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**Towards a
new ecology
of audiovisuals**



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Quaderns del CAC is a journal dedicated to analyze the big topics about audiovisual communication policies, and in general, the contemporary audiovisual culture. Edited by the Consell Audiovisual de Catalunya, the journal intends to be a meeting point to discuss about the audiovisual from a Catalan perspective with international vocation.

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Introduction

This 34th issue [Vol. XIII (1)] of *Quaderns del CAC* inaugurates a new era for the journal and includes the changes announced in the last issue. The content is now divided into the following sections: “Invited author”, “Monographic theme”, “Observatory”, “Book review” and “Agenda”. The “Observatory” section will only include articles that have been subjected to a double blind review.

In its first “Invited author” section, *Quaderns del CAC* has been honoured with a contribution by the Polish professor, sociologist and journalist **Karol Jakubowicz**, one of the most celebrated European experts in the prospective analysis of changes in the media. With his article “Television A.C.? Change and Continuity in Television” he presents the state of affairs for television in 2010, the evolutionary trends based on the new social demands, existing policies and different regulatory models.

The “Monographic theme” for this issue, entitled “Towards a new ecology of audiovisuals”, continues the focus provided by Jakubowicz and deals in depth with the impact of the digital switchover throughout the image and audiovisual ecosystem. **Carlos A. Scolari** links an analysis of the empirical perspective of changes in the communication ecosystem to the theoretical tradition of Media Ecology, an interdisciplinary, trans-media movement that has gradually become a highly appropriate scientific field for analysing the socio-cultural evolution of the communication society (“Media ecology. Map of a theoretical niche”). From an anthropological perspective, **Elisenda Ardévol**, **Antoni Roig**, **Edgar Gómez-Cruz** and **Gemma San Cornelio** examine how the digitalisation of audiovisuals, the Internet, broadband and mobiles have altered the “culture circuit” resulting from the previous mass culture, and investigate how the roles of consumers, the media and cultural creators are being redefined (“Creative practices and participation in new media”). **Joan M. Corbella** starts with the structural elements that, since the 1990s, have been involved in the current digital ecosystem, raising doubts regarding both the very concept of a communication medium as well as the dominance of the audiovisual sector, and he produces a detailed map of the new actors in the value chain and of the new emerging services (“The new ecology of audiovisuals: new actors, old problems and new problems”). **Ramón Zallo** bases his prospective analysis on the impact of the economic crisis starting in 2007 and argues that communication and culture are at the epicentre of change and of the techno-cultural crisis, understood as a crisis of overproduction and also of business models (“Economic crises, digitalisation and techno-cultural change: elements for prospection”). **Juan Pablo Artero**, **Mónica Herrero** and **Alfonso Sánchez-Tabernero** analyse the effects of digitalisation and convergence on the Spanish market in terms of television supply, business models, new intermediaries and the new central role played by the public, and end up suggesting possible scenarios for the Spanish audiovisual sector for the next decade (“The economic impact of digitalisation and convergence in Spain’s audiovisual sector”).

An article by **Josep M. Martí**, **Maria Gutiérrez**, **Xavier Ribes**, **Belén Monclús** and **Luisa Martínez** opens the “Observatory” section, analysing the crisis in conventional radio among young people in Catalonia aged 14-25, diagnosing the causes of this and noting, in conclusion, that the emergence of the Internet has exacerbated the lack of an “emotional link” of young people to radio (“The crisis in youth radio consumption in Catalonia”). **Jaume Soriano** looks at the media consumption patterns of foreigners living in Catalonia compared with native residents, using data from the Baròmetre de la Comunicació i la Cultura for 2008 (“Comparative analysis of audiences and cultural consumption of foreigners in Catalonia”). **Núria Almiron**, **Maria Capurro** and **Pablo Santcovsky** present the findings of a comparative study of the main states in Europe regarding the controversial electoral block mechanism used by the public Catalan and Spanish media during election campaigns, concluding that such a system has no precedent in the European Union (“Electoral blocks in the public media in Spain: an exception in Europe”). Based on an analysis of the content from a sample of programmes from radio stations with the highest audiences and coverage in Mexico, **Aimée Vega** highlights and criticises the social representation of violence against women and points to the role played by the large media in reproducing stereotypes in gender-based violence (“The social representation of gender-based violence on Mexican radio”). And **Sudhamshu Dahal** and **I. Arul Aram** offer a map of community radio in South Asia, emphasising the pioneering example of Nepal and the specific policies of India, to highlight the benefits of this “dialogue-based” medium for communities that are under-developed or with problems of marginalisation (“Community Radio in South Asia: Technology for Community Benefits”).

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Television A.C.? Change and Continuity in Television

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Abstract

"Television A.C." stands for television after convergence. Suggestions that "television A.C." is or will be qualitatively and fundamentally different from traditional television abound in the literature. Forecasts for the future range all the way from "transformation" (a paradigm shift involving the dismantling of traditional television) to "stagnation", or - at best - "Broadcast Plus". Though all the technological prerequisites are already available, social and cultural factors have so far prevented "transformation". There has been a great deal of change in television, but also a lot of continuity. The television landscape will most likely incorporate elements of all the scenarios discussed in the paper.

Convergence is posing many challenges to legal and institutional frameworks of regulation. The jury is still out on whether the merger of telecommunications and broadcasting law and regulatory authorities is the best way to deal with these challenges. In many cases, countries with strong and well-established broadcasting regulatory bodies retain them and seek to promote not their integration, but closer cooperation, with telecommunications regulators.

Key words

Television, convergence, future scenarios, paradigm shift, change and continuity, legal and institutional regulatory solutions.

Resum

La "televisió D.C." designa la televisió després de la convergència. En els mitjans escrits preval l'opinió que la "televisió D.C." és o serà qualitativament i fonamentalment diferent de l'actual. Els pronòstics de futur van des de la "transformació" (un canvi de paradigma que implica el desmantellament de la televisió tradicional) a l'"estancament" o -en el millor dels casos- "Emissions plus". Tot i que els requisits tecnològics ja són disponibles, els factors socials i culturals han impedit de moment la "transformació". S'ha produït un gran canvi en la televisió, però també continuïtat. El panorama de la televisió incorporarà probablement elements de tots els escenaris analitzats en l'article.

La convergència planteja molts reptes als marcs jurídics i institucionals de regulació. El jurat encara delibera sobre si la fusió de les telecomunicacions i de les autoritats l'audiovisual i de les autoritats reguladores és la millor manera de tractar aquests reptes. En molts casos, els països amb organismes reguladors forts i ben establerts els mantenen i no fomenten la seva integració, sinó una cooperació estreta, amb els reguladors de les telecomunicacions.

Paraules clau

Televisió, convergència, escenaris futurs, canvi de paradigma, canvi i continuïtat, solucions normatives legals i institucionals

"Television A.C." stands for "television after convergence". Suggestions that "television A.C." is or will be qualitatively and fundamentally different from traditional television abound in the literature. We need to know whether such forecasts are likely to be confirmed or not in order to understand where television is really going. We will concentrate here on the general direction of change and its main features.

Convergence, let us recall at the outset, leads to "the growing ability of a range of digital distribution networks to carry different types of content (audio, video, text and other data) and services to a variety of consumer devices" (OFCOM 2008a: 89). Convergence also leads to the media acquiring the features of digitality, hypertextuality, dispersal and virtuality (Lister, Dovey, Giddings, Grant and Kelly 2003) and com-

bining interpersonal communication and mass media dimensions on the same platforms (Cardoso 2006; see also Mueller 1999). The process has far-reaching ramifications and so, as noted by Latzer (2009), we may distinguish different types of convergence: technological, corporate, socio-functional, receptive, spatial and regulatory.

Of course, the process of convergence is by no means complete. The new media and the technologies behind them are still at what could be described as their "chrysalis" stage, i.e. at an intermediate phase of their development when their features and uses, as well as the opportunities and potential dangers associated with them, are not yet fully explored (Jakubowicz 2009).

We propose here to examine some main elements of the

Table 1. "Generations" of TV

Noam (1995)	Galperin and Bar (2002)	Roel (2008)
Privileged TV: a handful of channels, behaving in an oligopolistic way	Fordist television: one way broadcasting of a few channels	Paleo-television: the initial age of public or state monopoly
Multichannel TV: greater commercialism, greater diversity and greater specialization in channels	Multichannel television: one way broadcasting of multiple video channels	Neo-television: public and commercial sector compete, and "broad-casting" coexists with "narrow-casting," i.e. thematic channels
Cyber-Television: distributed, decentralized cyber-television	Interactive TV: two-way delivery of multiple video channels and other services	Post-television: multiplication and personalization of programme offers; non-linear delivery and individualised TV; time- and place-shifting technologies; alternative distribution platforms – mobile telephony, PDA or the Internet

Source: In-house.

process of change in television and to suggest a rough analytical framework for considering it.

The evolution of television is often presented as a three-stage process of transition, as in Table 1.

This is often presented as an objective and inexorable progression to third-generation cyber- or post-television. Real-life developments and the prevailing opinion of media scholars suggest otherwise. To begin with, let us briefly present (for reasons of space it will not be possible to discuss this at length) two pertinent conclusions from the literature:

- Many authors agree with Fidler's (1997) view that metamorphosis encompasses *inter alia* "coevolution and coexistence" of all forms of media: the "survival" of older forms, if they adapt and evolve, as well as "propagation", whereby later forms of media propagate dominant traits of earlier media forms, and that therefore media changes continues to be "cumulative" (newly emerging media do not replace older media, though they may have modified their functions and content; see e.g. Fortunati 2005; Bolter and Grusin 2000);

- Technological determinism, i.e. extrapolating a medium's development and evolution solely from advances in technology can, when other factors are disregarded, lead at the very least to overestimating the pace and scale of change. Like Williams (1974), we should rather speak of a "social history" of television, of the powerful impact of social, economic and cultural factors, i.e. of "supervening social necessity" that determines the emergence and application (or not) of technological inventions (Winston 1990); or of the "pathway of interaction between society and technology", whereby needs experienced by society, usually as a consequence of changing material and environmental circumstances, lead to the search for technological solutions and – we may add – affect the manner of their application (McQuail 2007; see also Sawhney and Lee 2005; Stöber 2004). As summed up by Karaganis (2007: 9): "New

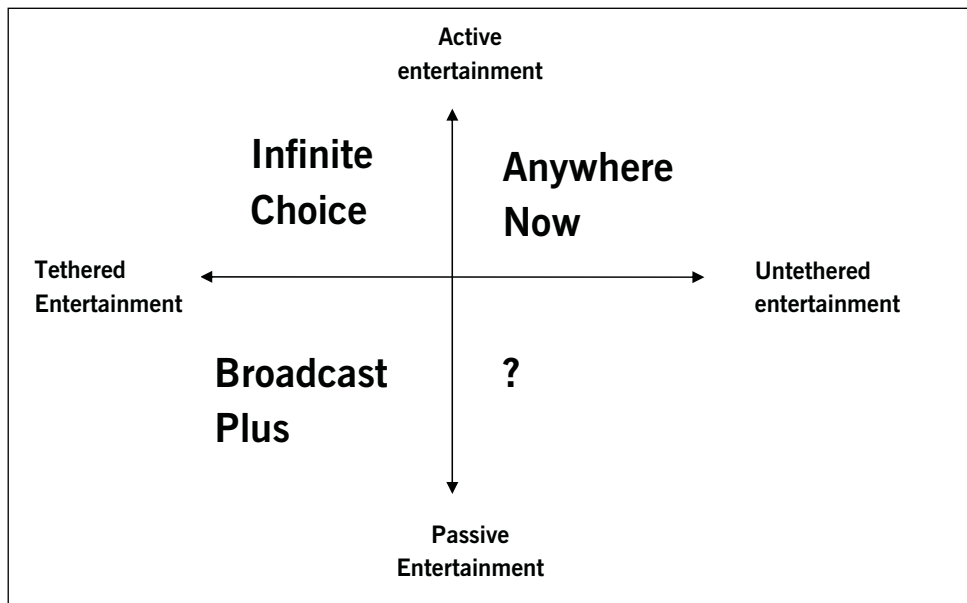
technologies take hold only in the context of accompanying cultural innovation as their latent possibilities are explored. This interdependence means that technologies are not merely received but, through processes of adoption, socially defined and, eventually, socially embedded in new collective and institutional practices".

