different from companies that sell cars, steel, or underwear.

Figure 1: Increasing Outputs, Decreasing Average Costs, and Concentration as Results of Digitalisation and Globalisation
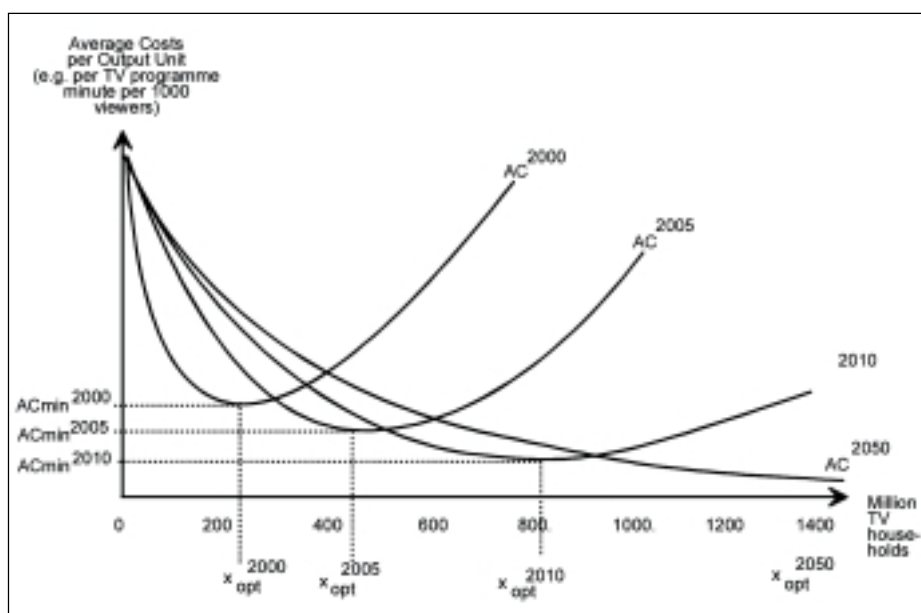
Concentration of ownership and unregulated economic and political influence of the media is substantially promoted by the globalisation of the media, especially as national authorities find it difficult to control global media players. The instruments to regulate and prevent concentration of media ownership have to be strengthened. Additionally, if a weak competition policy fails or if it intentionally accepts the high market power of a domestic media company in order to benefit from the above mentioned advantages (efficiency and higher competitiveness), these media companies should at least be controlled through public measures (e.g. reporting obligations, transparent ownership, prohibition of political sponsorship etc.).

Reduced diversity

There is another negative impact of the search for bigger and bigger audiences. It makes economic sense for any media company to focus on "mainstream content" which is, per unit, much cheaper than "minority content". The scale economies usually are so high that minority programmes for small audiences cannot compete with mainstream programmes, even if the willingness to pay for minority programmes is much higher. Table 2 illustrates this: "minority content" (e. g. a television report about a local event) with an audience of one million is crowded out by mainstream content (e. g. an international soccer game) with an audience of ten million viewers, even if the willingness to pay for the local report with $1 exceeds the willingness to pay for the soccer game at $0.50, and even if the production costs of the minority content is only 10 % ($1 million) of the costs of the mainstream content ($10 million)!

Table 2: Mainstream Programming as Economic Logic of the Media Industry

	Audience (in Mill)	Total Costs (in Mill $)	Costs per Viewer (in $)	Rev. per Viewer (in $)	Net Benefit per Viewer (in $)	Total Net Benefit (in Mill $)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Manistream Content	10	4,0	0,40	0,50	0,10	1,00
Minority Content	1	0,4	0,40	1,00	0,60	0,60

Globalisation intensifies this inherent tendency of "more of the same": When media markets expand, the audiences increase mainly for programming that was already popular even in the smaller regional and national markets, like sport events, movies, popular daily soaps, or international pop music. In contrast, programmes that were interesting only for minorities within the regional and national markets, like reports about local events, regional or national cultures, or programmes in local or regional dialects and locations, will not significantly expand their audiences when they are offered on wider, globalised markets.

Table 3: Intensified Mainstream Programming as Result of Globalisation

BG = before Globalisation AG = after Globalisation	Audience (in Mill)	Total Costs (in Mill $)	Costs per Viewer (in $)	Rev. per Viewer (in $)	Net Benefit per Viewer (in $)	Total Net Benefit (in Mill $)	First Mino- rity Progr. (Rank)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Manistream Content BG	10	4,0	0,40	0,50	0,10	1,00	1,7
Minority Content BG	1	0,4	0,40	1,00	0,60	0,60	
mainstream Content AG	100	8,0	0,08	0,50	0,42	42,00	4,6
Minority Content AG	10	0,8	0,08	1,00	0,92	9,20	

If we assume that the audience for mainstream content (e.g. a soccer match) increases from ten million to 100 million as a result of globalisation, and the audience for minority content (e.g. a local report) increases from one to ten million (see Table 3, column 2), the high economies of scale for the soccer match lead to a substantial increase of the broadcaster's total net benefit (from $ one million to $42 million, whereas the net benefit for the minority programme only rises from $0.6 million to $9.2 million (see column 7). Thus, globalisation further strengthens the economic profitability of mainstream programmes compared to minority programmes. In other words, "More of the same" (soccer) becomes even more profitable and, in the process of globalisation, minority programmes will fall further in economic ranking and programming priority.

Less diversity jeopardises public communication

The diminishing diversity of the media has negative effects for public communication, both within and between nations. Within a national framework, reduced diversity means smaller chances for minorities to articulate their choices and perspectives; the public discourse is dominated by mainstream thinking and by persons and communities who favour mainstream thinking. This can endanger the nation's stability, especially when extensive and intensive public communication within a nation is important for national coherence, justice and integration (e.g. when the nation's population consists of several sub-communities, e.g. by race, religion, ethnicity or income).

Diminishing diversity of the media also reduces the flexibility of a nation to adapt to a changing environment. Comparable to the biological diversity that is a central precondition for biota to adapt to a changing environment, the diversity of attitudes, views and proposed solutions is a central precondition for a society's capability to find appropriate and consensual solutions that become necessary as the economic, political, social, cultural, or institutional framework of a nation changes. An open, fair and diverse public communication, by means of the mass media, is an important vehicle to achieve this.

From this perspective, reduced diversity is to the disadvantage of all members of the national community. However, the disadvantages are not distributed evenly. Whereas the chances of minorities to present their views become less, mainstream groups and their attitudes gain a more prominent position. For the members of mainstream communities (e. g. of the largest racial, religious, ethnical, or political communities) it becomes easier to articulate and establish their positions. For minorities it becomes more probable that their chances to influence public communication will further diminish and that they would become marginalised. The same is true with regard to a nation's sub-communities, e.g. in a federal system. The local authorities of (and the citizens in) large regions and states further gain influence, and the local authorities of (and the citizens in) small authorities further lose influence.

Ways to enable public participation

It is necessary that mechanisms are designed to promote wide participation in public debate and discourse. Some NGOs have recognised this, and the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva in 2003 was a remarkable platform where the voices against the domination of market rules and commercial actors in public communication were articulated. For UNESCO, for instance, it was the starting point to elaborate an international Convention for the Protection of Cultural Diversity[1] which shall serve as a counterweight against the recent trend of commercialisation and globalisation of the media sector.

In general, there are two ways to ease the rules of the market. The first way is to **publicly regulate private media companies.** Commercial broadcasters can be obliged, for instance, to broadcast certain programmes in the public interest which are not profitable for them (and thus would not be provided according to the market rationale), but which increase the programme variety, e.g. programme windows for local minorities, small political parties, disabled people, ethnic or language groups etc.

They also could be obliged to provide certain special interest programmes (e.g. on local, religious or cultural issues). Regulations providing for open access to the distribution channels (e.g. must-carry rules for television cable networks) can weaken or bypass the logic of the market and ensure that minorities find the necessary opportunities to participate in public communication.

However, as the regulation of private media also offers opportunities to steer media content for political gain, care should be taken to ensure that the regulators are politically independent. Parliaments, and even governments, who necessarily have their own political objectives, can be bad regulators, as the experiences in many countries show. Several countries have, therefore, established politically independent regulation authorities.

Non-market financing is the second way to loosen the hold of economic forces and to ensure fair opportunities for all in public communication. In this case, the media companies, while maximising profit, are also obliged to fulfil non-profit missions - functions that maximise the interest of the public. Public service broadcasters are constructs of this kind. They are financed solely or dominantly by public revenues, e. g. by revenues from a receiving license fee, and they can be obliged to fulfil public interest i.e. provide a broad platform for public communication, including those groups who would otherwise be crowded out by economic rationales.

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[1] *http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php*

As public service broadcasters can also be abused for political purposes, precautions should be taken that the state and the government cannot interfere with the public service broadcasters programme decisions, especially regarding political contents of the programmes. As with the regulators of private media companies, the regulatory bodies of public service broadcasters should be politically independent.

Less media diversity jeopardises public communication between nations

The economic rationale that substitutes local content by regional content and regional content by national content, also substitutes the national content of small nations by the national content of large nations. The reduced diversity of the media and the diminished chances of small nations to publicly articulate their views and interests jeopardize international communication between nations. The consequences for public dialogue, for the coherence and integration of world society, and for the willingness to participate in international regimes are negative.

The two ways to ease the market rules already mentioned earlier - to regulate commercial broadcasters and/or run non-commercial broadcasters - also can be applied at the supra-national and international level. Commercial broadcasters can be regulated, e.g. to broadcast content of public interest which are not profitable to them (and therefore would not be provided according to the market rationale). Commercial broadcasters could also be obliged to provide programme windows for minorities, e.g. for "spatial minorities", bearing in mind that at the international level, not only local and regional communities, but also nations can be "spatial minorities". National news of small countries, or the expectations and requests to the international community of small and non-influential nations are thus minority content and, just as local and regional content may be crowded out from national markets, national content of small and unimportant nations may be crowded out from supra-national and international markets.

The absence of an enforceable international regulatory regime is a major reason why such international regulations for commercial broadcasters are not usually found in practice. As long as some nations do not agree on a unified regulatory regime and as long as some nations do not agree to enforce such a regime, broadcasters can easily avoid public service obligations by moving to those unregulated countries.

Non-market financing, the second way to release the media from economic compulsions, suffers from severe problems when it comes to practice. However, here we have to distinguish between two forms of non-market financing: state financing and financing from direct public funds for broadcasting. Most countries that afford national broadcasters with an international mission are closely bound to their governments, and they are financed from the states' budgets. This applies to the **Voice of America** and the **Voice of Russia,** both of whom are politically controlled and financed by state money. They can contribute to international public

communication and especially to international political communication, as they are not driven by the market. However, as it is primarily large and rich nations like the USA who can afford state-funded international broadcasting, their existing economic and political domination in the world is likely to be further intensified and supplemented through the activities of their state-funded broadcasters.

In practice there very few examples that fit into this approach. In Europe only **ARTE** and **3.sat** can be found as supra-national public service broadcasters, the first one focussing on an intensive public communication between Germany and France, the latter one focussing on an intensive public communication between Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. In other parts of the world similar stations exist, but like **ARTE** and **3.sat,** they usually are restricted to communication between two or three neighbour nations, often with similar historic roots or an identical national history. Public service broadcasters whose mission extends to a larger area or to a larger number of nations are rare.[2] Supra-national and international public service broadcasters are urgently needed as a counterweight to the growing influence of global commercial media companies.

Conclusions

Expansion of markets increases the optimal output of media companies, decreases the minimum average cost of media products (e.g. per newspaper copy or per television programme hour/viewer), and thus raises both the media consumers' surplus and the media companies' profits. For the successfully globalised media companies and for the countries where these companies are based, globalisation also means higher turnovers, higher profits and new jobs.

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[2] *An exception is Deutsche Welle, a German public service broadcaster that broadcasts only to countries outside Germany. According to §4 of the Deutsche-Welle-Gesetz, these programmes shall "present Germany as a European-grown cultural nation, and as a liberal constitutional state, and for German and other views it shall offer a platform for important themes, namely politics, culture and the economy, with the purpose to promote understanding and exchange of cultures and peoples." Translation by the author.*

Figure 2: Advantages and Disadvantages of Globalisation of Media
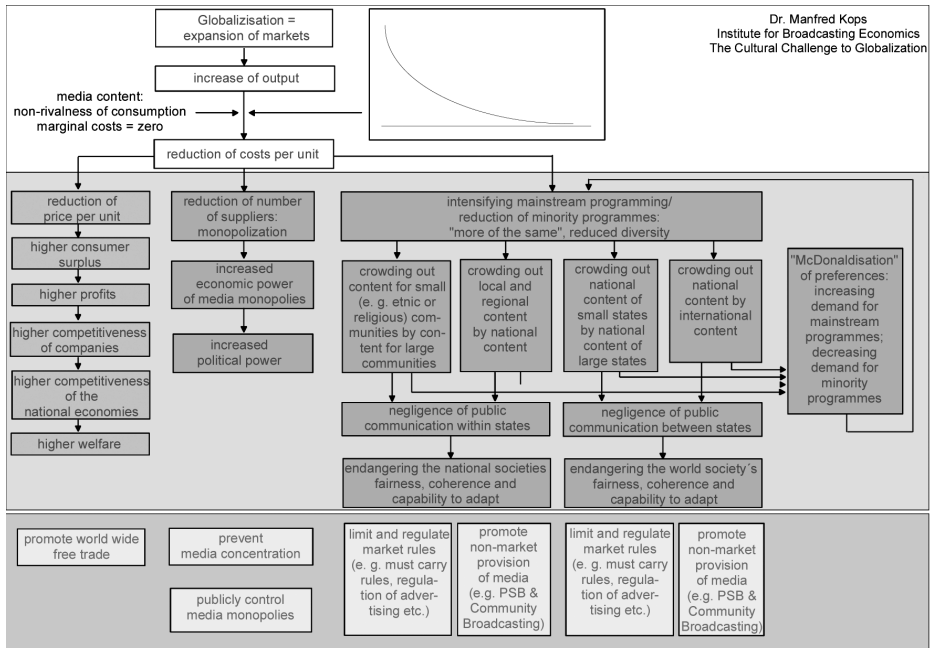
Figure 2 above summarises the different (partly positive, partly negative) effects of globalisation of the media. The overall evaluation is hard to state, and it will vary for countries where economic efficiency is most important, and countries where vibrant and diversified public communication is a central prerequisite for the healthy development of society.

Is globalisation necessarily opposed to cultural diversity? As an economist, I can definitely answer this question with a **'Yes'.** However, I also have to say, **'But'.** The first **but** refers to the positive consequences that have to be weighted against a reduced cultural diversity; the second **but** refers to the opportunities available to control economic logic by appropriate regulations and introduction of non-commercial players.

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Broadcasting, Diversity of Culture and Globalisation

Tian Jin

Confucius once said, "In human relationships, a gentleman seeks harmony but not uniformity." Here "harmony" refers to universalism while "not uniformity" relates to specific characteristics and differences. His saying proves that traditional Chinese culture stresses upon and respects diversified cultures. In the long history of humankind, various nationalities in different regions and countries have created unique and colourful cultures. The distinct characteristics of each different culture stand out through dialogue and exchanges. As various cultures discuss and exchange their differences, they also develop through this process and preserve their specific characteristics. The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity points out: "Cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature." In this sense, cultural diversity is the heritage of humankind, the foundation for progress of human society and the source of cultural creation and development.

We have also noticed the profound influence of economic globalisation on cultural diversity. On the one hand we have wider, more frequent communication among regions, countries and nationalities in the "global village". We may say it is economic globalisation that has given cultures wings to be free and cultures constantly gain new momentum through their sharing and mingling with other cultures.

Economic and cultural globalisation

On the other hand, in the process of economic globalisation, highly monopolized multinational conglomerates and the news and cultural entertainment products produced and distributed by global media systems under the control of a few countries, have dominated the cultural markets, especially those of the developing countries. The so-called "single cultural pattern", "universal cultural standard" and "cultural globalisation" represent in essence the cultural value of only a few countries. It weakens to a great extent the identity of ethnic cultures. Many developing countries are faced with this common issue.

The People's Republic of China has always maintained that economic globalisation does not mean political or cultural globalisation. We have to conform to the trend of economic globalisation and political pluralism. And we have to acknowledge and respect cultural differences to maintain the diversity of world civilisations. In this

way, we can achieve harmony and common development among different cultures in society, and promote common prosperity.

Asia has a long history - as well as brilliant cultures and rich and colourful natural and human resources. The continent is one of the most dynamic regions in the world, with the fastest economic growth. In recent years, Asian countries have united to deepen their regional multilateral cooperation and fostered their mutual trust to expand their common benefits and strengthen their ability to cope with the challenges of economic globalisation. At the same time, Asia is faced with such issues as how to protect and develop its ethnic cultures, and maintain and promote cultural diversity in Asia. As the most influential mass media, radio and television undoubtedly shoulder a primary role in the important task of maintaining cultural diversity.

China is a country covering 9.6 million square kilometres with 1.3 billion people belonging to 56 nationalities. The profound Chinese civilisation with a history of 5,000 years has made great contributions to human civilization and progress. In past years, Chinese broadcasters have been dedicated to promoting traditional culture, protecting ethnic culture, as well as developing an advanced culture. They have exerted their efforts to satisfy various cultural demands, as well as to promote international cultural exchanges, and to maintain and advocate cultural diversity.

Promoting tradition and local culture

One major guideline for programming for the radio and television stations in China is "priority of traditional culture". In programme production, we aim to blend the essence of ethnic culture into each segment of our programming. We have launched a series of channels, frequencies and programme slots that are devoted to traditional Chinese morality, arts and culture, as well as local practices and customs. The cultural channels and programme slots featuring the traditional Peking Opera and local operas as their main content introduce and popularise traditional culture and art, and help to protect and develop the "quintessence" of the national culture. Moreover, television stations at the national, provincial, city and county levels are broadcasting China-made television drama series on prime time in order to encourage and promote local culture. This has greatly promoted the creation and production of drama series highlighting local themes, and they have enjoyed popular reception by the audience.

Satisfy various cultural demands

In recent years, China's GDP has gained constant growth and living standards of the people have been rising steadily along with the decline of the Engle Coefficient. With that, the cultural demands of the 1.3 billion people have become more diversified and personalised. China's broadcast media have to face the challenge of

protecting and promoting cultural diversity. We focus on producing content more aligned and pertinent to various social sectors, actively conduct research to aid the specialization of our television channels, and push forward for digital television and pay television to meet the diversified and personalized cultural requirements of the audience.

At the same time we constantly perfect the public service system of radio and television. In 1998, we started the project of "Every Village Having Access to Radio and Television" to enhance the coverage of the rural and remote regions by radio and television. The population coverage by radio and television has now reached 96% and 95% respectively. The gap of cultural communication and information divide among different regions and social groups is narrowing gradually.

Special attention to national minorities

China is a country of many nationalities and languages. Protecting the diverse ethnic languages is a basic requirement for protecting cultural diversity. The radio and television stations at the central level and in the autonomous regions all have programmes in ethnic languages, which cover the population of national minorities. For instance, China National Radio, as a national broadcaster, airs daily programmes in Mongolian, Uygur, Tibetan, Korean and Kazak languages. These programs meet the fundamental demands and needs of various national minorities - featuring their own cultural content in their own languages.

International exchange and cooperation

China has established cooperative relationships with international broadcasters and organisations, including those in Asia. We have maintained constant exchanges and cooperation with many of them in programming, technology and personnel. Every year we import a large quantity of film and television programmes of various themes from different countries and regions to enrich the choice of the people for cultural products and to introduce advanced, rich and diversified cultures of the world to the Chinese people.

At the same time we also introduce the excellent culture of the Chinese nation to people around the world through the important cultural conduit of radio and television. China Radio International airs about 300 hours of programmes in 38 foreign languages every day. The International Channel and the English, Spanish and French Channels of China Central Television have been carried by broadcasters in more than 100 countries. Chinese film and television products have achieved good overseas marketing and sales results, especially via television networks in Southeast Asia and East Asia.

Chinese culture has made its own contribution to the development of world cultures. In addition, the development and continuous progress of Chinese culture is also an outcome of the constant assimilation from the rich cultures of other regions, countries and nationalities.

Asia is our common homeland. The colourful Asian culture created by the Asian countries and nationalities is our common treasure. Today, in the context of economic globalisation, as well as the steadily growing concern for protection of cultural diversity, it is very important for Asian broadcasters to foster exchange and proactively cooperate. We must do our part to foster wider and profound dialogues and exchanges as part of the world media. We can make an important contribution to the protection and promotion of diversified cultures, as well as to the prosperity of Asia and the world at large.

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What is at Stake for Television Archives?

Emmanuel Hoog

I shall discuss here regarding television and radio archives, which are our audiovisual heritage, a "monument" that bears witness to the last sixty years of our history, the diversity of our cultures and the evolution of our society. Broadcast archives have a full part to play in the debate on globalisation and cultural identity.

Television (or radio) is not just an industry. It **makes history** and reflects our cultures, and the archives are where all of this is carefully retained. There is a vast amount of archive material produced by or for television that deserves to be passed on to future generations.

I would like to give you an example that is particularly close to my heart. The audiovisual archives from Afghanistan, mainly television archives, survived the Taliban era hidden behind a brick wall. For the last three years, France has been helping Afghan TV to restore and digitise this archive material. Today, young Afghans are discovering what their country was like before the Taliban, thanks to those archives. Once restored, these programmes can be broadcast.

Audiovisual archives are one of the key repositories of the **memory** and **cultural identity of different nations.** That is why the issue of archives is an integral part of the discussion on media, globalisation and cultural identity.

A vast heritage under threat

Audiovisual archives make up a colossal heritage - 200 million hours of audio and video programmes according to UNESCO estimates - and this heritage is under threat. Every day, archives are disappearing. In ten years, or at best in fifteen, it will be too late to save them!

The **dangers** are many:
- the first danger is the **fragile nature of the media involved:** in most cases only a single copy of the programme is kept. Videotapes deteriorate, and film does too (vinegar syndrome)
- old format **playback equipment,** such as the two-inch VTR, is no longer manufactured, and spare parts are not available

- **poor climatic conditions,** particularly in the tropics, accelerate the deterioration of archive media. Archives do not like humidity, or dust, or heat
- **wars** put at risk images, which are one of the main targets of the warring parties: they are confiscated or even destroyed, as happened in Cambodia
- negligence and a lack of cataloguing make it impossible to use archives since **their content is unknown.**

These dangers are more or less the same everywhere, in Paris and New York, Kabul and Beijing. And yet, do we really want to live in a world with no archives and therefore, no memory?

An invaluable heritage

As soon as archives are accessible, in other words preserved, documented and digitised, demand for them soars. This is the surest way of determining the value of archives.

For **broadcasters,** their archives are **one of the company assets.** Using archives, editorial staff can put today's events in perspective, producers can make historical documentaries, programme schedulers can fill gaps in the schedules with rebroadcasts, and managers can diversify the company's activities by creating themed channels and Internet sites and publishing videos.

In addition to these aspects, which are normal activities of broadcasters, it is clear that there is another responsibility at stake, the responsibility to make our collective memory available to everyone (here I am thinking in particular of schools, universities and researchers) to preserve and to pass on to future generations. This responsibility must be shared by broadcasters and the public authorities.

Globalisation an advantage for archives

Globalisation can be a good development for archives.

We may deplore the way news images are becoming increasingly uniform, in particular, images of major international events (e.g. the death of Pope John-Paul II) or natural disasters (the tsunami), and we may fear that our screens are being overtaken by the same types of programmes due to market strategies (Dallas syndrome). But **redundancy** has its advantages too. It offers countries the opportunity of recovering archives that have been lost (e.g. INA, the French institute responsible for the national radio and television archives, was asked by its Spanish television colleagues for the pictures of the coup d'état in the Cortes) or confiscated (e.g. the archives from the colonial period) or destroyed (e.g. in Cambodia).

What strikes me today is that all the archives in the world, in Japan and Korea just as in France, Italy and the United States, are faced with the same technological developments and the **same issues:** preservation, selection, access and the advent

of digital technology, which has forced us to stop and think again, in terms of both technology and archive management. Archives that are not transferred to a digital medium will be lost a second time because it will become impossible to use them. **Migration** is the only way. What technological choices should we make? How should we organise the migration of archived programmes? How should we reorganise archive collection, storage and access procedures?

Since all broadcasters are being faced with the same issues, they can share knowledge and good practices and work together to find the solutions. Our salvation lies in cooperation and international action. Paradoxically, it is through joint, globalised action that archivists will acquire the resources and means to ensure the proper preservation of their country's own identity and heritage.

In favour of joint action

We must not remain isolated. I would like to recommend a few specific areas in which we can cooperate:

- **technical cooperation,** through major applied research projects such as **PrestoSpace,** a project supported by the European Union that brings together around thirty different partners such as archives, universities and technical service providers.
- bilateral cooperation and **sponsorship,** which I have touched on earlier when discussing the revival of archival material in **Afghanistan.**
- joining the **International Federation of Television Archives (FIAT/IFTA),** the top professional organisation in the world of television archives. IFTA brings together the world's biggest archive centres and top experts, and they are all determined to advance the cause of archives. It was IFTA, for example, that last October launched an appeal to save the world's audiovisual heritage, an appeal that has already collected some 8,000 signatures in 87 countries and that will be officially presented to the United Nations.

Broadcasters are in the front line...

In conclusion, I would like to urge all the region's **broadcasters to preserve their archives** and emphasise how vital it is that they assume responsibility for this role. They hold a major part of the world's cultural archives. I know that it is not always easy to give **priority to archives**; nevertheless, we need to start working with them now. If we wait, it will be too late...

I hope broadcasters will give particular recognition to the irreplaceable role of archives as the guarantor of cultural identity of the nations of the world.

Emmanuel Hoog is the President and Director General of the National Audiovisual Institute, France, and President of the International Federation of Television Archives.

Culture and Language in a Globalised World

A. Mohajerani

The word culture stems from the Latin "colore", meaning "to build on, to cultivate, to foster". Thinkers like Voltaire, Hegel, Kant, Freud , Aderno, Marcuse have reflected on the meaning of the word in different versions of its use. In the early stages of the philosophical debate about what is culture, the term often referred to the opposite of nature, whereas culture referred to something constructed consciously by human beings.

When we talk about global culture we essentially refer to those cultural elements which shape the common way of life of human communities, through the process of globalisation. By globalisation we relate to the "rapid means by which goods, people and information are transported on a worldwide basis".

A global culture

We are then faced with two questions:
Is there a global culture? Is a global culture desirable?

It is true that all of us in every country see and feel the indicators of global culture, like Coca Cola, Pizza, Macdonalds, Time and Newsweek magazines, BBC, CNN, Hollywood cinema, pop music, Internet and so on. Some thinkers believe globalisation has also brought about what has been called *"macdonaldization"* of societies, most notably through the entry of cultural products like fast food. Multinational corporations promote a certain kind of consumerist culture, in which standard commodities promoted by global marketing campaigns exploiting basic material desires, create similar lifestyle"Coca-Colanization". Is this another face of the coin of *"Americanization"?* And, is this global culture desirable?

Language and worldview

Each language reflects a distinctive culture and a worldview. Through language we cry, we explain our ideas and ideals, we communicate our needs. We need a clean and sustainable environment; but more importantly, each human being needs to feel and communicate love, kindness and compassion. However, our world - this common house - is full of violence and we are all victims living in this vicious circle.

It is only through language that we can express and explain our pain. Hulderlin says, "Language is the house of thought" where our worldview is articulated. A symbolic abstract language is the dominant sign of a culture and the language of any group is directly connected to the worldview of the group.

Humbold wrote regarding language: " the difference in languages is not a difference in sounds and signs, but a difference in worldview." The most well-known theory stemming from this is the Sapir-Whorf theory: "The real world is to a large extent unconsciously built on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels. It is also important to note that language, just as every other of the cultural determinants, is a dynamic entity that evolves and changes with time. For example, in Arabic, more than 600 words were once known to describe "camel"; but today, most of these words have disappeared.

UN officials asked the delegations to the United Nations to specify in which language they would prefer to receive correspondence and publications. They had to choose between the official languages of the United Nations: English, French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Arabic. 130 nations chose English, 36 picked French, 19 preferred Spanish. This means that representatives of 97 percent of the earth's population picked English. This indicates that most of us have to accept that we must think and talk in this global language.

What can we do to protect the rich diversity of our world's languages, identities and world views?

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Freedom of Expression and Media Ownership

Access to Information in the Information Society

Khieu Kanharith

The emergence of a networked knowledge society in the next twenty to thirty years is a major paradigm shift from the industrial model of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This transition is of crucial importance in opening up new opportunities for education, social inclusion, and more efficient use of resources. It also redefines the link and relationships between people, nations and religions. Low cost access to networks - fibre, cable, wireless and satellite - can empower creativity, innovation and local entrepreneurship, as well as strengthen local communities, and improve resource-productivity by occasioning more value from less.

Role of ASEAN

The ASEAN Joint Statement at the World Summit on Information Society in Geneva 2003 made it very clear that:

"the primary aim of the Information Society must be to facilitate full utilization of ICT at all levels in society and hence enable the sharing of social economic benefits by all, by means of ubiquitous access to information networks, while preserving diversity and cultural heritage".

For this purpose, in the year 2000, ASEAN Heads of Government signed the e-ASEAN Framework Agreement to enable the region to benefit from the opportunities offered by the revolution in information and communication technologies (ICT) and to promote cooperation to develop, strengthen and enhance the competitiveness of ICTs in ASEAN; reduce the digital divide within individual ASEAN economies and among members countries as well as between the public and private sectors; to realise the e-ASEAN vision; and to liberalise trade and investment in ICT to support the e-ASEAN initiative.

Cambodia and ICTs

For new members like Cambodia, access to ICTs is challenged on many fronts, but primarily on human capacity building and regulations on Internet governance. The Royal Government of Cambodia's (RGC) top priority is to use ICTs, including broadcast media, to serve and to meet day-to-day needs of the people. These advancements

should also become an efficient means for the public to exercise their right to get information on decisions made by the government and the conduct of government business in accordance with the principles of transparency and good governance. In the long run, the introduction of decentralisation as part of the government's administrative reform efforts will require the increasing use of ICTs to link communes and local communities with the city in order to promote efficient management and timely exchange of necessary information.

A major challenge to this goal is the copyright issue. With each technological advance it is important to find the most effective way to protect the creator's works, but also to seek fair balance between its protection, the stimulation of intellectual creativity and the public's lawful access to protected works. As we know today, ICTs have radically changed the way information and services are circulated, and have also changed the way protected works are accessed and used. Nonetheless, for young societies, and in many poor countries around the world, stricter implementation of copyright issues means that vulnerable groups like rural poor and women will have no access to the knowledge that communication revolution is supposed to bring in. With this spirit I would like all of your suggestions to find a balanced solution to this dilemma.

We all know that ICTs are just a "tool for development" and not a "reward for development" as the Club of Rome rightly points out. And we know too that today discoveries or technological progress are not the work of a lone scientist or researcher but the result of collective work. The same applies to human development and social harmony. We need to coordinate our efforts and share the fruits of knowledge to make this century an era of peace and cooperation.

The Honourable Khieu Kanharith is the Minister of Information, Royal Government of Cambodia.

Media Concentration and the Impact on Quality

Aidan White

This should be a golden age for journalism. We have the technology. We have the professionals and creators to deliver high quality services. And we have a great hunger among people for reliable, timely and useful information. But this is no glittering era for media. Everywhere, there is the increasing perception that media fail to carry out their watchdog role in society.

Is this because politicians don't want to let go of the controls over media or it is because the vested interests of the increasingly global media industry have lost all sense of mission in the single-minded pursuit of market share and commercial gain?