What is "television" and how will it evolve? Some scenarios

Let us begin by briefly listing the main features of "traditional" television. According to McQuail (2005: 36), they are: very large output, range and reach; audiovisual content; complex technology and organization; public character and extensive regulation; national and international character; very diverse content forms. Traditional television is, of course, a quintessential mass medium, addressing a mass audience.

Forecasts of how the media in general, and television in particular, will develop include Robin Foster's (2007) four possible scenarios. They are: (i) **transformation**: dramatic decline in the use of scheduled broadcast TV, as distribution platforms serving as common carriers link millions of individual consumers to many thousands of content suppliers; (ii) **consolidation**, with only a small number of largely vertically integrated main players remaining on the market; (iii) **extreme fragmentation**: a significant digital divide and highly fragmented consumption, producing an impoverished broadcast sector, a highly fragmented online sector, and a major digital and cultural deficit among those who are unable to participate fully in the new broadband world; (iv) **stagnation**: slower than expected growth in demand for new broadband and digital services, with no large-scale investment in new technologies (see also OFCOM 2008a).

Figure 1. Three scenarios selected for 2028



Source: OFCOM (2009).

OFCom's (2009a) predictions of what the UK entertainment sector will look like in 2028 accept that technological advances are likely to be dramatic, but note that the greatest uncertainty concerns future end user demand for entertainment. This shows precisely that a socio-culturally-deterministic, and not technologically-deterministic approach is the right one. Media evolution is determined not by the availability of technology but by the uses that people will (or will not) make of it.

OFCom (2009a) envisages three possible scenarios, as shown in Figure 1. Under the **Broadcast Plus** scenario, the majority of the population would prefer scheduled video delivered through a mix of subscription and advertising-funded services. The main reason for this would be the convenience and ease of use of schedules. Broadcasters would remain strong in their traditional roles but a handful of broadcasters would dominate in the new markets of targeted advertising and the supply of personalised channels. These broadcasters, with the biggest profit streams available to fund content, would be the most successful in the supply of traditional scheduled television.

Under the **Infinite Choice** scenario, consumers of virtually all ages would embrace the participative and immersive experiences of entertainment which the Internet can offer over second-generation broadband networks. As a result, the bulk of entertainment content and services would be delivered over the Internet, although a minority of the population would still watch broadcast television. Consumers would be attracted to Internet-based entertainment by the almost infinite variety of content that is available. Some would use active video search. Others would rely on recommendations from social networking with friends or buy from entertainment stores. Yet others would subscribe to personalised schedules.

Finally, under the **Anywhere Now** scenario, most people would use their mobile personal devices as the primary means of controlling the consumption of entertainment, making it a more personal experience. Services would be available anywhere and at any time by using the personal device to access services via a mix of WiFi and cellular network connections. Internet-based entertainment would dominate but the personal device rather than the home network server would be key to the consumption of entertainment. If consumers wanted a "sofa cinema" experience, they would link their personal device to a large high-definition screen to view in the living room or bedroom. The terrestrial TV broadcast platform would be switched off, following migration to satellite platforms for high-definition multichannel broadcasting and to Internet-based entertainment.

By now, little is left in these scenarios of unavoidable progression to third-generation cyber- or post-television. The "Broadcast Plus" scenario is presented as a viable alternative, even though it assumes relatively limited change compared to the present situation.

In the same report, OFCom (2009a) looks at the process which may be decisive in determining which of the three scenarios will prevail, i.e. prospects for the transfer of television to broadband networks. The extent to which television programming is accessible and, most importantly, consumed on demand and online, via broadband networks, can serve as a key indicator of the direction and pace of change in television.

In addition to other factors, OFCom - correctly, in our view - identifies demand for online video content as the key determinant of the evolution of television. Demand, of course, is a consequence of social, cultural, financial and technological circumstances. On this basis, four scenarios for future demand for

Table 2. The mass communication process before and after convergence

Before	After
Large scale distribution and reception	Distribution at once global and personalized
One-directional flow	Two-way flow: the audience can respond or provide content to be disseminated by the medium
Asymmetrical relation	User can respond, offer feedback and content, engage in dialogue
Impersonal and anonymous	Affected by individualization and personalization
Calculative or market relationship	UGC and new communicators change that
Standardized content	Highly diversified content

Source: Adapted from McQuail (2005).

online video content are developed, along a continuum from the gradual increase in demand to almost universal demand for online content.

Scenario 4 (almost all TV is HD, on demand and consumed over IP networks, so it is closest to the cyber-television or post-television from Table 1) is – according to the authors – an extreme scenario that is less likely to emerge. They believe scenarios 2 and 3 (major shift to on-demand, often over IP networks, larger proportion of content from specialist channels; limited shift to broadcasting linear content over IP networks; significant move to DVDs being downloaded) are quite likely to emerge if New Generation Access (super-fast broadband services) is widely deployed.

Elements of change in television

With reference to McQuail's description of the main traditional features of mass communication and the mass audience, we can see that convergence has the potential to leave practically none of them unchanged, as is clear from Tables 2 and 3 (the "Before" columns represent features of mass communication and the mass audience as identified by McQuail; the "After" columns have been added by the present author).

Some of these processes of change are shown in bold print because, in our view, they form part of what would amount to a major "paradigm shift" as far as traditional television is concerned. From this point of view, we can identify three groups of processes of change in terms of their impact on traditional television. These are shown in Table 4.

We should note that the "liberation of content" has required, as in Article 1 of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD), the invention of a new term for what used to be called "television" and is now called "an audiovisual media service". It is defined in terms of the purpose for which content is distributed ("the provision of programmes in order to inform,

entertain or educate, to the general public") and not by the technology used for this purpose (provision of this content can happen, as stated in the directive, by means of any "electronic communications network").

What is called here a "paradigm shift" would correspond to what Foster (2007) calls "transformation" (see above). We would take this to mean either (1) basic structural change and decentralization in content provision, or (2) an end of the division into active content providers and passive receivers of this content, so that content could be contributed by both sides. As for "fundamental change", individualized distribution of content by content providers would enormously change the audience experience.

Individualization and personalization of content are also possible in OFCOM's "Infinite Choice" scenario. In this case, the audience would move from passive to active reception ("active" in the sense of searching for and selecting content to watch, but not in the sense of contributing content), but not to active participation in content production and distribution, as in the "paradigm shift". The same would be true of possible audience involvement in the formulation of general broadcasting policy or specific programme policy of particular programme/service providers. This would certainly be revolutionary but would still not affect the basic traditional framework of television (regarding changing sender-audience relationships, see Carpenter 2009; Enli 2008; Sundet 2009; Ytreberg 2009)

Finally, as regards "secondary change", the processes listed here should not, of course, be underestimated. For example, new content production processes (see e.g. Erdal 2009; Verweij 2009) require significant adjustments in the way programme/service providers operate and are organized. Still, by themselves they may change little in the way traditional television operates vis-à-vis the audience.

From our point of view, therefore, the main question is the pace and degree of change from "before" to "after", as shown in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 3. The mass audience before and after convergence

Before	After
Large numbers	Full range – from global to individual reception
Widely dispersed	Addressability and localization mean that clearly identifiable audiences or even individuals can be reached
Non-interactive and anonymous	Interactive and potentially personalized
Heterogeneous	Potentially homogenous
Not organized or self-acting	Capable of organization, reaction, response
An object of management or manipulation	More media literate, resistance to propaganda or manipulation

Source: Adapted from McQuail (2005).

Table 4. Three types of change in traditional television

Type of change	Description
Fundamental "paradigm shift"	• Elimination of the basic framework whereby content is assembled into a programme on offer and distributed by a number of dedicated organizations (broadcasters or media service providers) • An end to the passive role of the audience, with all the content coming from the broadcaster/provider
Fundamental change	Transition from generalist "one-size-fits-all" programme services (via thematic channels/services) to individualized distribution of content by content providers within the traditional television framework
Secondary change (examples)	• Ability to receive content on different screens (TV, PC, PDA, mobile television, etc.). • Introduction of 3D TV • Availability of content in linear or on-demand (non-linear) form • Audience's ability to engage in time- and place-shifting for content reception • New multimedia content production methods • Structural and organizational change in television organizations to enable them to adapt to convergence • "Liberation of content": it is no longer bound to one physical medium • "Liberation of archives": access to old content can easily be made available to all interested parties via the Internet ("Media (re)gain a memory")

Source: In-house.

"Transformation" or "Broadcast Plus"?

Below we provide a very brief overview of some of the main trends in the evolution of television which may suggest which of these two scenarios will prevail in the foreseeable future. We will concentrate on the question of whether what we have called the traditional television framework is being challenged to an extent that would amount to a "paradigm shift".

According to the European Audiovisual Observatory (2010), what we are seeing in 29 EU member and candidate countries is "growth of the number of television channels and multi-channel platforms in Europe despite the crisis". More than 245 European television channels were launched in the

course of 2009 (approximately 220 channels ceased transmission). Of the 7200 European channels, more than half are regional or local channels, 43% are national channels and 6% international. Many of these channels are thematic, with cinema (and fiction), sport and classic entertainment channels occurring most often.

The cable market is consolidating while the number of IPTV, satellite and mobile TV operators continues to increase. There are over 4000 cable operators in the 29 countries.

In line with the deployment of DTT throughout Europe, the number of companies distributing pay DTT services has risen from 14 at the end of 2008 to 20 at the end of 2009.

The number of IPTV operators increased from 68 at the end

of 2008 to 90 at the end of 2009. There has also been a growth in the number of satellite packagers available in Europe, an increase from 51 at the end of 2008 to 60 at the end of 2009.

The total number of operators of services for mobile networks (both TV services for mobile phones on 3G networks and mobile personal TV over DVB-H) has also increased, despite the fact that DVB-H platforms have only taken off in a couple of European countries. 114 television channels have been established specifically for mobile services and these are often versions of well established channels.

So much, very briefly, for the supply side in Europe. But what about the more important demand side? Part of the answer is provided by OFCOM in its research report *The International Communications Market 2008. 4. Television* (OFCOM 2008c; see also OFCOM 2009b), which draws comparisons between the UK and six large comparator countries – France, Germany, Italy, the US, Canada and Japan, and also includes data from another five countries – Poland, Spain, the Netherlands, Sweden and the Republic of Ireland.

In most countries in that study (except Japan), around half of respondents with Internet access said that TV was their first choice of media to find out about world or national news, as opposed to using the Internet, newspapers or radio. TV was the most popular first choice for entertainment across all countries surveyed, ranging from 45% of respondents in the US to 60% in France and Germany.

We might note that the Internet also serves as a platform for consuming television content. In the US, for example, 158 million Internet users watched online videos during July 2009 – the largest audience ever recorded – and streamed a record 21.4 billion videos during the month. 81% of the total U.S. Internet audience viewed online video in July, with the average online viewer watching 500 minutes of video, or 8.3 hours (Hefflinger 2009).

This is in line with the findings of a study conducted in the UK, where there is a strong interest in multi-screen TV viewing capabilities: 55 per cent of survey takers showed an interest in services that allow them to seamlessly switch the viewing of programmes between multiple devices, such as PCs and smartphones. The study also showed a growing interest in accessing TV content through mobile television devices (QuickPlay Media 2010).

Similar findings are reported by the European Media Engagement Barometer, covering the UK, Sweden, France, Germany and Spain (Motorola (2010)). Viewers now access television programming via a range of distribution channels (streaming Internet video, television on-demand and downloading video from the Internet) and want to control and customise the content experience, as well as share content between different devices. However, there is still a preference for watching live television. Sweden is the only country where respondents stated they would rather watch live/streaming Internet video (48 per cent) compared to live television (28 per cent).

Motorola (2010) speaks of the “the Internet Era of TV”. Nielsen’s (2009a: 1) “three screen report” shows, however, that while DVR and online video usage show most growth in the US, traditional TV “remains strong (...) consumers are clearly adding video platforms to their weekly schedule, rather than replacing them”. Even American teenagers, Nielsen (2009b) reports, are not abandoning TV for new media: in fact, they watch more TV than ever, up 6% over the past five years in the US.

Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu (2010) adds that many watch TV and simultaneously engage in electronic communication via a separate device. This promotes what is known as the “water cooler effect”: blogs and social networks such as Facebook and Twitter enable a conversation about the programming people are watching, encouraging them to split their time between the computer screen and big-screen TV (OFCOM, 2008c, reports that concurrent media use, or stacking, is now common: between 70%, as in Italy, and 83%, as in Japan, of consumers across countries covered by the OFCOM report, claim to access the Internet while watching TV). This helps drive up the ratings and thus prompts television stations to regard the Internet as a “friend”, rather than as an “enemy” (Stelter 2010).

Most importantly, however, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu (2010: 4-5) says in its “media predictions for 2010” that “linear’s got legs: the television and radio schedule stays supreme”. According to this prediction, in 2010 over 90% of all television and over 80% of all audio content will continue to be consumed linearly. The report states: “It may be that, in the long run, the majority of all audio and video consumed will be non-linear. But in 2010 most consumers of content are likely to remain happily beholden to the schedule, rather than resentful of what some pundits have labeled the ‘tyranny of the schedule’”. Among the many reasons for this view provided in the report is a phenomenon noted also in other publications, namely that with the number of choices available, “choosing programs one-by-one [becomes] tedious and superfluous”. Ease of use and inertia promote continued preference for linear reception. It may, says the report, “remain dominant not just in 2010 but for many years to come”. If so, then so will the dominance of the broadcaster/content provider.

Let us now look at prospects for the other main element of a putative “paradigm shift” to unfold, i.e. for passive receivers to become transformed into active “prosumers”, engaging in content creation and distribution on a scale that would end the dominance of traditional content providers. This phenomenon usually goes under the name of “user-generated content” (UGC) or “user-created content” (UCC), “consumer-generated content”, “citizen journalism”, “social media” or ‘participatory media’. Let us note immediately that this usually refers to users of the Internet (Le Borgne-Bachschmidt, et al. 2008; Wunsch-Vincent, Vickery 2007; Thurman, Neil 2008; Jakubowicz 2009) and that according to research only a relatively small minority of them (admittedly, their number goes into the millions worldwide) are prepared to play such an active role (see also Horrigan 2007).

Table 5. Different forms of UGC

Type of UGC	Description and use	Examples
Audience-generated news content	Forms of UGC used by news, such as images, experiences and 'new' stories	Breaking news stills, audio and video, case studies and story tip offs
Audience comment	Expressions of audience opinion	Contributions to online discussion boards or radio phone-ins
Collaborative content	Non-news material produced through collaborations between broadcasters and contributors	Short films, personal biographies
Interactive journalism	The collaborative creation of news content	Audiences researching and adding to news stories
Other non- news content	All other non-news material	Reviews, non-news images, recommendations

Source: Scott (2009: 17)

UGC is also discussed within the context of broadcasting. Table 5 shows the main forms of UGC, as identified by broadcasters.

Some forms of UGC go beyond a strictly controlled and limited form of content provision. One such example is a citizen journalism TV show launched by Endemol in 2007 in the Netherlands (Luft 2007). The daily half-hour programmes - called *Ik op TV* (Me on TV) – are developed in partnership with the Dutch citizen journalism service Skoepe. News videos could be uploaded onto the Skoepe.nl website, as well as via the show's site. They are then screened before being placed on the sites and selected for the presenter-led TV show.

A more ambitious form of UGC in broadcasting was Fame TV, launched in 2006 on the Sky satellite platform in the UK. It relied entirely on members of the public for its programming content. Viewers were able to upload video clips, pictures and texts via mobile phones and the Internet, being live on air within 15 minutes of the user submitting the content. Viewers were invited to send in their own music selection which would be played as the backing soundtrack to clips during broadcast. They had full control over what they saw on screen and could vote via SMS for the clips they want to view. The channel does not appear to have survived for long.

These and other examples show that UGC is still a marginal presence on traditional television and, however important or promising, is still incapable of producing a "paradigm shift".

It should be abundantly clear by now that, on the continuum between "Broadcast Plus" and "Transformation", we are still very much in the "Broadcast Plus" scenario.

Regulating Television A.C.

As shown by the debate on the European Commission's 1997 *Green Paper on convergence*, and more recently on the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD), convergence

produces major legal and regulatory headaches, with the need to extend content regulation to more and more platforms (see Tambini, Leonardi and Marsden 2008), and to apply it to unexpected areas and situations (Lewin 2010). The old "vertical" model of regulation (technology- and industry-specific regulation of telecommunications, based on the common carrier principle, on the one hand, and of broadcasting on the public trustee principle, on the other) is no longer tenable.

According to Latzer (2009), the policy and regulatory response to this challenge has taken the form of five lines of action:

1. "Integrated strategy – integration of political competences: all in sight" – precisely the integration of different strands of policy into a communications policy as the sum of telecommunications and media policies (van Cuilenburg and McQuail 2003) or what Latzer calls "mediamatics" policy;
2. "Integrated control structures – horizontal convergence regulators: everything under one roof" – creation of integrated/convergent regulatory authorities;
3. "Technology-neutral functional taxonomy – transmission and content regulation: don't lump everything together" – maintenance of separate regulatory regimes for telecommunications and content;
4. "Integrated legal frameworks and laws" – development of integrated statutes governing telecommunications, broadcasting and online communications;
5. "Alternative modes of regulation: from government to governance" – inclusion of stakeholders in the process of regulation, and especially self- and co-regulation.

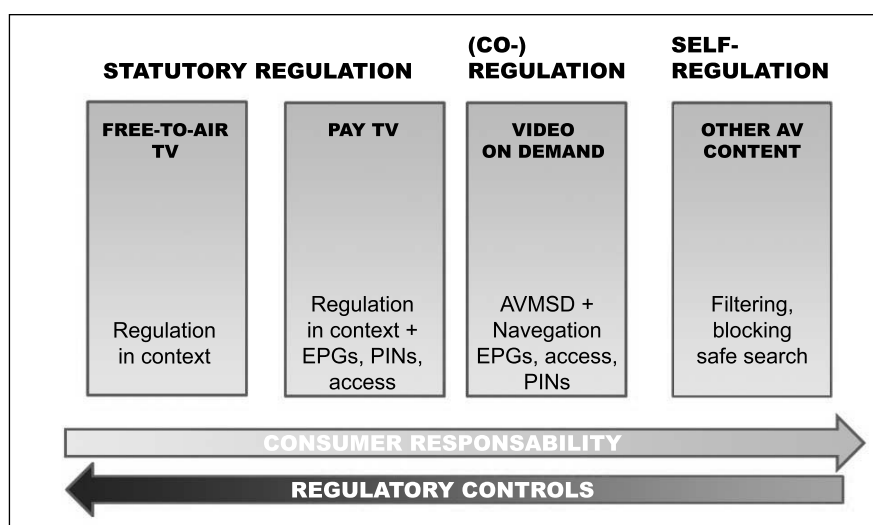
Our discussion below will touch on some of these developments. Two main challenges had to be faced in this process: substantive (in the area of policy, law and regulation) and institutional.

To begin with substantive issues, the question of which regulatory regime to apply to which services was resolved with the decision to keep telecoms and broadcasting regulatory regimes

Table 6. Old and New Models of Regulation

Old Model	New Model
Content regulation of broadcasting	Horizontal, technologically-neutral, graduated regulation of content, involving – where needed – self- and co-regulation

Source: OFCOM (2009).

Figure 2. Graduated regulation and co- and self-regulation

Source: Purvis (2008)

apart, as was made clear in the EU context by Directive 2002/21/EC on a common regulatory framework for electronic communications networks and services.

Broadcasting regulation applies different structural regulatory measures to implement the policy objective of “viewpoint diversity”, i.e. plurality of voices, and a number of behavioural regulatory measures to pursue such objectives as cultural diversity, programme diversity and standards (Working Party on Telecommunication and Information Services Policies 2004). However, given the diversity of platforms for content distribution (including, in the case of broadcasting, both television and “television-like” services) and their susceptibility (or otherwise) to regulation and supervision, classical forms of full broadcasting regulation cannot easily be applied to all content services. Nor, indeed, should they be, where so called “light-touch” regulation is more appropriate. Hence, the new model of content regulation (involving also the designation of co-regulatory bodies to operate in tandem with the regulator; see OFCOM 2009c), as shown in Table 6.

Figure 2 illustrates how this new model is applied in practice. This new regulatory model has been enshrined in the AVMSD. When the directive was being drafted, the assumption was that it would be good for 10 years, after which technolog-

ical and market changes may require a return to the drawing board for a new design of the regulatory architecture. In this regard, two remarks appear to be in order: (1) the directive can potentially become obsolete even earlier, and (2) the entire time when it is in force will be taken up by efforts to understand what it says and to find ways of implementing it. This has already been called a “mission impossible” due to the fact that “several controversial issues and unclear definitions will have to be tackled by regulatory authorities in their daily practice of supervision” (Betzel and Machet 2009).

European regulatory authorities have identified the following issues, among others, that need to be resolved, as shown in Table 7.

As can be seen, many of these issues are of a technical or administrative nature but some (e.g. numbers 1, 3, 5 and 6) go to the heart of the process of regulation and supervision.

As concerns the institutional challenges, the question of regulatory architecture appears crucial: should there be separate regulators for telecommunications and content services or integrated/convergent regulators? However, with the two fields integrating so much, the question became whether they can efficiently be regulated by separate regulators (see e.g. Palzer and

Table 7. Selected issues left unresolved by the directive

Area of regulation	Questions to be answered
Monitoring	1. How to get a grip on the potentially huge number of new services that need to be examined? 2. Which aspects of the monitoring processes can be automated, for instance by the use of search bots/spiders searching the World Wide Web for audiovisual media services? 3. What kind of methodology for monitoring is needed: only action after complaint or random checks? 4. Is there a need to outsource certain aspects of the monitoring process?
Registration/ licensing	5. Which audiovisual media services need registration and which need a license? 6. What is the best way to check the place of establishment?
Cooperation	7. In what ways should regulators provide each other with assistance? 8. In what ways should the European Commission be informed?