Certainly, confidence in media among readers, viewers, listeners and users of information is at an all-time low. Among journalists, too, the morale is low. This developing crisis of confidence leads to less challenging journalism and less risk taking in programme-making. In spite of all the talk of more channels and more choice, the market models are uniform, and the content models are depressingly copy-cat from country to country and continent to continent.

As a result, pluralism and diversity, the cornerstones of democracy and cultural values, are weakened. Therefore, it is not surprising that there is a growing debate about how to put quality back into media and about curbing the influence of an increasingly powerful corporate elite.

Need to support media's special role

We should begin by reiterating that well established if oft-forgotten policy that media products are not like other economic products - they have a social, cultural and democratic value that makes them special within market conditions. The argument goes that the media market itself cannot protect pluralism and diversity. People - all the people - need information services outside the market imperatives of ratings, profits and commercial objectives.

But why is it that politicians (at least those who do not directly own media organisations) are so reluctant to put in place policies and rules to support these principles?

In Europe, parliamentarians are angry that 13 years after a Green Paper on pluralism and media concentration in the internal market was published, the European Commission remains stubbornly opposed to any proposal to set limits on the power of media owners. In fact, the European Union has bowed to ferocious lobbying by international media organisations, who resist rules to protect pluralism and to strengthen cultural diversity. Even more, they want to dismantle completely the commitment to public service that has hitherto driven broadcasting policy. Last year private broadcasters and European publishers launched a full-blooded attack on the very idea of publicly-funded media, rejecting the core notion of public service values in media.

In France, big business, including the defence industry, is grabbing chunks of the French media market, thus raising fears for the future of editorial independence.

In Britain the BBC, under pressure from the government and private media, is cutting almost 4,000 jobs in a desperate attempt to fend off criticism about its privileged status as a public broadcaster.

In Italy, the Prime Minister, whose political and commercial interests dovetail into one dangerous agenda for pluralism, has a stranglehold on both the private and public broadcasting media.

In the United States, the big media players bought political influence in Congress, which secured the passing of the 1996 Telecommunications Act allowing a small number of media corporations to expand into dominant positions in the US market. Deregulation has not only boosted the commercial power of companies like AOL Time Warner, Viacom, Disney, but it also gives them political power. They have demanded even greater relaxation of rules on media ownership, spending enormous sums - more than one billion dollars in recent years according to the Centre for Public Integrity - on political donations and lobbying key politicians.

The consequences - both in Europe and North America - are a handful of powerful global media groups exercising increasing control of the expanding media and leisure market spanning film, television, book publishing, music, new online media, theme parks, sport, the print media and even the theatre.

The trend towards ever-larger media groups is presented as an inevitable part of the development of the media sector. Complacent legislators argue that the increase in the number of channels, the arrival of digital media, and convergence of broadcasting, computing and telecommunications technologies, makes media concentration and cross-media ownership rules obsolete.

I am not so sure.

Media under attack

The competition for market share is driving down standards and cutting deep into the fabric of quality journalism. Wherever I travel to meet with my members, the message is uniformly grim: professionalism is under attack, working conditions and employment rights are being reduced. Across Europe and North America some of the world's most powerful media employers are slashing editorial budgets, they are cutting back on training and on investigative reporting.

The shift in employment conditions tells the story most dramatically. As many as a half of all journalists working in Germany, Europe's largest media market, are freelance or in casual employment. They have precarious working conditions and almost no control over the use and re-use of their work because of draconian contracts that wrest control of copyrights from authors and creators.

If you want to know the extent of the crisis, just ask the journalists of Hungary where there is not a single fully employed journalist at work. Not one. They are all denied access to social benefits and rights that used to be taken for granted in a well-regulated labour market. When the fabric of employment rights is ripped to shreds, there is a profound weakening of professionalism.

But is it all bad news? Not really.

People fight back

The Republican-dominated Federal Communications Commission got a shock in 2004 when they introduced relaxation of ownership rules on behalf of media owners. The public rose up and angrily tossed them back.

Tellingly, in spite of the Republican administration being there for years and in spite of the enormous power of media conglomerates lobbying hard for deregulation and for more concentration - local communities in the US flatly refused to accept more media concentration.

Across metropolitan USA, coalitions of civil society groups, including unions, civil liberties groups and local communities, combined to mobilise public opinion against changes in ownership as people threw out the attempt to strengthen the hand of big media in local media markets. Rejected by people on the ground, the changes were formally abandoned in January 2005. It was a tremendous victory for citizen's power and clear evidence that people want to protect pluralism. But this was not reported widely in the media.

While in the United States there are some grounds of optimism, in Europe and elsewhere the situation is getting progressively worse. In the years since the fall of Communist regimes in central and Eastern Europe, the encroachments by Western

media groups have prevented or made difficult the development of independent or nationally-based media groups in these countries.

Governments seem to be in retreat from long-held commitments to ensure that strong regulation plays its role in protecting and developing media. In Asia, as new markets open, the challenge to governments will be to resist the temptation to maintain political influence on media while creating a framework for a public-private mix that offers pluralism and quality in equal measure.

Pre-conditions for quality in media

It is time to stop back-tracking and start coming forward in defence of strategies that respect culture and diversity, give priority to public service values and encourage quality journalism.

Quality requires some minimum conditions:

• The citizen's right to information

• Open and accountable government

• Action to enhance pluralism by supporting diversity in media

• Endorsement of the ethical and professional rights of journalists

• Support for editorial independence.

All of these demands, buttressed by decent pay and conditions and respect for the right to organise in journalism, provide an agenda for change that is urgently needed to reinvigorate the landscape of journalism and media worldwide.

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Media, Democracy and the War on Terror

Ian Morrison

Those of us who care about the role of the media in fostering democracy share the idea that in order to participate in a democratic society, citizens need access to reliable information about important matters that affect their lives. Michael Oakeshott once said that "in history, as in the law, there are no facts. There is only what the evidence obliges us to believe." Citizenship in a democratic society, then, requires access to *diverse* sources of reliable information and opinion. In the words of the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, "diversity is an opportunity for growth and development".

Friends of Canadian Broadcasting is a citizens' broadcasting watchdog group and one of our priorities is to foster links with groups in other countries who share our values. This is one reason we appreciate so much our association with AIBD and its diverse membership.

Opinion and manipulation

There is a fine line between opinion and manipulation. If I know that I am being exposed to manipulation from a variety of points of view, but I can recognise it and put it in context, then I will be less concerned about it. Governments often seek to manipulate citizens through media. So do powerful corporations. They both have the means to command editorial attention. And their dominance of the news crowds out less powerful interests who are trying to reach the public.

This is why public affairs, some call it current affairs, programmes are so important in a civil society. They get behind the news. They provide context, they question assumptions and expose 'spin'. They can also offer a voice to less powerful interests.

The term "War on Terror" deserves scrutiny. George Lakoff is a linguistics professor at the University of California, Berkeley with expertise in dissecting manipulative phrases. I'd like to quote him on the "War on Terror":

"Terror is a general state, and it's internal to a person. Terror is not the person we're fighting, the "terrorist." The word terror activates your fear, and fear activates the strict father model, which is what conservatives want. The "war on terror" is not about stopping you from being afraid, it's about making you afraid.

"Next, "war." How many terrorists are there - hundreds? Sure. Thousands? Maybe. Tens of thousands? Probably not. The point is, terrorists are actual people, and relatively small numbers of individuals, considering the size of our country and other countries. It's not a nation-state problem. War is a nation-state problem." [1]

Who are the terrorists?

We all know that "terror" has a long history, from ancient times and across cultures. "Liberté, egalité, fraternité" was formed in a cauldron which included "terreur". Terror keeps bad company: it can be linked to organised violence against specific social, ethnic, or religious groups; to racism, slavery, and genocide. One person's terrorist cell can be another's national liberation movement. The Irish, Israeli and Kenyan fighters against British colonialism have been called terrorists, as have the Fenians who raided what is now Canada from bases in the United States during the period of the American Civil War.

Writing in the **Jamaican Gleaner** recently, Gwynne Dyer noted that:

"Adolf Hitler has now been dead slightly longer than he was alive, and he is about to stop being real. So long as the generation whose lives he terrorised is still with us, he remains a live issue, but the 60th anniversary of his death on April 30 is the last big one that will be celebrated by those who survived his evil and knew his victims. By the time the 75th anniversary comes around, they will almost all be gone. And then Hitler will slip away into history."

"You don't think that could happen? Consider the way we now treat the "Corsican ogre", Napoleon Bonaparte.... Nobody seems particularly perturbed by the fact that his wars caused the deaths of about four million people.... Europeans actually stood about the same chance of dying as a result of Napoleon's actions at the height of his power in 1808 as they did from Hitler's actions in 1943 - and Napoleon has been forgiven by history." [2]

So, while the phrase "media independence" can stand on its own two feet, the "War on Terror" is a manipulative image whose spin-doctor is the President of the United States. I seek not to diminish the horror of 9/11, but to place it into a larger, and historical, context. We need tools to analyse these words. A variety of trusted and authoritative media can help. It brings to mind Shashi Tharoor's call to "make the world safe for diversity".

In her 2003 Nobel Lecture, Shirin Ebadi said:

"In the past two years, some states have violated the universal principles and laws of human rights by using the events of 11 September and the war on international

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[1] *http://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2004/08/25_lakoff.shtml*

[2] *http://www.jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20050429/cleisure/cleisure4.html*

terrorism as a pretext.... Regulations restricting human rights and basic freedoms, special bodies and extraordinary courts, which make fair adjudication difficult and at times impossible, have been justified and given legitimacy under the cloak of the war on terrorism."

"The concerns of human rights' advocates increase when they observe that international human rights laws are... violated in Western democracies, in other words countries which were themselves among the initial codifiers of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is in this framework that, for months, hundreds of individuals who were arrested in the course of military conflicts have been imprisoned in Guantanamo, without the benefit of the rights stipulated under the international Geneva conventions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the [United Nations] International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights." [3]

The "War on Terror" has another insidious influence on media. It diverts attention from other important topics. I come from Toronto, which was a centre of the SARS epidemic two years ago. At the height of that crisis, Canadian viewers were deprived of timely news about an extremely relevant new development in Hong Kong. This happened because the Hong Kong correspondent of CBC, our national public broadcaster, had been shipped to Baghdad.

In Canada, several media (though not all) have done a good job of providing skeptical coverage of the United States government spin on the Iraq war - a war which most Canadians have opposed from the outset.

In the US, however, as Richard Sambrook of the BBC has said, the mainstream media tend to be one-sided. He called them "patriotic". The magic word "terrorism" seems to have blown away their much-vaunted independence and introduced a fear of dissent not seen since the McCarthy era. The only media dissent seems to appear in the form of comedy. For example, on Jon Stewart's nightly segment called "Mess-O'Potamia", the Iraq war policy is subject to sustained ridicule. Stewart's Daily Show on CNN carries "fake" news that appears more truthful and twice as popular as CNN's own "real" news.

This may begin to change now that a Gallup poll in May 2005 has found that 57% of Americans have come to view the Iraq war as a costly mistake.

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[3] *http://nobelprize.org/peace/laureates/2003/ebadi-lecture-e.html*

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Freedom of Expression vs Media Monopolies

Kumar Abeysinghe

In his speech delivered to Friends of the Constitution as far back as 1791, Maximilian Robespierre made this famous statement in defence of freedom of expression:

"Freedom of the press is inseparable from freedom of expression. Both are sacred like nature. Freedom is necessary as is society. Freedom of the press must be complete and unlimited or it does not exist."

This man, who was among the first resolute supporters of press freedom, was beheaded three years later along with nineteen others. He was condemned by the very press he fought for as a 'loathsome man', 'traitor' and 'evil-doer.'

It is even stranger that, after a lapse of four centuries after Robespierre's death, we are still raising similar doubts about citizens' untrammeled right to freedom of expression. This is in spite of the fact that today we live within a sophisticated media environment. Many questions are being debated: Are the media just another business? Can media owners give people a voice and prosper? Can citizens give media owners a voice and benefit from the dialogue? Can the market place thrive while practising responsibility and ethics? What happens when professional ethics clash with commercial or political interests?

Concerns expressed through these questions are undoubtedly posing threats to even mature democracies with free market economies. Meanwhile, in democracies in lesser developed countries with free market economies, one can see that these issues are still in the formative stage.

Right to information

It appears that the struggle for freedom of expression and freedom of the press still continues and has taken a different turn, adding new dimensions to the problem. Today, the struggle is not against autocratic leaders or despots who want to have total control of the media. As Thomas Blanton of the George Washington University suggests, history will probably call the ten years from the collapse of the Soviet Union to the destruction of the World Trade Center Twin Towers, as the 'Decade Of Openness'. This is the period when social movements around the world used the

opportunity to demand democratic and responsive governments. As a result, some 45 countries have enacted formal statutes guaranteeing their citizens the right to information. In spite of these legislative interventions by democracies the world over in response to the pressure brought upon them by civil society, journalists associations and international organisations on human rights, doubts still remain whether people can exercise their right to communicate without hindrance and whether their views get reflected in the media.

According to the annual report by Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF), press freedoms in Asia's democracies and dictatorships alike suffered in 2004. The region's independent media continued to be dogged by violence and censorship: 16 of the 53 journalists killed worldwide in 2004 died in Asia (excluding Iraq). Added to this, with the collapse of the socialist system and the expansion of the neo-liberal economic philosophy fuelled by the globalisation process, the earlier configuration of the Media - State - Citizen partnership has been or is in the process of being replaced by a Media - Corporate - Consumer partnership shattering the hopes of the crusaders of media freedom.

The evolution of media ownership is a story of the struggle for freedom of expression against the vested interest of media ownership, be it state or corporate. The press was deemed necessary as a source of information that would enable citizens to democratically participate in public affairs. In practice, during the nineteenth century the press was often partisan in providing support or opposition to existing regimes. In the late nineteenth century, the state increasingly intruded into the public sphere and used the press as an instrument of political indoctrination. Later we find corporate entities taking control of both the state and the media to promote their own interests.

Media superpowers

Advertising has became a crucial component of mass communication. In some countries we often find the state wielding the big stick against media by controlling access to government advertising, in order to make them amenable to the government. The cumulative result of all these factors is a crisis in the public sphere and threat to democracy. Today, the global commercial media system is dominated by a small number of super-powerful, mostly US-based transnational media corporations. It is a system that works to advance the cause of the global market and promotes commercial values while denigrating professional journalism and cultures not conducive to the immediate bottom-line corporate interest.

The global media system is now dominated by the first tier of nine giant firms. Behind these, you find the second tier of some three or four dozen media firms. In short, the overwhelming majority of the world's film production, television show productions, cable channel ownership, cable and satellite system ownership, print publishing and music production is provided by these 50 or so companies. By any standard, such a concentration of media power is "troubling, if not unacceptable".

We can see how electronic conglomerates are attempting to control vast sectors of the information and the entertainment industries and even the Internet is not exempt. These developments are part of a new configuration of techno-capitalism which combines new technologies with neo-capitalist forms of economic organisation. Critics observe that:

"The resulting new media experience which is primarily 'Imagistic' (grounded in image production and proliferation) is producing new forms of experience 'culture and hegemony'. In this image culture, reality is effaced and media constitute a new realm of 'hyper real' experience where images replace reality and the distinction between reality and 'unreality' blurs."

This leads us to the question of whether democratic ideals such as freedom of expression, pluralism, diversity of cultures, media ethics, good journalism can coexist with commercialised media targeting consumers rather than citizens. Marketing rules on capturing audiences, and thus market share, dominate the media business and democratic cultural standards of communication become the least concern. Putting forward a pessimistic view, some argue that democracy has clearly become subordinate to capitalism in the current system of commercial media. They say that in a society where the means of communication are concentrated in powerful corporations, the access of minority oppositional or alternative views is denied or limited. Several studies done on this issue also have shown that the opinion spectrum presented is severely limited and that many groups and individuals are denied access and thereby freedom of expression.

Douglas Kellner, Professor of Philosophy at University of Texas, Austin, in his book **TV and the Crisis of Democracy,** comments:

"The large number of important stories published in the 1980s by the investigative press and ignored by mainstream media leads me to conclude that we have two media systems in USA : the mainstream capitalist media which tend to be working with and indeed are part of the existing power structure and, in contrast, the investigative media which maintain the honorable tradition of a free and independent press... Mainstream media are primarily commercial media focussed on profit and the Bottom Line as well as the existing power structure".

Lowest common denominator

There are also contradictions between the nature and the purpose of commercial media, on the one hand, and the democratic social order, on the other hand. Commercial media networks maximise audiences by offering non-controversial programmes to keep away from offending people and by following a least objectionable programme philosophy that leads to 'Lowest Common Denominator' programming which, in seeking a mass audience, avoids challenging that audience.

In addition, there are contradictions between democracy and the advertising that sustains media networks. Advertising seeks to show that people can resolve their problems by purchasing something. It contains the images that celebrate the society as it is rather than stirring up people to political action or social participation. Democracy however thrives in controversy and requires participation in social process. These developments are not only at the global level; similar signs are visible in the local media scene in our countries in Asia. With liberalisation of the media sector, audiences were initially happy to see the diversity of programming and more balanced news reporting in private media. But, as the proliferation of television and radio stations was unsustainable, we could see programming tending to the lowest common denominator.

Contrary to the expectation of media becoming more independent, a partisan approach could be seen even among the private media. If not for the breed of the few old school journalists struggling to uphold professional standards of journalism, by now even the print media would have been totally subjugated to the will of the owners. But the hopeful sign in our countries is the emergence of an alternative press. Though few in number their impact is felt.

In conclusion, I quote Max Weber as I find in his statement both the question and answer to our dilemma:

"The question is how are freedom and democracy in the long run possible at all under domination of highly developed capitalism? Freedom and democracy are only possible where a resolute will of a nation not to allow itself to be ruled like sheep is permanently alive".

The answer lies within ourselves.

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Ethical Standards and Peace Journalism

Ethics of Journalism in Conflict Reporting

Drew McDaniel

Journalists are expected to educate and inform in their news reports, but they must be mindful of the fact that these news reports have consequences - they can also prompt destructive reactions. Indeed, news coverage is a crucial factor in war and peace; reports by journalists can be decisive either in shaping the course of violent events or in moving conflict toward peace. Media can indeed play important roles in minimising the intensity of conflict, but it is equally possible that inflammatory or misinformed news coverage can spark additional conflict and new cycles of violence. As technology brings more rapid intensive coverage, the problems of constructive reporting in conflicts have grown. Nevertheless, many journalists and scholars believe that the media must bear a responsibility to the conflict resolution process around the world. This informative and instructive role is vital, for as novelist Mary McCarthy[1] has written, "in violence we forget who we are."

What scholars think about conflict

Most scholars recognise that conflict is a part of being human, and efforts to entirely eliminate conflicts are not realistic. Conflict arises because of contrasting objectives and interests, or clashing belief systems that result from such sources as varied cultures and differing life experiences. Most troubling are conflicts that become intractable - conflicts that remain unresolved for long periods of time. As time passes, the intensity and destructiveness of conflicts are likely to rise as the parties become anxious and frustrated. Intractable conflict may involve multiple parties and issues typically are tangled in factors such as historical, religious, cultural, political, and economic issues[2]. Issues like these are at the core of human social existence and cannot be reconciled easily.

Researchers for a long time have focused energies on the topic of conflict because this subject represents one of humanity's most compelling problems. This has resulted in a mountain of findings about the nature and theory of conflict, most importantly on warfare. Despite this work, there is a lack of consensus in formal research findings about the causes and solutions for human conflict. For example, two scholars who

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[1] *Mary McCarthy, "Characters in Fiction," On the Contrary, New York, Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy 1961.*

[2] *Peter Coleman, "Intractable Conflict," in The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice, eds. Morton Deutsch and Peter Coleman, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., 2000), 428.*

have written on the subject, Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff[3] have noted that scholars:

"are divided on the question whether social conflict should be regarded as something rational, constructive, and socially functional or something irrational, pathological, and socially dysfunctional."

One can say that at least in some cases, conflict is a positive condition. For example, democratic principles are built upon the idea of opposing ideas. The competition of viewpoints in the "marketplace of ideas" ensures that an engaged public can make the best political choices. Some political scientists have argued, in fact, that the apparent present rise in conflict around the world stems partly from the emergence of new democracies. Societies that have not had experience with political options may have to learn how to cope with the natural conflicts that occur when opposing philosophies and ideologies clash.

Our main concern is not this kind of clash, but real human conflict, ones that pose the risk of violence. Serious, dangerous conflict inspires interaction at a more intense level than mere competition. These are conflicts that give rise to violence and perhaps to intractabability. In these are the most troubling challenges to journalistic practice for in these, peace and stability hangs in the balance.

Problems faced by journalists

Scholars have identified three primary types of ethical problems faced by journalists working on stories involving conflict. Issues about coverage tend to fall into one or more of the following three categories:

Conflict of interest. In order for journalists to present an unbiased account of news events, it is believed that they should have no stake in the news they report. If a journalist is covering a conflict in which he has an interest, suspicions will be raised about the evenhandedness of his reports. Generally, any interest - direct or indirect - may raise questions. Equally, this simple principle could apply even if the reporter is active in benevolent organisations engaged in work within a conflict setting. Organisations have their own points of view and, if the reporter were a member of an organisation, however well-intentioned, we would expect that point of view to be reflected in stories touching on the organisation's interests.

Withholding of information. The journalist is expected to report news fully and completely. If portions of a news story are omitted or obscured, this could change completely the meaning of events reported. The result would amount to manipulation of the news story.

One interesting example occurred in the 1950s. You may recall that a small group of political operatives funded by the United States government launched an attack on

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[3] *James E. Dougherty and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Contending Theories of International Relations. New York, Harper & Row Publishers, 1981, p. 187.*

Cuba. We know this as the "Bay of Pigs" invasion. It was a terribly embarrassing affair for the US government. The **New York Times** knew of the invasion before it took place, but decided to withhold the story. After it became clear the invasion was a total disaster and a serious error on the part of the US government, the **New York Times** came to the conclusion that it had made a mistake in withholding the story. Interestingly, President John F. Kennedy of the United States later said that he also agreed with the newspaper's judgment, and that he too concluded the newspaper should have printed the story.

However, on this ethical standard, almost everyone agrees that there are exceptions to the general rule. One example might be the editing out of information in conflict stories that could put people's lives at risk.

Participation in news events. Here the rule is this: journalists should report on news, not become involved in news. Once involved in the story, the journalist is in danger of influencing the course of events in the story, and this is considered wrong in practically all cases. In the case of conflict news, the mere fact of reporting incidents of violence or other kinds of serious clashes inevitably makes the journalist a participant. To deal with this conundrum, several approaches to conflict journalism have been developed.

Peace journalism

The approach of Peace Journalism recognises the universal need for peace, and it urges journalists to take an active role in presenting stories about conflict in ways that can move parties toward peaceful outcomes. Peace Journalism argues that journalism in conflict settings should consciously adopt an agenda for resolution as the only genuine alternative to an - unacknowledged - agenda for ongoing discord. Such news coverage highlights any pre-violence conflict, fully identifying parties and causes, and thereby possibly opening up unexpected paths towards dialogue and peace making. According to proponents, if properly carried out, this type of journalism humanises all sides of the conflict and will document both deceit and suffering as well as conciliation efforts from all parties.

The aim of Peace Journalism, however, places journalists squarely within the events they report. To some, it inherently raises ethical problems for journalists of involvement in their stories. This apparent contradiction between the need to foster peace and what some have called activist journalism presents us with a puzzle.

Perhaps the best answer to these questions about ethical principles for journalists was given by John Stuart Mill. He defined the principle of "utilitarianism." It says simply *"The greatest good for the greatest number."* Whether a story is covered, or how it is covered depends on how many members of the public benefit and to what degree they benefit.

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Peace Journalism in a Violent World

Georges Leclere

What is Peace Journalism?
Is it news about peace? Is it peace for journalists?

If the answer is 'Yes', let me start with some bad news:

Journalists are not at peace. Ever.

Of course, when your mission is to inform your audience, you have to be sure that you have something to announce, something significant, something newsy, something worth listening to, something that will make your audience more informed, wiser and, hopefully, ready to come back and listen to you or read you again.

Does that seem obvious? Well, it is not so any more.

News trends in a changing world

First of all, take television. The proliferation of 24-hour news channels leads many journalists to just fill up airtime when nothing significant is to be announced. A newspaper can print less pages, but a television station cannot suddenly decide to cut broadcast time to 23 hours a day. One answer to this is found in the proliferation of Internet news. This news can take the shape of text, the now-famous blogs, of sound, streamed radio or, more and more, streamed video that you can watch at your leisure, and that can be updated any time there is something really new.

The danger here could be the ease of access to the Internet. More and more non-journalists are writing on the Web and many blogs are more opinion pieces than actual news. All kinds of blogs are found on the Internet - from legitimate additional outlets of newspapers that have found a good way to beat their own deadline, to human rights groups launching appeals against the silence imposed by authorities in their countries, from corporations carrying their disguised advertising, to political groups rallying their believers.

And now, with the proliferation of video news releases, the infamous VNRs produced by all kinds of pressure groups, including governments who have found this a cheap way to communicate their messages, it will be more and more difficult to distinguish the truth from propaganda.

Another trend is also impacting the life of journalists. In radio and television, it was well established that local authorities would let companies use a common property, the spectrum, to broadcast programmes and make money out of it. In return, it was also clear that these companies had to give something back to the audience: fresh accurate news.

Not any more. Because of the mergers and acquisitions, most news divisions are now part of giant conglomerates that have only one rule: show profit. Hence, all divisions have to be profitable, including the news. The rule in selecting the stories to cover are closer to "if it bleeds, it leads", rather than informative and diversified news from around the world. Juicy murders, controversial trials and horrible accidents have more chances of finding headlines than information on a remote country that lacks clean water to drink or medicines to cure major diseases.

Lives in danger

And that is not all. The profession itself is in danger.

For the two past years, when the International Academy of Television Arts and Sciences award the News Emmy, our elected officials, the President and Chairman, read out the names of the journalists killed during the year. Many fell in the line of duty during their coverage of the Iraq war. Many more were killed elsewhere. And the trend has worsened: 2004 was one of the deadliest years on record, with 78 journalists killed worldwide and Iraq leading the pack with 23 journalists killed.

The International Press Institute (IPI), in one of its recent reports, noted another trend:

"The overwhelming failure of the authorities in many parts of the world to properly investigate and prosecute the killers of journalists."

Asia

IPI notes that Asia is one of the most dangerous regions in the world for journalists, with 27 persons killed last year. In the Philippines, 56 journalists have been killed since the country gained independence in 1986, including 12 in 2004. No one has ever been convicted for these killings. In Bangladesh, where five journalists were killed in 2004, authorities appear oblivious to the need to assert the rule of law.

Other regions

Unfortunately, Asia is not alone:
In Mexico, corruption and drug trafficking have made it almost impossible for journalists to carry out investigative reporting without being targeted. Four journalists were killed in 2004. In Haiti, there have been no arrests for the murders

of Jean Dominique in 2000 and Brignol Lindor in 2001. (IPI)

Eastern Europe is also a region marred by impunity, says IPI. In Russia, there is a history of failed attempts to investigate journalists' killings. Belarus and the Ukraine are two other countries where authorities routinely mishandle cases involving journalists. During the Emmy Awards judging process in Kyrgyzstan during July 2004, I had the opportunity to work with many jurors, some of them journalists, while judging the news and documentary categories.

The heavyweight among the jurors was, undoubtedly, Pavel Sheremet, Anchor and Director of the Special News Projects of ORT-1, the main Russian channel broadcasting across all the former Soviet countries. Pavel is from Belarus by birth, living now in Russia. Four years ago, Pavel went to jail in his native country after a television report about corruption at the border between Lithuania and Belarus. His cameraman, Dmitri Zavadski, also jailed at the same time, was also the journalist who later revealed in a strongly documented news story that some former Belarus soldiers turned mercenaries, were fighting on the side of the Chechens in their war against Russian troops. On July 7, 2000, Dmitri was abducted by unknown kidnappers and since then, no one has heard of him; his body has not been found. Pavel is still fighting furiously to unearth and reveal the truth about this case.

Pavel Sheremet has also helped the Academy in conducting a well-attended news training workshop for young Kyrgyz journalists in 2004. Perhaps the recent political events in Kyrgyzstan were partially fueled by the training and opening up of minds that both Pavel and the International Academy brought to the country through that process.

Light of hope

Following the recent events in Ukraine, the newly elected President Viktor Yushchenko announced that Ukrainian authorities have detained suspects in the killing of Ghia Gongadze, an Internet journalist who was murdered four years ago while writing about top level corruption under Yushchenko's predecessor, Leonid Kuchma. The newly elected leader had promised to solve this crime. *"The main task now is to get to the most important thing: who organised and ordered the murder,"* said Yushchenko. Events started to develop swiftly since this announcement. The former Minister for Security committed suicide when he was called to testify in front of the judge, and the former President, Leonid Kushma, has promised to fully support the investigation to bring out the truth regarding this killing.

This is part of the mission of Peace Journalism and the path is not peaceful.

Georges Leclere is Senior Vice-President of The International Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, an international organisation based in USA.

Ethical Standards in Covering Violence and Controversial Issues

David Barlow

Should we let media coverage be a free-for-all, the bloodier the better, to act as a deterrent? Should horrifying and brutal drama be banned?

The answer is 'No' to both questions. I am, however, suspicious of questions which ask should "we"; I wonder who the "we" are and by what right they wield the power. I know that many attempts have been made to answer these questions by regulation and international agreement but I suggest that all the evidence points, at best, to partial success and, at worst, to failure.

Is there a common understanding/standard between broadcasters from various countries on controversial issues such as violence and political conflicts?

My answer to this is "Maybe" and that such an answer comes at two levels. This whole topic is a profound and complex subject and there is general alarm at the extent to which trust in our media has been undermined. I suggest that we sometimes confuse two distinct issues here and that this confusion has made answers harder to find.

Grammar of the media

The two distinct issues are: first, the grammar of the medium; the second issue relates to the editorial complexities that arise once this grammar is understood, accepted and given context.

Confusion of these two issues has had several unfortunate consequences. If the grammar is neglected, then whatever you do further down the editorial chain has little relevance. But if the grammar is respected and enshrined in good practice, then the editorial questions are both simpler and easier to address because the context has been established.

I suggest that within the grammar and context of our media there are aspects which lead to a necessary convergence of approach. I would argue that there are forces inherent in the medium, or the context in which it operates, that suggest that some degree of common approach to these contentious issues among professionals from different countries and cultures is, at the primary level, both necessary and inevitable.

I shall identify two such forces. The first is to do with that aspect of the grammar of the medium which determines the way it works, and which informs the implied contract between viewer and broadcaster - the way the viewer judges and evaluates the broadcaster.

A story

To illustrate, let me tell you a story that addresses this issue directly. I will not identify the country but the story is true. In the country concerned, there had just been an election; the incoming Prime Minister, wishing for a fair wind for the new arrivals in Government House, wisely made sure that the state broadcaster acquired a new Director General from the incoming political party who was in sympathy with the aims and policies of the new government. This is not unusual and not necessarily reprehensible.

Six months later, the new government has run into economic difficulties and has had to introduce a tough unpopular budget. Ministers fear a backlash. The Prime Minister phones the new, but very bright, DG and says that the government is relying on the Director General to ensure that the broadcasters will report how popular the budget is and how rapturously it has been received by the populace.

The new DG quietly reads the PM the first lesson in the new journalists' course; if he reports it as asked, he says, no one will believe the broadcaster. The Prime Minister must know that the budget is deeply unpopular and to say otherwise would invite derision. It has to be reported in that context. If not, no one will believe it. And worse will follow; trust in the broadcaster will have been eroded and serious damage will have been done.