Source: Betzel and Machet (2009).

Hilger 2001). The British government was convinced that they could not and decided to merge the existing regulatory bodies into OFCOM (see Department of Trade and Industry and Department of Culture, Media, Sport 2000: 11).

Of course, the United States and Canada have always had “integrated/convergent regulators”: the FCC and the CRTC have always regulated broadcasting and telecommunications together. Over the years, in most cases quite recently, the number of such regulatory authorities has come to include AGCOM in Italy, the Office Fédéral de la Communication (OFCOM) in Switzerland; the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa; Regularna Agencija za komunikacije (CRA) in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the Telecommunications and Broadcasting Agency of the Republic of Slovenia; the Australian Communications and Media Authority; the Iraqi Communications and Media Commission; and the Austrian Regulatory Authority for Broadcasting and Telecommunications (RTR), working together with KommAustria. Such authorities also operate in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Brazil, India and Ghana. At one time or another, plans to create such regulators have also been announced in Nigeria, Thailand and South Korea.

The advantages of converged regulation include: the one-stop shop approach for industry that simplifies processes and reduces bureaucracy; assumptions of improved cost-benefit ratio; of efficiency and coherence of regulatory implementation; of a better approach to alignment with the EU regulatory framework; avoidance of the duplication of activities; a better ability to approach issues of market and content regulation, together, across different platforms.

The risks and concerns associated with integrated/converged regulators include:

- They may become too powerful, when they are not independent and professional;
- Such large organisations may be less transparent;

- There may be a potential conflict between the objectives and aims of telecommunications and broadcasting, and of market and content regulation; and between different regulatory cultures;

- Non-economic goals of regulation may take a back seat to promoting competition;

- Broadcasting regulation may be dominated within the structure as telecommunications regulators are generally much larger and so is the volume of regulatory tasks related to telecommunications;

- Regulation of content becomes less central compared to the regulation of access.

The reason why we have been speaking of integrated/convergent authorities is that an integrated regulator is not necessarily a convergent one. It is easy to “integrate” regulation by bringing two separate regulators under one institutional roof, allowing them to concentrate solely on telecommunications in some departments and solely on broadcasting in others. The result is not a comprehensive approach to electronic communications as a whole, but sector-based approaches to different aspects of it in different parts of the organization.

Convergent regulatory bodies, like OFCOM in the UK or AGCOM in Italy, are designed to avoid this danger. There is no internal separation in their structure or operation between telecommunications and broadcasting. They deal comprehensively with different markets, rather than separately with each of them.

The jury is still out on whether this is the best way to deal with the institutional challenge of regulating convergent communications and television A.C. In many cases, countries with strong and well-established broadcasting regulatory bodies retain them and seek to promote not their integration but closer cooperation with telecommunications regulators.

Conclusion

Though all the technological prerequisites are already available, social and cultural factors have so far prevented the dominance of “cyber-television” or “post-television”. While there has been a great deal of change in television, there is also a lot of continuity. Progress towards “transformation” is proving to be much slower than expected and may never take place fully. Much more likely is a television landscape incorporating elements from all these scenarios. What remains to be seen is the extent of each feature that typifies the different scenarios that will go into creating the real-life television and media landscape, with the proviso that these will probably change over time.

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Media ecology. Map of a theoretical niche

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Abstract

The article introduces media ecology within the context of 20th century communication theories and reflects on its potential for understanding contemporary media mutations. The first section maps out the development of the field from its very beginnings, then continues with contributions from the founding fathers (Marshall McLuhan, Neil Postman, Walter Ong), concluding with the new generation of media ecologists. The second section analyses the basic principles of media ecology. The article concludes by briefly reflecting on the scientific possibilities of media ecology to understand the current processes that affect the media ecosystem.

Key words

Media ecology, communication, literacy, orality, technology, transmedia, convergence, McLuhan, Postman, Ong.

Resum

L'article presenta l'ecologia dels mitjans (media ecology) en el context de les teories de la comunicació del segle xx i reflexiona sobre el seu potencial per comprendre les mutacions actuals del sistema de mitjans. La primera secció en determina el desenvolupament a partir dels seus pioners, continua amb les aportacions dels pares fundadors (Marshall McLuhan, Neil Postman i Walter Ong) i acaba amb la nova generació d'ecòlegs dels mitjans. La segona secció analitza els principis bàsics de l'ecologia dels mitjans. A la part final, es reflexiona breument sobre les possibilitats científiques de l'ecologia dels mitjans per comprendre els processos actuals que viu l'ecosistema de mitjans.

Paraules clau

Ecologia dels mitjans, comunicació, escriptura, oralitat, tecnologia, transmèdia, convergència, McLuhan, Postman, Ong.

Introduction¹

What is a *theory*? According to the Spanish Royal Academy's Dictionary, a theory can be – simultaneously – speculative knowledge independent of all application, a series of laws that are related to an order or phenomenon, a hypothesis whose consequences are applied to a science (or an important part of it) and, for the Ancient Greeks, a religious process. As we can see, a theory covers anything from scientific explanations (of empiric or speculative origins, or so-called *scientific theories*) to religious practices. Etymologically, *theory* derives from the Greek for *observe* and is related to the action of *looking* or *seeing*. It comes from *theoros* (spectator), comprising both *thea* (a view) and *horar* (to see). In this article, I wish to re-examine the idea of *theory*, not so much related to seeing but closer to hearing: theory understood as a conversational field where different but more or less competent individuals talk about a specific theme. In other words, theories understood as something performed. If, as Austin (1982) said, we can make things with words, then scientists *make theories*. Within this context, analysing conversations is essential to understanding a scientific domain.²

Where are theories talked about? Universities, books and sci-

entific journals, research centres and conferences all go to make up organisational settings where scientific discourse is produced, circulated and interpreted. Scientists are not limited to exchanging words: they also discuss hypotheses; they argue; they arrive at agreements – the so-called *scientific consensus* – and make compromises. From this perspective, a scientific field is more than a space where conflicts appear and different players make their symbolic stakes (Bourdieu 1999): it is also a network of conversations, a fabric of linguistic compromises – in the sense of the theory of speaking acts (Searle 1990; Austin 1982) – where these players define what kind of interaction they wish to hold with each other, in which class of conversation they are interested in taking part and how they will carry out these conversations. If we want to understand the activity of a scientific field, we need to look at their discussions, identify the speakers and listeners that go to make up the network of conversations and understand the acts of speaking and listening that take place inside this part of the semiosphere (Lotman 1996).

Communication theories constitute a discursive field characterised by its heterogeneity. According to R.T. Craig:

“The various traditions of communication theory each offer distinct ways of conceptualizing and discussing communi-

cation problems and practices. These ways derive from and appeal to certain commonplace beliefs about communication while problematizing other beliefs. It is in the dialogue among these traditions that communication theory can fully engage with the ongoing practical discourse (or metadiscourse) about communication in society" (1999, 120).

It could also be said that communication theories have been nothing more than a long conversation aimed at clarifying the meaning of the word *communication* (Scolari 2008).

Communication theories have been classified in different ways, based on their original discipline (sociology, psychology, anthropology, etc.); their explanatory system (cognitive, systemic, etc.); their organisational level (interpersonal, group, institutional, mass, etc.); their epistemological premise (empirical, critical, etc.) or their implicit conception of communicational practice (rhetoric, semiotic, phenomenological, etc.) (Craig 1999). In addition to considering theories as conversation, this article also proposes a new classification: *generalist* theories and *specialised* theories.

Generalist theories propose building integrating or global tables for all the processes that affect the communication world. Although a theory *that explains everything* is unimaginable, it is obvious that some theoretical constructions tend towards integration and generate an explanatory model of greater scope. Amongst the generalist theories, the Political Economy of Communication and Culture covers communication production, distribution and consumption processes without ignoring an analysis of cultural goods (Mosco 2009; Golding and Murdock 1997). In its own way and time, Shannon and Weaver's Information Theory also proposed a very simple explanatory generalist model, while including all communication process elements (transmitter, channel, message, receiver, etc.).

Specialised theories focus on one particular aspect or process of communication and leave others outside their explanatory model. Theories of limited effects, of news-making, agenda-setting or semiotic-textual models are a type of theoretical construction that attempts to explain a smaller area of the communication universe. On the other hand, scientific discourses on communication have always shown a tendency towards speaking about the mediums in an isolated way: studying "television", "radio", "cinema", etc. Semiotics have also followed the same route; this is why a "semiotics of television", a "semiotics of cinema", etc. exists.³

If we base ourselves on this opposition between generalist and specialised theories, it will not take us long to find media ecology amongst the former: this is an expanded theory that covers, depending on the theory-statesperson of choice, almost all aspects of communication processes, from relationships between the media and the economy to the perceptive and cognitive transformations undergone by individuals after being exposed to communication technologies. On the other hand, media ecology does not focus on one medium in particular – it

is a theory that covers all media in all aspects. Nor is it limited in time: its reflection starts with the transition from orality to literacy and stretches into our agitated days of digital life.

1. Media ecology: McLuhan and his predecessors

Generally, when one talks of the "invisible university" one is thinking of the group organised around George Bateson, Paul Watzlawick, Ray Birdwhistell and Edward Hall in the 1970s. However, media ecology also suffered a period of academic ostracism, which condemned it to invisibility for some years. The famous monograph

Ferment in the Field in the *Journal of Communication* (1983) about the state of the sector ignored it completely, and something similar happened a decade later in *The Future of the Field I* and *II* (1993). Corseted between empirical-administrative research and critical approaches, there was somewhat of a delay in media ecology finding its place under the academic spotlight. However, little by little, media ecologists were gaining territory and nowadays have their own organisation (the *Media Ecology Association*), a scientific publication (*Explorations in Media Ecology*) and a space in organisations such as the *International Communication Association*. In this section, we will take a quick look back over the history of this trend of communicational thinking.

The consolidation of an ecological vision for media and communication ran parallel to the diffusion of ecologist ideas from the 1960s. Although the concept of media ecology was officially introduced by Neil Postman in a talk for the National Council of Teachers of English in 1968, Postman himself recognized that Marshall McLuhan had used it at the beginning of that decade, when the Canadian's brilliance was at its brightest (*The Gutenberg Galaxy* is from 1962 and *Understanding Media* from 1964). However, other researchers prefer to award the distinction of semantic coining to Postman (Lum 2006, 9). Whatever the case, during his talk, Postman defined media ecology as "the study of media as environments". It can be said that Postman brought about the shift from metaphor to theory or, better, the journey from a purely metaphoric use of the term media ecology to the start of the delimitation of a specific scientific field. Postman fought hard for the new concept: in 1971 he created the first degree in media ecology at New York University, thereby providing media ecology with its first step towards academic institutionalisation.

Beyond the semantic origin of media ecology, it's clear that this conception, which aims to integrate different components and processes from the techno-social-communicational sphere, did not arise from spontaneous generation nor from a stroke of genius from McLuhan or Postman. As Borges maintained about Kafka and his predecessors (how many writers were unwittingly Kafkaesque before Kafka was born?), we can also identify a series of researchers who were 'McLuhanesque' before McLuhan himself.

1.1. The predecessors

All texts dedicated to media ecology almost unanimously recognise the existence of a first generation of predecessors. By the beginning of the 1970s, the mathematician Harold William Kuhns (not to be confused with the epistemologist Thomas Kuhn) had already defended the legacies of Lewis Mumford, Jacques Ellul, Siegfried Giedion, Norbert Wiener, Harold Innis, Marshall McLuhan and Richard Buckminster Fuller in *The Post-Industrial Prophets: Interpretations of Technology* (1971). This list could be completed with other predecessors such as Eric Havelock. We will continue by summarising some of the most noteworthy contributions.

- **Lewis Mumford (1895-1990):** Media ecologists do not hesitate to consider Lewis Mumford's *Technics and Civilization* (1934) as the great founding work in the field. Throughout his life, Mumford developed an investigative, inspirational, ecological programme based on the following points: urbanisation / mass communication / technology. *Technics and Civilization* provided an integrated picture of humanity's technological evolution, beginning with the *eotechnical* phase (craft traditions), continuing with the *paleotechnical* (industrial society based on steam machines) and the *neotechnical* (society based on electricity). Mumford suggested a parallelism between the organic and the technical, making him a pioneer in proposing an ecological vision of technological culture based on the concepts of life, survival and reproduction. This supersedes mechanical focuses based on concepts such as order, control, efficiency and power. But Mumford's *technorganic* idea was nothing if not ingenuous, especially since, after the Second World War, he questioned the growing distance between the biological and the technological due to savage mechanization and industrialization processes (Strate and Lum 2006).

- **Jacques Ellul (1912-1994):** Better known for his sociological contributions than for his work on communications, Jacques Ellul tried to combine Marxism and Christianity in the same theoretical vessel. His preoccupation with dehumanisation places him amongst the founding fathers of media ecology. Two works go to make up key references for media ecology researchers: *La technique ou l'enjeu du siècle* (1954) and *Propagandes* (1962). Rather than being an anti-technological luddite, Ellul questioned replacing lifelong moral values with technical ones; with regard to propaganda, he was worried by the persuasive power of images against the more traditional forms of communication based on words and debate. It could be said that Ellul preferred *the power of the word over the power of the image*, as the latter was charged with negative connotations. Despite some discrepancies – Ellul considered that McLuhan insisted too much on the media while leaving social aspects to one side, while McLuhan and other researchers such as Walter Ong did not promote image over word but orality over writing – Ellul's eclectic and interdisciplinary

work became an essential reference for media ecologists (Kluver 2006; Christians 2006).

- **Harold Innis (1894-1952):** Together with Marshall McLuhan, Harold Innis is considered the other great representative of the Toronto School. Some well-known media ecology researchers such as Neil Postman or James Carey readily consider Innis the true revolutionary that gave the discipline its definitive form. Trained in political economics – his first works are dedicated to an analysis of the railway system (*A History of the Canadian Pacific Railroad*, 1923) and the fur trade (*The Fur Trade in Canada*, 1930) – as time passed, he gradually shifted his integrating, systemic gaze towards the field of communication (*Empire and Communications*, 1950; *The Bias of Communication*, 1951). The importance of Innis' contribution to media ecology is undeniable: the Canadian was the first to put communication processes at the centre of history. In other words, Innis moved from analysing the economy of the railways and fur trade to concentrating on technologies that allowed the flow of information and knowledge. His perspective helped to link, for example, the development of the telegraph with the press in the 19th century and the growing demand for new information, an analysis that McLuhan brought to its utmost consequences. In *Empire and Communications*, Innis relates the stories of Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Rome and the Middle Ages from the viewpoint of their communication systems, covering the development from clay tablets and papyrus to the printed book.

Eclipsed by the international fame of fellow Canadian Marshall McLuhan, Harold Innis's fundamental consideration gradually acquired warranted recognition within and outside the confines of media ecology. One could say that their approaches were complementary to a certain extent: while Innis's vision linked communication technology to social and economic organisation, McLuhan's connected the media with sensory organisation and individual thought (Heyer 2006).

- **Eric Havelock (1903-1988):** The link between Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan would not be complete without mentioning the work of Eric Havelock, a British researcher and expert in classical culture who also often visited the University of Toronto between 1927 and 1947. In every way, Havelock should be considered the leading expert in the transition from orality to literacy in Greek society; his book on the transformations of Greek culture since the consolidation of literacy (*Preface to Plato*, 1963) profoundly influenced Harold Innis, Marshall McLuhan and Walter Ong.

1.2. The Founding Fathers

The boundary between predecessors and founding fathers is made clear by the explicit application of ecological metaphor to the media. However, there are researchers who, for a series of chronological, scientific and discursive reasons, are located at a frontier zone between the predecessors and founding fathers.

For example, Walter Ong – a key player in media ecology for having developed, amongst other things, the concept of *secondary orality* – did not speak directly about “ecology” in his texts about the contrasts between orality and literacy. So why not place him among the predecessors? For two reasons. First, because although he had published some works of great relevance in the 1960s, the most noticeable contribution by Walter Ong was *Orality and Literacy* in 1982. On the other hand, his doctoral thesis, dedicated to the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, was supervised at St. Louis University by a young, studious Canadian called Marshall McLuhan in the 1940s.

It's obviously not easy to differentiate or distinguish between academic generations: rather than a lineal flow of scientific debates, they go to make up a semiotic network of continuous and often simultaneous appropriations, deviations and reinterpretations. Next we will consider the founding fathers of media ecology.

- **Marshall McLuhan (1911-1980):** What can be said about Marshall McLuhan that has not already been said? McLuhan had a double effect on media ecology: on one hand he presented an ecological viewpoint of contemporary media processes both inside and outside the scientific arena; on the other hand, his fame was also counterproductive as it eclipsed other media researchers (not only in media ecology) who worked in silence and rejected the Canadian's effervescent declarations. Within the context of 1960s mass culture McLuhan was, undoubtedly, the paradigm of media researchers and enjoyed media fame similar to other popular icons such as Andy Warhol or Bob Dylan. This gained him no small number of enemies in academia. Such was the envy of some University of Toronto colleagues that McLuhan asked his students not to cite him in theses and dissertations to avoid reprisals (Morrison 2006, 169).

As has already been mentioned, the concept of media ecology was born out of a conversation with his colleagues (Morrison 2006). However, from a more general perspective we should also acknowledge the fact that it was McLuhan who updated and integrated within one approach the ideas of some of his predecessors such as Lewis Mumford, Sigfried Giedion, Harold Innis and Eric Havelock. McLuhan never tired of insisting that the media together form a sensory atmosphere or environment (a *medium*) in which we all move; like a fish in water, we do not realise their existence until we stop perceiving them for some reason. His ecology is totally biased towards the perceptions of subjects: we humans model communication instruments but they, at the same time, remodel us.

Marshall McLuhan's other noticeable trait concerned his explosive forms of expression: his writing in mosaics, his ability to create unforgettable slogans and concepts – such as *the medium is the message* or *global village* – and the permanent inter-textual jump between the media, the literary and the technological make him an indispensable figure in the study of twentieth-century mass communication. Some of his works have become essential references, even for those who do not

share his view, from *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (1962) to *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (1964), *The Medium is the Message: An Inventory of Effects* (1967, with Quentin Fiore) and *Laws of Media: The New Science* (1988, with Eric McLuhan).

At the beginning of the 1990s, when his detractors had forgotten about him, the appearance of the World Wide Web and the global consolidation of television channels such as MTV and CNN brought about a revival of Marshall McLuhan's ideas, a process which culminated in his canonisation by *Wired* magazine (which voted him *Patron Saint* in its first edition in 1993). From then on McLuhan's works have initiated a process of re-appropriation in digital format, which we will discuss in the third section of this article.

- **Neil Postman (1931-2003):** Although he is a well-known academic heavyweight in the Anglo-Saxon academic world, Neil Postman never had the media presence achieved by Marshall McLuhan. As I have already mentioned, McLuhan's overexposure in some ways eclipsed researchers of undoubted importance such as Postman himself.

Coming from an education background (more specifically, English language teaching), Neil Postman was one of the great thinkers in the media from 1970 to 2000. In such works as *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business* (1985), *Technopoly: the Surrender of Culture to Technology* (1992) or *The End of Education: Redefining the Value of School* (1995) Postman developed an ecological, critical and ethical view of the American media system (Gencarelli, 2006). According to Postman, technological change was not additive but ecological, and he explained this by using the following example: if we leave a drop of red ink in a glass of water it will dissolve into the liquid, colouring each of the molecules. That is what Postman understands by *ecological change*. The arrival of a new medium is not limited to just being added to what already exists: it changes everything. In 1500, after the invention of the printing press, there was not an 'Old Europe' with a press: there was a different Europe. After the arrival of television, the United States was not the USA plus television. The new medium gave a new colour to each political campaign, home, school, church, industry, etc., of the country (Postman 1998).

The figure of Postman is fundamental to media ecology, not only for his theoretical ideas but also for having created, in 1971, the first degree course in media ecology at the Steinhardt School of Education (New York University). Postman trained, inspired and worked with distinguished researchers such as Paul Levinson, Joshua Meyrowitz, Jay Rosen, Lance Strate and Dennis Smith.

- **Walter Ong (1912 – 2003):** As we have already indicated, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (1982) is a key reference in media ecology. Together with Eric Havelock, the Jesuit priest Walter Ong is a great expert on the

transition from orality to literacy; his half a century of research analysed this transition in its different dimensions: literary, theoretical, social, cultural, historical and even biblical. Some of his works before *Orality and Literacy* included *The Presence of the Word* (1967), *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology* (1971) and *Interfaces of the Word* (1977) (Soukup 2005).

The generation of media ecology's founding fathers is made up of many researchers and obviously the list does not end with Marshall McLuhan, Neil Postman and Walter Ong. A more detailed study than the present article would, for example, include **Edmund Snow Carpenter (1922-)**, co-editor, together with McLuhan, of the magazine *Explorations*, whose best articles were published as a collection in *Explorations in Communications* (1960), or **James W. Carey (1934-2006)**, a researcher who can be considered the bridge between North American media ecology and British Cultural Studies. Carey rejected the dominance of quantitative methods but at the same time distanced himself (albeit recognising the value of his contributions) from the sometimes speculative ideas of Marshall McLuhan (Wasser 2006; Vannini et al 2009).

1.3. The new generation

In June 2000, the first *Media Ecology Association (MEA)* convention took place at Fordham University (New York) and, two years later, the first volume of *Explorations in Media Ecology* appeared – the Association's scientific publication. The conventions continued: the last one occurred in St. Louis (Missouri) in 2009 and the 2010 event will be hosted by the University of Maine. Behind this feverish institutional activity is a new generation of researchers trained, when they were young, by the founding fathers McLuhan, Neil Postman and Walter Ong.

Among the most prominent exponents of the new generation is **Lance Strate**, professor of Communication and Media Studies at New York's Fordham University. Strate was the first president of MEA and one of its most active militants. His field of research covers many areas, from epistemology and the historic roots of media ecology to the impact of new information technologies and popular forms of mass communication.

Another distinguished member of the new generation is **Joshua Meyrowitz**. His book *No Sense of Place: The Impact of Electronic Media on Social Behaviour* (1985) is still an invaluable reference to reflect on mass media and communications. Sadly never translated into Spanish or Catalan, *No Sense of Place* is a text that has not lost its validity in spite of the transformations media ecology has undergone since the World Wide Web.