Brave words - and you will be glad to know that the DG kept his job, and the respect of the Prime Minister. The new DG had, in that six month period, learnt a crucial lesson. Namely, that credibility lies at the heart of the unspoken, and sometimes unwritten, compact between broadcaster and viewer; damage it and it is very hard to regain.

Credibility is fundamental

Credibility is a seamless robe; damage it in one area for seemingly good reasons and it is damaged throughout your output. It is a primary level issue; get that wrong and the rest is irrelevant. And I would argue that in practical terms this is not about editorial rules at the outset; it is about the fundamental understanding of the medium which must underpin the very charters and legislation that govern their operation.

And how does that bear on the topic? It is precisely because reporting the world credibly, as it will be recognised by our viewers and listeners, requires an honesty of

approach, or at least an approximation to honesty; it requires you to deal with difficult areas such as political conflict and violence and to do so in a way that does not strain or threaten credibility. And you cannot fail to report such events, to pass them by or to misrepresent them without losing that credibility. It is the context, the culture within which the subsequent editorial decisions are taken.

If I am right, then the question is not *if,* but *how.* Once that is agreed, then the reply as to "how" will (within broad parameters) vary from culture to culture. It is here that agreement between editorial professionals from differing cultures is much harder to reach and may indeed prove elusive. But if there is agreement that credible coverage is necessary, then the questions that remain are procedural and editorial. And it is not essential that there is agreement about the precise nature of that coverage but we all need to accept that our audiences know that tragedies, accidents and general mayhem are cruel, often bloody and very violent. Honest coverage must reflect that if it is to be believed.

All this may seem plain obvious, but we need to pause and ask if that is indeed so. There is enough evidence that a declining number of people believe what they see and hear, that growing numbers feel manipulated by the media. This suggests that many media managers either do not understand the nature of the medium or that they are deliberately neglecting it for short term gain. At this level, it is not primarily an editorial problem; it is an issue for owners and/or regulators and the responsibility and choices lie with them.

A tough taskmaster

The second area, the second part of modern communications grammar, has to do with the landscape within which the media now operate and which moves us towards convergence in a similar way to credibility. It also constrains, informs and contextualises the editorial decisions we take. It is simple. We live as never before in an era of multiple choices for the viewer and listener. If we fail to report a violent event of significance, or a political difference of relevance - unless we live in a very closed society (and there are fewer and fewer of those left) - our viewers will learn about it elsewhere (through satellite, on the net, via international radio) and will judge our output accordingly. We live in a truly global village and gossip is everywhere. In this environment, the question is not *if* but *how* we tell the stories. We cannot avoid telling them because if we don't, others will.

Violence such as 9/11, the Madrid bombings, the latest suicide bombers in Israel, Iraq or Russia are facts of our modern world, reported widely and often graphically. Equally so are political events and differences - and whether we want it or not - they are in the public domain. If we fail to report them, not only do we forfeit credibility, but we damage whatever credibility we have for other stories even nearer home. The medium is a tough taskmaster: neglect its essential grammar and the consequences are dire.

So the first level issues, the ones that respect the grammar of the medium and incidentally respect the audience as well, are to do largely with charters and laws and regulation. They determine the context within which we operate and the context within which we judge our editorial choices. If that context denies that grammar, then no editorial system in the world will be much use. Credibility will be forfeit.

The cultural context

Beyond that arise the editorial issues and it is here that consensus to some extent breaks down - and it does so for understandable reasons that are often cultural, religious and political. What is acceptable in one culture does not work in another; what works in London may not be acceptable in Jakarta - and vice versa. For instance, I believe media in the UK show less blood and gore than, for example, do the Italian media. One is not better than the other, but just different.

Some of what I have argued is obvious and every broadcaster is aware of it. It may be obvious but it is nonetheless widely disregarded - for short term political or commercial reasons, for fear of stirring up trouble, for fear of offence, etc.

Of the three questions that we considered at the beginning of this paper, I consider the third as the most important. I would like to believe that as broadcasters, guided not least by the grammar of our medium, we are agreed that facts require reporting; these have to include the awful, the violent, the cruel and the political. Failure to do so breaches our silent contract with our viewers and undermines our overall credibility. Besides, if we do not, others will - and in terms that we may find unacceptable. If we are agreed that we must do that then, I suggest, how we do so is less important, provided the intent is honesty and the context respects both the grammar of the medium and the culture within which we broadcast. This is not an excuse for deliberate obfuscation; it is an argument for turning that honesty into pictures and stories which truthfully tell our viewers the facts of the world in which they live, in ways that are acceptable and credible.

In conclusion, I believe that honesty in reporting, an honesty that leads to credibility, fidelity to the facts and respect for the audiences who watch or listen, will benefit broadcasters in the short term and long term.

David Barlow, formerly with the BBC, is a broadcast consultant based in France.

Chasing Ratings or Changing the World?

Eduardo Lingao

It was a particularly slow night in the Manila police headquarters, almost two decades ago, when one reporter barged into the precinct's press office.

"Hey everyone", he said. There's a robbery suspect at the front desk!"

The reporters rushed to the front desk, which they found empty except for one sad-looking fellow, whom they then began to beat up the way they do other criminal suspects. The poor fellow protested in vain, but the beating went on, until the policeman came running back from the bathroom.

"Stop it", the policeman screamed. "That man you're beating is not the suspect. He is the victim."

Unfortunately, in my country and perhaps, in many others around the world, journalists can sometimes be as bad as a crooked policeman.

This is a popular story among police reporters in Manila. But there is more.

I have seen photographers stick a knife back in a dead body, just so the picture or the video would look much better. I have seen reporters and cameramen urge victims to beat up the suspects in the police stations, just so there's some action video. And, of course, I have seen journalists beat up suspects black and blue.

Journalism is about change

In another context, I've seen newsmen ask the military to fire off a few artillery shells, just so their standups look better. Where the artillery shells land, no one seems to care. I've seen fake firefights and military encounters, where soldiers stand up and grin at the camera after firing off hundreds of rounds, all for the benefit of the media. These are of course reported as genuine encounters, with the courageous reporter doing his spiels while bullets seem to bounce off his skin.

By the way, each bullet in these fake firefights cost as much as a kilogram of rice, enough for a meal for a small family in a country where half the population is hungry.

These are realities I like to tell aspiring journalists, but these are also realities that we must discuss among ourselves, veteran journalists, academics, and teachers.

I always like to say that journalism is about change. Changing the way people think and act, changing the way we see the world. Sometimes changing governments and, oftentimes, I'd like to think, changing ourselves. Otherwise, we would just be overpaid stenographers.

It is in this context that I would like to look at the concept of peace journalism - journalism as a means to help us better understand the reasons and dynamics of peace or conflict. And I would like to look at how some of us have failed in changing our worlds.

War reporting

The best and worst examples can be found in war reporting. For some of us, reporting a conflict is as simple as reporting a shoot-out downtown: how many were killed, what kind of guns were found, and did the bad guys get away.

However, in treating conflicts this way, we have missed the point. Conflicts are much more complex, they bring in factors like history, culture, religion, race, economics, even psychology. If the journalist fails to grasp the complexities of a conflict, how do we expect his audience to be any more enlightened?

In covering the conflict in the southern Philippines, I have come across reporters who have no idea what the fighting is all about. All they know is that the rebels are Muslims, and the government is mostly Christian, and that the video is good. I know of few reporters who bother to know the demands of the rebels, or the history of the conflict, or even the history of Mindanao. They just jump from town to town, chasing after the latest military operation, reporting it like a crime story - just get the body count right, and make sure my hair is in place for my next standup.

Too few are the journalists who can discuss the roots of conflict, much more how to stop it. In fact, few journalists even seem to care. That explains why we have so many reporters who want to cover wars, and not enough who want to cover the causes of conflict.

A few years ago, I heard a veteran reporter say, on national television, that all Muslim rebels, in fact, all Muslims, were alike. What makes me cringe is the thought that the person now anchors a major newscast.

Police reporting

In an ideal world, the same principles should apply to police reporters. We all know the standard practice of employers - stick the greenhorns, the cub reporters, in the

police beat, in the night shift. Let them earn their stripes, or maybe grow their horns. After a few years, when you've proven yourself, they'll take you out and stick you someplace where the toilets are nicer, and the people smell fresher. I went through the same thing myself and have done the same thing to others.

Many times, the police beat is where they throw reporters who simply won't learn how to write, or never learned how to cover. Let them tough it out with the criminals and the cops and the ordinary people. Let them make all their mistakes at that level, where the only important thing that they may screw up is someone else's life.

Which does make you wonder, who deserves the bad eggs of journalism? Do politicians deserve better journalism than the man on the street? Do they deserve better copy, and less grammatical errors? Do we inflict our deadbeats on the poor because they can't complain?

Don't get me wrong. I was once a police reporter myself, and there are plenty of good police reporters out there who really care about their subjects. But sadly, like it or not, most editorial chiefs don't care about these subjects. They care that no congressman calls them up in the middle of the night to complain that his name was mispronounced. In the context of police stories, peace journalism is the opposite of blotter journalism. Of course we still have the Who, What, When, Where, but most importantly, there is also the Why and the How. Crime is up. Why? The streets are violent. Why? Kids have guns. Why? Well, kids have laptops and press cards. And I ask, why?

Peace reporting

I would like to think that our job is to show humanity by showing the inhumanity of war; to encourage understanding by explaining our distinct uniquenesses and ethnic and religious diversities, not to aggravate it; to attack prejudice, not to show it; to show, to some extent, the nature of human beings' dark side so we can stop it, not so our audiences can ask for more of it; to show what war does to people so we can do something about it, not so that we can all be voyeurs waiting for the next reality show. Should we show blood and violence on television? To do so irresponsibly is to demean those whose suffering we report. Yet to not show any at all, I think, is to hide the awful truth because we are in the business of change. To paraphrase a famous quote, we must afflict the comfortable, and comfort the afflicted. I think the balance can and should be found, but I don't think many newsrooms even know there is a balance that needs to be struck.

I would like to make many audiences uncomfortable, because in my medium, comfortable is what they are, sitting on a living room couch munching on potato chips. But we have to do it for a reason other than ratings or fame or entertainment.

But more than that, I think we should make our newsrooms just as uncomfortable. A comfortable reporter sees the world through rose tinted glasses and these glasses can easily become blinds. We are all at fault. Owners for demanding ratings and circulation above all else, editors for throwing police and showbiz reporters at stories that deserve much more, and reporters, for simply being pretty and highly paid stenographers or ambulance chasers. There are real reporters out there who do care to explain the statistics, who do bother to do research, who take pains to explain the roots of conflict even if no one wants to watch and the ratings go down. There are those who do read history, and most of all, who do bother to listen and learn, because that, essentially, is what journalism is also about. It is about learning first, and then passing that learning on to your viewer or reader.

Learning to listen

Maybe that is it. Maybe as reporters, we should listen more than we talk, read more than we write, and weep more than we care to admit. I am certain you have heard all of these before, but every once in a while, we need to be reminded who we are, and why we are here.

In closing, allow me to share with you a mantra of sorts that I often use to remind myself - maybe warn myself - about my job:

As a journalist
Be afraid when you no longer feel fear
Be alarmed when you no longer feel anger
Be embarassed when you no longer feel shame
Because when you no longer feel any of these,
It is time to look for another job.

Eduardo Lingao is Senior Correspondent and Head of News Operations, ABC 5, in the Philippines.

What Price Ethics as Journalists Die?

Rodney Pinder

More than 1,200 news media workers have died worldwide in the course of their work over the past 10 years. We count 117 fatalities in 2004 - the worst year in a decade for our profession. In only two years, 68 have died covering the Iraq war, making it one of the bloodiest events for conflict reporters in modern times.

And Asia is a black spot.

The International Press Institute (IPI) now labels Asia as the most dangerous continent for journalists. Asian countries - namely the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and China - accounted for almost half of the global total of non-Iraq fatalities in 2004. After Iraq, the Philippines is the world's worst place for journalist murders. Twelve were killed there last year and three so far this year.

Of course, not all of the journalists who die at work around the world are murdered. Some die in work-related accidents or from health problems.

Murder top cause of deaths

And most disturbingly, the killers usually get away with it. Fewer than ten per cent of cases result in any kind of punishment. A London burglar has twice as much chance of getting caught than a killer of a journalist in many countries.

No one has been held to account for the killings of any of the journalists in Iraq or in the Philippines. The Philippines is, at one and the same time, one of the most democratic nations in the world and one of the most dangerous for journalists, who are the pillars of any free society. The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) reports that 66 journalists have been murdered in the Philippines since 1968 and only one person has been successfully prosecuted.

This surely is an ethical issue of the first rank, for the authorities in the countries where journalists are murdered, and for the news media themselves.

The IPI, the IFJ, the Committee to Protect Journalists, the World Association of Newspapers and others have all issued calls in recent weeks for governments to

take seriously their responsibility to investigate media killings. UNESCO has underlined this with a demand for an end to impunity for those who murder journalists. It has called on governments to fulfil their responsibility to ensure crimes against journalists do not go unpunished.

But governments, in the words of IFJ General Secretary Aidan White, "too often display a heartless and cruel indifference" to this issue. Their ethics and morality, such as they are, quite clearly rarely extend to journalists.

News media must save themselves

The **International News Safety Institute** (INSI) was launched on World Press Freedom Day in 2003 with the overarching aim of implementing practical measures that might help more journalists survive in dangerous environments.

The reporting of violence by its very nature can never be safe. But journalists in danger can be safer with proper knowledge and equipment.

INSI is setting up a global safety network to provide information on danger spots and to organise safety training and advice for journalists unable to afford their own. The first Asian office has just opened in Jakarta. The work encompasses:

- Raising money to provide safety training courses; so far, more than 150 journalists in Iraq, Colombia, Russia, Ivory Coast, Congo and Rwanda have been reached.

- Building better communications between the media and key militaries aimed at reducing mutual misunderstandings that can lead to fatalities in modern war.

- Holding a global inquiry into the causes behind the shocking rise in journalist deaths; this will provide a report and recommendations for action by governments and world bodies.

- INSI's first fact-finding session for reporters to express their views and relate their experiences during Asia Media Summit 2005. Others will follow in the Middle East, Europe, the United States and elsewhere.

- Most importantly, drawing up a Safety Code and Safe Practice recommendations which journalists and their employers are urged to adopt to reduce casualties.

Too often we see journalists going to war naked - the only professionals to be found on the twenty first century battlefield without modern training and effective preparation. Hundreds, including many from Asia, went off to cover the Iraq war utterly unprepared. We say the news media have the ethical, moral and practical duty to do much more for the safety of journalists covering dangerous stories - if only out of self-interest.

In a paper for the Newspaper Association of America, Beth Howe of Kennedy School of Government at Harvard said the risks of death, injury and mental trauma faced

by journalists, both staff and freelance, had ethical, financial and legal implications for employers.

Editors and publishers, she said, must actively promote safe behaviour by monitoring the situation in the countries from which their staff are reporting, mandating training and modified behaviour for journalists assigned to risk countries and providing staff with, and requiring the use of, safety equipment.

"Failure to do so may result not only in the tragedy of losing someone in the field but may also expose newspapers to potential legal action by the families of those killed on the job," she wrote.

In 2001 the family of reporter Larry Lee sued his employer, BridgeNews financial wire, claiming its negligence in failing to provide adequate training and protection had led to his death in Guatemala. The suit was settled out of court in favour of the family. INSI, through its safety network and impartial advice, can help employers with this and other practical and ethical issues.

Support of news industry needed

INSI represents a unique effort by us in the business to help ourselves and, to continue its work effectively, it needs the sustained support of the news industry. More than 60 concerned news organisations, from international networks and agencies to local and regional broadcasters and newspapers, have now thrown their weight behind INSI.

UNESCO Director-General Koichiro Matsuura said on World Press Freedom Day in 2003: "The debt we collectively incur when journalists suffer on our behalf must be repaid in practical ways."

Practically and ethically, we must help ourselves and stop the killing.

Rodney Pinder is the Director of the International News Safety Institute.

News Exchanges Bridge Divides, Counter One-Way News Flows

Yrjö Länsipuro

Coming from my own previous experience in television journalism and news exchange, I would like to address the question of whether there is a common understanding of standards on controversial issues between broadcasters of various countries. I maintain that there is now more understanding today than existed a few decades ago, or at least more tolerance for different standards, and that this development, to some extent, is due to regional and global television news exchanges among broadcasters. This has also gone a long way in making global news flows less of a one-way street and has done its part in bridging ideological and political divides and promoting mutual understanding and peace.

Eurovision and Intervision model

The pioneer of all electronic news exchanges, of course, is the Eurovision News Exchange, which is 50 years old. In the fifties, it probably contributed to healing some post-war wounds in Western Europe. In the sixties, the Intervision News Exchange was set up on the other side of the Iron Curtain. But just a few years after the Wall was erected in Berlin, Eurovision and Intervision were linked up and started a mutual daily exchange of television news items. This exchange continued throughout the Cold War and was interrupted only once, for three days, after the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia. The gatekeepers on both sides of the European divide were selective in what they showed from the other side. Nevertheless, people in Eastern Europe and the USSR were able to see glimpses of the West, as shot by Western cameras, and vice versa. Chief editors of television news from both sides held joint meetings, leaving ideology aside and groping for some common ground.

In the early seventies, broadcasters in other regions of the world became interested in the Eurovision model. At that time, the numbers of viewers in the Third World were growing. However, in the news they saw a lot of coverage from Europe and the US, but nothing from their immediate neighbourhood. There was interest in mutual regional exchanges, but no infrastructure. There were no permanent microwave links, as existed in Europe. Satellite tariffs - especially those charged for the ground segment by local PTTs - were very expensive.

Asiavision and Arabvision

A beginning was made by shipping news film and cassettes by air to these areas. The satellite age finally dawned by the mid-eighties, when tariffs began coming down. The Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union was the first with a functioning news exchange that spanned the regions from Pakistan and India to Korea and Japan, and from China to Australia.

I was involved as a consultant in these efforts in the Arab countries and in Asia. Discussing the concept of mutual news exchanges with chief editors, many of them said they would contribute news items to the exchange, but under no circumstances would they show the "bloody propaganda" produced by some of their neighbours. On many television newscasts one could not even show the head of state or minister of a country that was deemed hostile. Also, even though there was lip service to the need for development news and everybody was eager to offer visuals of their own projects, they were not keen on showing what others were doing.

Training

Since a news exchange is only as good as its individual items, there was a great need for training journalists and cameramen to produce short, visually effective and to-the-point news items. The German foundation, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, cooperated in organising training courses in Asia as well as other regions like Africa and the Caribbean, under the leadership of the late Reinhard Keune. During the training courses in television journalism, we had to walk a narrow path. While we had to avoid being accused of just inculcating Western news values in our students, at the same time we had to train them to produce news items than would be marketable not only to other Asiavision countries, but also to Eurovision and the US networks. That meant, for example, that just showing a speech by a minister would not be acceptable. Sometimes, my students came to me and said, "You are teaching us wonderful things but when I go back, I can't do as you teach…"

The professed aim of regional news exchanges - Asiavision, Arabvision and others - was to supply development news, but the exchanges were nevertheless dominated by items dictated by protocol - emirs and presidents coming and going, opening and closing ceremonies, and such. The great challenge was to produce good news that is also interesting. Another problem was the absence of hot news or hard news - the bad news that also, unfortunately, happened in the region.

Showing the bad news

We would argue that even bad news - floods, fires, political conflict - should be offered by national broadcasters, because it would be anyway covered by other broadcasters and news agencies - somebody would sell a cassette to Visnews and there it would be in the global media, edited by their editors in London. We argued

that even by offering the bad news, the national broadcaster would at least be in charge of the editing.

Gradually, events like floods and fires started to appear on the exchange, as broadcasters were allowed to acknowledge that such events actually took place in their countries. Asiavision members would release for the exchange controversial items that they would not show in their domestic networks. I wonder whether this has changed since! In those early days, this was a way of gaining credibility both for the Asiavision exchange and for the member broadcasters.

Lastly, I would like to mention a case where television news exchange has been, and still is, a factor in healing political wounds. In the former Yugoslavia, television news of the various state broadcasters was a vehicle of war: media always fired the first shots. Now, they have been turned into vehicles of peace and understanding. Finland is funding a news exchange project which is run by the Finnish Broadcasting Company since November 2000. Being members of Eurovision, they could use Eurovision's satellite and coordinating mechanism; therefore, the political hurdles here proved to be more challenging than the technical issues. However, as a result of the exchange, viewers in that sub-region now see news items from their neighbouring countries that are not so violent and sensational as those picked up from the main EVN or CNN. In addition, television journalists, who used to regard each other as enemies and had engaged in vitriolic propaganda against each other, are now learning to cooperate for the benefit of all.

This is a way of making the world safer for diversity. Perhaps this could also be called peace journalism.

Yrjö Länsipuro is Director-General, Department for Press and Culture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland.

Media and Religion

Media and Religion

Chandra Muzaffar

The media have always been an avenue for the expression of religion. Even in societies which see themselves as 'secular', religious festivals and ceremonies are widely reported. The activities of religious organisations make their way into the media. Religious belief systems, rituals and symbols are sometimes discussed in newspaper articles or radio and television programmes. Religious personalities attract media headlines.

The presence of religion in the media is not a problem. It is when elements within a religious community use, abuse and exploit religious sentiments for some nefarious purpose through the media that we should become concerned. Such misuse of the media is not new. If the exploitation of religion through the media has become more serious, it is because the impact of both religion and the media upon society is much greater today than it was a few decades ago.

Biased view of the Other

In almost every religious community today, there is a fringe that distorts some sacred belief or other and then disseminates this perverted view through the media. Unfortunately, the mainstream media tend to give the impression that this is happening only within the Muslim community. Of course there are Muslim extremists who preach hatred of the 'infidel' and have made violence their credo but there is also the Christian Right - especially Christian Zionists - who spew venom and anger against the Muslim Other. A segment of the media, specifically American television, has been a powerful and influential ally of the Christian Right as it propagates a dogma that justifies empire and military hegemony - a dogma which many Christian thinkers would argue, subverts the sublime message of Jesus. Likewise, a segment of the Israeli media has helped to buttress the Jewish Right with its belligerent attitude towards Palestinian Muslims and Christians in contradiction to the true teachings of the Tohrah which display some concern for the unity of humankind, just as a segment of the Hindi media has played a major role in promoting a form of Hindu bigotry which makes a mockery of the religion's spirit of inclusiveness and accommodation.

An ethical journalist who is genuinely concerned about bigotry and extremism will be critical of such tendencies in all religions, including his own, and will not be selective or biased in his approach. At the same time, through study and research, he will discover that in all religions there is also an inclusive, universal dimension premised upon the oneness of the human family. Indeed, the media should help the masses understand how profound and authentic this dimension of religion is, and how it can contribute towards the evolution of a global civilisation in the future. Here again, one observes that the mainstream Western media, which often set the tone for the non-Western media, have seldom highlighted the all-embracing universal vision of a common humanity that lies at the very heart of the Quran and has moulded Islamic philosophy and mysticism through the ages.

Religion-power nexus

In analysing the inclusive as against the exclusive, the universal as against the particularistic in religion, the media should attempt to relate them to socio-political and socio-economic structures at the national and global levels. The leadership in a certain society may choose to emphasise the exclusive and particularistic aspects of religion in order to perpetuate its political dominance in the name of the community it claims to represent. On the other hand, a group aspiring to come to power may be more inclined towards the inclusive and universal dimensions of a certain religion as a way of maximising support from a wide spectrum of ethnically diverse communities found in that society.

At a certain point in time, the exclusive approach to religion may serve the economic interests of a certain class; at some other time, an inclusive approach may help to enhance the economic well-being of a particular community. Similarly, at the global level at this juncture in history, it is apparent that those who are determined to perpetuate their political and economic hegemony are closely aligned to certain elements in the Christian and Jewish communities - the Christian and Jewish Right - who have an exclusive religious outlook. Interestingly, certain Muslim groups who are challenging this global hegemony through terror and violence also adhere to an exclusive and narrow interpretation of Islam. It is perhaps even more significant from a long term perspective that there are groups of Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus and followers of other faiths who are opposed to both global hegemony in all its manifestations and the terror tactics employed by some of the adversaries of hegemony.

The interactions among these different religious groups and the common positions that they have adopted on the imperative need for a peaceful global transformation have received very little coverage in the mainstream media. This proves that the media has not really understood the established and emerging trends within different religious communities and how they interface with the structures of power and wealth especially in the global arena.

Distinction between 'fundamentalist' and 'conservative'

When the mainstream media try to comprehend certain trends within a particular religious community they tend to use categories of analysis which may, in fact, be meaningless in the context of the community's own vocabulary. An outstanding example of this is the use of the term 'fundamentalist' to describe someone who in the media's opinion is 'bigoted', 'conservative', even 'extremist'. To apply the term to a Muslim makes little sense since all Muslims are required by their religion to uphold the fundamentals of their faith, the most important of which is the belief in the oneness of God. Conservative Muslims invariably go beyond the fundamentals and demand for instance that Muslim governments implement the Islamic penal code and enforce a certain Islamic dress code for women in order to prove their fidelity to the faith. It is Muslims who make such demands that the Western media regards as 'fundamentalists' while, from an Islamic perspective, these Muslims would be guilty of elevating the non-fundamentals of the religion to the level of fundamentals.

By imposing a term which owes its origin to the orientation of certain groups within early twentieth century American Christianity upon Islam and Muslims, the media have not only caused unnecessary confusion but have also, perhaps unwittingly, strengthened the hand of conservative Muslims! From another perspective, the application of the term 'fundamentalist' to the followers of non-Christian Protestant religions without considering the specific characteristics of 'the other' religion is an outstanding example of contemporary intellectual imperialism disseminated through the media.

Journalists need to understand religions

What all this shows is that contemporary media have to deepen and broaden knowledge and understanding of the different religions and how they impact upon society. It is true that the majority of journalists in today's world are not well versed in different religions and the relationship between religions and social forces. Indeed, many of them, even when they are operating in societies where the people are by and large religious, tend to be somewhat estranged from matters of faith. With religion playing a much more prominent role today in the public sphere, it is no longer possible for journalists to stay away from religion. This is why they should not only learn about religion; they should also develop some empathy for faith and the practice of faith.

This is one of the major challenges that await the journalist and the media in the twenty first century.

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Need for Guidelines

Elizabeth Smith

Religious broadcasting is thought by the general public to be quite straightforward. In fact, it is one of the most difficult areas of broadcasting, full of hazards and pitfalls and with explosive potential.

A broadcasting organisation may, for example, have a principle that all religions should be treated equally. But one religion may be a state or official religion, so there will be arguments that this should be treated in a special way. Or one religion may command many more adherents than any other in one area, so again, there is a call for more advantageous treatment. The broadcaster may decide to divide up the time for religious programming according to guidelines that take these factors into account. They may then face as the years pass, a decline - as in England, in the number of adherents of the Church of England which is the State Church - alongside major changes in the numbers of adherents to other religions. With different factions protecting their positions, it can be very hard to amend an established system.

To help producers through the maze of competing religious factions, various advisory committees may be set up, comprising representatives of all the religions involved. I fear this is not always a recipe for peace and harmony; it sometimes polarises views and leads to unseemly wrangles - as happens in Jerusalem between competing Christian churches over who controls which monuments and which relics.

Media in a multi-faith world

Most of us now live in multi-faith worlds. Most faiths have a political dimension as well as a religious core. They may need political support to promote certain kinds of behaviour which they feel is socially desirable: e.g., to help their members to marry within the faith; to support religious rather than secular education; to allow distinctive dress.

All these aspects reduce integration. For example, in the troubled British province of Northern Ireland, the education of the majority Protestants is nearly all in different schools from the minority Catholics. This is because the religious divide runs very deep and people prefer to send their children to school with others of their own faith. But the result is that mixing between the two groups is greatly reduced, the other side is demonized, and when it comes to job applications, the school attended

is a complete giveaway as to the applicant's religion. Discrimination can easily be applied and was operated against the Catholics for many years - which in turn has led to further bitterness. The agony is compounded, of course, by the fact that the numerical balance is slowly altering; the Catholics are increasing in numbers and are likely to become a majority in due course - a development bitterly resented by the Protestants.

Problems such as these can be greatly helped by interfaith groups, by organisations which promote interfaith schooling, and various other measures. But activists of this kind are in the minority. The majorities on both sides tend to take hard-line views and to fight - literally to the death if need be - for the right to separate religious schooling, and for measures which promote their faith rather than that of what they regard as the Opposition.

Running religious programming in such a fiercely divided society takes great sensitivity and skill. You can see how this is needed also in circumstances of civil disorder, which in very many cases may be rooted in religious divides. One of the key issues in the Ayodhya coverage in India was how far the reporting of the tearing down of the mosque actually led to people rushing out into the streets to join in the escalating violence. Should the broadcasters have stood back and let the events unfold without live coverage? Where lives are at stake, that is not an easy question to answer.

Reporting with responsibility

My own view is that, in times of disorder, the broadcaster has a duty to report what is happening, but must take every possible care not to pour petrol onto the fire. If this means running reports without pictures for a few hours or, on radio, switching to announcer-read reports rather than going live to the reporter on the scene, then this is an option. But in today's competitive world, the broadcaster doing this is likely to lose audiences very fast to those showing the riots live in full colour and close-ups.

I remember a survey in Beirut at the height of the bombing and shelling there which showed that people sat inside their flats and houses obsessively tuning to all channels in turn, desperate to find out what was going on, which buildings had been hit and which were about to be hit. The moment they found a station giving this, even if it was Israeli radio, they stayed with it.

The moral is that broadcasters are less and less likely to avoid live coverage. But they must still be very cautious in these circumstances about who they interview, and whether they show interviews live. In the passion of the moment, even religious leaders can make rousing speeches which have the effect of inciting their followers to action in the cause of their faith. A shrewd broadcaster records such interviews, looks out for such content, and avoids it.

Formats for religious programming

There are many different formats for religious programming - services can be shown, and people allowed to share in the worship at a distance; there can be news magazines covering religious developments as news and current affairs; there can be comment or discussion programmes. It is the last group that probably causes most difficulty. A right-wing majority may protest, for example, about the number of left wing clerics used for comment and in discussions. It may, however, be a fact of life that the number of left wing clerics in a particular country is greater than those of the right, so the choice is limited. And should a newsworthy cleric, heading a small faction, be given airtime rather than a boring middle-of-the-road leader?

When religion is covered in general programming, such as drama, there are also major hazards. A committed author may present one side of a case from personal conviction, and many can feel that, while it may be high art, it is also inherently unfair as it only shows one side of the picture. Also, where blasphemy creeps in or disrespectful references to matters at the heart of religions e.g., the Crucifixion, the Koran, the Haj - the cause of offence may be very major.

CBA Broadcasting Guidelines

Addressing these issues, the CBA Broadcasting Guidelines recommends:

"Programmes which contain profane expressions or other references to religion which could cause offence should not be broadcast before the watershed and broadcasters should give warnings of material which could cause offense to an audience."

"References to religion should be presented accurately and in a dignified manner."

"Programmes that denigrate or satirize any racial or religious group should not be broadcast."

"Programmes that feature the views or beliefs of any race or religion must be acceptable to the target audience and should not be proselytizing in nature."

These Guidelines are drawn up to be widely acceptable, but in some areas they may need to be modified to fit with local sensitivities. I do commend the process of drawing up and applying guidelines. The exercise of defining the parameters by involving the front line producers clears the air and clarifies the issues. This, combined with support for all people of goodwill who encourage interfaith dialogue, can go a long way to minimise the tensions inherent in religious programming.