While Strate and Meyrowitz come from Neil Postman's American circle, **Robert Logan** studied, in Toronto, the effects of literacy alongside Marshall McLuhan at the end of the 1970s. The fruit of that investigation was *The Alphabet Effect* (1986), a text that was followed by several other works in the spirit of McLuhan, such as *The Sixth Language: Learning a*

Living in the Internet Age (2000) and *The Extended Mind: The Emergence of Language, the Human Mind and Culture* (2007). These days Logan is one of the most faithful interpreters of this multifaceted, across the board view that characterised Marshall McLuhan's intellectual production.

Finally, another fundamental reference in post-McLuhan studies is **Derrick de Kerkhove**, Director of the McLuhan Program in Culture & Technology at the University of Toronto since 1983 and recognised moderniser of the Canadian's work. We will not dig deeper into Derrick de Kerkhove's contributions here, although he is perhaps the best known media ecologist in Latin America out of all the new-generation researchers (de Kerkhove 1999a, 1999b), because he did not play an active role in the academic institutionalisation of media ecology (although from an epistemological perspective his work fits perfectly within this theoretical field).

This brief reference to the third generation is incomplete and unjust since it does not take into account many researchers who participated in the academic community built around the *Media Ecology Association*. On the other hand, a fourth generation of young researchers will not delay in achieving academic visibility and continue exploring the possible paths opened up by media ecology.

2. Media ecology: an intertextual mosaic

In this section we will provide a brief synthesis of the fundamental concepts and postulates of media ecology. Following a methodology inspired by McLuhan, we will build this section from a mosaic of ideas, phrases and expression from the principal exponents of media ecology:

- "Media ecology is the study of media as environments" (Postman, *The Reformed English Curriculum*, 1970).
- "Plato was thinking of writing as an external, alien technology, as many people today think of the computer" (Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 1982).
- "One such perspective, or emerging metadiscipline, is media ecology" (Nystrom, *Towards a Science of Media Ecology*, 1973).
- "We put the word "media" in the front of the word "ecology" to suggest that we were not simply interested in media, but in the ways in which the interaction between media and human beings give a culture its character and, one might say, help a culture to maintain symbolic balance" (Postman, *The Humanism of Media Ecology*, 2000).
- "Any technology tends to create a new human environment. Script and papyrus created the social environment we think of in connection with the empires of the ancient world (...) Printing from movable types created a quite unexpected new environment: it created the public" (McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, 1962).
- "The surge of modern science undoubtedly depended, to a

great extent, on the joint effect of the technique of the Indo-Arab system of numeration and the technique of the Greek alphabet, multiplied by the introduction of the printing press" (Havelock, *Origins of Western Literacy*, 1976).

- "Technologies are not mere exterior aids, but also interior transformations of consciousness, and never more than when they affect the word" (Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 1982).

- "The medium is the message" (McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 1964)

- "(An environment) structures what we can see and say and, therefore, do. It assigns roles to us and insists on our playing them. It specifies what we are permitted to do and what we are not. Sometimes, as in the case of a courtroom, or classroom, or business office, the specifications are explicit and formal. In the case of media environments (e.g., books, radio, film, television, etc.), the specifications are more often implicit and informal, half concealed by our assumption that what we are dealing with is not an environment but merely a machine. Media ecology tries to make these specifications explicit" (Postman, *The Reformed English Curriculum*, 1970).

- "One thing we can never see is the element in which we move" (McLuhan, *The Marfleet Lectures*, 1967).

- "Every technology has a philosophy which is given expression in how technology makes people use their minds, in what it makes us do with our bodies, in how it codifies the world, in which our senses it amplifies, in which of our emotional and intellectual tendencies it disregards" (Postman, *Five Things We Need to Know About Technological Change*, 1998).

- "All technological change is a trade-off ... Technology giveth and technology taketh away. This means that for every advantage a new technology offers, there is always a corresponding disadvantage ... Culture always pays a price for technology" (Postman, *Five Things We Need to Know About Technological Change*, 1998).

- "As a general rule, textualists identify writing with printing and rarely – or never – even dare to take a look at electronic communication" (Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 1982).

- "Whether there ever will be TV in every classroom is a small matter: the revolution has already taken place at home. Television has changed our sense-lives and our mental processes" (McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 1964).

- "The media tend to become mythic (...) common tendency to think of our technological creations as if they were God-given, as if they were a part of the natural order of things." (Postman, *Five Things We Need to Know About Technological Change*, 1998).

- "Electronic technology has brought us into the age of 'secondary orality'. This new orality has striking similarities with the old in this participatory mystique, its foresting of a communal sense, its concentration on the present moment and even its use of formulas" (Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 1982).

- "No medium has its meaning or existence alone, but only in constant interplay with other media" (McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 1964).

- "Media ecology is the study of media environments: the idea that technology and techniques, modes of information and codes of communication play a leading role in human affairs. Media ecology is the Toronto School and the New York School. It is technological determinism, hard and soft, and technological evolution. It is media logic, medium theory, mediology. It is McLuhan's studies, orality-literacy studies, American cultural studies. It is grammar and rhetoric, semiotics and systems theory, the history and the philosophy of technology. It is the postindustrial and the postmodern, the preliterate and prehistoric" (Strate, *Understanding MEA*, 1999).

- "Media ecology is very much in its infancy. Media ecologists know, generally, what it is they are interested in – the interactions of communication media, technology, technique and processes with human feeling, thought, value and behavior – and they know, too, the kind of questions about those interactions they are concerned to ask. But media ecologists do not, as yet, have a coherent framework in which to organize their subject matter or their questions. Media ecology is, in short, a preparadigmatic science" (Nystrom, *Towards a Science of Media Ecology*, 1973).

- "Technologies are artificial, but – paradox again – artificiality is natural to human beings" (Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 1982).

- "Media ecology looks into the matter of how media of communication affect human perception, understanding, feeling and values; and how our interaction with media facilitates or impedes our chances of survival. The word 'ecology' implies the study of environments: their structure, content and impact on people. An environment is, after all, a complex message system which imposes certain ways of thinking, feeling and behaving." (Postman, *The Reformed English Curriculum*, 1970).

- "Today, the ordinary child lives in an electronic environment. He lives in a world of information overload" (McLuhan, *Cybernetics and Human Culture*, 1964).

"Media ecology tries to find out what roles media force us to play, how media structure what we are seeing, why media make us feel and act as we do" (Postman, *The Reformed English Curriculum*, 1970).

In brief, what do media ecologists talk about? The following diagram – composed from a series of classic articles on media ecology written by Marshall McLuhan, Neil Postman, Walter Ong and other representatives of the new generation – serves to visualise the major themes of theoretical conversation for this field of communication knowledge.

Media ecology can be synthesised into one basic idea: technologies (in this case communication technologies, from writing to digital media) generate environments that affect those who use them. Some ecologists such as Neil Postman developed a moral interpretation of the new forms of communication, for example criticising the advance of television over the practices of writing, while others such as Marshall McLuhan

tion. In a world marked by profound changes in the ways people produce, distribute and consume knowledge, the comparison with past processes such as the discovery of writing or the invention of the press has much to offer. Some cyber-culture researchers readily compare our society's current techno-cultural transformation with the discovery of the printed press in the fifteenth century (Piscitelli 2005). Within this context, the works of Eric Havelock, Marshall McLuhan, Walter Ong and other media ecologists become compulsory reading for researchers interested in the new forms assumed by digital interactive communication.

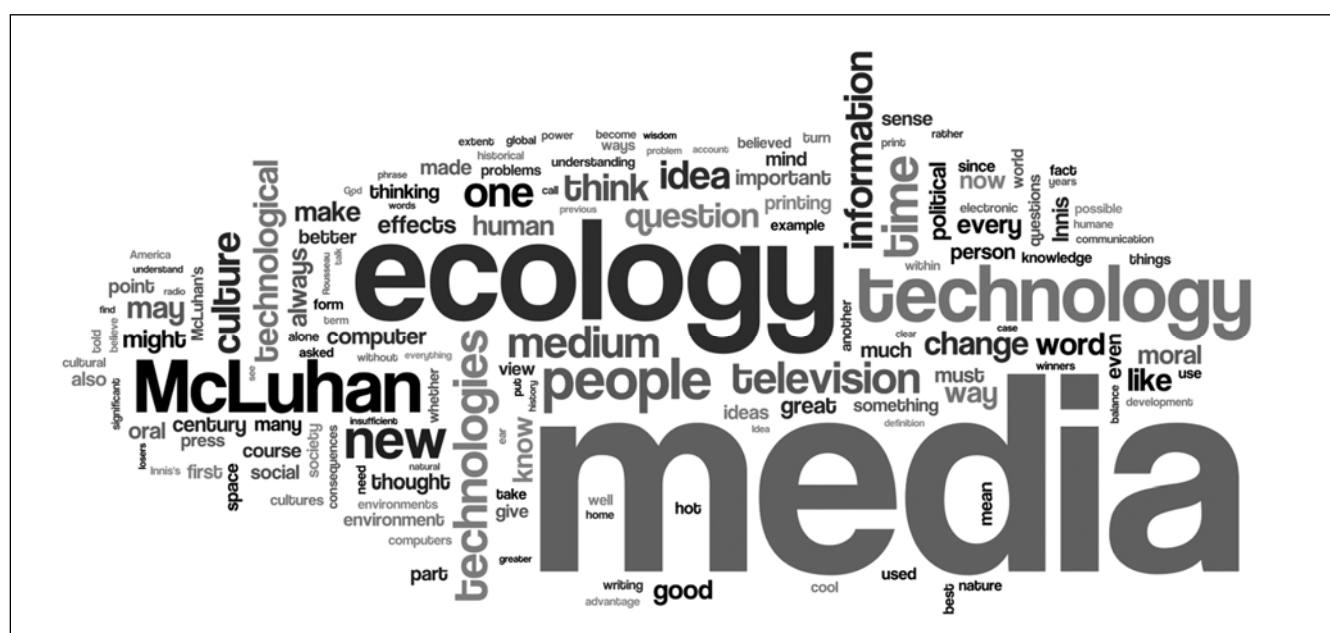
With Marshall McLuhan something extraordinary happens: you only need to take any one of his texts and replace the word “television” with “World Wide Web”. The results are surprising. McLuhan spoke in the 1960s about the transition of the written word to “electronic communication” (or television) but it’s as if he were describing the digitalisation processes that occurred thirty years later. A re-reading of McLuhan in the digital age has generated works of great value such as *Digital McLuhan: A Guide to the Information Millennium* (Levinson 2001) or *Understanding New Media* (Logan, in progress).

In a scenario marked by the consolidation of global information networks, convergence processes and the explosion of new media and communication platforms, the appearance of trans-media narratives and the eruption of a paradigm of many-to-many communication, breaking the traditional model of broadcasting, media ecology becomes an almost essential reference for understanding these processes. It proposes themes, concepts and questions that enrich scientific conversations about interactive digital communication. Re-reading McLuhan with-

In recent years, media ecology researchers demonstrated a particular interest in new and interactive multimedia forms of communication. At a 1995 conference Neil Postman had already identified the *infocration* (Cornella 2000) prevalent in a digitalised society: “people don't know what to do with information. They don't have an organising principle, what I would call a transcendent narrative.” Humanist till the end, Postman argued that “the guys from MIT” (2004, 6) did not actually have the answer to this information explosion. His reflections on the crisis facing academia and the need to adapt itself to new times are as relevant now as they were when he wrote them nearly three decades ago.

On the other hand, texts written by predecessors and founding fathers have undergone a *sub specie* digital reinterpretation.

Graphic 1. Themes of theoretical conversation about media ecology



Source: In-house.

out the academic prejudices that isolated him from some colleagues in the 1960s, rediscovering Postman's analysis of education and communication in the midst of a crisis in schooling, or going back to the astute reflections of Ong or Havelock on the transition from orality to literacy can offer us new key interpretations for the understanding of the shape being adopted by the media ecosystem in the 21st century.

Notes

- 1 The first part of the Introduction is based on Scolari (2009, 2008).
- 2 A brilliant semiotic reflection on conversations between scientists (and between scientists and the rest of society) can be found in Verón (1999).
- 3 Some indispensable bibliographic references in the field of communication theories: Rodrigo and Estrada, 2009; Wolf, 1987, 1994; Moragas, 1981.

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Creative practices and participation in new media

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Abstract

The digitalisation of audiovisual technologies, along with the popularisation of Internet use and the spread of broadband and mobile devices, have made a revolution in cultural production possible and altered the "circuit of culture" established in a mass communication system in which production and consumption roles were clearly defined and the professional regulation and distribution of media outlets were thoroughly differentiated from domestic and amateur production.

The objective of this article is to contribute to the current discussion on media practices, especially as regards audiovisual content production and consumption by private individuals within the context of the so-called "new media". We specifically wish to examine the way in which cultural creation practices by private individuals enter the circuit of culture, the implications of considering a productive audience or public and how current practices linked to digital information and communication technologies (characterised by self-creation, remixing, sharing and dissemination on the internet) are reshaping the role of the media and the role of the cultural creator itself.

Key words

New media, digital culture, media practices, cultural production, agency.

Resum

La digitalització de les tecnologies audiovisuals, conjuntament amb la popularització d'internet, l'extensió de la banda ampla i de la telefonia mòbil ha suposat una revolució en la producció cultural, alterant el "circuit de la cultura" establert dins d'un sistema de comunicació de masses on els papers de producció i consum cultural estaven delimitats clarament i on la producció professional disposava d'uns circuits de regulació i distribució ben diferenciats de la producció domèstica i amateur.

L'objectiu d'aquest article és contribuir al debat actual sobre pràctiques mediàtiques, en especial pel que fa a la producció de continguts audiovisuals per part de la gent i el seu consum en el context dels anomenats "nous mitjans". Concretament, volem preguntar-nos com les pràctiques de creació cultural per part de la gent entren en el circuit cultural, quines són les implicacions d'una audiència o públic productiu, i com les pràctiques actuals vinculades a les tecnologies digitals —caracteritzades per l'autocreació, remescla, intercanvi i difusió a internet— redefeixen el paper dels mitjans de comunicació i el mateix rol de creador cultural.

Paraules clau

Nous mitjans, cultura digital, pràctiques mediàtiques, producció cultural, participació.

The context of "new media"

If any one particular practice characterises the new popular uses of digital technologies, it is the production and exchange of content on the internet. The development and falling costs of audiovisual digital technologies, in conjunction with the spread of the internet and simplification of its usability, are encouraging many people to produce their own creations (texts, pictures and videos) and share them on the internet in

many different ways, while the products of culture industries, which people are creatively remixing and reusing (often coming into conflict with current intellectual property laws and regulations) are being appropriated on a massive scale. These production practices are also known as "user-generated content", especially in the field of audiovisual production.

It's not hard to see how far the creation of audiovisual content has gone in diversifying and intersecting in different platforms and languages at the same time and how the emergence

of new individual and collective social agents with access to production and dissemination tools are generating new production and exchange patterns that pose a challenge to understanding today's production and consumption of cultural products and redefining the complex relationships between the media, industries and audiences.

Since its inception, the internet has been considered a "new media" that has made changes not only in how people communicate with each other but also within the realm of cultural production by defining a new media environment, together with other information and communication technologies and products. This new environment includes a diverse array of digital objects and technologies that range not only from multimedia products and video games to internet social networks (especially sharing sites such as Flickr, YouTube, Vimeo and MySpace, etc..) but also from digital cameras, mobile phones and podcasts to videogame consoles, which are used interchangeably as a medium, game and tool - new means of social communication, production, distribution and consumption that are within reach of many people. Nonetheless, speaking of "new media" as opposed to "traditional media" (newspapers, radio, television) or ascribing them to "new" technology or "new" formats is problematic. Lievrouw and Livingstone warn us of the limitations of this term, often used as a catchall to refer to certain products from the technology and culture industry, such as multimedia, video games or even e-commerce (Lievrouw and Livingstone 2002, 1). Authors such as Peter Lunenfeld (1999) and Lev Manovich (2001) consider that "new media" cannot be defined solely on the basis of digital technology.¹ It is hard to find an alternative term in this controversy to indicate the ICT-related processes that are transforming the circuit of culture but are much more than a replacement technology and that cannot always be understood in opposition to the "old" media.

In this paper, we choose to speak of "new media"² to refer to a "new" social context of participation, distribution and consumption of textual and audiovisual products based on the concept of the "media landscape" (Appadurai 1998). Furthermore, by using the term "the media" we propose to overcome the unambiguous identification of "medium" with technology, adding to it all the related practices and objects produced. Thus, we understand "the media" as both a series of technologies (productive, for consumption, distribution and exchange), as well as the cultural practices, objects and agents related to the use of these technologies. And we understand new media to be the "new media context" that has arisen from the interrelationships and intersections between the different media ("old" and "new") and different social players.

New media practices collide or mingle with the system defined by the media and culture industries in such a way that, within the unstable new media context, emerging cultural practices and forms interact with the media and established practices, come into conflict complementarily or in symbiosis and reinvent each other. In this volatile and innovative media environment, we must rethink what we mean by cultural produc-

tion and consumption, since not only must we explain how audiences "receive" cultural products but also how these products are transformed, newly recreated and sent into circulation in a way that might be called "playful", since both self-production as well as the mixtures and recreations often have an unmistakably entertaining sense and playful side. One might even say that this is one of their features, together with interactivity, horizontality and participation.³

The possibilities for horizontal participation and interaction that the new media landscape has opened up has made many researchers believe in the emergence of a new mass communication model based on its democratising potential. Obviously, we must note the horizontality of new interactive media, specifically the internet, since computer-mediated communication and the internet's conceptualisation as a public space is relative, especially when websites' visibility is largely organised on the basis of search engine criteria and other hierarchical devices and virtually all the major sites of mass interaction and attraction on the internet are in private hands. However, this is not inconsistent with the assertion that relationships are changing among producers, distributors, regulators and consumers of audiovisual content and that the new configuration is opening up new paths of user empowerment.

The literature in the field contains several theoretical proposals for defining this new mass communication model that explain the empowerment of "audiences" and the current transformations in the relationships between producers and consumers. For example, Henry Jenkins (2004 and 2006) proposes to understand and describe this new context in terms of cultural convergence and the emergence of a participatory culture. Jenkins distances himself from the idea that this is merely a technological change and also from understanding this new media context as convergence of the different media into one single mode of production or consumption. Instead, he sees it as tension between two contrasting yet interrelated trends: the confluence of two modes of cultural production based on different technologies and practices: "Convergence is both a top-down corporate-driven process and a bottom-up consumer driven process...Consumers are learning how to use different media technologies to be able to bring the flow of media more fully under their control and interact with other users. Consumers are fighting for the right to participate more fully in their culture" (Jenkins 2004: 37). From this perspective, we regard today's media context as the cultural crossroads of two cultural logics that converge on the internet. The first involves commercial concentration and deliberately intertextual product diversification. The second involves the appropriation, modification and re-formulation of these products, in addition to self-production by users who openly distribute their content and create social and sharing networks.

To P. D. Marshall, culture industries are also diversifying by offering models of cultural products in different formats (film, television, DVD, the internet, video games, e-books) in order to retain the audience, spectator or player within a controlled sys-

tem of entertainment options, even while they continue to develop different strategies for incorporating user production into the corporate universe. This intertextual matrix is made up of complex links of intersecting cultural forms that can be considered the industrial response to consumers' growing power (Marshall 2002, 69).

In any case, it seems that this "new" consumer power is linked to its growing production capacity (in the use of digital technologies) and the new distribution channels and peer relations offered by the internet. And it seems that consumers are taking that initiative as part of their entertainment. i.e., they devote part of their spare time to producing, exchanging and sharing audiovisual products, among others, in such a way that consumer culture is increasingly including a productive component. Thus, the current model of cultural consumption clearly cannot be understood solely in terms of reception but also in terms of production and the pleasure that comes from being involved in these creative practices.

Where are the cultural producers?

The audiences' productive relationship with the media breaks the causal, linear and highly regulated conception that goes from the producer to the consumer after passing through the distributor. Within the new media context, we cannot characterise the recipient of cultural products as simply the "audience", "spectator", "public" or "TV viewer". Just as we believe that the processes of receiving a television product or film are not mere passive acts but rather ones in which the observer actively participates, the act of viewing or interpreting an audiovisual text no longer satisfactorily describes what people are doing with the media.

Media theory has led to several different approaches to the study of the relations between producers and audiences; these usually separate political economics from studies on a work's reception. On the one hand is the analysis of market and cultural policies and, on the other, the analysis of the meaning an "audience" gives to a work, i.e. how it interprets a text. Both from the perspective of the cultural economy, as well as an analysis of a work's meaning, the consumer or spectator is seen as a "receptive" subject, a consumer of (cultural) goods or services or a recipient who might have a larger or smaller degree of freedom in interpreting a text. In the production line of goods or meaning, the end recipient was the last link. The audience participation that is possible in art based on the ideas of performance and authorial diminishment, or even based on audience involvement in television programmes, was limited compared with today's situation where, on the one hand, audiences "answer" by producing new products that are circulated or directly intervene and modify the "finished" product to create "new products" and where, on the other hand, the recipient's position as subject changes as well as his or her experience of "receiving" a cultural product, be it a text, film or

television series, not to mention a product such as a videogame or a website; and the receptive context also changes (is watching a series on the internet the same thing as watching TV?).

Thus, Dan Harries proposes a new term, "*viewing*" as "the experiencing of media in a manner that effectively integrates the activities of both 'viewing' and using [...]" "*Viewers*" are the new 'connected consumers' who find entertainment pleasure in the multitasking activities being promoted through their pc and TV screens" (Harries 2002, 172). In turn, P. David Marshall recognises the difficulty in finding a useful neologism to describe the subject's new position, since no term is precise enough to identify the wide spectrum of possibilities related to the subject's involvement with new media. While "browser" might be an appropriate term for referring to some of the intensive uses of digital technologies, the term "player" might be particularly apt for indicating the intensity of the emotional experience associated with the subject's deep engagement in his or her different uses of new media (Marshall 2004, 26-27). From another perspective, Alvin Toffler proposed the term "*prosumer*" back in the 1980s to express what he saw as a new trend - the link between producer or professional and consumer - and therefore saw a new relationship between the industry and the consumer defined by product personalisation and the consumer's involvement in its design. However, this new conceptualisation of the consumer as producer can be seen as a form of instrumentalisation of the consumer's role as cheap "cultural manpower" (Maxwell and Miller 2005) and not as a process of entertaining participation and the democratisation of cultural production. Nevertheless, the term has prospered and is now used precisely to indicate the fact that consumer culture can be the producer of content at the same time, since it participates in network sharing on the internet. The *prosumer*, in principle, does not act for profit, nor considers his or her production as "work"; instead it is a freely donated creative act within a collaborative context.