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What a Mess! Religion in the Media

Tim Jensen

[Luther][...]removed the servitude of devotion by replacing it by the servitude of conviction. He destroyed faith in authority by restoring the authority of faith. He turned priests into laymen by turning laymen into priests. He liberated man from exterior religiosity by making man's inner conscience religious. He emancipated the body from chains by enchaining the heart. (Marx 1977,69)[1]

I am a scholar of comparative religions (not a theologian) and though I do study the representations of religion in the media and function as an expert on these matters and as a public opinion maker in regard to religion, I am not a journalist. I may be able to analyse and criticise the ways religions are represented in the media, but that does not enable me to teach journalists how to do their job.

It is not just in Denmark that journalists agree that religion has become not only hard news, but also news hard to deal with. On the basis of the research I have done on religion, mainly in the Danish national media, including interviews with Danish editors and journalists at some of the major dailies, and on the basis of my general knowledge of religion, I put forward a few questions in regard to the way media deal with religion.

Before that, let us look briefly at :

- the media coverage of two recent events which made religion newsworthy
- the very notion of 'religion'.

The tsunami and the death of a Pope

The catastrophy caused by the tsunami and the death of a Pope were two recent events which made news - worldwide and for more than one day. These events also made *religion* newsworthy, and a matter for discussion in editorials, op-eds, letters to the editor, demonstrating that the media, transnational as well as national, the individual journalists as well as the editors, do not have *one* approach or policy in regard to religion - be it religion in general, particular religions or denominations within religions, 'our own' religion or the religion of others.

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[1] *Thanks to Russ T. McCutcheon for drawing my attention to this passage in the writings of Marx. Cf. also McCutcheon 2005*

There were sincere, compassionate, or 'neutral' *reports* on prayers and mourning of survivors belonging to different religions, *and* critical-analytical feature articles by pundits on the problems of evil, the beliefs in the power of God or gods, forces of nature, and on a seemingly meaningless catastrophy in relation to the meaning offered by religion(s); respectful reports on temples, mosques, and churches serving as a last refuge for the victims, and on the work of religious relief agencies; also critical articles questioning whether the work of the very same agencies is kept strictly humanitarian, driven by some sort of cross-religious universal 'love for your neighbour', free from any kind of mission or proselytizing.

Theological differences between the religions, e.g. concepts of death and afterlife, guilt and divine punishment, were noticed, and mention of the Aceh province as an area with 'Islamist' movements was made. But differences as well as political aspects of the religions involved mostly were played down. Differences between 'us' and 'them' were also played down. 'We' were all hit by the tsunami, we all had compassion with all the victims, be they Muslims, Hindus or Christians. The 'media-church' became an ecumenical church with a worldwide congregation of mourners in front of the television.

Yet, that is not the whole story. The 'we' in the Danish media and in front of the television was also a national, Danish 'we', and the Danish media would never have covered the catastrophy of the tsunami to the degree it did, if not for the fact that hundreds of Danes and their relatives were amongst the victims. The news and the feature articles, consequently, also helped build, rebuild, and celebrate the national Danish 'we', but not in visible or explicit opposition to a hostile 'other'.

Likewise, the memorial service in the main church in the capital of Denmark, with the Queen, the Prime Minister and the most prominent members of parliament present, was a notoriously 'civil religious' and Lutheran-Protestant national celebration and manifestation. And, though it did take place in a real church, it was constructed largely for the benefit of television. It was, of course, a media event, first class entertainment; great care was taken to show and comment upon the dresses worn by the celebrities, the cars they arrived in, etc.

Nevertheless, it was also a celebration of basic human compassion, and afterwards the media was open for criticism, e.g. criticism from theologians complaining that (their) religion had been misused and mistaken for entertainment, and comments from other pundits, arguing that religion always accommodates elements of entertainment.

Death of the Pope

The reasons why the dying and death of the Pope made religion newsworthy are different from the case of the tsunami. Yet, in this case too, consistency was not the rule. In report upon report, in one news story after the other, the media and the

audience, without further notice, were transformed into pious, grieving Catholics, children of the beloved papa of the whole wide world. Journalists and audiences from Lutheran-Protestant countries like Denmark, with an almost non-existent minority of Catholics, and a long tradition of a critical and sceptical attitude towards the whole 'papal' institution, acted as if they too had lost their herd and father. The master of beatification was beatified by the media in a moment, also by the non-Catholic media.

Forgotten, but only for a while and not totally, was the criticism of a religious leader trying to influence politics, and to suppress Catholic clergy and lay people inspired by liberation theology. Gone was the criticism of the stance of the Pope in regard to abortion, women's rights, homosexuals, and contraception. Forgotten were thousands of Africans who might have had a better chance of escaping AIDS and HIV if not for the Pope. Instead, we were all fascinated, in the most uncritical way, by a mixture of old-fashioned mystery, the secrecy of the Vatican, ceremony and rituals, a man with global power, and an old man dying.

However the mentioned criticism *did* enter the media, by way of articles by journalists, opinion-makers, Catholics and non-Catholics. The past and the future of the Catholic Church was discussed; factual information about the theology, the rituals, the politics and various positions amongst Catholics, lay people and clergy, was provided.

The national 'we', of course, also entered into the discussion of the nationality of the coming Pope and, of course, it entered into the German media as the new Pope was elected. But the German media gave voice also to critical debates about this.

In both cases, then, the media helped build and rebuild national as well as transnational, local as well as global, mono-religious as well as inter-religious, inclusive as well as exclusive, 'congregations' of mourning people, directly and indirectly involved, Catholics or non-Catholics.

Respectful, uncritical and subservient reports and articles on the Pope were mixed and supplemented with sharp, and disrespectful criticism by insiders as well as outsiders. Religion and the death of the Pope most certainly became also first class entertainment. The media, no less than the spin doctors and PR officers of the Vatican, know how to give people what they hunger for. But this too was also criticised in, and by, the same media.

The total picture painted by the media, not only of religion in the two cases mentioned, but in most cases, be it of religion in general, of the various religious traditions, in the national or the global village, is all but clear. If we look at one or the other individual article or report, we *may* find a specific approach and attitude, but very often it is characterised by anything but a uniform and clarified approach. The coverage of religion in the media is a mess!

It is, however, no more messy and ambiguous than thinking and talking about religion is in general amongst the majority of the global and national media audiences who, be they religious or non-religious, do not know what to think and say of religion. In this way, at least, the media, to a large degree, is but a mirror of the world it reflects upon, a producer but also a reproducer of the public opinion on things religious. Perhaps the mess may be seen as a plurality of approaches, as something positive and good. In this way, it reflects the pluralism of opinions amongst journalists and audience. Moreover, *one* approach to religion may be as dangerous as to think that there is only one god and one truth.

Consequently, criticising the way media handle religion, is not an easy task. The media discourse on religion is as ambiguous as the public discourse on religion. Many a story on religion can be seen as flawed or biased, in need of 'neutrality', or of knowledge, too uncritical and subservient. But, looked upon over a longer period and including the range of reports and articles, we see that the media actually do cover religion from more than one angle, in a nuanced and variegated way. Besides: The media not only create the public discourse, but also feed on it and are limited by it.

The notion and location of 'religion'

The most important issue, and the one entailing most of the other crucial issues in regard to media coverage of religion, has to do with the basic and extremely complicated question:

What is this 'thing' called 'religion'?
What, in the world, in the various countries, in academia and in the media, gets to count as 'religion'? What normative and exclusivistic notions of 'true' or 'good' religion, of 'real' and 'legitimate' religion, does the media draw upon, produce and reproduce?

What and who decides whether a religion or features of religion are located in a 'zone of tolerance' or not? What is taken as 'given', 'normal', and 'natural', and what is not? What religion and what features of religion are being reported as normal, and what as so abnormal that it attracts attention and becomes 'news'?

Definitions or notions of 'religion', be they by outsiders or insiders, which become the norm, slip almost unnoticed into the public sphere and constitute central elements in public opinion on religion.

Recognition as a 'religion', by the state, the courts, or the media, gives a social movement or a social group and its members, ideology and practice, prestige and status, especially if recognised as a 'true' religion, not a fake or false religion, 'semi-religion', 'superstition', and the like.

Words are far from innocent: To be named by the media a 'new religious movement', a 'cult' or a 'sect', and not 'church', 'religion', and 'denomination' has far-reaching consequences. So, a first recommendation: Take heed of the academic discussions and deconstructions of 'religion'.

'Religion' is a word with a long history and a lot of shifting 'meanings', a word at first part of a specific Latin-Roman context, and then a word successively loaded, in the history of Europe and the world, with various meanings, gradually ending up as a synonym of 'faith' or 'belief', 'system of beliefs and ritual practices'. 'Religion', to a large degree, is what the religious adherents but also the non-religious non-adherents, even opponents, make of it. Religion does not exist beyond humans and societies.

Neither is a religion something that can be understood simply by reference to the 'holy scriptures' and the versions made more or less normative and authoritative by (usually) a body of learned, old men. No religion has one, true original 'version' which then, as time goes by, turns into something with more versions. There never existed only one true version of any of today's 'world religions', and no religion is owned by the authoritative figures and learned spokesmen. Islam, Christianity, and the other so-called world religions come in as many versions as they have adherents.

Therefore, none of these religions can be *mis*used because there is no one invested with an unchallenged authority to decide what is use and what is misuse. Religion does not exist apart from the uses of the users, and the discourses of the speakers.

Danish media and religion

The notion of religion shared by the public and many journalists, in Denmark as elsewhere, is a result of historical happenings, part of the religio-cultural heritage, and as such often normative. In Denmark the dominant public notion of religion is to a large degree shaped by the Danish state religion - a local, rather orthodox kind of Lutheran-Protestant Christianity.

The public opinion, shared also by the journalists and editors I have interviewed, is, and ought to be, something that has to do with so-called existential 'big' questions posed by all human beings, independent of their historical setting.

Religion, in this view, is humankind's answer to these big questions and related feelings; religion originates as man 'confronts' universals like death, disease, the miracle of birth, the silence of the universe, the forces of nature. At the same time, strangely enough, most people and journalists, more or less religious themselves, somehow also accept the postulates of most religions, namely that the religion in question is *not* a result of this human quest for meaning, but the result of some divine plan and action, or the workings of divine heroes and prophets.

In Denmark, the efforts of Luther (cf. Marx) to reform the notion of true religion has been a great success. This success, which is also part of what is called 'secularisation', is not solely the result of Luther. It is also the result of a liberal, bourgeois and capitalistic development and ideology, and of the anti-religious, criticism of the Enlightenment. Emmanuel Kant, too, has contributed to this discourse.

Religion, true religion, good religion, according to this theological-political-economical-philosophical ideology and development, belong to the intimate or private sphere. It may 'spill out' into the social sphere by (e.g.) way of ethics, but it must not spill out into the public, especially not the political, sphere.

Despite the fact, then, that the Danish constitution posits the Lutheran Church as the religion of the state, and as such to be supported by the state, and despite the fact that the calendar is a Christian calendar, and that Christian festivals are celebrated in the public schools and in all public places, the normal opinion in Denmark has been, and still is, that 'we' have a mature, and, at the same time, 'original' way of having religion, and that we have managed to locate and keep religion in the place where it truly belongs, in the heart, in the church, in the homes.

Add to this the very common notion of religion as having two sides. Not two equally valid sides, but two opposite sides: An 'inner' and an 'outer' side, the inner being the original and true one, originating in a personal, almost mystical, experience of the 'holy', of 'god', etc., and the outer being later and less pure (dogmatics, institutions, rituals, etc.). Ethics is also often thought of as belonging to this 'true' side of religion. The less you see religion (except in the moral behaviour of people, where it cannot be differentiated from an humanistic ethics), the less it shows in clothing, in what you drink or eat, the better and more 'mature' and 'real' it is.

Add to this the view, that religion and science, no less than religion and politics, are, and ought to be, two clearly separated spheres of life and society, and that religions which 'mix' science and religion are as wrong and bad as those that 'mix' religion and politics.

These are the central elements in the dominant, normative discourse on religion; it is no wonder then that religious people with other notions of religion (ethics, politics, and the relations between these 'spheres' or sections of society), be they Muslims, Jews or Hindus, are considered 'old-fashioned', 'immature', 'childish' - and quite often fanatical. They consequently fall outside the 'zone of tolerance' - and become news.

No wonder that people who pray in public or wear a headscarf are considered fanatical, misguided and with an understanding of religion that misses the whole point of religion: The 'inner', true dimension.

There is also the concept of 'clean' and 'unclean': To consider menstruating or birth-giving women unclean or impure, to consider certain kinds of food unclean, is but a sign of childish ways.

Opinions and discourses like these are not altogether special to the 'irreligious Lutherans' of Denmark. Some of these lines of demarcation can, of course, be found also in other countries and amongst various groups and individuals within other religions.

This makes it hard for the media to write balanced and nuanced coverage of religious groups and persons who have other notions of religion and other visions of the role of religion in the state and the society than the notion shared by the majority.

However, the national media, covering religion 'out there' as well as at home has to (re)consider the degree to which they (re)produce representations of religion which serve narrow-minded nation-building - the building of a 'we' against the significant 'other'. The media has to consider whether their coverage of religion serves to make Huntington's flawed and vehemently criticized thesis on "The Clash of Civilizations" become a reality.

Questions and recommendations

To deconstruct the dominant notion of religion is no easy task. It cannot, except with great difficulty, be separated from an overall notion of an orderly society and world. The notion of religion is part of a larger cosmology and classification system, according to which the world and society is and must be divided into neatly separated spheres (the private, the public, the economical, and the political sphere). In this scheme, religion (in my part of the world) belongs to only one sphere. One of the results of this is, that quite often it is only in case of religion transgressing the borders between the spheres, that religion becomes news.

When religions or religious persons violate the normal and normative system of classification, *then* they become news (and dangerous). When a minister of the church who is expected to behave morally does not do so; when a religious group, thought to deal with peace of heart, the existential big questions, the 'inner' man, and the like, deals instead with war, money, politics and 'outer' things like clothes, food and the like, then we have 'religion in conflict', be it conflict on a smaller or larger scale.

The journalists interviewed by me 'complain' that though they would like to write more about the 'soft' side of religion, religion has become hard news during the last ten years. On rare occasions, the media focus attention on religion out of conflict, religion in the daily lives of religionists who are not in conflict, neither with the norms set for religion, nor with the society, nor with other religionists.

Even as I recommend journalists to write about, for example, the silent, hard-working, invisible Muslim immigrants, I have some understanding for the arguments saying that this does not make as good news and good stories as suicide bombers and Muslims and Islam in conflict, at home or abroad.

While I see the reasons why the media reproduce the inherited notion of religion and of certain religions, I also recognise that the media have a role as nation-builders and upholders of the community of the nation.

I do, however, also long for the day when the media at large is able to see, for instance, that the ideology of the 'apolitical religion of the heart' is as efficient a political and religious ideology as any other, serving those in power, serving the capitalistic economy, and to some degree also serving the church and religion.

The media has to take heed of the fact that the 'we' of the nation is no longer the 'we' of yesterday. 'We' are no longer only 'irreligious Lutherans'; 'We' are also more or less religious Muslims, New Agers, more or less believers in Jesus Christ as well as in reincarnation and karma. 'We' are also part of the world, and the world is multi-religious, and there is more than one truth.

The media, not least in a country like Denmark, have to acknowledge that most people get their knowledge about religion only from the media. Religion is nowadays, to a large degree, what the media make of it. The increase of religion as a popular topic has not shown in a like increase in church attendance or in active involvement in other religious activities.

I recommend the media to ask themselves these questions:

- Would it be a good idea for the editors and journalists to sit down and take a couple of days to discuss how to cope with religion - the advantages and disadvantages of having a less ambiguous approach to, or even a specific policy on religion? Or should the policy on religion be the same policy as for any other subject matter?

  Perhaps a special 'religion policy' is a good idea, e.g. in order to create some kind of equal treatment of all religions, because religion *does* differ from other topics, and because reporting on religion may have greater consequences.

- Would it be a good idea to assign a journalist or two to this topic? In that case, who would be the right person? Somebody with a special educational background, e.g. someone who has had some education or in-service training in comparative religion or the like, or should it be just a normal journalist with a special interest in this topic? Should the person be religious, or should he/she be detached, maybe even a decidedly non-religious person?

- What do you do with economics, politics, sports? Is this something everybody is supposed to be able to report on?

- What are the criteria for religion to become news? Are they the same as for everything else, or are they different?

- To what degree do the media approach and represent religions from the point of view of religious insiders, and to what degree, and when, from the point of view of outsiders?

- Are economy, power, and similar worldly issues part of religion? Is the institutional side of religion as much religion as the 'spiritual' side?

- Are journalists and media equally critical or equally un-critical of all religions?

In conclusion, I do think that it would be relevant if more journalists, as part of their education or in-service training, took courses in the academic, comparative study of religions as they have developed around the world. I am sure that it might help develop a more sophisticated notion of religion as a historical variable instead as an universal given. I am sure that a tour around the world, to past and present religions, would help widen the 'zone of tolerance' and help journalists write in a more nuanced and less biased way about religion in general and about specific religions.

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Religion, Media and the Question of Authority

Amir H. Zekrgoo

Religion is among the hottest and most sensitive issues of our time. Religion has agitated world politics and, consequently, has become a focal point for the media. In order to understand the issue in a more comprehensive manner and to view it with clearer vision, it helps to deliberate on a few basic questions:

- Why is religion an issue now?
- Does the problem emanate from the nature of religion (or that of a specific religion), or is there something wrong with "Now"?
- Who is having the problem, and why?

Shift from truth to facts

Political powers either take religion as a form of threat that challenges their authority, or align themselves with it in order to materialise aims that are not necessarily religious. The audience, in most cases, is not quite aware of the games played behind the scene, is pushed in different directions by the media, hoping to get the "truth" in the roller-coaster ride of "information". As time goes by, they find the ride more and more interesting; this attraction eventually turns to addiction, because the ride that the media provide is entertaining, colourful, abundant and constant.

Gradually the audience becomes 'enlightened'; they are now 'liberated' from the burden of search for "truth" and accept that the enjoyment lies in spending time with the news itself and not worrying much about the outcome, for if the ride ends and the global soap opera is deprived of exciting scenes, life becomes too flat to bear. 'Truth' is no longer an issue; it is not entertaining enough, nor does it make money. The 'news' we encounter comprise 'fragmented facts' and the way these fragments are composed often follows the pattern suggested by the superpowers in the game of global politics. But the irony remains that neither the politicians, nor the audience are totally at ease with the issue of religion, specially that aspect of it which often makes 'hot news'.

Our notion of peace too has undergone essential transformation in the age of modernisation. Peace, from a religious viewpoint, is directly linked with spirituality. This inner tranquility will find manifestation in society and then spread throughout the world. Therefore, social peace can happen only after the inner peace is accomplished. However, our modern world perceives the notions of 'inner' and 'outer'

in a new manner that is different from that of tradition; we talk about 'inner peace' in a psychological context; we study human behaviour and introduce 'meditation techniques' to calm us.

Presenting a fragmented reality

Information is proliferating, but what about 'knowledge and wisdom': *have we become wiser?* The answer to this essential question is unfortunately negative. Lack of trust has led to suspicion - suspicion generates anger, anger causes enmity, enmity may result in violence, and violence is what we see in the news on a daily basis. Our world lacks that 'inner peace', and this is also reflected in its outer reality. The fact is that interest in the 'Age of Information' is shifted from inner presence to the outer present, from the spiritual essence of the human being to the manifestations of the outer ego. Reality is fragmented into minute particles that we call 'data'. Selected samples of these fragments are communicated to people through media.

In this selection, however, the media cannot act independently and with fairness. The media cannot promote a reality that would contradict the interest of those who own them, despite the hard work of many honest individuals who have risked their lives in many instances to provide us with the naked truth.

On the one hand, there exists 'the political factor': the political superpowers, who also own the major news broadcasting empires, communicate their views more prominently than any other to persuade the residents of the globe that their way is the ultimate way and their solution is the only one. This is reflected in a well-known statement by the US President in his crusade to bring about the New World Order: *"Either you are with us or against us"*.

On the other hand is the "entertainment factor": the media have to amuse and entertain people constantly through finding and providing "interesting news" that sells and hence justifies their presence. For this, news channels must be able to compete with television serials and soap operas, and they have been successful in doing so: the world news is embedded with countless fragments of colourful information that is presented in an entertaining and convincing manner. Entertainment comes first: a sex scandal connected to a pop singer, for example, or breast cancer of a pop star has undoubtedly more entertaining quality than a scientific discovery based on decades of hardship and research.

Religion and the New World Order

The notion of religion, in its broader sense, is as old as the history of humankind; religious belief has been an inseparable part of man's nature at least until the emergence of the "modern era". Religion was the very first 'media' that provided people with information, knowledge and wisdom; it was through religion that the

human being discovered himself and understood his relationship with the worlds within and without - the pre-life (the world that he came from), the life (world that he experiences with his mind and physical senses), and the after-life.

The world of religion is infinite; a person's true identity is not therefore confined in a time-bound world of senses and of his or her power of 'mind'; instead he or she is regarded as an immortal entity whose 'self' transcends the boundaries of time and space. Humanity's duty towards other beings - physical as well as metaphysical, human, animal, and the natural environment in general - is governed by an 'Authority' that is believed to be transcendental. 'The World Order', as perceived in the worldview of the religious human, is therefore a divine system in which faith in God and the hereafter stand fundamental.

But the world order that we face today is different and new: it is called the New World Order (NWO). To many people, especially Muslims, the New World Order is rather a 'New Western Order' prescribed for the world. Furthermore, to them, the way this "Order" is being implemented does not merely imply a new 'arrangement' or 'system', but rather it involves 'force, command and demand'. The philosophy of the NWO can be explained concisely in the Western expression, "White man's burden" which, in turn, can be explained in another Western claim, 'a mission of civilising people'.

Globalisation too, with 'free trade' as its focal point, is viewed as a new form of Western colonialism, for those who benefit the most from it are the Western powers who already have their control over a major part of the world economy. With the spread of globalisation, the path will be smoothened for the spread of Western capitalism to take control over areas that have so far been able to survive with a different system of economy and of thought. On the other hand, no true religious system can accept an authority that establishes "money and trade" as the axis-mundi of the universe; a system in which money is deified but God and religion are reduced to mere aspects of "cultural diversity".

Religion and 'cultural diversity'

'Cultural diversity' too, like globalisation, is a popular subject of the day; everyone agrees that the diversity of cultures must be preserved. But why, all of a sudden, has it become crucial to keep the diversity alive?

- *Is 'cultural diversity' now in the list of endangered species?*
- *What factors have led this beautiful phenomenon to the verge of extinction?*

Thinking about the above questions could be enlightening and may lead to very interesting results. First of all, it is a sad fact that the beautiful diversity that has taken form on the face of earth through a very slow and natural process in the course of thousands of years is being threatened. The invaluable treasure known to

us as 'Cultural Diversity' is the embodiment of wisdom and beauty of the traditions that were responsible for their creation. Through the harmonious blend of beauty and wisdom they gave birth to the highest forms of art, architecture, music, literature and drama. 'Wisdom' for the seers of those traditions was the 'inner beauty', while 'beauty' to them meant the 'embodiment of wisdom' in the realm of senses.

A major source of such diversities has been from religion. In the words of Herbert Read:

"The relation between art and religion is one of the most difficult questions that we have to face. We look back into the past and see art and religion emerging hand-in-hand from the dim recesses of pre-history. For many centuries they seem to remain indissolubly linked; and then, in Europe, about five hundred years ago, the first signs of breach appear. It widens, and in the High Renaissance we have an art that is ... aiming to express nothing beyond the artist's own personality. The history of Western art after Renaissance is checkered and discordant... and finally we begin to think that there can be no great art, or great periods of art, without an intimate link between art and religion."[1]

It is sad that cultural diversity, in the contemporary political vocabulary, refers mostly to the surface layer of cultures: things such as rituals, costumes, food, etc; it hardly involves a thorough understanding of the philosophical and religious principles underlying such diverse appearances. Preservation of cultural diversity, therefore, is looked upon as preservation of outdated antiquities in a museum collection: be it an antique robe or an icon, a gold coin or a sacred talisman, they need to be preserved and kept intact, preferably "out of context"; the robe is not to be worn, the icon not to be worshipped, the coin shall not be spent and the talisman is deprived of its supernatural powers. In other words, it is not the 'spirit' that is meant to be preserved, only the form. When the soul is weakened the very existence is endangered, and it does not matter how carefully we treat the body; when the soil is not cared for, and the environment does not suit the growing, cosmetic preservation cannot help.

Modernisation was the first real threat to the traditional way of life; the spread of industrialisation in traditional societies - that took place systematically with the objective of generating more profit for the business owners - destroyed many small local factories and imposed a new style of life that belittled the local way of living that was based on traditional-religious values. Globalisation, as is being pursued by the economic/political powers, is itself a great threat to the very principle of diversity. The campaign has gained momentum through the influence of mass media. In the beginning the whole process looked glamourous and very "progressive" as it implied a process of 'civilising the uncivilised' and 'modernising the backward'. But now we come to realise the destructive effect of modernisation and industrialisation over the very traditions that provided humanity with the precious diversity which had hitherto been taken for granted.

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[1] *Herbert Read, The Meaning of Art, 1972, London, p.82*

Faith and reality

The game gets more confusing when it comes to dealing with the problem of religion. Faith is a different domain altogether. We often use the expression, "Seeing is believing"; this cliché refers to the domain of matter and exact sciences and implies that "Only physical or concrete evidence is convincing"; that observation comes first and is then followed by the approval of the observer with regard to the reality of the observed.

In the realm of religion, however, faith, that is believing, precedes seeing; there are certain realities that transcend the temporal senses, that only the eyes of a believer can perceive; those who do not believe, according to the Qur'an, have eyes that do not see, have ears that do not hear for *"God has set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing, and on their eyes is a veil.."* (**Qur'an** 2: 7, 16:108).

Seeing, hearing and believing is the system by which the media operate. A religious worldview operates according to different values and principles that may be understood only by the language of faith. We must accept that religion addresses the issue of reality at a different level: 'information' would be considered harmful unless it leads to 'knowledge', and knowledge would do no good unless it is guided by rays of wisdom and is put into action. It seems that wisdom has lost its credibility in the age of information, for "we have more degrees but less sense, more knowledge, but less judgment, more experts, yet more problems, more medicine, but less wellness". I urge fellow journalists and the media to go beyond the crust of unveiled facts and to dive deep into the domain of what I call 'the concealed reality and metaphysical aspects of faith".

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5

The State of Public Service Broadcasting

The Blessings of the BBC Crisis

Richard Sambrook

In January 2004, the Chairman of the BBC and its Director General both resigned in the wake of the Hutton Report. It was described as the biggest crisis in the BBC's eighty-year history.

In 2006, the BBC's Charter - the licence by which the corporation exists - has to be renewed by the British Parliament. Consequently, we are currently in the middle of a public debate in the UK about the role and responsibilities of the BBC.

The BBC crisis

On May 29, 2003, the **Today** programme - the BBC's main morning news programme - broadcast a report by reporter Andrew Gilligan about the British government's intelligence on weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in advance of the Iraq war. He said basically two things, both based on a conversation he had with an anonymous source - that we now know to have been Dr David Kelly, Britain's foremost expert on WMD.

Gilligan said the British intelligence services were unhappy with the way the intelligence had been presented in a public dossier in advance of the war. He said the intelligence had been exaggerated, the subject of spin or, to use his phrase, "sexed up" - particularly the notion that Saddam Hussein had WMD capable of being deployed in 45 minutes. This narrative had been a key plank in winning Parliamentary support for the war and in winning public support in the UK. We now know, of course, that it was untrue, that the intelligence had been patchy and uncertain but presented as authoritative and beyond doubt.

The BBC stood by this element of Gilligan's report and would still do so. However, in one sentence at seven minutes past six in the morning, he went further and suggested that the British government had deliberately misled the public, knowing the dossier to be wrong. As it turned out, he had insufficient grounds for suggesting this and it should not have been broadcast.

The British government ignited a very public argument with the BBC saying every element of the report (including the "sexing up" of the dossier) was wrong and demanded a retraction of the entire story. The BBC, knowing a significant part of

the story was right, dug in and defended its stand. So we had the government seeking to defend its integrity and the BBC seeking to defend its impartiality. Both are non-negotiable for each side - and it was bound to end badly.

In the pressure of the row, Dr Kelly killed himself and the Hutton Inquiry was set up to find out what happened. The report vindicated the government and seriously criticised the BBC, leading to the resignations. A subsequent inquiry, the Butler Inquiry, severely criticised the government for its handling of the intelligence in the run-up to war.

Opportunity for reflection

In the wake of this crisis, the BBC has looked long and hard at what it got wrong - and what it got right. We don't agree with Lord Hutton's conclusions about our editorial processes - but we do accept we should have found a way to differentiate between what Gilligan got right and what we subsequently learned he got wrong. More significantly, we accepted that we needed to modernise our system of handling complaints and our system of governance and accountability.

At the height of the controversy, the BBC's Board of Governors, our regulator, issued a statement in support of the management without instigating their own inquiry into the report. Many have taken this to indicate there was insufficient separation between management and regulators.

As we now look forward to the renewal of the BBC's Charter, debate around the role of the BBC governors is one of the key planks for reform. The new chairman of the BBC, Michael Grade, has already introduced greater separation between governors and management, moving the governors into a separate building and providing them with independent staff with which to review and challenge the management of the BBC.

The government's proposals go a little further, cementing this separation by abolishing the governors and replacing them with a trust, acting on behalf of the British public but sitting separately from both government and the BBC.

Mission for the 21st century

In terms of the rest of the case for renewal of the BBC's Charter, our task has been to take the original mission of the BBC - to inform, educate and entertain the British public - and re-interpret it for the twenty-first century.

We see the key responsibility of a public broadcaster in the future as being to help build and sustain social capital - or public value as we call it. The BBC's founders believed that broadcasting could make the world a better place. Public intervention

would ensure that its astonishing creative power - to enrich individuals with knowledge, culture and information about their world - would be put to work for the sole benefit of the public.

We believe the BBC creates **Public Value** in five ways:

Democratic value - the BBC supports civic life and national debate by providing trusted and impartial news that helps citizens make sense of the world and encourages them to engage with it.

Cultural and creative value - the BBC enriches cultural life in the United Kingdom by bringing talent and audiences together in new ways, to celebrate our cultural heritage and broaden the national conversation.

Educational value - by offering audiences of every age a world of formal and informal learning opportunity.

Social and community value - by enabling the nation's many communities to see what they have in common and how they differ, the BBC hopes to build social cohesion and tolerance.

Global value - the BBC seeks to support the UK's global role by providing trusted news and information and showcasing the best of British culture to a global audience.

We also believe the BBC has a strong role to play in leading the conversion to digital services and technology and leveraging them in the new environment of on-demand consumption.

Thus, the crisis of 2004, combined with the debate on Charter renewal, has forced the BBC to think long and deeply about the social role it plays and about its core values. We believe there is as strong a role for public broadcasting in the digital future, as much as there has been in the past.

With mounting competition, changes in the ways audiences consume our programmes and increasing globalisation, we believe the values which differentiate the BBC - and public broadcasters in general - will have a growing value. But to deliver that value we have to concentrate hard on our core purposes and find creative ways to fulfil them on behalf of our audiences.

Our loyalty and responsibility is to the British public. One year on from the "BBC Crisis" there has been no reduction in the very high trust the public places in the BBC. We hope that by continuing to focus on the public value the BBC can provide, we will continue to earn that trust - in Britain and around the world.

Richard Sambrook is Director of World Service and Global News, BBC.

Time of Challenges for Public Broadcasters in Australia

Jean-Gabriel Manguy

In early 2005, Australia's two publicly-funded broadcasters, the mainstream ABC and the multilingual SBS, found themselves in competition over sporting rights. SBS, as a public broadcaster with the ability to generate commercial sponsorship, won the day and in the end secured the rights to a forthcoming popular series of cricket matches. What is interesting is that two publicly-funded broadcasters were trying to outbid each other from the same public purse, in order to chase large audience ratings and so further enhance their appeal.

This is unusual as normally it is commercial television operators who try to outbid each other for major sports rights.

Here we were with SBS, by all accounts a niche multicultural broadcaster with a small television audience share overall, intent on securing the rights to a mainstream sporting event such as cricket - a sport generally followed in Australia by the predominant Anglo-Australian community, not SBS's traditional constituency.

This gives us an indication of the pressures Australia's two public broadcasters are feeling as they try to position themselves for the future, in a period when further significant changes are expected in Australia's media environment.

Governance reform

Yet, looking back on what occurred at the BBC, we at the ABC certainly take comfort in the feeling that our organisation was better prepared to deal with complaints and political pressure. Over the last six years, the ABC has been operating under a rather hostile government. As a result, it has had to do a lot of governance reform, in particular in the way it handles complaints.

First, the ABC has a special unit in its Audience and Consumer Affairs section that handles complaints and coordinates responses to them. Structurally, this unit has been set up separately from editorial areas such as networks, programmes, news or current affairs. This provides it with a greater degree of independence. A senior executive position - Complaint Review Executive - has been created to look at more serious complaints referred to him by the Managing Director or to deal with other complaints which have not been dealt with. While this structure is an internal ABC structure, its effectiveness results from the rigour with which it handles the complaints process.

Above this structure, the ABC can also refer serious matters to an Independent Complaints Review Panel set up by the ABC Board and operating separately from the rest of the organisation.

In addition, every three months, the ABC publishes Quarterly Public Reports on complaints received. All in all, this provides the organisation with an effective system of upward referral in order to deal with complaints before they get out of hand, and generates greater transparency in the process.

In recent years, moreover, considerable work has been done at the ABC as part of the Corporate Planning framework, in particular to formulate better performance indicators, with targets better aligned to corporate objectives. A lot of effort has also been put into reporting to parliament, notably through the Annual Report. Earlier this year, the Australian government even commended the organisation for the quality of its corporate governance reporting.

However, the same government announced recently yet another efficiency review of the ABC. Although it has indicated that any efficiency savings will remain within the organisation, the review will no doubt put the ABC under further pressure.

The digital challenge and concentration of ownership

The biggest challenge faced by public broadcasters in Australia at present arises of course from the digital environment. The challenge of relative audience decline for traditional radio and television networks, greater market fragmentation and more personalised media platforms are compounded by limited budgets for public broadcasting.

However, the other significant development this year is the Australian government's intention to remove, either entirely or partially, media ownership restrictions. Until now, these have prevented a particular media owner from owning more than two media outlets in one market. The objective was to foster media diversity.

From July 1, 2005, the Australian government holds the majority in both houses of Parliament and, as a result, is in a position to lift restrictions which until now have been resisted by the opposition.

There is a lot of lobbying going on at present from both sides of the argument and, in particular, from major commercial media players who stand to benefit from a further concentration of media ownership in Australia. In cities like Sydney and Melbourne for instance, the minimum number of owners permitted could be halved from the current 13 and 11 respectively, to just six. In some smaller cities, this drop could be more dramatic - from the present five to simply two.

Further media concentration in Australia will no doubt lead to greater content uniformity and, in turn, provide public broadcasters with opportunities to attract audiences through content with stronger local identity. However, they will find it increasingly difficult to compete with larger media players who can cross-promote their outlets and realise economies of scale in terms of distribution as well as buying power.

Increased foreign investment

If restrictions are also lifted on increased foreign ownership, this will further open the door to overseas investment capital. As a result, the position of large commercial operators will be strengthened, particularly in terms of securing content rights.

Meanwhile, over the next five to ten years, public broadcasters in Australia need to pursue internal reforms to cope with the changes taking place. This requires responsiveness and flexibility. As long-established organisations, will their infrastructure and staff be dynamic enough to adapt to the demands of the new environment?

Keep the faith

Australian public broadcasters need to keep faith in their values and mandate in order to deliver social capital and social value but, as you can see, they also have to remain viable and relevant in a changing and increasingly competitive environment.

Jean-Gabriel Manguy is the Head of Radio Australia.

Editorial Independence and Public Accountability in PBS

Guy Berger

A public broadcaster is pulled in two directions. There is the need to be accountable to the public, and imperative to be editorially independent at the same time. The first implies control, the second points to autonomy. This distinctive tension marks out public broadcasting from both private broadcasting and government-controlled broadcasting.

Parallel to the re-examination of the BBC's systems in the wake of the Gilligan report, the SABC has attempted to mediate the complex challenges entailed through formulating detailed editorial policies and systems. The significance of this experience is highlighted by understanding both the nature of policy and the definitions of "public accountability" and "editorial independence". SABC's system has much to commend itself, but there are questions over its internal accountability system of "upward referral".

Case of South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC)[1]

The infamous "sexed-up" dossier report by BBC reporter Andrew Gilligan triggered a chain of events that saw unprecedented government and judicial criticism of the BBC. In turn, this was followed by a slew of senior resignations at the corporation and intense state pressure to tighten the broadcaster's quality control systems and editorial policy protocols.

While this was going on, South Africa also faced a potential squeeze on the SABC by the country's Ministry of Communications, which sought to prescribe a set of editorial policies for the broadcaster. A public outcry reversed this and an innovative public consultation took place instead, as a result of which the South African public broadcaster adopted its own editorial policies and systems. Some of the ingredients were home grown, but many also drew extensively and, sometimes inappropriately, from the BBC model. The whole experience makes for an interesting case study in how a PBS in a mid-level developing country negotiates the tensions between editorial independence and public accountability.

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[1] *This paper owes a debt to Denis Jjuuko, who conducted substantial research into the topic for his MA thesis in the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University in 2004.*

This paper analyses the SABC's editorial policies and processes that were finally adopted in April 2004, with attention to the particular way these protocols interpreted and sought to balance editorial independence and public accountability. The significance of the South African experience is examined through theories of public broadcasting and theories of policy.

Definition of Public Broadcasting Service

Various authors have come up with different definitions of PBS and many have painted this form of broadcasting as one that is non-commercial and primarily supported by public funds for public purposes (McChesney 2000; McQuail 2000). However, PBS in countries like South Africa is mainly funded by advertising. Such funding models stir debates about the impact of commerce on PBS programming and, therefore, about the essential character of a public service broadcaster when it competes commercially for audience and advertising share. What does accountability to the market mean for *public* accountability?

Another factor prompting debate about the nature of PBS is the democratisation of countries with a government-controlled broadcaster. Here the challenge is to change these entities into public utilities free of government interference - even when there is a democratically-elected government. But if this freedom is the meaning of editorial independence, to whom then does PBS account?

A third dimension of debate is that if PBS is suppose to serve neither profit-purposes nor political interests, what then does it mean to serve the "public"? How is the overall public interest, as well as minority interests, to be served by this form of broadcasting and through what kind of accountability? And to what extent should PBS also define and serve the "national interest" as distinct from "public interest"?

The nature of PBS in relation to all these matters is not clear-cut or settled. Moreover, this does not even touch on other issues such as the extent to which PBS is also sometimes defined by components such as universal service and children's programming.

In South Africa, chapter four of the Broadcasting Act (as amended) of 2002 stipulates the 'ideal' roles of PBS as being, *interalia*, to:

- *Make services available to South Africans in all the 11 official languages*
- *Strive to offer a broad range of services targeting, particularly, children, women, the youth and the disabled*
- *Provide significant news and public affairs programming which meets the highest standards of journalism, as well as fair and unbiased coverage, impartiality, balanced and independence from government, commercial and other interests.*

Critics assert that the broadcaster's commercialism has compromised delivery on the first two of these public services, and that there is a pro-government bias that contradicts the "balance" and "independence" of the third point. At stake in defining PBS are the concepts of editorial independence and public accountability, and the relationship between them.

Editorial independence

Public service broadcasters are expected to be independent in the sense of being autonomous and having the ability to make decisions without being controlled by anyone else. In PBS, this means that programming and related decisions should be free from any form of interference (political, commercial, or personal) that prevents them from fulfilling their public mandates (Dlamini 2003; Warren 1998). In this context, editorial independence provides a 'layer of insulation' from any potential form of corrupting influence (Mendel 1998:10).

This can be analysed at four different levels:

- The concept of editorial independence protects the right of staff to make day-to-day decisions regarding editorial matters. Barker (2000) argues that editorial independence provides the right to journalists and editors to make decisions on the basis of professional criteria such as newsworthiness of an event or its relevance to the public's right to know and in accordance with the codes of ethics of journalism. It primarily implies, in this interpretation, independence from the biases and values of owners where such may be contrary to the norms of free and professional journalism (Berger, 2003b).

- Editorial independence is the independence of the editorial function as a whole from the exclusively economic imperatives of a media institution and, in particular, from those staffers responsible not for the integrity of editorial content, but for generating revenues for the business.

- The notion can also be assessed in regard to the degree to which reporters have independence of their editors. This relates to the professional autonomy and responsibility of each rank-and-file journalist.

- Another level relates to the independence of journalists from their sources (Berger 1997).

These complexities help to explain why journalists do not operate in a vacuum as far as editorial independence is concerned. Their autonomy is framed in terms of the broad practices of the profession. However, underpinning these levels of editorial independence there needs to be institutional independence from the power centres of government and the business sector. This status should be also guaranteed to the regulatory bodies that oversee the activities of the public service broadcasters.

The Access to the Airwaves Principles as developed by Article 19 emphasise that all public bodies which exercise powers in the areas of broadcast regulation, including those that receive complaints from the public, should be protected against interference, particularly of a political or commercial nature. Thus, the legal status of regulators should be clearly defined in law and their institutional autonomy and independence should be guaranteed and protected by law. This can be done through legislation which establishes the body and, if possible, also by being inscribed in a country's constitution (Kupe 2003:186). South Africa indeed has a constitutionally-enshrined independent regulatory authority which keeps broadcasting services at an arm's length from government.

Public accountability

Editorial independence is something relevant to all forms of broadcasting. But in PBS, it goes hand-in-hand with a unique level of accountability to the public in whose name its operates.

Public service broadcasters are expected to be editorially independent - and yet also editorially account to the public (as distinct from the government) (Tleane and Duncan 2003). Financial accountability is a different matter, although defenders of public broadcasting may see a loophole in this that can allow governments to impinge upon editorial independence through control of the purse strings.

The complex paradox is that while a public service broadcaster needs to be independent from all forms of interference, it is also expected to account on a regular basis as to how it realises its public mandate (2003:73). To be accountable is to be responsible for your own decisions or actions, and to meet expectations to explain them when you are asked (Hornby 2000).

There are several ways a public service broadcaster can demonstrate its accountability to the public. The first is through a **public board of governance.** As Tleane and Duncan (2003) observe, public service broadcasters usually account to the public through board members, who should represent the broad spectrum of public opinion since they are appointed through a public process for the office. In turn, board members account to the public, rather than the government, through the representatives of parliament. In South Africa, this is one of the ways by which the SABC accounts to the public.

A second form of accountability is through **responding formally** to criticism, including participation in industry complaints bodies. In the case of South Africa, the SABC is a member of the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), which has established a voluntary, statutorily recognised and independent-of-government complaints body called the Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA).[2]

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[2] *The BCCSA consists of seven members who represent viewers and listeners, drawn from nominations received by the NAB after placing advertisements in the electronic media. The BCCSA also consists of another seven members drawn from the electronic media industry as proposed by NAB.*

The third mechanism is through **reporting to broadcast regulators** which are supposed in turn to hold their licensees, including public broadcasters, accountable. In South Africa, the regulator, Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) also has a complaints body called the Broadcasting Monitoring and Complaints Committee, which adjudicates complaints and institutes investigations into contraventions by broadcasters. This committee is used mainly by broadcasters who are not members of NAB, and for complaints that do not fall within BCCSA's jurisdiction.[3]

Other measures of accounting to the public may include **advisory councils** and **public meetings** (Tleane and Duncan 2003:73). Public meetings are conducted to enable the board and/or PBS staffers to receive comments and views from the general public regarding the programmes of the public service broadcaster.

Tensions in editorial independence and public accountability

Editorial independence is an imperative that pulls a public service broadcaster away from specified external interests such as business and government. Public accountability pushes in the reverse direction towards externalities that are supposed to represent the general interests of the public. It is in order to regulate, or even reconcile, this tension that PBS editorial policies come into the picture. Ideally, such policies spell out, or should do, what amounts to public service, what is the content of "editorial independence", and what criteria and mechanisms are required for "public accountability".

By spelling these out in policy, a PBS can counter any idea that editorial independence means free licence. Instead, it would clarify that independence means accountability in relation to professional journalism norms and ethical standards in the first instance. Yet, even private broadcasters ought to be accountable to professional norms and standards. The point is that being professionally autonomous does not, in itself, specify what public accountability entails, and how this frames and constrains the activities of a public service broadcaster. This is where policy should also give substance to public service and the kind of public accountability mechanisms discussed above, to enable development of detailed criteria for determining whether the public service broadcasters have met their mandates or not. In short, PBS staff have to be accountable for both general journalistic professional norms and editorial policy guidelines with a public service orientation, and be accountable to the public for performance in this regard.

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[3] *The Access to the Airwaves principles as developed by Article 19 emphasise that "regulatory bodies [of public service broadcasters] should be formally accountable to the public through a multi-party body, such as the legislature or a committee thereof, rather than a minister or other partisan individual or body. Regulatory bodies should be required by law to produce a detailed annual report on their activities and budgets, including audited accounts. This annual report should be published and widely disseminated" (Kupe 2003:189).*

The upshot of all this is that, although editorial independence may mean that editors take full control of content without conceding influence to political or commercial interests, these individuals still have to work within specific policies that guide them on fulfilling their mandates (Berger 1999). This means that editors have free reign but only within a policy framework that puts professional standards and public interest above the rest (Berger 2003a). The content and parameters of such policy, its formulation and its implementation, are central to how this issue is managed.

I shall analyse the SABC's editorial policy experience against this backdrop. However, a short review of policy theory is valuable in order to appreciate the origins, developments and prognosis entailed.

Understanding policy

Policy can be taken to mean a plan or course of action - of government, political party, business, or any other organisation - intended to influence and determine decisions and actions (Hornby 2000). How policy works varies according to diverse paradigms, in particular, functionalism, liberal pluralism, power, radical democracy, and chaos (Berger 2004b).

Paradigm 1: Functionalism
Policy in this outlook is regarded as a system to harmonise and align behaviours in the interests of the reproduction of the whole entity. This approach highlights common interests and consensus and thus sees policy playing the role of integrating different forces. As such, the point of policy in this perspective is to provide for predictability and to avoid ad hoc actions. To do this, policy must spell out the agreed rules of the game and ensure that there are unambiguous roles that are clearly understood by the various players. From this perspective, it is readily apparent how policy can be intended to clarify relations and resolve tensions between editorial independence and public accountability.

This paradigm is temptingly obvious as an understanding of the role of policy, but it has some blind spots - in particular, it ignores the politics of policy.

Paradigm 2: Liberal pluralism
Policy in this view reflects differing interests in competition. The perspective assumes that the outcomes will depend on the degree of pluralism present and on the possibilities for informed choices and debate amongst those making policy. Although policy formulation may eventually entail aggregation and compromise between differing interests, even this is not necessarily stable: politics can easily continue in the implementation (or non-implementation) of the policy. It is predictable therefore that whether to prioritise editorial independence over public accountability (or vice versa), is likely to be a matter of ongoing contestation.

Again, we have a paradigm that sensitises us to an important dimension of policy formulation and practice. But also, we find that something else is ignored - namely power.

Paradigm 3: Power
In this perspective, policy is also about authority and responsibility. Politics around policy do not necessarily take place between equal parties, nor do the most rational proposals automatically win the day. Instead, policy is very often about the exercise of power by those with power. But by the same token, wielding power is intrinsically bound up with responsibility, so this approach also highlights where "the buck stops" - i.e. where final authority and accountability lie for formulation, implementation and review of policy. This perspective is especially relevant to making public accountability a reality: it stresses who ultimately has authority and responsibility to adopt, enforce and review policy. It sensitises us also to noticing that much power in policy comes less from the policy-initiators and policy-makers than from implementers - the mandarins, mundane bureaucrats, and mid-level newsroom managers.

The perspective is further valuable in reminding us that policy is sometimes about legitimisation - about the symbolism that "something is being done" by those in charge. But this focus on the top-down power dimension of policy can also hide a different dimension.

Paradigm 4: Radical democracy
This grassroots view observes that policy is not simply a tool to be brandished unchecked by those with power, but also often something that is constrained by those at the bottom of the heap. It indicates how grassroots actors can impact on policy even by active non-cooperation, and set its parameters accordingly. It also implies that effective policy should explicitly go further than recognising the role of the liberal pluralist elite of active stakeholders and explicitly canvass the views of grassroots stakeholder groups (whose experiences and insights can often enrich the policy outcome and make a difference to implementation). The radical democratic paradigm also puts value on the notion that policy can empower and liberate; that it does not only have to be about strictures. A policy on editorial independence, in this view, can be a useful tool for journalists to fend off pressures to compromise ethics and can strengthen their abilities to make and defend professional decisions.

Being conscious of bottom-up policy aspects is a valuable insight. However, there is a danger of it becoming romantic populism that reduces the role of final authority (and even of trained expertise) in policy formulation and implementation. This insight about the dangers of a policy "free-for-all" is provided by a fifth approach.

Paradigm 5: Chaos theory
This outlook sensitises us to several situations. One is when there is a policy vacuum - and the fact that "no policy" can in fact be a policy in the sense of allowing authorities to avoid having to develop something to which they can be held to

account. In this sense, chaos can also serve power. Also highlighted by this paradigm is that even when there is policy, it is often *ad hoc,* inconsistent, arbitrary, half-baked, unknown, arcane, or ineffectual. Chaos can exist too when there are too many policies, or too much detail about them, and when there is a lack of integration and prioritisation. The chaos approach further points to irrationalities in processes, the deleterious effects of poor research, the likelihood of unintended effects, and confusions as regards roles, responsibilities and review.

In general, therefore, the chaos paradigm underlines what is poor in much policy - and the antidote points to some kind of functionalist order and harmony. On the other hand, chaos is not intrinsically negative. There can be dangers in an "over"-policy-ised situation that lacks any flexibility. Accordingly, editorial independence and public accountability can sometimes flourish in the absence of policy detail and precisely because of the flexibility entailed. On the other hand, a complete policy vacuum can also open the gates to unprofessional journalism and to something other than public accountability.

Summing up paradigm insight:

- policy as integrative and harmonising
- policy as continuously contested
- policy as power of the dominant, and as responsibility
- policy as checked by the grassroots, and as potentially empowering
- policy as a mess or vacuum, or as flexible.

Speaking generally, political or business control of a public broadcaster can be avoided through formulation of policies that are functionalist in nature and therefore capable of serving all sections of the entire society. Cognisance should, however, be taken of the contested interests in policy and of whether grassroots input is incorporated. The power paradigm points towards the hot topic of where final decision-making and responsibility should lie. Chaos, or flexibility, is often the result of (sometimes, but not always, welcome) policy realities - incomplete knowledge, time, skill, process and follow-through.

A final insight into policy theory is the difference between **values, policies** and **codes.** Values are key foundation stones of policies on editorial independence and public accountability, and will inform the specific cultural form these take. Codes are the mechanisms by which editorial policies are supposed to be put into practice: they are the written rules that state how people in an institution should behave. It stands to reason that good policy is explicit and clearly based on values, and is also made implementable through defined codes and procedures. It is not enough to have either editorial independence or public accountability defined and operational at only one level (eg. values or codes) and outside the three-tier package as a whole. If this is the case, too much is left assumed or taken for granted.

Origins of SABC editorial policy

The external policy environment for the SABC dates back to the early 1990s when negotiations between the ruling party, its political opponents, and other civil society organisations set the stage. The operative paradigm in this period was a mix of political contestation between elites and grassroots participation. The independence of the SABC, which was the dominant feature of the country's broadcasting sector, was a critical point. Neither the ANC nor the (then ruling) National Party wanted the other to control SABC; hence a compromise (at least temporarily) was reached whereby the corporation would be insulated from the political arena. An autonomous regulatory body would ensure competitive pluralism so that there were broadcast alternatives to the SABC, and various mechanisms would be instituted to make and keep the corporation a non-government broadcaster.

Against such a backdrop, the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA), now the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA), was set up in 1993 with legal provisions calling for the regulation of broadcasting in the public interest (Horwitz 2001:145). Continuing in this spirit, the Broadcasting Act of 1999 included a Charter which guaranteed the SABC freedom of expression and journalistic, creative and programming independence. [4]

This overall policy and regulatory regime reflects many of the values set out in the South African constitution and has resulted in a neo-liberal style of broadcast dispensation in which contestation for audiences, ideas and advertising is a reality. Within this environment, the challenge has been for the SABC to be distinctive as a PBS and thus both editorially independent and publicly accountable.

Over the years, the policy terrain itself has been highly contested - both between broadcast sectors (e.g. private sector vs SABC), and between government and broadcasters. From the early days when the regulator effectively drove policy, the situation changed in the late 1990s so that government is now recognised as having a legitimate role in setting broad policy guidelines within which licenses can be given (or revoked) and specific conditions applied to them. This evolution reflects a recognition of the power paradigm ethos and, indeed, the government itself has been seeking to strengthen this over time. Attempts by successive ministers of communications to claw back some of the forfeited control over electronic communications and correspondingly reduce some of the independence of the players involved has been tracked, particularly in the telecom field (See Horwitz, 2001). However, the same trend has also been seen in broadcasting. In particular, the government (and many others - though for different reasons) has felt that SABC has been a law unto itself in deciding how to deliver on, and be accountable for, its legally-enshrined mandate.

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[4] *Adapted from the Broadcasting Act of 1999. Accessed on February 10, 2005 from http://www.icasa.org.za/Default.aspx?page=1030.*

This resulted in the Broadcasting Amendment Bill (2002), in which government stipulated the need for editorial policies to be introduced at the SABC. The bill claimed a rationale of creating an independent and publicly accountable public broadcaster modelled on the same principles of PBS as in Britain, Canada, and Australia (Tleane and Duncan, 2003). However, the draft law saw various stakeholders accuse the Minister of seeking increased governmental rather than public accountability of the corporation. (2003:170; Holomisa 2002). [5]

Critics argued that the SABC was to be turned into a government broadcaster by the Bill's provision to eliminate a clause from the original Act that guaranteed the SABC freedom of expression and journalistic, creative and programming independence (Cosatu 2002; Tleane and Duncan 2003; FXI 2002; Holomisa 2002). More, clauses 6 and 12 of the Bill were set to allow the Minister to approve the editorial policies for the corporation, a proposal that elicited much criticism.[6]

Two major steps were then taken by parliament in response to the outcry. First, it rewrote the Bill by specifying that ICASA, and not the minister, would be the agency to approve or reject SABC's editorial policies. Second, it required the SABC to adopt a participatory approach in the development of the policies and "provide suitable means for regular inputs of public opinion on its services and ensure that such public opinion is given due consideration" (Tleane and Duncan 2003:176). These provisions replaced those that had sought to empower the Minister as the custodian of SABC accountability. Further, parliament overturned the Bill's attempt to scrap the clause that guaranteed the SABC freedom of expression and journalistic, creative and programming independence.

This was put into legal effect in the final Broadcasting Act (as amended) of 2002, and the SABC accordingly embarked on drafting its editorial policies, which it put out for public comment in April 2003.

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[5] *The Minister, however, argued back that the ANC government she represented did not intend to control the SABC in any way. After all, she stated, it understood the need for independence in broadcasting since, it was the same political movement that struggled against the use of the corporation as a propaganda machine under the apartheid regime. The SA National Editors Forum counter-argued, stating that the proposed Section 6(5) of the bill subverted the authority of the SABC board and its powers by vesting them with the Minister instead, and that this essentially stripped the SABC of its independence from Government, which contravened the provisions of the Broadcast Act of 1999 (the principal Act). Accessed on December 15, 2004 from http://www.pmg.org.za/docs/2002/viewminute.php?id=2084.*

[6] *Minutes of public hearings conducted by the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Communication during the Broadcasting Amendment Bill of 2002. Accessed on December 15, 2004 from http://www.pmg.org.za/docs/2002/viewminute.php?id=2055.*

These draft policies were greatly influenced by those of the BBC, indeed taken over almost verbatim in parts (Berger 2004a). This phenomenon reminds us that policy making today is a global business, extending beyond the horizons of national broadcast stakeholders. The power and legitimacy paradigm is in evidence in the influence accorded to the BBC model.

However, local politics of policy still determine which sections of foreign policies will be taken over, and why. This is especially relevant to the SABC's editorial policy mechanism of "upward referral" and its conferral of Editor-in-Chief status to its CEO.

SABC draft editorial policy and public consultations

In April 2003, the SABC board released the draft editorial policy document, saying that it was intended to guide the corporation in executing its public mandate and to make it editorially independent and publicly accountable. Once finalised, the policies would also clarify what the general public was entitled to expect from the national public service broadcaster (SABC Draft Editorial Policies, 2003). The draft policies covered programming, news, language, education, universal service and access, local content, and religion. Not all the policies were entirely new; some had been in existence from as far back as 1995. Many points covered conventional journalistic ethics and standards, while other provisions dealt with the particularities of public service broadcasting. (SABC Draft Editorial Policies, 2003).

As part of the public consultation process, the SABC distributed summaries of the policy document in various translations through public spaces such as post offices; it used its own broadcast channels to call for comment and convened public meetings in various provinces. There were also internal consultations. At the end, the board received 920 written submissions on the policies, 847 of which were from individuals and the remaining 73 from organisations (Hassen, 2004:11). The latter included the SA Communist Party, the SA National Editors Forum, the Freedom of Expression Institute, the Media Institute of Southern Africa, Rhodes University Journalism and Media Studies Department and the ANC among the active stakeholder organisations. It is a good example of how policy can be contested, with various interest groups advancing their causes (see Meenaghan and Kilty 1994).

Although the consultation represented "public accountability" in practice, when the SABC board released the final editorial policies in early 2004 the *modus operandi* was along power paradigm lines in that it did not elaborate on how it had reached its final decisions, and what criteria had been applied to evaluating the public comments. Further, the consultation itself seems to have been deemed by SABC to have legitimated the final outcome.

The next sections analyse some of the final policies whose principles are directly related to editorial independence and public accountability.

Programming policy - defining public service

This policy seems to somewhat conform to the ideals of PBS, as it is guided by principles such as the aim to meet the needs of all audience segments (SABC Editorial Policies 2004:7). This is a functionalist approach as it portrays the public service broadcaster in terms of the whole and therefore as independent from the majority, or a single minority, and as accountable to all. Thus the policy spells out clearly on Page 118 that the need to meet the needs of all audiences "forces" the SABC to commission programming for the "young and old, urban and rural in all the provinces, speakers of all the official languages, and people of every religious persuasion" (2004:7).

On matters regarding taste and decency, the programming principle of advance warnings is in line with the ideals of PBS. Some sections of the population might find acceptable what others consider indecent. The SABC's policy is to give adequate warning beforehand when they believe the material to be broadcast may upset some sections of the general public.

The programming policy also looks at groups that often feel marginalized, such as those structured along the lines of disability and gender. The policy ensures that the public service broadcaster should promote access to its services and programmes and ensure that the representation of people with disabilities in the corporation's programming is fair. On matters regarding gender, the policy stresses that the "SABC undertakes to strive to ensure that its programming...does not promote violence against women, depict women as passive victims of violence and abuse, degrade women and undermine their role and position in society, promote sexism and gender inequality, and reinforce gender oppression and stereotypes" (2004:12).

Such principles in this programming policy are in agreement with the ideals and best practices of PBS and are in line with the values and concept of public service in the South African context.

Editorial independence regarding content

The policy on programming also clarifies what should be expected of an independent public service broadcaster by stating:

Although the SABC makes every effort to minimise what audiences might find distasteful or tasteless, the public broadcaster does have to deal frankly with controversial topics and cannot avoid tackling issues because of the risk of offending certain people (SABC Editorial Policies, 2004:8).

News, current affairs and information programming arguably form the basis on which PBS stands, since it is especially here that a public service broadcaster may be assessed as to whether or not it is editorially independent.

SABC's policy stresses the importance of providing general programming that caters for the general public. Such programming, the policy states, should reflect the country's entire demographics. It further stresses that to be able to achieve this, the editorial division should "uphold the highest editorial and ethical standards consistently and diligently" (SABC Editorial Policies 2004:19).

This policy also expands on the need for objectivity, accuracy, fairness, impartiality and balance, all of which are indispensable for a public broadcaster like the SABC. The policy here associates itself with the corporation's pre-existing Editorial Code, which spells out in part the importance of holding to the values of editorial independence. The policy states:

We do not allow advertising, commercial, political or personal considerations to influence our editorial decisions. The SABC is expected to provide information, and as part of this duty should evaluate, analyse and critically appraise government policies and programmes. The SABC is not the mouthpiece of the government of the day, nor should it broadcast its opinion of government policies, unless they relate directly to broadcasting matters (2004:20).

The principle above is directly in line with PBS norms of editorial independence in that it tries to eliminate elements of the power paradigm when government, dominant political parties, and business groups control policy as it is being formulated and implemented.

Furthermore, the policy also highlights the need to avoid internal influences such as personal biases and prejudices by individual SABC news staffers and also the need to resist external ones. This is stressed in the principle of the policy which states that "the staff may not allow their professional judgement to be influenced by pressures from political, commercial or other sectional interests" and therefore "SABC reporting should be, and be seen to be, accurate, fair, impartial and balanced" (2004:20).

The policy on news also includes a principle that calls for restrictions on sponsorship of news, current affairs and information programmes. This, the policy says, is "to preserve the editorial independence and integrity of the programmes concerned" and to "ensure that editorial control of programmes remains with the broadcaster" (2004:25). It is also a legal requirement that editorial independence is not influenced by the presence of advertising and sponsorship as prescribed by the Broadcasting Act (as amended) of 2002. This principle is of value in PBS as, if implemented, it can deal with conflicts of interests that could arise out of the sponsorship mix.

The policy also has a section on election broadcasts. It reads

"...news decisions during election periods have, as is the case between elections, to be driven by the news judgement of our news staff, and take account of the need to ensure that attention is given to thorough examination of views, policies and campaigns of all the main political parties" (SABC Editorial Policies 2004:25).

Although this principle is generally in agreement with the norms of PBS, it does imply that the public service broadcaster could do a disservice to the followers of small parties. The SABC should strive to cater for the interests of minorities as this is one of the tenets of PBS. Also, catering for minority interests is a yardstick in determining public service.

Mechanism and procedures for accountability

As explained above, reacting to complaints by the public is one of the several ways through which a public service broadcaster accounts to the general population. This distinction further identifies a public broadcaster like the SABC from other broadcasting players in the industry. Indeed the policy on programming tackles the issue of dealing with programme complaints (SABC Editorial Policies 2004:16-18). The corporation's policy is that responses should be prepared in consultation with, or communicated immediately to, the management of the channel/station concerned or the relevant head of SABC News. Such a policy falls within the PBS concept of public accountability. When the public service broadcaster reacts to the complaint furnished by a stakeholder, it shows that the corporation accounts to the general public.

However, the policy documents also lay down a mechanism and procedure to ensure internal accountability within the corporation. This is through a section detailing upward and mandatory referral systems. This provision is presented as being designed to ensure that the public service broadcaster sustains and deepens "the trust the public have in the SABC" and therefore "maintain the highest standards of performance" so that consistent, relevant, useful and high-quality programming is provided (SABC Editorial Policies 2004:5). To be able to achieve this, the editorial staff should voluntarily consult upwards for guidance in case they are unsure of anything. The consultation is voluntary because the authority to broadcast, the editorial policies indicate, is vested in the editorial staff. This policy spells it out clearly that this process could extend as far as the Group Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in his capacity as Editor-in-Chief.

Problems and loopholes

There are several criticisms of this policy package.

1. The policy seems to jeopardise the programming policy point that the SABC provides a "home for programme makers that encourages them to innovate, take risks and develop their craft so that audiences may be given a rich diversity of top quality programmes". Critics argue that this could stifle the creativity of editorial staff as they have to refer upwards so that they are not held responsible in case material that is "controversial" and might have an "extraordinary impact" on the corporation is broadcast.

2.   A weakness is that this policy area has no discussion on implementation and monitoring - unlike the counterpart section that deals with policy on language.[7] The policy on news, which is discussed below, also lacks a section on implementation and monitoring.

This upward referral policy is also controversial as it entrusts the Group CEO with the final say on editorial decisions by bestowing him with the title of Editor-in-Chief, thus making him/her responsible for "the performance of all news and other programmes, broadcast and presented on all SABC radio, television, Internet and other multimedia platforms" (2005:5). This means that the editorial staff are not entirely responsible for what is produced and broadcast on the public service broadcaster. This upward referral decreases the editorial independence of staff - even as it could be held that it increases their accountability.

3.   There is also evidence that what the SABC Editorial Policies (2004) call voluntary upward referral comes close to being mandatory. This is evident in a paragraph on Page 116 which says that:

Even when specific editorial advice is not asked for, programmes or news items that are controversial, or likely to have an extraordinary impact, should be reported in advance to the senior news and programming executives. They, in turn, may decide to notify top management. Should a programme producer or editor not refer an issue upward to their supervisor next in the line function, that programme producer or commissioning editor would be held responsible for the editorial decision so made (2004:6).

4.   The level of upward referral ends at the Group Chief Executive Officer. In terms of the policies, when a 'controversial' issue arises, even the Heads of News and the Managing Director of News at the SABC should consult the Group CEO who doubles as Editor-in-Chief. This in turn reduces the editorial staff's independence. Kruger (2004:1) argues that the document would have benefited from situating ultimate editorial authority clearly with the Heads of News where it belongs. This would not have then been interpreted as a deliberate attempt

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[7] *The SABC Editorial Policies (2004) include a section on language. Public service broadcasters worldwide are expected to produce programmes that cater for everybody. The language policy commits the SABC to being "the voice... of every South African" (SABC Editorial Policies 2004: 26). Such a functionalist approach to the use of languages is in harmony with the PBS concept of catering for the general public. Public service is not very practical if programming language is elitist or controlled by the powerful. However, producing and broadcasting programmes in all the official languages including the marginalised ones (those with hearing disabilities, the Khoi, Nama and San), which might not attract a lot of advertising. That SABC still upholds these values in policy shows the desire for the public broadcaster to adhere to the norms of PBS. Public accountability in this area is also made meaningful (though not quantifiably) in that unlike the policies on programming and news, the language policy has a section on how the corporation will monitor and implement it.*

effort to take control of the SABC newsroom by the Group CEO, which in the end denies the corporation editorial independence and public accountability, while affirming the policy's character as one aligned to the power paradigm.

5. Also questionable is that the policy does not spell out what programmes or news items are likely to be "controversial" or even have an "extraordinary impact" on the corporation. Controversial might be news that a certain big advertiser might consider unsuitable for their business; extraordinary impact might be programming or news items that might lead to a reduction in the advertising revenue. Since the Group CEO is tasked with the responsibility of making the corporation financially viable among other duties and responsibilities, editorial decisions and news policy in general might then be fashioned to suit the interests of business groups other than the general public. This in turn would make the public service broadcaster editorially dependent and unaccountable to the whole society.

At the time of the controversy around the original draft policies, the response of the SABC (and the ANC) to this criticism was that the Director-General (DG) at the BBC doubled as "editor-in-chief", and that this should be the accountability standard to be upheld. Critics argued back that the difference lay in the fact that the BBC's funding model not require the DG to operate a commercial operation, whereas the SABC expressly has a CEO and not a DG. The argument that the CEO should stick to the business side of the corporation and not take responsibility for editorial content was, however, not accepted in the final policy.

Finally, under the rhetoric of enforcing greater public accountability, the system of upward referral was retained despite the fact that it could compromise several of the key components of editorial independence.

Conclusion

Despite the criticisms, the SABC's final policies were accepted by ICASA and the corporation now has to account to the regulator on how it performs in terms of public service, and how it interprets editorial independence and secures internal accountability.

Apart from the policy on editorial responsibility and upward referral, the final document indicates that the SABC board is to review its policies on programming and news every five years.

Meanwhile, the matter of how, and even whether, the SABC implements its editorial policies is subject to further research. Here, it will not be a surprise if it is found that a range of paradigms are again in operation. First, the highly detailed and comprehensive list of policies may mean that "flexibility" reigns, with few of the corporation's journalists reading or recalling the contents of the 60 page publication.

Second, there are sure to be internal politics around which policies are implemented, which are not, and how they are interpreted. Power may be selectively wielded in the enforcement of policy points, or in toleration of chaos. The extent to which SABC maintains editorial independence and public accountability through these policies will be contested, not least in regard to upward referral.

However, the policies are intended to create integration and harmony. They could indeed serve to safeguard editorial independence and to ensure that no undue political, commercial and other self-serving group pressure is brought to bear on programme scheduling and commissioning practices, or editorial and news content. They could further function to define the substance and mechanisms of accountability. Whether they do so depends on the practical implementation, monitoring and review. And in turn, all of this relies in part on continuing momentum from the now-ended policy formulation process, and the shape of broader evolving dynamics of government, civil society, competitive broadcasters, and SABC staffers themselves.

In review, it is fair to say that the SABC - in complying with parliament's decisions on the matter - has taken considerable steps to deal with the editorial independence and public accountability issue, even if not everyone agrees with all the inflections. Since this experience, another matter has arisen, whereby the regulator has sought to increase the accountability of SABC by setting out detailed conditions to the corporation's licences - much to the chagrin of the broadcaster and the delight of competitors and critics. That, however, is another story. As far as the policies go, they have their role to play in the editorial independence and public accountability arenas where there are now elaborated guidelines and standards. The elements are in place towards an integrated, effective policy - something that was not there before. It is a significant step towards concretising what is meant by editorial independence and public accountability and the nature of SABC as a public broadcaster in a new democracy.

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The State of PSB One Year after the BBC Crisis

Chu Pui Hing

What is the lesson to be learnt about the BBC crisis?

At the BBC, the story did not end with the installation of new people at the top. We have been reading stories about job cuts and the reform of the Board of Governors. It would be easy to conclude that public service broadcasting is going through a period of severe public scrutiny and change is the buzzword all around. Greg Dyke in his book **Inside Story** summed it up by saying "The stark choice facing the BBC today is that we either change or we simply manage decline gracefully." This, I believe, applies to all public broadcasters.

Luxury or necessity

Broadcasting has changed - we have moved on beyond the invention of the portable transistor radio. Constraints of scheduling and spectrum are no longer of such relevance. Decline in audiences is causing changes in the role of the public broadcasters. Globalisation means that information travels much faster and new markets for programmes can be tapped. The dictum "to inform, educate and entertain" now describes what is being done by every broadcaster.

Analogue radio is being joined by digital broadcasting, and radio is being streamed over the Internet, allowing listeners to have enormous choice and freedom to download them as mp3 files. Listeners can choose when they want to hear their programmes, as opposed to being tied down by a schedule, and programmes can be downloaded onto iPods. Indeed, recently what US President George W. Bush listened to on his iPod made the news!

The younger audience is increasingly mobile and wireless connectivity is all the rage. **RTHK** itself is reflecting that; we have Teen Power WebJs, a host of young people presenting programmes over the Internet. Instant phone messages (SMS), texting and instant computer messages such as ICQ and MSN have become the norm.

Then we come to the latest craze - blogging - now labeled the new journalism. Web logging or blogging, once considered nothing more than rantings of opinionated authors, has become a powerful tool of communication. Weblogs certainly have advantages over traditional media: it is fast, has more variety, and is interactive -

"Rathergate" is a prime example of bloggers asserting their influence over the development of a news story.

Public scrutiny - a wake-up call

There have always been challenges to a broadcaster's impartiality. In the wake of the Hutton Report which contained criticism of BBC reporting and the corporation's allegedly "defective" editorial processes, it is more important than ever before for broadcasters around the world to remain editorially independent and unbiased.

RTHK, like other broadcasters, faces the same probing questions especially when it comes to "objective" reporting. Reports critical of government policy could easily be perceived by some as "biting the hand that feeds it".

On the financial front, again, we are facing increased pressures. The reality is, with decreasing funding but increased competition from other forms of media such as cable and broadband television, public broadcasters are less willing to take a risk when it comes to implementing creative ideas. This soon becomes a vicious cycle in which producers become averse to risk-taking and would rather stick with the "safe" formulae. In RTHK's case, though, we have tried to prove it wrong by picking up 38 awards in international festivals last year.

Vision-Mission-Value

Broadcasters all over the world have attempted to define the term public value, with some using quality measurements on performance as judged either by the community or against the charter. The BBC goes further by stating that it contributes to public value in five main ways, viz. democratic value, cultural and creative value, educational value, social and community value and finally, global value.

One exercise we are conducting in light of recent debates about **RTHK**'s role, is a review of our Vision-Mission-Value (VMV) statement based on an examination of the public value argument. Last year, we appointed a consultant to work with management and frontline employees to help further develop our VMV taking into consideration the concept of public value and principles of universality, fairness, equality and accountability. The new VMV would preferably dovetail with the concept of public value and include key indicators to allow the public to gauge the station's performance.

An interesting revelation was that some members of staff were not sure of the management's commitment to "live" the VMV, so it was imperative for us to consider how it could be incorporated internally in the decision-making, appraisal and evaluation processes. After much discussion between staff members and management, we all agreed that individual value should include elements of trust,

quality and innovation. Social value should embrace factors such as social cohesion, cultural and educational development, and standard setting. Finally, economic value should include value for money and economic impact.

An important point emerging from this round of discussions is the emphasis that has been placed on the concept of "trust". A public broadcaster should act as a stable, trustworthy and credible source of information. Although it strives to be everything to everyone, *accuracy* and *dependability* seem to be the important operative words.

The new VMV basically implies that **RTHK** should have more visibility in news and documentary productions on social issues. We should cater to minority interests with high social or educational value. Any productions should be explicitly of high quality or of innovative nature - setting and promoting higher standards for the industry.

Our operating environment keeps changing. Expectations and demands from members of the public change all the while. We must be able to anticipate and evaluate those expectations so that we are ready for the next evolutionary step. Complacency is the foundation of failure and we should guard against that at all costs.

Chu Pui Hing is Director of Broadcasting, Radio Television Hong Kong.

Changing Stereotyped Images of Africa

John J. Musukuma

There are over 200 million people in the 13 nations of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region - a region almost half the size of the entire African continent. Like the rest of the continent, this region is portrayed by global broadcasters in a standard, stereotyped image of Africa:

• Dark-skinned hungry babies with bulging eyes and shriveled bodies held in the arms of emaciated mothers, with flies swarming over them.

• Child soldiers armed to the teeth with Kalashnikovs and rounds of shiny bullets strung across their young shoulders, looking threateningly at the world from emotionless eyes.

• Multitudes of displaced people wandering in search of shelter and into an uncertain future.

These are images of destitution and suffering, poverty, war and interminable human and natural disasters. The images are real because the broadcast programmes that paint the picture are real.

But it is just one side of the African image coin. There is a flip side to the African image coin, one that recognises Africa's positive achievements and development.

It is not unimaginable that good news can make news about Africa. It is not unthinkable that Africa, like all other places on earth, could be projected like any other place on earth - with the good, the bad and the ugly coexisting effortlessly, intermingling seamlessly and in constant mutation. The African situation provides a moral imperative for broadcasters to make more informed and balanced reports on Africa and its regions. It is possible to project a more balanced picture to contribute to the challenge of poverty alleviation and progress in Africa.

Can this be done? That ultimately, is the question facing SADC broadcasters and the international electronic media as well.

The good news

The President of the African Development Bank, Omar Kabbay, in his speech on the occasion of the African Development Bank's fortieth anniversary celebration, tried to illustrate the kind of progress that is taking place away from the glare of global and African broadcasting:

- Africa's GDP growth rate stood at 2.6 per cent in 1994: in 2003, growth was around 3.7 per cent.

- Average inflation in 1994 was 41 per cent: by 2003, some 40 countries in Africa had brought inflation down to single digits.

- Africa's external debt to GDP average was 77 per cent in 1994; that declined to 48 per cent at the end of 2003.

These developments get lost, of course, in the frenzy of electronic media coverage and the propensity for the sensational in coverage of Africa generally. The result is that Africa, to the vast majority around the world, is seen in a light that shows nothing but its stupendous humanitarian, political, economic and social crisis.

However, progress in many parts of the continent is real and it is possible to give proportionate coverage to both sides of this reality.

There have been some impressive developments in Africa and southern Africa in particular, over the last decade. Many countries are currently pursuing economic reforms - deeper structural and institutional reforms - that were unimaginable only a decade ago. Change is the order of the day in southern Africa in every aspect of life; broadcasting in the SADC region is part of this change.

Positive Changes in Southern Africa

- **Politically,** almost all countries in the region have adopted a democratic, multi-party system, which guarantees pluralism of ideas and options. Constitutions protect the freedom of expression and information for every citizen. Broadcasters are in the forefront of this development as custodians of constitutional rights.

- **Economically**, all countries in the region are undergoing rapid change with more free market policies emerging. This introduces an opportunity for different funding mechanisms for broadcasters.

- **Regionally,** the countries grouped in the Southern African Development community (SADC) are developing closer ties and working towards creating regional integration in a variety of spheres. The public broadcasters are part of this process.

- **Internationally,** the region is becoming an active player in the global village. At the same time, Southern African broadcasters are seeking to utilise the advantages inherent in the new broadcasting technologies.

- **Private broadcasting services** are fast emerging. The public broadcasters in the region regard the opening up of the airwaves as a stimulus and challenge. It is good for audiences, who then receive a wider choice of programming. It is beneficial for radio and television producers, because the market widens. It is beneficial for the public broadcasting organisations as it stimulates the reassessment and reformation of broadcasting structures and programming concepts.

- **Citizens** in the region have a right to expect public radio and television to contribute actively to further development and to reinforce their identity, based on the fundamental values of democracy and the new political dispensations. This is the public broadcaster's **social contract.** This should not, however, be confined to a concept of broadcasting in which all that counts are the laws of the marketplace and the constraints of advertising.

Crucial broadcasting roles

In view of the regional evolution referred to above, the public broadcasting agenda must embrace crucial roles in promoting democratic governance, including diversity, viability and competition:

- **as a civil forum,** giving voice to different sections of society and enabling debate from all viewpoints.

- **as a mobilising agent,** facilitating civic engagement among all sectors of society and strengthening channels of public participation.

- **as a watchdog,** checking abuses of power, increasing government transparency and holding public officials accountable for their action in the court of public opinion.

- **as a facilitator** for building regional links to realise aspirations of people in the SADC countries.

If democracy is to take root and have meaning beyond the formal electoral process, people in the SADC region must be in a position to understand the changes taking place around them. They must be enabled to actively participate in the processes and decisions that affect them, and make informed choices. Public broadcasting, in providing access to a wide rage of information and ideas, serves as an instrument of popular empowerment through its programming.

John J. Musukuma is the Secretary General of the Southern African Broadcasting Association (SABA).

6
Role of Broadcasters in Natural Disasters

Disaster Prevention and Management Systems at NHK Japan

Hiromi Hirose

As you may know, Japan is prone to calamities like typhoons, earthquakes and other natural disasters that threaten human life.

NHK is a public broadcaster sponsored by the public in the form of receiving fees. Therefore, it is NHK's duty to transmit reliable and valuable information to the public in an accessible and people-friendly way.

NHK is responsible by law to provide disaster coverage and does its broadcast planning based on that requirement. For example, after the Hanshin-Awaji earthquake on January 17, 1995, NHK immediately started providing emergency coverage on both radio and television. In the first month after the earthquake, NHK broadcast 273 hours 15 minutes of earthquake-related news and other programmes nationwide.

NHK has put in place the following systems for disaster response.

Feed point

Each of Japan's major broadcasters has its own feed point at the Japan Meteorological Agency, so that it can carry live coverage in the event of a disaster.

Easy-to-see screen

During emergency coverage NHK provides live information on screen for the Japanese audience.

NHK provides graphic colour maps of Japan indicating the alert level from caution for tsunami, to tsunami warning, with the height of the waves, as it would be too time-consuming to mention each individual village name specifically.

The television screen could also be divided into an L-shape to provide information on the place of disaster, date and time, which scrolls past with images of the event on the same screen above. NHK also provides on the screen schedules and cancellation details for flights, trains and buses at the time of disaster, as well as information on hospitals.

Special equipment

NHK has several facilities, such as skip back recording cameras, which record pictures through memory and not on the videotape, and also over 400 robot cameras which are operated remotely to record disasters. NHK has 11 helicopters in nine locations throughout Japan that are on standby for 24 hours with a camera crew and pilot in case of any emergency. All helicopters are equipped with high definition cameras with 360-degree movement, and can be operated remotely.

Preparation

All of NHK's vehicles have prior clearance from the police and relevant authorities to enable them to pass through in areas where traffic is blocked during disasters. This will ensure fast information to be quickly disseminated. NHK has four Disaster Assistance Cars (which are equipped with a kitchen, refrigerator and working space) to follow along with SNG trucks during disasters.

Sharing expertise with other broadcasters

During a recent workshop jointly organised by NHK and ABU in Tokyo, about 40 broadcasters participated from 15 countries and different regions to learn about disaster management systems.

Role of the journalist

I worked as a journalist during the recent tsunami disaster in Asia, especially in Aceh, Indonesia and Malaysia. During this experience, I rediscovered my role as a journalist during emergency broadcasting.

There were many aftershocks after the earthquake in Sumatra, and I realised how important it is to have some form of early warning system on whether these aftershocks will be followed by a tsunami, so that I could be on alert regarding how dangerous the situation could get and to decide whether I should do news coverage or otherwise. In addition, broadcasters need to ensure that alternative forms of communication are available to them when the telephone lines are down. Satellite phones and other means of communication are necessary in such situations.

Awareness

In Aceh, Indonesia, even the schoolteachers did not know what the term "tsunami" means. It is very essential to create awareness on different kinds of natural disasters and to include this into educational curricula.

To conclude, I would like to highlight three key points that are very crucial for emergency broadcasting.

Accurate information: Fast and accurate information will enable broadcasters to report the true magnitude of a disaster promptly without sensationalising it. Broadcasters have a duty to calm people down, and prevent panic and the spread of rumors. The tsunami and its aftermath have also clearly demonstrated the importance of radio for communication in times of natural disasters.

Warning: There was a delay before some broadcasters could confirm the early information they received about the tsunami. Ways of receiving prompt warnings from government authorities and international agencies must be established.

Education and sharing information: Broadcasters have a responsibility to ensure people do not forget disasters. They can do this by airing special programmes, by reporting the anniversaries of previous disasters and so on. Broadcasters in different countries will benefit from joint operations and the sharing of information when a disaster strikes.

In normal news coverage, news will only be broadcast after the incident; however, in case of disaster, the warning itself is important information to be aired. This is what makes emergency and disaster coverage and the role of broadcasters so different and unique.

Hiromi Hirose is the Kuala Lumpur Bureau Chief for NHK, Japan.

Broadcasting during National and Regional Disasters

Ahmed Abdullah

I represent the Maldives, one of the smallest, yet one of the most beautiful countries in the world. It used to be safe from storms, tidal surges and other natural calamities. But things have changed, just as the world has changed. The natural environment is now at stake and Maldives is among those countries most vulnerable to looming environmental threats, mainly due to abuse by human beings. Consequently, Maldives was one of the most severely affected countries during the tsunami of December 2004.

It was a nightmare for all of us. The big wave swallowed thousands of lives and destroyed livelihoods, infrastructure and economies of many countries in the region. We are still suffering from the shock and grief. The loss is colossal and we are going to take many years to recover and rebuild our nation. We have, more than ever before, felt the need for a more united, caring and sharing world. The tsunami has brought us together with one heart and one voice and we are working with renewed determination on the Herculean task to help speed up the process of recovery. Indeed, our objective is Recovery Plus, as the United Nations Secretary General has so passionately called it.

We are very proud of the role played by media during the major part of the tsunami disaster and its aftermath. The media worked hard and efficiently, conveying news and information about the tsunami, minute by minute, in great detail. The media became the biggest supporter and partner in the work of relief and rehabilitation and still remains crucial, especially in this time of rebuilding our countries.

We have to intensify our efforts for the speedy mobilisation of much-needed financial support. The whole world has been very generous and magnanimous financial assistance has already been committed. However, it is equally important to make this pledge a reality. Urgent action is imperative and delays would mean more losses and suffering for people who are already in a sad plight. This is what broadcasters must communicate and work to motivate concrete action.

Lessons of the tsunami

The tsunami has also taught us many lessons. It has taught us how the media can become more efficient and proactive during times of disasters and crises. It is

important that the media become more vigilant and more equitable. I say this because the Maldives was not given timely and adequate coverage by the global media during the tsunami, although Maldives is the most severely tsunami-affected country in terms of total loss to the economy, infrastructure and livelihood. It resulted in the loss of 62% of the GDP. We need at least $470 million for reconstruction; only half of this has been pledged and about $33 million has been received so far.

Therefore, we need the sympathy and understanding of the world media. We must receive our requirement of financial assistance urgently. The low-lying geographic formation of Maldives makes the islands more vulnerable every day; every minute counts and every dollar is precious for our survival.

There is no doubt about the need for the accurate and early dissemination of information and news that would have direct impact on the lives of people. Such information and sharing of scientific research and technical expertise would enable early warnings before any potential disasters and efficient relief operations in the aftermath. It will also help people living in vulnerable areas to take timely prevention and safety measures. Maldives has already prepared a comprehensive disaster management plan and our media have a major role in this plan for the future.

AIBD has taken several initiatives during the tsunami in harnessing expertise and resources to deal with the calamity. Broadcasters must share their experience to do even better in dealing with future disasters and crises. It is very timely and important for us to prepare a comprehensive media plan to deal with such emergencies in the region. I am confident that the wealth of expertise and knowledge we share will be most useful for the future.

The Honourable Ahmed Abdullah is the Minister of Information, Arts and Culture, Government of Maldives.

Tsunami 2004: Role Played by Sri Lankan Media

Nishantha Ranatunga

The tidal wave on December 26, 2004, left in its wake not only death and destruction, but also panic and incomprehension. We were familiar with floods and droughts, but the damage they caused was hardly remarkable compared to other calamities elsewhere in the world. Major national disasters were what happened to others, things we read about or watched on television.

The tsunami was literally a bolt from the blue. And it found Sri Lanka completely unprepared to comprehend what was happening. We were like the people of Pompei whose charmed existence on the slopes of Mt. Vesuvius ended suddenly and unexpectedly, in fire; in our case, the agent of doom was water, the sea that surrounds this little island.

Educating people on tsunami

In the totally new psychological situation that came into being in the aftermath of the tsunami, the media had a very special role to perform - in fact, multiple roles. We had to inform, educate, organise and provide succour for a people who had faced one of the worst natural disasters in the world. Beset by rumours and a reality that was worse than any rumour, many of our people turned to the media, especially the electronic media, to try to make sense of what had happened.

Most Sri Lankans did not know what a tsunami is. In fact, even most of those working in the media organisations did not know what a tsunami is. The whole phenomenon was as alien to us as the name. Therefore, the media organisations had to educate themselves before educating the public about what had happened; we also had to allay the fears of more disasters coming in the wake of this one. And time was of essence because every minute gave rise to more rumours.

Preventing panic

We had to inform without contributing to the panic that was spreading like a mental epidemic. We had to tell the truth without causing more fear and greater uncertainties. And the truth was fearful enough, and kept on getting more so, as information started pouring in about the extent of the devastation to life and property caused by the tsunami. We were required to perform a fine balancing act,

to tell the truth in a way that would not cause more chaos and would calm and stabilise instead, as fear and panic would have hampered the rescue and relief efforts and created a situation of anarchy.

Coordinating relief work

As the information came pouring in we were faced with another task - to get help across to the affected people as soon as possible, beginning with cooked food, medication and clothes. The government machinery was not functioning in many of the affected areas, because the tsunami's victims included government officials and government offices. To make matters worse it was the end-of-the-year holiday season, the time that the country was more or less shut down for serious business - except shopping. There was a vacuum, which the media organisations had to fill, undertaking and organising the task of delivering immediate relief supplies to affected people.

Using our ability to reach out to the unaffected populace we managed to involve them as our co-partners in this gigantic effort. The response from the public was immense; they contributed relief materials and the number of volunteers far exceeded the requirement. Everyone wanted to help. It was our task to coordinate and turn this unorganised mass into an effective supply and delivery network.

Giving information

Our role as communicators did not stop with informing and educating. We also had to gather and disseminate information about the dead and the living. Sri Lanka is a small country and almost every person in Sri Lanka either had a relative or a friend living in or visiting the affected areas. People, both survivors and those who were unaffected, wanted information about their families and friends. Lack of information caused panic and, in those first days, panic was our main enemy.

Inform, educate, organise, assist, coordinate - these according to our own experience - are the main tasks of media organisations in the aftermath of the tsunami.

Let me move from the general to the specific using the example of Rupavahini. Once we realised what was happening we shifted our focus completely to prevent the creation of chaos and anarchy. We stopped all normal programmes and worked 24 hours to transmit information and to educate the public. We were also the first media organisation to undertake the task of delivering urgent relief to the affected areas. The first container of relief supplies to the North and the East was organised and sent by us. For three days, until the government machinery swung into action, we collected and distributed relief, with the generous assistance of the public. Afterwards we concentrated on sending medical supplies. I hope that our effort made a small contribution which prevented any epidemic from breaking out in Sri Lanka.

We also maintained a 24 hour help desk to answer questions, to help find loved ones, to unite families, whenever possible.

Role of media in emergencies

Disasters are emergencies; national disasters are national emergencies. And in such situations, media organisations, especially ones with a national outreach, have a very special function to perform. The situation in each country and in each case may vary, but it is likely that during a major national disaster, panic would inevitably follow. And panic, if allowed to get out of control, can lead to a second human-made disaster by hampering relief and rescue efforts and by creating a situation of chaos. Media have a key role to play in the prevention of panic; a role that, in the initial period, can be even more important than that of the government. That is why we have to inform with responsibility and not to give in to sensationalism. Although the media are inherently sensationalist - that is how we sell and compete - we must make a conscious effort to control this natural impulse and try to become a stabilising influence to a bewildered populace.

The indispensable and unavoidable role of media in a situation of national disaster is to act as an agent of stability. Without this support, even the strongest government would not be able to handle the situation adequately.

Nishantha Ranatunga is the Director General, Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation.

The Tsunami: Role of Broadcasters in Thailand

Pattareeya Sumano

This is my experience of how the media in Thailand, especially the National Broadcasting Services of Thailand (NBT), dealt with the recent tsunami that hit this region in December 2004. The December 26 tsunami caused huge damage to the lives and property of millions of people, not only in Thailand, but also in many countries in Asia and the Pacific as well as the African continent.

There are six tsunami-affected provinces in southern Thailand, namely, Phuket, Phang-nga, Krabi, Ranong, Satun, and Trang. Within 30 minutes after the tsunami attack, Television of Thailand **Channel 11,** Phuket Province, broadcast several pictures of widespread devastation in Patong beach in Phuket. It was also highlighted by live reports on radio and television from the tsunami-affected areas, which were relayed by the National News Bureau in Bangkok.

Television of Thailand **Channel 11** network was instructed to suspend the daily programmes and instead report urgent news on the tsunami all day long. Furthermore, programmes and special documentaries related to the tsunami disaster were presented to explain how the government could provide assistance to the victims as well as its plan to establish a warning system. In the face of the prevailing situation, NBT broadcast special programmes in foreign languages to keep foreigners informed about the tsunami and regarding assistance provided to the victims. These programmes included news reports in English, French and German on Radio Thailand and on our website.

Fast and accurate information

The philosophy of NBT is based on "fast and accurate information". Therefore, after a natural disaster strikes, the news reported by NBT is intended to calm down the people and ease their panic, as well as to prevent the spread of rumours.

NBT also served as a central body to mobilise assistance from the people and various organisations in terms of materials, money, and blood donations for the victims.

One of the important lessons learned by broadcasters is that they should educate the people and raise their awareness of natural disaster preparedness, in addition to providing them with knowledge and information. The "prevention and care approach" must be acknowledged, coordinated and practised by media practitioners in the public interest, which takes precedence during disasters of such magnitude.

Pattareeya Sumano is Deputy Director-General of National Broadcasting Services of Thailand (NBT).

7
Privatisation of the Broadcast Media

Private and Public Ownership of the Media

Frank Morgan

Should the media compete for our money or only for our attention?
Is competition in the public interest?

There is an assumption that our humanity is defined by our competitiveness. This ignores the possibility, recognised by some anthropologists, that humans prevail over other species because they collaborate and cooperate with one another and not because they compete. None of us were born of our own volition; nor have we flourished solely by our own efforts and cleverness.

Philosophers likewise observe that the demise of communism at the end of the 1980s may have indicated its own weakness but not the strength or virtue of individualistic capitalism which now stands uncontested in the world. But this is a question that broadcasters might pursue to public benefit in their programming.

Fundmental truths of broadcasting

Others point out two fundamental truths about broadcasting:

- Broadcasting is never free, the strident claims of so-called 'free-to-air' broadcasters notwithstanding. The question is just 'how will we pay?'

- Broadcasting can be organised and paid for in one or more of only four ways, as:
    - State
    - Public
    - Community
    - Commercial operations.

It is generally agreed that broadcasting is best considered in the broader context of the media and how they communicate. At the end of the nineteenth century, the only media that could be used to communicate in short periods of time with large numbers of people drawn from widespread areas of the world were print media. Since the early twentieth century, we have had first radio, and then television. Now, we also have mobile telephony and the Internet. We have a fusion of the social functions and genres of information, education, entertainment and persuasion. Indeed, all media content, whatever its function, must be informative, educative, entertaining and persuasive.

There are, however, three relevant factors that give us pause. One is that half the world's people cannot read. Another is that 70% have never made a phone call. And the third is that too many can ill afford the machinery needed to obtain broadcasting and cinema, telephony and the newer media forms. All of which makes a mockery of globalisation and the notion of universal media culture.

Gift of audience

Those of us who have had the privilege of speaking publicly - in words, in music or on the screen - know that (as the French scholar Roland Barthes has said) 'writing in pleasure does not guarantee reading in pleasure'. We know also that we must entertain - catch and hold people's attention - and we must persuade people to sustain that attention, if we are to have any chance of educating or informing, much less inspiring, them.

At the JourNet conference in 2004, we heard that the greatest and most precious gift that we can receive is the gift of audience - that people are willing to devote their time, their money, their trust and their interest to us. And this, I submit, is why all broadcasters - state, public, community and commercial - have an obligation to serve the people. It is an obligation of self-interest. If we don't care for them, they won't care for us.

The replacement of analogue technology by digital technology means that the broadcasting spectrum is no longer the scarce and precious resource that it once was. Today, we are adrift with Coleridge's Ancient Mariner and there is *water, water everywhere but not a drop to drink'*.

The media are not just in surplus, but in surfeit. Yet, people worldwide thirst for quality more than they do for quantity.

Strengths of a mixed economy

I cannot agree with Australia's wealthiest man, the media owner Kerry Packer, who told a parliamentary inquiry some years ago that 'his media interests' relied on his money and were therefore his business, by which he meant 'no-one else's business'. He has that money largely because of public licences and trade protection. Yet, Packer remains a good friend of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the Special Broadcasting Service - the country's two public service broadcasters. Life is hard enough for him, competing with two other commercial networks for the national television audience. He would not want to double the competition for the advertising dollar, much less deal with the pernickety and troublesome third of the population who have eyes and ears for a particular concept of quality. Any government which set out to sell the ABC and SBS to commercial interests would, I believe, have him to deal with. That, surely, is one of the great strengths of a mixed economy in broadcasting.

My argument is not that public broadcasters are always and inevitably good or beautiful or true, or that such organisations should be protected, but that public service broadcasting - broadcasters serving the public - is vitally important.

Shashi Tharoor of the United Nations has recently reminded us that the American and French Revolutions raised great fears of democracy and 'the mob'. The people were often seen as the mob. Similar, unfounded, fears surrounded the end of colonialism during the twentieth century.

The important issue today is for the media to publish the charters by which they will set out to serve the public, how they will pursue those goals and the extent to which they succeed. It is of secondary importance, then, whether they are publicly or privately owned. If they cannot catch and hold our attention, we can always ignore them and they will not get their hands on our money.

Frank Morgan is President of the International Association for Media and Communication, University of Newcastle, Australia.

Liberalisation of Audiovisual Media
The French Experience

Jean-Claude Benoist

I shall outline here how the audiovisual scene in France has developed and a balance has been found between private and public sectors. I will focus on the role of the public service media and especially that of **Radio France Internationale (RFI).**

After the total ban on what were known as "radio libres" or free radios in the 1970s, the liberalisation of the audiovisual sector, which started in 1981, saw the emergence of private FM stations. There were more than 2000 private FM radios in 1985, representing 25% of the total audience. Television also evolved as rapidly and as radically; the leading station, **TF1,** was privatised, two new networks were created, as well as a private pay station.

The change from public to private domination of the sector was swift and radical. The early days were followed by a period of stiff competition on the part of the private media. This was accompanied by deep soul-searching by public media concerning their identity and role.

Role of the state in a liberalised environment

These years also saw a profound change in the role of the state. Moving from a broadcast monopoly, the state modified its role to cope instead with how to regulate and control the new audiovisual reality. Hence the creation in 1982 of a regulatory body which, after several permutations, has kept the same form and functions since 1989. This watchdog body is the Conseil Superieur de l'Audiovisuel, the Higher Broadcast Authority (CSA).

Regarding radio, the increased choice due to liberalisation led, on the one hand, to an increase in audience and, on the other, to specialisation in programme content. In 20 years the global French listenership increased steadily from 72% in 1986 to 84% in 2005. From being dominated by general radio stations, the market diversified to include thematic stations specialising in sport, news, the economy, music, religion, associations and ethnic groups. All of this is obviously listener-friendly and specialised stations cater for a wide range of public interests. In 2004, the Council of Europe recommended that the development of such radios should be encouraged.

Liberalisation created a new dynamic in France with the public sector stimulating the private sector and vice versa. For its part, the public sector showed a great capacity for adaptation and innovation. New public stations were launched - such as **France Info,** a twenty four-hour news station, the first of its kind in Europe.

The dynamism of public radios can be seen in their current audience figures. In the first quarter of 2005, Mediametrie results gave the public group **Radio France** an audience of twenty-seven percent. The group has eight stations including general, news, regional, music and culture.

Radio France Internationale is another public sector broadcaster with an international mandate but which also broadcasts in the Paris region where its listenership has doubled over the past eight years. Similar to other international radio stations like the **BBC World Service, Deutsche Welle and Voice of America, Radio France Internationale** is a public service station, the sole stakeholder of which is the French state. **RFI** has the legal status of an independent, national broadcasting company and, like other public radio and television stations in France, has a specific brief.

RFI's general goal is to "contribute to the dissemination of French culture through French and foreign language broadcasts aimed at foreign audiences" as well as French nationals resident abroad, and to broadcast news about France and the world. Again, like the other public radio and television stations, **RFI** is answerable to the CSA watchdog body.

RFI has an annual budget of almost 130 million euros; 55% of this is in the form of a grant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 40% comes from radio and television licence fees and the remainder comes from other sources such as advertising.

Jean-Claude Benoist is the General Secretary of Radio France Internationale.

A Conversation with Media Colleagues

Ken Clark

It is important to have the small voice of the Pacific Region heard in the world; we appreciate opportunities to share about developments in our part of the world - isolated as we are - and to learn of events elsewhere. I hope the personal experience I share here will contribute to the debate on private or public ownership of media.

On the subject of privatisation of broadcast media, my prejudice is that I am one of the best qualified to comment. In fact, I personally experienced the privatisation of my own career many years ago. It has been my privilege to work with Canadian Crown Corporation, a small local television station; to be a part of the founding of two regional private networks; to lead a Crown Corporation affiliate; a private network affiliate; independent broadcasters; and to work in four different countries.

Having begun my broadcasting life as a performer, my first full time job in the industry was in television production. I distinctly remember saying to my production colleagues of the day, "I hope I never have to make a living selling something - I'd starve!"

Yet, just a few short months later I was making a living selling something - television broadcasting airtime. Having come from a family of academics and musicians, I was then considered the "black sheep" of the family - devoted to crass commercial activity.

I remember our attitude as young television producers and directors. We were in our twenties and we knew it all. We debated our work energetically among ourselves, we criticised every lighting effect, every camera angle, lens chosen and audio recording - but heaven help any viewer, any consumer, any customer who chose to take pen to hand and advise us of their negative view.

We didn't know what ratings were and we didn't want to know. Well , it is probably fairer to say that we did not know what could be learned from accurate professional ratings information.

Commercial broadcasters can also do good!

But during that period I went from that highly "artistic" frame of mind to a commercially motivated mindset. And the sky did not fall in. I learned to adopt the view that it is acceptable to do well by doing good. Most broadcasters probably

don't need a reminder that our industry has at its fingertips every day the opportunity to do good for our communities.

But let us review that opportunity for a moment: we have sound, we have pictures, we deliver colour, emotion, action to our audiences and we inform. Television is probably at its best when we see pictures of humans walking around on the moon, or the cataclysmic events of September 11 (September 12 for us in the Pacific); but it is also just as good when we learn of a coup in a small country, deliver information to an afflicted family about what to do to prevent the spread of AIDS, inform on what a change in ownership in a piece of squatter settlement territory means and where a displaced family can find accommodation, or how to deal with the government bureaucracy.

My point is simply this:
Public broadcasters can do good - and also do well in their environment.
Private broadcasters can do well by doing good for their communities and there's room for both public and private broadcasters.

The funding always has to come from somewhere. The commercial broadcaster has to create that from his own resources but - contrary to the attitude we adopted as the corduroy clad, leather elbow patch generation of the sixties - the commercial broadcaster can, at the same time, do well, do things that benefit their communities and deliver quality of programming that is excellent.

Media environment in the Pacific Region

Let's start with Papua New Guinea (PNG). I learned a lesson a long time ago: if you are not locally relevant, it is very easy for the community to ignore you. They watch for their own special interest - in PNG that's the Rugby League - but they'll ignore everything else you do unless it is relative to what their own interests are. At **EM TV,** between 30 % and 40 % of the programme schedule is local news, current affairs, sports, music, some local religious programming, children's programmes etc.

In Fiji, where the television industry and our involvement in it is ten years old, **Fiji One** recognises the importance of being locally relevant and of service to our community, e.g. we broadcast live coverage of parliament and the senate.

But our view is that there is a lot more that a public service television broadcaster can and should do in Fiji and the Board of Directors has endorsed our support for the establishment of a public service television operation for Fiji. We are committed to the establishment and support of such an operator. In our view, it needs to be very well planned, properly funded over the long term, well managed, independent of government and political bias and it needs to serve the public. Such a public service broadcaster would need to endorse the Media Council Code of Ethics and Practice.

During late 2004, we established a new service for the Pacific region called Sky Pacific that delivers television coverage and programming to places in the Pacific which never had access to television. It closes the information gap between the urban and the rural; where the outer islands of Fiji once, till only recently, had access to a newspaper that was already three weeks old, now they can watch the **6:00 O'Clock News** on **Fiji One** every day and they can do this for a one time investment of about $500.00 Fijian. They can also watch the national rugby seven's side win the Melrose Cup - the World Cup Seven's tournament in Hong Kong live (they also need a generator and the fuel to run it).

During Fiji's election in 2006 - the first since the introduction of the satellite-delivered service - they would be able, for the first time, to look their politicians in the eye and make up their own minds about what their potential political leaders will do for them.

They can do that because a commercial broadcaster has taken the lead and delivered on the opportunity that the future presents. Therefore, I am not concerned about the presence of commercial or privatised television; in fact, I am very enthusiastic about the possibilities for the future.

Room for all

We have to think about how we do things; make our decisions practical; generate the resources necessary to do the assignment effectively, whether private or public; recognise that we are a service to our communities - and get on with it.

There is room for public broadcasting, there is room for private broadcasting, there is room for commercial enterprise in broadcasting and there is room for creativity in broadcasting - whether it is publicly funded or privately financed. There is a need for each type of broadcaster as each performs an important function in modern democratic society.

Ken Clark is Chief Executive Officer of Fiji Television Limited.

Afro-Asia and Arab-Asia Dialogue

Contemporary Challenges Confronting African Broadcasting

Eddie Iroh

The diversity of our respective countries not withstanding, African peoples share common anxieties and aspirations. The dehumanising experiences of slavery and apartheid were pervasive across the continent. Colonialism has also represented a scourge whose repercussions still dog every step along the continent's path of development. Our self-inflicted problems of military rule and dictatorship all add up to our litany of underdevelopment.

The parlous situation of our people has meant that the African media will remain a fundamental agent of societal transformation.

Challenges confronting African broadcasting

The role of broadcasting in independent Africa, from its early control by the colonial rulers supporting imperialism, to that of education, entertainment and information, has been quite remarkable. A significant development has been the dilemma of cultural imperatives; the problem of the domination of foreign programmes, otherwise described as cultural imperialism. This situation has thrown up the challenge of **local content in programming.**

In meeting this challenge, Professor Alfred Opubor (2004) suggests that:

"another extension of the local content protection argument is to encourage local ownership of broadcasting facilities. Community radio, for example, is seen as a way of ensuring content that reflects the needs, aspirations and culturally acceptable values of the listeners".

Community broadcasting indeed contributes to development and to democratic dialogue.

Another area of challenge for the African media manager relates to such key personnel as announcers, newsreaders and the producers who are accused of imitating foreign counterparts, or who seem to prefer the broadcast of foreign programmes. To overcome this dilemma, A. Alaba Ogunsanwo (2000) advocates:

"African broadcasters should be creative and culturally conscious, as this is one way by which they could meet the challenges in the broadcasting industry that is laying emphasis on cultural identity while aiming at competitiveness…"

The challenge of **funding and sourcing appropriate technology** is another problem confronting African broadcasting in the twenty-first century. It should, therefore, be of concern to us how we can overcome the challenges of technological inferiority and capacity in a rapidly-changing communications technology world. Poor funding also affects operational efficiency as well as the welfare and morale of the workforce - our most critical resource.

The problem of **inadequate infrastructure and infrastructural decay** is another formidable challenge faced by African broadcasting. In many African countries, electricity is not constant; the telephone system is not reliable; potable water remains a problem, while other infrastructural services are generally inadequate. These challenges no doubt serve to complicate the problems and challenges for African broadcasting.

The challenges of **legislation, policy and enabling environment** are also germane. In the area of policy, for instance, Professor Opubor (2004) agrees that:

"privatization and deregulation of broadcasting in Africa are considered major progressive steps towards media pluralism and democratization."

There is also the need to create opportunities for **diversification of media ownership** through creating new environments and encouraging new actors. In this regard, Opubor suggests broadening the base of broadcasting to include genuine community stations, and approving licenses for universities, women groups and non-partisan sources to operate stations, with clearly-defined guidelines to ensure that they add value in specific ways to the cultural, educational and democratising services that broadcasting can contribute to society.

The challenges of **illiteracy and poverty** also represent another problem of African broadcasting.

When a large percentage of our populace are illiterate, there is that extra demand to communicate to them in the language that they understand. And being a multilingual continent, there is, therefore, an extra mile that African broadcasters have to go in meeting this challenge.

Large-scale poverty has meant that even the cover price of a newspaper can often be too high for many in Africa. Broadcasters, therefore, have a special responsibility to reach out, cultivate and sustain interest against other competing demands of audiences.

Ideal media leadership is another challenge confronting African broadcasting in the twenty-first century. Generally, leadership and management training in our society has largely been devoid of specialisation in specific professional areas. As opposed to the training of broad-based managers, therefore, there is the need to specifically train our graduates in **media management and leadership.**

The unique circumstances of African broadcasting demand that we mould leaders who truly understand the dynamics and demands of media practice in our developing continent.

Eddie Iroh is the President of URTNA and Director-General of Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN).

Afro-Asia-Pacific Media Cooperation

Tarique Imam

The Afro-Asia-Pacific region is home to nearly two-thirds of the global population, comprised of different racial origins and beliefs. A cradle of ancient civilisation, the region has survived the vicissitudes of time through the ages and racial harmony and religious tolerance were the main characteristics of its heterogeneous population. Since bountiful nature had blessed the territory with rich natural resources, the maritime powers of the west managed to occupy different parts of the Afro-Asia-Pacific region in a bid to exploit its natural resources for their own benefit and their empires and colonies. However, the indigenous population regained freedom through long and arduous struggles and the experience of colonial rule and the anti-colonial struggles is the valuable shared heritage of the peoples of this vast region.

In fact, one of the most significant developments in the international arena has been the emergence of a strong desire for solidarity and cooperation amongst the people of Africa, Asia and the Pacific based on mutual understanding, respect and cooperation.

The African and Asia-Pacific countries have come a long way from their colonial past; they are, however, facing massive challenges imposed by underdevelopment. The region provides a study in contrast, with oases of affluence amid a vast desert of poverty, as 30% to 40% of the population lives on or below the poverty line. The leaders of public opinion in the Afro-Asia-Pacific region have realised that the existing disparity in progress and development must be seriously addressed to hasten the pace of socio-economic development of their countries.

Regional development: role of media

Major challenges facing countries of the region are poverty, economic development, education, health, energy, agriculture, environment, and the relatively new problem of terrorism. The existence and interweaving of all these problems have created serious impediments to the development of these regions.

It is here that the mass media, specially radio and television, can be pressed into service to play a significant and positive role in guiding the peoples of Africa, Asia and the Pacific towards a comprehensive and fruitful understanding amongst themselves. It is essential to use the enormous potential of the media as a process to develop a meaningful interaction among the peoples of the region.

The process of globalisation and the WTO regime necessitate the adoption of a joint strategy by the countries of the region. They need to focus on greater cooperation in fields like trade, industry, science and technology and resource utilisation. In such key areas as energy, health, agriculture and resource utilisation, they should develop mechanisms of cooperation characterised by mutual complimentarity and diversity. The process of media dialogue can greatly help in identifying the opportunities and promoting required cooperation and understanding to address issues synergistically and emphatically.

Education: One of the most significant drawbacks in the march towards progress has been the lack of education facilities and each country is working to develop its own infrastructure. Therefore, we find that stress on education has been common to all government plans in countries of the region. Fortunately, there exists a powerful base of indigenous information technology in the region that can be used by the media networks. All that is needed is collaborative effort by the media to plan programmes aimed at promoting literacy, high education and research.

Health: This is an important sector where media interaction can be helpful. Remarkable progress has been achieved in medical education and pharmaceutical production by some countries of the Asia-Pacific; this can be shared with Africa through media in a useful manner. Television and radio can arrange talks by renowned physicians and surgeons on diseases and their prevention for diseases common in the area measures. Similarly, medical education and research guidance can be imparted by acknowledged specialists through media, especially on radio and television.

Agriculture: Since agriculture is the mainstay of the Afro-Asia Pacific population, there is a crying need for improving this vital sector of the economy. The radio and television networks should arrange informative programmes involving farmers and agricultural scientists for in-depth discussion on various problems faced by farmers, new methods of cultivation and other matters concerning development of agriculture through teleconferencing format.

Democracy: Media dialogue can play an effective role in the area of local self-government, the backbone of democracy. The people of the region should know about the working of the system in member countries in order to learn from their experience.

Gender equality: Media interaction will certainly be helpful in upholding the cause of women. It may be recalled that a historic women congress was organized in the region in 1995 but there has been little follow-up since. The media should take up the threads and initiate the dialogue on the status of women in each country of the region. Media discussion should aim at an understanding of the problem with a view to eradicating all forms of discrimination against women.

Media development: The region can cooperate for development of media itself. In some countries it is fairly advanced while others are still in the process of evolving media infrastructure.

The twenty-first century provides unprecedented and unlimited opportunity for rejuvenation and development of the region. The rich natural and human resources combined with vast markets provide African and Asia-Pacific countries an incomparable historic opportunity for mutual cooperation to achieve sustained economic growth.

World's most dynamic regions

We must seize the opportunity and take important initiatives in sharing our vast natural resources and expertise based on our diverse strengths. This is, however, feasible only if cooperation and partnership is promoted amongst the nations of these regions. Media dialogue can act as a catalyst in promoting the required understanding and advocacy for mechanisms to enhance political trust, deepen trade and economic cooperation, expand cultural exchanges and strengthen security dialogue. We have the potential to be the world's most dynamic regions in all respects.

Let media take the lead in translating this into reality.

Tarique Imam is the Director-General of Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation.

Towards an Arab-Asia Media Dialogue

Chandra Muzaffar

It is an irrefutable truth that the influential elite of Arab society obtain news, information and analysis about Asia through the mainstream Western news media and vice versa. In other words, it is through the **International Herald Tribune,** the **BBC World Service** and **CNN** that Arab and Asian elites 'know of each other's problems and challenges'. There is no need to emphasise that this is a direct consequence of Western hegemony over the global media.

Nonetheless, in the last six decades, as a result of the rise of nominally independent nation states in Asia and the Arab world, alternative conduits for news and information have emerged in these two regions. More often than not, these are state-linked agencies; sometimes they are managed by the private sector. But, by and large, they remain peripheral as channels for Arab-Asia communication. It is not often that one comes across a news report or news analysis about Malaysia in an English language newspaper in the United Arab Emirates or Qatar or Egypt which has been sourced from **Bernama** (the Malaysian news agency) or a Malaysian newspaper. By the same token I have yet to read a feature article reproduced from Egypt's renowned **Al-Ahram** weekly - and **Al-Ahram** has such fine features - in any English language newspaper in Malaysia. To put it in starker terms, even when the news item concerns a very Malaysian happening like the 2004 general election or a very Egyptian event like the recent announcement about new rules for the nation's presidential election, the chances are that the source will be the Associated Press, Reuters or some other Western news agency.

Critical analysis of media

In order to free ourselves from the hegemonic hold of Western media power there has to be a transformation in the mindset of not just media elites in Asia and the Arab world but also other influential elements in the two regions. Our slavish adulation of the mainstream Western media should cease. Instead, we should develop a more critical, evaluative attitude towards the leading newspapers, radio stations and television networks in the West. At the same time, we should evince a more positive orientation towards our own homegrown media by using materials from them wherever and whenever possible. This change in our mindset can only come about through sustained, long term public education and the right examples from our elites themselves.

A fundamental prerequisite for this change is ensuring that our media are credible. They will not be credible as long as our state news agencies are mere government mouthpieces. This is why it is so important to provide adequate space for the articulation of dissident Arab and Asian voices. To enhance credibility, our media should also be more professional and should demonstrate a commitment to good work ethics.

Understanding each other

There is also an urgent need to encourage media journalists in both Asia and the Arab world to master more languages: more Arab journalists should learn Chinese, Japanese, Hindi and Malay while more Asian journalists should become fluent in Arabic. More than acquiring language skills, it is crucial that journalists in both parts of the world develop more in-depth knowledge of each other's cultures, histories, economic structures and political systems. Mass communication faculties and institutes in the two regions should help nurture a new generation of journalists who have an empathetic understanding of each other's deepest aspirations.

It follows logically from this that the better-endowed media in Asia should station capable correspondents in important Arab cities such as Cairo and Beirut, just as Arab journalists should be located in Beijing, New Delhi and Jakarta. A conscious endeavour should be made to obtain the services of good columnists from Arab countries to write in leading Chinese, Indian and Indonesian newspapers while Asian writers should be encouraged to contribute regularly to leading Arab dailies and weeklies. There should also be more frequent and more systematic exchange of radio and television programmes of both varieties - information and entertainment - between the two regions.

It is not just television, radio and newspapers that will help foster the Arab-Asia media dialogue that we hope to initiate and sustain. For a vigorous and vibrant dialogue to take place, the Internet too will have to play a critical role. More websites should be established with focus on increasing interest and expanding awareness of Asia in the Arab world and vice versa.

Dialogue for development and liberation

However, multiplying the channels of communication between the two regions is one thing; ensuring that the content of this communication serves the wellbeing of the people of the two regions is another. It would be a pity if increased interaction between Arab and Asian media practitioners merely leads to a reproduction of ideas and analyses associated with the present hegemonic, West-centric journalism which often camouflages and conceals the truth.

In analysing Arab politics, for instance, one would expect Asian journalists to understand that the greatest challenge facing the region is not the growing legion of angry, unemployed youths raring to become 'suicide bombers' but the diabolical plan of the neo-imperialists abetted by the Christian Zionists to 'Isroilise' the Middle East - that is, ensure Israel's dominance, on the one hand, and secure a permanent grip upon oil supplies on the other. Similarly, Arab journalists would be making a big mistake if they echoed the view peddled by most Western media that the rise of China is a threat to the rest of Asia when, in fact, China has attempted to lend a helping hand to the economic development of the region. It is Washington which is seeking to curb China's ascendancy so that the United States will remain the planet's sole superpower.

A genuine Arab-Asia media dialogue must lead to the emergence of more autonomous and independent media in the two regions, which in turn will herald the true liberation of both Arabs and Asians.

Chandra Muzaffar is the President of International Movement for a Just World (JUST), based in Malaysia.

Agents of Peace Media Education for Children

Abdelhafidh Harguem

During a workshop organised by the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU) in Tunis some years ago, the session facilitator asked one of the participating children: "Do you talk in class about the television programmes you usually watch?"

The child immediately answered in a firm voice that betrayed real astonishment: "Never… never," as if to say: "In class there is room only for serious matters. It is only outside class that we speak of television programmes." For the schoolmaster, serious and hardworking children are those who do not yield to the temptation of television and devote themselves to study and school duties.

This child summed up in one word the discrepancy between the educational system and the media, as well as the negative image that many teachers have of television - in their eyes, television is responsible for many children's intellectual laziness and their disaffection with reading. Some of them go even further and blame television for the rise of violence, juvenile delinquency and behaviour deemed contrary to good moral values.

However, the media play a decisive role in the development of children. Research on youth and the media has for long clearly shown that children are not the passive receivers we often imagine them to be, but are, on the contrary, deeply committed, both at the intellectual and emotional level, in their relationship with the media. At the heart of the socialisation process, the media constitute a very significant general field for the training of children.

Studies carried out in Europe show that children between the ages of six and ten spend an average of two hours a day watching television. With ten-year-old children, the average viewing time can reach up to three hours a day. As for American children, they devote no less than five hours a day to television programmes. These figures could easily be extended to the Arab world and the Asia Pacific countries.

One must acknowledge that children still attending school are immersed in this media culture which moulds their view of the world. With the media, they learn about themselves and about the world, because the media feed, animate and affect continuously, their intellectual, emotional and social development. The media have thus turned into unavoidable "parallel schools" which are at the core of the interaction between young people and their family and educational milieu.

The astounding development, over the past years, of "new media" like the Internet and the large-scale investment of schools in Internet applications have made it compulsory for educationists to take this reality into account. For all these reasons, the introduction in school curricula of education on the media proves to be a pressing need. Countries like Canada have integrated it as a fully-fledged school discipline.

One must bear in mind the fundamental distinction that exists between education "by" the media and education "on" the media. In the case of education on the media (media education), the prospect is totally different. Media education addresses media productions, their origin and the way in which they are designed, broadcast and consumed.

The main goal of media education is the development of critical thought in children and their capacity to identify, describe, understand and assess the daily messages conveyed by our media world. It goes without saying that, to make a critical assessment of the media and media production, children must rely on a vast body of knowledge related to all aspects of the production, distribution and reception of media productions by different recipients and their impact on both individuals and society.

Developing one's critical judgement is to understand how this mass culture is produced, disseminated and received. It is also being able to decide, on a personal basis, what to believe and what to do in the face of the media and their products; it is to become a lucid user, able to ingest all kinds of information with a view to building a personal vision.

Education on the media tends to highlight the concept of the "non-transparency of the media" which establishes that the messages conveyed by the media should not be regarded as merely reflecting reality, but as "constructs" - "representations" - of reality. The aim is to urge children to question the media messages they consume, to become aware of their problematic nature, and to ultimately realise that such messages are nothing but "constructs" always expressing individual views on reality.

This education requires a methodological approach. This approach varies from one country to another, but the programmes are generally based on the following issues:

1. Who chooses and conceives the messages and images and why is this issue important?

2. Who are media productions targeted to?

3. What techniques are used in production to achieve the expected effects?

4. Who controls the means of production and of dissemination; how does the issue of property impact the content?

5. Why are certain items of information covered in the news while others are discarded?

6. What do the context and the situation of the recipient or consumer bring to the comprehension of the media product (film, television programme, cartoon, advertisement, etc.)?

7. How do the media influence the way we perceive reality and the world in general?

8. How does the choice of the used media and technology influence the way information or a message is presented, and how does its cost determine the choice of topics and authors?

9. How does the interactivity of the new media influence our relationships to traditional media?

10. What are our roles and responsibilities as active recipients and consumers?

Agents of peace

There is no doubt that media education is beneficial both for the media and the nation. Educated audiences will induce the media to display rigour, objectivity and transparency and to better comply with their code of conduct, knowing that they target a lucid and informed audience, capable of analysing and decontructing the message.

Media education will help in training citizens capable of understanding, imbued with a critical sense of the universe that is more and more characterised by the omnipresence of the media in the individual's personal and professional life. Enlightened children can be the agents of peace and understanding in the region and in the world.

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Abdelhafidh Harguem is the Director General of the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU).

Window on China and the World CCTV-9

Jiang Heping

As one of the 16 channels of China Central Television **(CCTV)**, CCTV International **(CCTV-9)** has come a long way since its launch on September 25, 2000. Today, through strategic partnerships with a number of key international media market players, **CCTV-9** reaches 40 million households around the world. In May 2004, we relaunched the channel to meet the needs of our international audience - from our neighbours in Asia to the United States.

Prior to the relaunch, our mission was to act as "a window on China for the world." As our technical and professional capacity at **CCTV-9** continued to increase, as well as the strong demand from our international viewers who asked us to provide more worldwide perspective, we refined our mission by bringing to the world the Chinese and Asian perspective on Chinese, regional and international affairs. Our new slogan is "Your Window on China and the World" and we wish to emphasise Asia the most.

Asian perspective on world events

How do we focus on Asia?

In news programming, **CCTV-9** is committed to being a 24 hour news channel. We have a rolling news update every hour and more than 60% of our schedule is devoted to news. We did not need the tragic tsunami of 2004 to drive home to us the importance of news in Asia. We began our "Asian" strategy by introducing the programme **Asia Today** - a daily 30-minute newscast devoted exclusively to Asian news of the day. We believe that none of our worldwide competitors have such a timely and comprehensive programme offering. We had assumed that the programme would find a strong audience in Asia, but we have been surprised by the positive response. **Asia Today** quickly became a programme that Asian foreign service representatives in China watched. We invited many of them on the programme as guests, and they have spread the word in their own Asian countries about the programme and its focus on Asian news. As a result, **Asia Today** is watched by opinion makers in various Asian countries every day.

In terms of other news programming, we have devoted most of the topics on our weekly programme **World Insight** to issues that specifically focus on Asia, e.g. the revival of the Asia-Africa Summit in Indonesia recently and the continuing story of the Six-Party Talks on the Korean peninsula nuclear issue.

Business and cultural programmes

Our daily business program, **Biz China,** also places strong emphasis on business issues in Asia, as it is obvious that the Chinese economy and the greater Asian economy are firmly linked with one another.

Although our bedrock is news, **CCTV-9** also showcases feature programming. Our efforts have begun with the airing of feature programming which focuses on the cultural aspects of Asian life. This emphasis on cultural programming is the beginning of our efforts to expand our feature programming outside of China-based content.

As part of our relaunch, we also underwent an overhaul in our production facilities. Our new studios include multiple new sets. We are now equipped with live satellite coverage facilities. This "live" capability has greatly helped our ability to cover news in Asia.

In the overhaul, the proportion of international personnel of on-air staff was increased. Presently, more than ten international employees are working for the channel as newscasters and television hosts and we believe that this greatly enhances both the professionalism and credibility of **CCTV-9** as an international news provider. We have recruited broadcasters of Filipino, Thai and Vietnamese ancestry to appear on **CCTV-9.**

Challenges ahead

Constructive criticism is invaluable as it helps us to grow. In "listening" to our viewer comments and knowledgeable critics in the media, I have gained a clearer perspective of our challenges ahead.

1. Balanced and unbiased coverage of the news is of the essence - indeed of any news organisation - whether we are covering China, Asia, or the rest of the world. But what does this really mean on a practical level and more importantly, how can **CCTV-9** maximise its competitive advantage in the market where every player is shooting for the same goal? No doubt, we cover "typical" news topics such as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Iraq, etc, but to maximise our competitive advantage, we must extend our focus to topics that others tend to ignore or intentionally play down, such as newsworthy events in Asia.

    In this endeavour, I hope other Asian broadcasters can help us by joining with us for the exchange of news material in the Asian region. We are already doing this with ABU members via the daily Asiavision News exchange mechanism, but our goal in 2006 is to be more aggressive in this regard and I reach out to you, particularly representatives of the non-ABU members, to join us in this effort. By having your material, we have your perspective too, and that helps us to provide balanced journalism. It is a challenge for any state broadcaster to

balance the agendas of its government and the philosophical agendas of its producers. As we all know, even **BBC** made headlines last year over its reporting of the government's motivation for participating in the Iraq war.

2. As a maturing news organisation, our second challenge is to bring more than just news to the audience. To face this challenge, we strive to produce innovative feature programmes, informative documentaries, and educational Chinese-language teaching shows, which greatly enrich the channel's programming and help us set a lively pace at the same time.

3. Our third challenge has to do with the face of **CCTV-9.** There is a difference of opinion on the presence of non-Chinese broadcasters among the on-air anchors and hosts. Critics often come up with the argument that the huge population of China should produce enough newscasters proficient in English. Of course, it is always our goal to train and develop more Chinese personnel with both English and journalism proficiency to meet international standards. On the other hand, we feel international on-air personalities boost the credibility of **CCTV-9** and befit its image as an international channel. In this regard, **CCTV-9** will not restrict the origin of its employees and choose to build its unique identity through its programming.

4. Our final challenge is to win over more viewers in the highly competitive and saturated global media marketplace. The availability of myriad television channels is one reason behind the limited size of our viewership in some developed western countries. Having said that, I believe the main reason for limited viewership is a more fundamental issue that faces any new channel in a crowded television marketplace, i.e. branding and insufficient promotional efforts. However wonderful its programming, branding, marketing and promotion are necessary to create an audience for a channel.

I conclude with an ancient Chinese proverb: "The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step". While the road ahead is filled with many challenges, so long as we continuously strive to improve the quality of our programming and the extent of our marketing efforts, **CCTV-9** will become a channel with global competitiveness. On this journey, I look forward to your continued support, guidance and friendship.

Jiang Heping is Deputy Director, Overseas Centre, of CCTV, People's Republic of China.

What Role does Un have in the New World Order?

Role of the UN in the New World Order Some Pointers

Cerge Remonde

What is the New World Order?

We describe it in the following terms:

- Emergence of the global economy

- Power of the global media

- Emergence of the Information (Knowledge) Society due to the advent of ICTs

- Only one superpower, i.e. USA.

The "Traditional" Role of the UN

The role of the UN has been seen in these terms:

- Forum for dialogue (sometimes it is criticised as "No Action, Talk Only"- NATO)

- Venue for conflict resolution/management

- Mechanism for studying/analysing current or emerging issues (sometimes "analysing issues to death" or " paralysis by analysis")

- Setting global standards or protocols e.g. international conventions on the environment, human rights and even media

- Global "police officer" or peacekeeper.

Possible New Role for the UN

A. **Before new roles are identified for the UN, some questions have to be asked and answered.**

   - How can the UN remain (or at least be perceived as) independent? This is related to the issue of unilateralism (US interests) vs. multilateralism (UN interests)

   - How can the UN be more transparent in its operations?

   - What is the latest on the UN reforms Secretary General Kofi Annan had promised when he assumed office?

- Has the UN unwittingly given up (surrendered) its leadership role in influencing global policies and issues in favour of global economic "superstructures such as the World Bank and World Trade Organization (WTO)?

- Is the UN communicating enough with its various stakeholders?

B. Some considerations in defining UN's role in the New World Order

- Peace and sustainable development must be the end goal and be pursued in the context of pluralism and human rights

- Need to be an "activist" organisation, rather than merely reacting to issues and events

- Articulate a bias or preferential option for very poor countries suffering from famine, sickness, illiteracy, or where people live in inhuman conditions

Should the UN actively engage with private sector and NGOs?

Since the UN itself has helped in the emergence and strengthening of civil society organisations, these two sectors must certainly be included for the effective functioning of the UN. The private sector and NGOs can provide the check and balance mechanism vis-à-vis governments represented in the General Assembly.

In some countries NGOs, more than governments, are pursuing the developmental goals of the UN in many remote villages. NGOs and civil society organisations have "practical knowledge" of development issues that would be very useful in UN debates.

However, are the private sector and NGOs willing to actively engage and work with the UN?

Cerge Remonde is Chairman, PTNI/NBN and Head of the Government Mass Media Group, The Philippines.

Do We Need to Reform the UN and the SC?

Riad Ismat

In an ancient legend, when Procost's bed proved to be shorter than his body, the logic of that age dictated that Procost's limbs be cut off to suit the measurements of the bed. I do hope that logic has changed since then. Everything starts with a "concept". We plan things according to a vision; we then find a mission for ourselves to achieve our vision; and we try to overcome all obstacles in order to fulfill that mission.

When we pose the question whether the United Nations (UN) and its Security Council (SC) effectively preserve the stability of the world and resolve its conflicts peacefully, we face three options.

Option One

Accept and preserve the UN as it is, because it cannot get any better

When we contemplate the international situation today, we realise the lack of political stability in a rapidly changing world, especially after the termination of the cold war between the two blocks. There is too much rhetoric about principles, while there is no consistent attitude, because interests motivate political actions in our world. Are we truly facing a "New World Order"? Or is it the same "Old Order" which the UN was created to reform, coming back in a new disguise?

There is a general feeling that a new situation has emerged at the turn of the century, that marks a new age of "globalisation" which, unfortunately, to some parties means a neglect of indigenous cultures and the dominance of one pole through the influence of satellite, Internet and popular culture. At the same time, the new millennium poses different challenges and responsibilities regarding world disasters such as earthquakes, tornadoes, drought, floods, famine, the ozone layer and, last but not least, the nuclear threat.

Option Two

Dismantle the UN since it has failed to defuse conflicts and bloodshed

We all know that the SC could not prevent the "allies" led by the USA from launching a war against Iraq. I am sure we were not concerned so much about Saddam`s regime

as for the loss of human life among innocent people, whether Iraqi, American, British or other nationalities, while there were other peaceful solutions available through the UN and international society.

Conversely, we can recall the 338 and 242 Resolutions, which were meant to stop aggression and give back to the Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese their occupied lands, which had no effect at all and created a great deal of frustration and a feeling of double standards among all Arabs and Muslims.

We realise that accusations and even sanctions are imposed upon some countries because of an alleged involvement in terrorism, without differentiating between terrorists and freedom fighters, while other forms of terrorism are committed shamelessly, without any tangible sanction. I am afraid there is disillusionment regarding the ability of the Security Council to implement its resolutions equally, and not eclectically, in the third millennium.

Option Three

Develop the UN to meet the emerging needs and challenges of this century

The Nonaligned Movement attempted (in a conference held in a Yugoslavian island in 1956) to reform the UN by making more parties neutral; however, it did not succeed in achieving its goal. Now again, we need to work for reform from within the UN, through legitimate and democratic channels of dialogue. The reform might include provision for four and two years' duration non-permanent seats in the SC and canceling the "veto" right in order to maintain more democracy.

On the other hand, I wish to stress the need for widening the spectrum of reform to include reform of the economic and social service institutions affiliated with the UN. I believe that the UN should reassess its support to the humanitarian organisations such as UNICEF, UNDP, the World Food Program (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO). Also, the role of some independent institutions needs reassessment, such as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Monitory Fund (IMF), in order to help the progress of infrastructure development in some underdeveloped countries.

Only hope for humanity

I hope that the feeling in several parts of the world that the UN is under the domination of USA can be reversed; the UN must stay impartial and be a cradle for universal principles, not partisan interests, especially if they are the interests of one party and its allies. Some perceive a lack of democracy and tardiness in implementing some resolutions. However, Syria has expressed clearly to the SC that it is law-abiding by pulling out of Lebanon before the end of April 2005, because it believes that the

UN is the only hope for humanity and international peace. Syria backs the UN and supports its development and reform through legitimate channels, in conformity with its original rationale as the only hope for security and maintenance of peace in the whole world.

His Excellency Riad Ismat is presently the Ambassador of Syria to Pakistan and the former Director General, Radio and Television Syria.

Many Voices One World

Ishadi S.K.

The "imbalance in flow of information" has become an issue that has been discussed for the past three decades without any agreement on how to resolve it. Within this period of time, the sole contemporary notion is that one-way flow of information from industrialised countries has flooded to developing countries and not the other way around.

In the seventies, the telecommunication infrastructure was dominated by industrial countries through news agencies like AP, UPI, AFP, BBC, Voice of America, NHK, ABC and Deutsche Welle. These industrialised countries monopolised the satellite systems, the land and sea cabling systems, including broadcast transmission. Through these means, they bombarded both entertainment and education/information to developing countries.

In 1980, a UNESCO study was carried out, led by Sean McBride, a former Canadian diplomat. His book - **Many Voices One World** - proposed that *"communication is basic individual rights. Freedom of information and, more specifically, the right to seek, receive, and impart information - is fundamental to human rights"*. The McBride Commission put forward some recommendations comprising: Communications Policies, Strengthening Cultural Identity, reducing the Commercialisation of Communication, as well as Responsibility of Journalists, Protection of Journalists and Collection and Dissemination of News.

Convergence and globalisation

The actions carried out by developing countries based on these recommendations seemed to be effective only until the beginning of the 1990s, when significant developments in telecommunication technology convergence, especially in radio and television, led to the global penetration of radio and television broadcasting by developed countries, particularly through cable. Globalisation forces open windows and doors of houses in developing countries to receive information through television cable, space radio, distance printing, portable parabola, video cassette recorders and the Internet.

In response, governments of developing countries tried to open doors for the growth and development of indigenous commercial radio and television. It was considered

that this could counteract the aggressive flow of global news, music and entertainment through cable and regional and international digital satellite, e.g. MTV, HBO, Star Movies, Star World, Star Sport, AXN, Disney, MGM, CNN, BBC World, CNBC, Bloomberg, NBC Asia, NHK, RAI and Deutche Welle.

The concept consisted of inviting private investors to build high quality radio and television stations that were professionally managed to international broadcast standards, so that viewers could have alternative domestic television programmes.

Liberalisation of media in Indonesia

I was also given an opportunity to establish a new private television station in Indonesia. Soon after its establishment in December 2001, it took only ten months to rank fourth out of the ten existing national television stations. **Trans TV** and other private television stations in Indonesia have rapidly succeeded in positioning themselves at regional and international levels.

National commercial televisions have followed the "capital accumulation circuit" and have been growing bigger, using any means, for the sake of business and investors. This situation has created classical dilemmas. On the one hand, their existence has been narrowing the gap of media technology and infrastructure and supporting democratisation; on the other hand, the objective of profit has led to market-driven programmes, obedient to the market forces of ratings and advertising income instead of public interest. These two interests, which vastly determine the direction of media content, are heavily in conflict with each other.

The interest of idealism commonly supported by media professionals proposing the principles of democracy - right to free expression, religion, national culture, and moral values - is directly opposed to the interests of business enforced by the owners of media, investors and shareholders, who put forward the principles of competition, profit orientation and efforts to satisfy the viewers' tastes.

The factors that could balance these two sides are regulation, professionalism, ethical codes and public pressure. Unfortunately, in actual practice, investors and shareholders are the winners in every conflict. Consequently, the content of media, including news, is directed for the purpose of market demand and winning over advertisers.

Present media scenario

The rapidly changing situation of radio and television in Indonesia has significantly improved their quality and capacity of radio and television; besides, the tough competition will in turn bring about the indigenous commercialisation of radio and television, for example:

1. There is a rapid investment accumulation through IPO (initial public offering) including public listing in national and international stock exchanges. Of ten commercial televisions in Indonesia, seven stations have sold most of their shares to third parties.

2. Regarding content: commercial televisions buy 40% of their programmes overseas. Hollywood contributes the most, then Mexico (telenovelas), India, Hong Kong, Korea and Japan respectively. This composition excludes live sports programmes especially football, tennis, basketball, Formula 1, Tour de France and boxing from Las Vegas and Atlantic City, not to mention live broadcast of Academy Awards, Miss Universe pageant, Emmy Awards, etc.

3. Local programmes remain favourites, but are remakes of those from India and Hong Kong, or telenovelas and soap operas for drama series, or adaptations of Hollywood's reality shows, game shows, talk shows and late night shows. The result of tough competition and "me too" programming leads to decreasing creativity and taste, since they pursue the maximisation of viewers based on ratings and audience share, including those with low income and education. The tendency of corrupting audience tastes can obviously be seen in the variety of programme genres exposing mystery stories, violence and vulgar sex.

4. In news programming, items with a more sensational impact or with higher sexual content are chosen over milder coverage. In news content more emphasis is put on controversial political issues, violence, crime, and accidents. Camera shots focus on extreme angles without any hesitation to show the most graphic pictures. In most events such as coverage of bomb attacks, for instance, the footage shown is almost raw, causing much criticism of the coverage approach. News that has sexual content can be seen as harmless compared to the numerous corruption cases, reports of harsh police treatment, bribery and criminal action which become daily content for every radio and television station owned by political elites. At the same time, infotainment concerning celebrity gossip and rumours have become popular. In 2003, gossip news was broadcast in 74 packages in a week in ten private television stations. A television station even broadcast gossip news four times a day, including re-runs at 4.30 a.m.!

5. Broadcast news and information are predominantly Jakarta-centred, generating high advertising revenue of 60%. As a result, the information flows in a one-way direction from Jakarta to regional areas and not the other way around.

6. Since commercial television stations accentuate the cost benefit ratio, the coverage is focused on cities that become the sampling target of AGB AC Nielsen, in East Java, Sumatra, and Sulawesi. **RCTI** with the widest coverage has 50 transmitters, **SCTV** has 40 transmitters and the rest of the television stations have about 30 transmitters each. **TVRI**, the government-owned television network, has 450 transmitters all over Indonesia, while private

national commercial televisions only cover one-third of all Indonesia. A great number of geographical areas that have low economic potential have no access at all.

These developments prove that what the McBride Commission recommended cannot be achieved with this method. So what is the solution?

Need for local stations

The establishment of local television, in my opinion, would be the right solution in this era of globalisation because:

- Local radio and television stations will be able to cater to the need for effective communication infrastructure to bring in local issues, cultures and problems.

- This does not require high investment and operational cost and can be supported by local economic resources. Local radio and television stations are immune from "accumulation of capital" orientation which is a likely problem in national television stations. International and big investors are not likely to buy shares or become part of the ownership of a local television station.

- Local radio and television stations will be able to develop "local content" that originates from local culture and address local problems using local languages. It will, therefore, strengthen capacity to develop local culture-based programmes. They can also be an alternative to national television stations or foreign programmes broadcast through satellite and cable. As a result, they are expected to be a deterrent factor against penetration of global television.

- They can be effective democratisation tools especially when local government is directly elected. They can effectively be the 'watchdog', monitoring and communication tools between politicians and their constituencies.

- They can be promotion tools for local products that cannot afford to advertise through national television.

Currently, there are 50 television stations in Indonesia. Most of them may not survive due to inadequate feasibility analysis and calculation, and some have earlier collapsed due to poor management preparation.

Sustainable local television stations

While developing a local television station, we must take the following factors into consideration:

1. There must be a preliminary comprehensive analysis on economic scale, industrial capacity, and the capability of local advertisers to support the station. The analysis must also study the potential of local content programming to be developed as professional and marketable programmes.

2. Local stations should collaborate with national networks so that they do not have to create all the programmes on their own. They can insert local content for the duration that suits their capacity. Good models of local television stations that collaborate with national stations can be found in North America, Canada, and Australia, where local content is broadcast in only 10% to 20% of total duration daily, so that they can avoid high production costs.

3. If local stations cooperate with national networks, they would able to produce programmes with relatively the same quality in terms of technique, management, and skills.

4. Local stations can gradually increase their duration based on their capability and the capacity of operational cost supporting elements.

Based on the above considerations, it is urgent that all elements of society work together to establish broadcast training facilities that can gradually be improved to be training centres for local stations in other regions.

The local television station that I am planning will be equipped with a production house that can produce news, features, advertisements and local programmes that can be sold to local television stations in other regions. The concept is a three-in-one concept: local television studio, training centre and production house. I hope that this model can be developed in other strategic cities in Indonesia; in five years, this model will have been developed in sub-districts (Kabupaten) and even in remote municipalities (kota).

Strategic proposals

Through UNESCO, the United Nations has recommended the strengthening of local and national television networks as suggested by the McBride Report. In this context, I would like to recommend three strategic proposals:

1. To set up a Study Commission, as a follow up to the McBride Commission, to reconstruct the 1980 recommendations to adapt to the current global situation and conditions

2. To support professional broadcasting training and education centres in all countries as necessary

3. To maximise the existence of independent institutions such as AIBD which has clearly positioned itself as an institution that trains broadcasters in Asia and the Pacific in conducting media dialogue, establishing local radio and television, promoting public broadcasting, cultural diversity and local capacity building.

It is my dream that UNESCO would establish a production and distribution centre to source or produce programmes that can be used by local stations in developing countries, distributing them at a non-commercial price so that all local stations in the world can afford them.

Hundreds of television stations that are big in capacity and multinational in capital investment continuously fill the air, while local radio and television stations are still needed in small cities and sub-districts in many countries. This is the basic concept of **Many Voices One World.** Let thousands of local stations develop and give colour to this world. This is the time to act.

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Recommendations of AMS 2005 to WSIS at Tunis

Broadcasting is crucial to development. For many, it remains the major source of information and knowledge, and therefore, it requires strengthening and support.

The ministers of information and broadcasting of countries in the Asia-Pacific region met in Bangkok, Thailand, in May 2003, to consult with academics, scholars and representatives of agencies of the United Nations on the steps to be taken to revitalise broadcasting as a tool for access to information and knowledge, and as a means of eliciting social participation necessary for sustainable development. The Bangkok Declaration, which emerged from this first Ministerial Conference, led to the annual Asia Media Summit. This year's summit was especially important, as it was registered as a "Regional Thematic Meeting" with a view to contributing to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Tunis in November 2005.

The United Nations agencies and the international community have been instrumental in promoting best practices broadcasting, notably in public services broadcasting, community multimedia and other citizen media initiatives thus contributing to sustainable development through access to information and knowledge.

However, many of the needs of broadcasters, and of society at large, are not yet fulfilled. Further action is essential. We believe more attention should be given to these issues at the forthcoming 2nd phase of the WSIS in Tunis in 2005. Towards this end, the Asia Media Summit 2005 puts forward the following recommendations.

Media and Globalisation

We

believe that globalisation is a forerunner to the formation of a knowledge society;

distinguish and differentiate between globalisation and the growth of transnational corporations;

recognise that while globalisation has led to the growth of the media, the media has a role to play in globalisation with a human face;

recommend that

The media, in both the public and the private sectors, be encouraged and actively assisted to

a. increase diversity of content to include marginalised populations, groups and communities in the communication processes

b. provide comprehensive information and support the culture of dialogue among civilisations with a view to promoting mutual knowledge, understanding and peace.

c. promote the use of broadcast network systems, particularly digital systems which are especially suited to such use, to carry information additional to normal programme content, for the benefit of the general public.

Cultural Diversity

We

support UNESCO's Declaration on Cultural Diversity;

realise that cultural diversity should not only be preserved but must also be fostered and that the media's function in producing, gathering, checking and distributing diverse news and content, including at the local community level, is vital.;

reaffirm that cultural and audiovisual works do not lend themselves to governance by general rules of exchange for goods and services since, unlike other goods, they come under the concept of cultural diversity;

call upon all concerned parties, governments, the general public and broadcasters to preserve and promote cultural diversity in their respective countries and internationally, and to help encourage dialogue among various cultures;

recommend that

a. Authorities be requested and encouraged to facilitate and support domestic legislation that guarantees the independence and pluralism of the media.

b. Regulatory bodies be encouraged to provide equitable allocation of broadcasting frequencies to public, private and community broadcasters and to establish the appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks to encourage community media.

c. Public and private organisations, such as bilateral and multilateral aid agencies and foundations, be requested to:

- support intercultural exchanges in order to foster understanding and appreciation of diverse cultural aspirations
- encourage and take part in the free flow of information across national and linguistic boundaries
- promote the production and dissemination of local programme content, using local languages and providing information on local culture and indigenous knowledge

d. Broadcasters be encouraged to

- • pay particular attention to the situation of indigenous people and the safeguarding of their linguistic cultural heritage and traditional values.
- • promote programming that represents the cultural aspirations of all sections of their listening and viewing audiences
- • promote, propagate and preserve the cultural heritages of their regions.

Digital Opportunities

We

believe that everyone, everywhere should have the opportunity to participate in the Information Society and to take advantage of its benefits;

recognise the potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), including broadcast media, as tools for facilitating sustainable development;

are committed to converting the digital divide into a digital opportunity for all;

recommend that

a. Authorities be requested to

- • make efforts to bridge the digital divide and pave the way for creating a knowledge-rich society, by providing universal, equitable and affordable access to information and infrastructure
- • provide access to information through all media
- • ensure women's full and equal access to decision making about, and use of, media and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)
- • facilitate the creation/production and uploading/transmission of local content in local languages.

b. Public and private organisations, such as bilateral and multilateral aid agencies and foundations, be requested to

- • promote the ability of communities to define and meet their own communication needs,
- • assist developing countries to improve connectivity and access, especially for the benefit of the disadvantaged sections of society
- • provide assistance to local communities to document and preserve indigenous culture using digital media
- • encourage free flow of information, especially on science, technology and culture, across linguistic and national boundaries

Free Flow of Information

We

reaffirm the belief that the free flow of information and ideas is of crucial importance in a democratic society, and that it contributes to the progress

and welfare of society and the enjoyment of other human rights and fundamental freedoms;

consider that Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is an essential foundation of the Information Society;

reaffirm the principles contained in the Declarations of Windhoek (1991) of Almaty (1992) and of Sana'a (1996) on Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Media, as well as those related to media in the Declaration of Principles adopted by the Geneva WSIS in December 2003.

recommend that

a. Authorities be requested to

- ensure free flow of information through all communication systems
- set up mechanisms to detect and prevent cyber crime, and crimes against human dignity in the form of obscenity, racism and the promotion of hatred and violence
- involve representatives of the media as full partners in the future Internet governance system
- set up mechanisms aimed at preventing violence against journalists and other media professionals to assure their safety in carrying out their responsibilities in the service of society
- encourage the free flow of information and programme content from developing countries to the developed societies.

b. Media professionals be requested to create and follow ethical norms in the practice of their professions, as we believe a professional approach to journalistic practices is an effective way to safeguard media freedom.

Public Service Broadcasting

We

mindful of the crucial role played by public service broadcasting (PSB) in ensuring a free flow of information and in maintaining diversity in the broadcasting industry;

agree on the importance of affirming to decision makers, policy makers, legislators, regulators and operators of the need and value of PSB;

recommend that

a. Governments be requested to

- promote public service broadcasting, and ensure its independence from political and commercial pressures and to provide all possible means to upgrade its performance.
- provide public service broadcasting organisations with adequate funding to enable them to provide high quality services while remaining viable and maintaining their independence.

b. The appropriate authorities be requested to

- promote non-profit community broadcasting and to ensure that suitable frequencies are allocated for such services
- encourage diversity in broadcasting, thereby offering opportunities for a diversity of views
- safeguard editorial independence and management transparency and support the upgrading of performance of the PSB where it has been established

c. Broadcasters be encouraged to

- define and adopt quality standards that include guidelines governing their programme standards and editorial practices
- establish systems for the internal and external monitoring of these standards and practices in relation to the guidelines and the legislation under which the broadcasting organisations are established.

Human Resource Development (HRD)

We broadcasters

recommend that

a. The appropriate authorities be requested to

- provide equitable, affordable and accessible training, especially to the young, the disadvantaged and those in remote communities, to enable them to participate actively in the information society.
- provide support and assistance to broadcasting training institutions to ensure that their employees are kept up-to-date with new technologies and techniques.

b. Public and private organisations, such as bilateral and multilateral aid agencies and foundations, be requested to support the training of trainers so that broadcasters and training institutions in the region are constantly updated on training techniques and technologies.

Children

We,

mindful that children should hear, see and learn about their culture, their language and their life experiences, through the electronic media, through programmes that affirm their sense of self, community and place;

reaffirming the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

recommend that

a. Authorities be requested to support broadcasters in their efforts to produce local content aimed specfically at engendering in children a knowledge of local culture and traditions so that they do not become alienated from their cultural roots.

b. Broadcasters be requested to

- set aside appropriate time for the transmission of programmes specifically intended for children
- produce and broadcast good quality children's programmes offering suitable content that will provide them with wholesome entertainment and help in their cultural and intellectual development
- ensure that programming inappropriate for children is not transmitted at times when they are likely to be listening and/or watching.
- ensure that children hear, see and express themselves, their culture, their language and their life experiences, through programmes which affirm their sense of self, community and place

c. International agencies be requested to support the training of broadcasters in the production of programmes especially for children.

Gender

We,

reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in promoting education as a fundamental right;

supporting the principles that emerged from the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action;

mindful of the role played by women in the development of nations;

recognising the feminisation of poverty and the precarious position of women and girls affected by war, violence, abuse, trafficking and all other forms of exploitation;

recommend that

a. Broadcasters be requested to

- prioritise and develop specific strategies for providing education and training to women and girls through the media for their empowerment.
- mobilise the electronic media to promote open dialogue on gender equality and equity to uplift the social status of women in developing countries
- develop guidelines or a code of ethics for impartial and gender-sensitive reporting that reflects high professional broadcasting standards
- give adequate attention to programming related to women's health and programmes that address the problems of trafficking in and violence against women
- address the diverse needs of women in multi-cultural societies through gender- sensitive programming

- ensure that women are given equal opportunities for the development of their broadcasting careers and encouragement to aspire to managerial positions in their broadcasting organisations.

b. International aid agencies be requested to

- provide support for gender sensitivity training in the media that promotes empowerment, equality and capacity building.
- provide support for projects that address the special training needs of women broadcasters.

HIV/AIDS

We

recommend that

a. Authorities be requested to encourage broadcasters to address HIV/AIDS issues with a view to promoting safety and an awareness of preventive action and understanding towards people living with HIV/AIDS.

b. Broadcasters be requested to

- produce and broadcast programmes promoting awareness of preventive behaviour and the understanding and care of HIV/AIDS affected people
- work in close collaboration with HIV/AIDS specialists from the UN, government agencies and other appropriate organisations to deliver relevant and up-to-date information and support for the HIV/AIDS campaign.
- be alert to the outbreak of similar pandemics that may be a threat to human and economically important animal or plant life on the planet, and respond proactively in an appropriate manner.

Disasters

We

realising the role played by broadcasters in harnessing international support in mitigating the effects of the recent Asian tsunami;

recognising the role of broadcasters in responding to natural disasters such as droughts, floods, fires, cyclones, storms, earthquakes and tsunamis;

mindful also of the limitations faced by broadcasters in helping communities to deal with natural disasters

recommend that

a. Authorities be requested to

- encourage broadcasters to take a proactive role in disaster mitigation

- create links between broadcasters and agencies involved in disaster forecasting, preparedness, mitigation and relief.

b. Broadcasters be requested to

- keep track of disaster warning systems and convey relevant messages to communities so that the risks due to natural hazards are reduced
- create and broadcast relevant content that can help communities in disaster preparedness.

c. International agencies be requested to

- support the training of broadcasters in disaster prepareness, risk reducing strategies and disaster mitigation
- promote regional and inter-regional co-operation to prevent, mitigate and manage natural disasters.

Preservation of radio and television archives

We

recognising the role of media archives as a production resource and a powerful tool for expressing cultural identity and preserving national, regional and world heritage;

realising the fragility of analogue archive material and the increasing obsolescence and unavailability of equipment needed to play back and reproduce earlier audio and video recordings;

considering the existence of reliable technical solutions to ensure the long-term preservation, access and reuse of archival records, mainly the migration to digital formats;

continuing the action led by UNESCO, and referring to the Call for the Preservation of the World Broadcast Heritage launched by the International Federation of Television Archives (FIAT/IFTA);

agree that it is essential to implement preservation policies using digital technologies;

recommend that

a. Authorities be requested to

- urge broadcasters to organise the preservation of their audiovisual materials, in cooperation with national archives where appropriate
- provide adequate resources for long term preservation and migration of endangered materials

b. Broadcasters be requested to

- provide adequate storage and IT facilities for their archived material
- establish a long-term policy for the collection, development and preservation of such material
- provide appropriate access to the archived material, internally and externally
- ensure proper training and up-skilling of their staff, so that the valuable resources are optimally used

c. International agencies be requested to

- provide venues and platforms to define and clarify the issues, obstacles and solutions regarding digitization and archiving
- support the training of broadcasters to improve their knowledge of archiving

WIPO Broadcasters' Treaty

We

recognising that broadcasters worldwide, through regional broadcasting unions including the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union, have for more than a decade been urging the World Intellectual Property Organization to update broadcasters' rights to meet the demands of modern times and technology;

recognising that the Convention for the Protection of the Rights of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organisations ("Rome Convention") having been concluded in 1961, provides inadequate modern protection for broadcasters as it does not grant protection against redistribution of a broadcaster's signal, against deferred rebroadcasts, or against the pirating of signals sent by satellite to broadcasters for simultaneous or deferred transmission by the broadcaster;

recognising that the other beneficiaries of the Rome Convention (performers and producers of phonograms) have been given updated protection by the WIPO Copyright Treaty and the WIPO Performances & Phonograms Treaty;

recognising that for many developing countries, radio and television broadcasting organisations play an important role in the dissemination of information, in education, in the reflection and encouragement of cultural values and in the impetus for positive social change;

further recognising that the derogation of the rights of broadcasters and the consequent loss of revenue or increased costs in carrying out their services can only result in depriving these public broadcasters of opportunities to carry out their social remit;

acknowledging that the provisions of the draft broadcasting treaty are imperative for broadcasters' ability to carry out their social remit.

recommend that

a. Authorities be requested to support at the international level the efforts of broadcasters to successfully conclude a treaty for the protection of the rights of broadcasters.

b. Broadcasters be encouraged to

- make representations to their governments supporting the efforts of their representatives to conclude an international treaty protecting the rights of broadcasters.
- make active representations to their governments at consultations arranged by the World Intellectual Property Organization in their regions to recommend to the General Assembly of the World Intellectual Property Organization that a diplomatic conference be convened with the aim of bringing into effect a treaty for the protection of broadcasters.

Copyright and Digital Technology

We,

recognising the crucial role in social and economic development played by broadcasters.

acknowledging that digital technology will bring both new opportunities and challenges to broadcasting organisations worldwide;

recognising that digital technology may result in some owners of copyright material attempting to take advantage of new digital technologies to diminish traditional exceptions to copyright, such as fair dealing;

acknowledging that all copyright laws should strive for an effective balance between the interests of copyright holders and those of individual users;

recommend that

International agencies and governmental authorities be requested to ensure that laws relating to digital technology make special provision for existing copyright exceptions and traditional rights of broadcasters.

Fifth World Summit on Media for Children 2007

In 2007, South Africa will host the Fifth World Summit on Media for Children around the theme, **"Media as a Tool for Global Peace and Democracy."** The Summit offers a global platform celebrating the tapestry of children's media.

The Summit will showcase the diversity of Africa's media environment, but it will also be a World Summit relying on the spirit of ubuntu which is aimed at sharing global needs, situations and possibilities. With a common objective to ensure that a multiplicity of children's voices is heard.

The outcomes will include research and production projects designed to amplify unique children's voices and cultures, through media created locally and shared globally. High quality content is expensive and difficult to develop, especially in countries where resources are limited, but the Fifth World Summit will seek sustainable solutions.

The Summit's underlying message is in line with the objectives of the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the priorities outlined in the Millennium Development Goals. Whilst young people are active participants in their own development, the media must create opportunities for them to define their development in a holistic way. The Summit must consider how information technologies - which are making tremendous contributions to human development already - can assist children who are at risk (diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, as well as poverty) and are forced to take on leadership roles in the household for which they are not prepared.

Children and young people's participation in media is essential in the face of a rapidly changing and challenging world. The Summit will bring together those - children and adults - who are using media to promote literacy, gender equity, independent thought, environmental responsibility and global health. It will spotlight ways of using appropriate and available technologies to deliver content that complements, enhances, entertains and promotes learning strategies.

We invite the world's media and technology experts, and those who lead the movement for children's rights, to join us in partnership as we together prepare the agenda for 2007.

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ASIA MEDIA SUMMIT 2005
Promoting Peace and Prosperity In a Globalised World

The second Asia Media Summit at Kuala Lumpur in May 2005 brought together 400 participants representing broadcasting organisations, media professionals, broadcasting policy makers and regulators, NGOs and international organisations from 65 countries of Asia, Pacific, Africa, Arab World, Europe and North America.

The Summit is also recognized as the Asia-Pacific Regional Thematic Meeting leading up to the UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) to be held at Tunis in November 2005. The consolidated statement and recommendations emerging from the discussions and working groups were ratified by the assembly as inputs to WSIS on media and broadcasting.

**ASIA-PACIFIC INSTITUTE
FOR BROADCASTING DEVELOPMENT**