From the perspective of the production and consumption relationships traced by Stuart Hall and Du Gay (1997), the circuit of culture also offers a framework for a critical analysis that explains the social processes it brings together. It starts out by understanding the process of receiving a cultural product as a form of consumption. From a systemic approach, the circuit of culture includes both the production and consumption process as well as regulatory mechanisms, identity processes and representative practices in such a way that the shared objects are accompanied by certain representations that link them to the social processes of difference and identity construction (in terms of class, gender or nationality, for example). From this perspective, consumers would not merely be an economic transaction but would rather play a creative role in the way in which the product is socially signified, used and transformed in everyday life.

In keeping with Bourdieu, the acquisition of a consumer good can be understood as the moment identity is articulated, since its possession or enjoyment refers to a system of values and the

establishment of differences and identification with a social group. "Good taste" or possessing certain objects and consuming them in a certain manner is a sign of social distinction. This social meaning is attributed to objects, yet it does not necessarily have to coincide with the producers' meaning. Between producers and consumers there is room for play, which is why both De Certeau (1984) and Fiske (1989) - the latter when referring specifically to audiovisual products - speak of the "pleasures of consumption" as rebellious and playful pleasures. In fact, Hall and Du Gay incorporate De Certeau's approach in their circuit of culture, in which everyday life is a productive form of consumption; consumption must be understood as creative appropriation that also involves the manipulation and transformation of the product and its meaning. Thus, according to the circuit of culture, consumption is not the end of a process but rather can, in itself, be a productive form.

Hall and Du Gay propose considering cultural products (narrative texts, music, theatre, film, television programmes, videogames, etc.) as objects of consumption and they therefore consider the audience or public to be consumers. Yet, at the same time, they propose considering consumers as active agents and consumption as productive work. However, productive work by consumers is in a different category from that by professionals or producers and the position between consumer and cultural producer remains differentiated. Productive work often consists of merely giving the product a meaning, serving as an agent for the construction of identity, yet it does not involve the sense of "generating a new text". Furthermore, producers are organised into production systems, while consumers are like "textual poachers", according to Henry Jenkins (2002), who started out from De Certeau and conceived the notion of a participatory culture that opposes or feeds back into the market. The media, understood as institutional corporations or private businesses, continue to control cultural production, organise and regulate the market and formulate the meaning that consumers will later reject or appropriate, formulate or transform, either via resistance or hegemony. What we find in today's context is intense interaction between different agents and media practices; the alignment among cultural producers, communication media and culture industries condemns consumers to a subordinate or resistant position and excludes a wide spectrum of media practices and other ways of understanding social agents in cultural creation.

This is not to negate the role of public institutions or the hegemonic power of large multinationals in shaping the current cultural scene, yet the active role of audiences as cultural producers in their own right needs vindicating. And not only that - people are also cultural producers through the media, not only by using or appropriating media-manufactured products. People are increasingly active agents as producers of content, not just meaning in the media system.

The fact that there is an intense innovative impulse in the creation of social content is not because of the juncture or fashion. Success stories with impressive followings through million

of views or downloads, unexpected media attention and sometimes the appropriation of "popular" aesthetic principles (such as home videos) in the established media such as film or television (Roig 2009). Big businesses can act as if they were "active audiences" in their appropriation and reworking of products made by private individuals, e.g. by copying the aesthetics and plot of a hit YouTube video to make an ad.⁴ Private individuals' leading role in their own cultural consumption, whether as agents or "managers" of their leisure time devoted to audiovisual consumption, has made formulating many questions from inside and outside the industry a must and not only with a view to "controlling" this new ecosystem.

Today's media context breaks with the stable roles taken for granted until now. Audiences cannot be made to correspond systematically with individuals, nor corporations with producers; it depends. Cultural production and consumption are different moments, relative positions that may correspond to different agents. The limitations that necessarily involve identifying "production" with "professional production" must be avoided, as must the opposite view that any cultural activity (including the very act of "reading" a text, for example) is an act of "production" (in relation to the different notions of production proposed on the basis of "active" consumption, as seen in Fiske, 1989, or proposed by Hills, 2002, for production by fans). In contrast, in his approach to digital photography practices, Larsen seeks to break with the concept of "consumer" technologies and speaks of individuals not just as consumers but also as producers (Larsen 2008, 146).

It can be argued that, to the audiovisual sector, these privately-created cultural forms are little more than an engaging, fun-filled hobby that has nothing to do with the "real economy". Benkler disagrees; to him, the internet society bestows greater autonomy and improved capacities upon its citizens in three main areas: production capacity per se, the capacity to establish open, community-based relationships with others and the capacity to constitute organisational forms that can operate inside and outside the realm of the market (Benkler 2006, 8). The author claims that this new innovation-based ecosystem involves a radical change in the global economy by concentrating activity across communities of interest. Within the realm of culture, this involves an increased transparency and malleability in the cultural production system, which would result in greater participation and democratisation (ibid. 12-15). Benkler discusses the emergence of the "social producer" as a new player alongside culture industries.

People can be cultural producers individually and collectively since they actively participate, i.e. they are an additional player shaping the current media scene, helping to define new cultural forms and produce textual and audiovisual narratives, etc. People are no longer merely audiences, they have audiences. The antagonism between the power of the "audiovisual media" and the audience's resistance or passivity as differentiated and irreconcilable players must be redefined in the same way that the asymmetrical complementary relationship between produc-

ers and consumers is changing. This redefinition of assigned roles does not mean the collapse or extinction of culture industries nor the disappearance of culture professionals. Neither does it mean the disappearance of differences and inequalities in the distribution of power, as Benkler's optimistic vision hoped, yet it does mean the advent of new social players who introduce significant changes in the circuit of culture, as we have seen. Within the new media context, people are cultural producers in their own right.

Media practices

The debate about the phenomenon of complex forms of audiovisual self-production and participation (from films or web-series to fans of "open" audiovisual projects) tends to reproduce a number of classic dualisms expressed in terms of either revolutionary change or pure marginality in the face of the industry's solid machinery. Hesmondhalgh (2007) proposes to distinguish between social production and industrial activity to analyse emerging practices, hybrid models and incipient forms of collaboration among the players operating inside and outside the traditionally established boundaries of "industry". "Social producer" allows us to speak of the new cultural players that configure the new media scene in the same way that we speak of social media - media made by and for the people - as opposed or complementary to the mass media. However, these classifications do not avoid the problem of the balance of power between 'grassroots' and 'industrial' productions.

Here we propose, on the one hand, to disassociate what people do with and through the media from their specific position in the circuit of culture and relations with the market, and, on the other, to detach a cultural analysis of the media from the centrality of the text. The aim is to highlight the 'agency' of people as producers of culture and understand media practices in a broad sense, to refer to what people do both with media products and technologies and with the media as a system - the Media. To treat individual and industrial production symmetrically, separating the Media and "audiences" must be considered, in itself, a strategy that helps to express the Media's power over "audiences", its legitimacy as society's spokesman, as well as its suspected role as a means of influence and propaganda over it.

To this end, it is helpful to look at the theory behind the practice carried out by Schatzki, in order to get closer to cultural production as a field of intertwined, material and embodied discursive practices organised around shared practical knowledge (Schatzki 2001, 3). This notion of practice, which entails a series of actions involving ways of being and speaking and includes the corporal, material and affective component in practice, should allow us to respond differently to what people do with the media beyond theories about audiences based on the reception of a text, and to distance ourselves from a linear, causal conception of cultural production, albeit without deny-

ing the importance of an audiovisual text or the importance of production and consumption relations in the circuit of culture.

As demanded by a growing number of authors, private individuals' media practices (with information and communication technologies, mass media and cultural or media products) must be understood within the context of everyday life (Abercrombie & Longhurst 1998). These practices may often have different but simultaneous objectives: the search for and sharing of information and knowledge, communication, games, aesthetic pleasure, political participation, etc., and these cultural practices are generally related to the production and consumption of narratives - the creation of meaning - that are intertwined with practices related to sociability and the construction of identity and difference that have a certain orientation or affective or emotional charge.

Nick Couldry (2004) approaches media study as a practice, specifically to decentre the text and move away from a structuralist approach, i.e. an overly abstract perspective of the political economics of culture. Couldry proposes seeing media practices as an open series of practices related or oriented to the media. For example, studying televised football as a media practice goes beyond considering the "text" and structural factors (channels and broadcasting conditions) and undertaking an evaluation of the way in which people's everyday lives are structured in connection with this media phenomenon (even including rarely considered aspects such as family and social relationships, emotional/affective expressions and ties, associated forms of performativity or even the decision not to watch a match).

However, Couldry views the media as the media production system, i.e. cultural production that is organised as a production system and, therefore, what people do with the media is reduced to what people do with media products or their ways of consuming commercial products through the cinema, television or the internet. From our point of view, Couldry's contribution to communication studies is extremely valuable and somewhat revolutionary compared with earlier paradigms, yet the problem with this approach is that it does not consider people as cultural producers; it only analyses them on the basis of their position as consumers (active) or audience (creative). To this author, like many others, people are still consumers above all else and, therefore, the practice of production is not considered legitimate but rather subordinate to the practice of consumption. Many of these specific forms of productive appropriation, such as production of fans, videogame modifications and collaborative film production, are practices performed during leisure time, i.e. they fall outside labour regulations and therefore outside the productive system and acquire the tone of a subordinate kind of work (such as housework), submerged work, paralegal economy (competition with the economic model and market prices) or a form of consumption (productive consumer), so that several authors even speak of a fusion between work and leisure time (Neff et al 2005, Christopherson 2008, McRobbie 2002).

Be that as it may, what people are doing with the media also

includes producing media products, contributing to the new media's everyday landscape. In other words, it is not that we live immersed in a world saturated by mass media and media products but rather we are helping to make the world that way. It is not only advertising agencies, large corporations and media institutions who are saturating us; we are also players and contribute to this saturation. It is not only "them". People, individually or collectively, are immersed in media practices that are productive in many ways, ranging from new forms of political activism to personal fame and from the creation of self-productions for fun and pleasure to sharing with friends as a form of sociability or play and putting the media system itself to the test. Media practices (with and through the media) include creative and participatory practices and should be understood within the context of everyday life.

This is a change from media anthropology which proposes, in the first place and in keeping with Mark Hobart (2010), considering all productive practices (regardless of the agent, be it an individual, a corporation or an institution) at the same level of analysis and, in second place, seeing production and consumption cultural products as part of an organised series of social practices and not exclusively in their market relationships. In other words, this involves making a third decentring movement, in this case situating practices with and through the mass media within the context of social and cultural practices. In the above example, watching a televised football match as part of the audience must be understood within the context of everyday activity and should not be treated merely as a practice related or oriented to the media event. Instead, the media event should be treated as part of a broader series of people's social and cultural practices - whether they like football or not, whether they are watching television or not, whether they are sports professionals, or amateurs or fans. To understand the decisions people make to watch or not watch a televised match, film a concert and upload it onto YouTube or download a new series from the internet, we must examine the place occupied by the media in their everyday experience.

The anthropological view of the mass media - or the Media - focuses mainly on studying media practices not as objects of study in themselves but in relation to other cultural practices or to highlight appropriated differently in non-Western cultural contexts (Postill 2010). Anthropologists have tended to reject the trend of separating the media from the rest of social life. Consequently, most ethnographical approaches to the media have tended to point out the interconnections between media practices and cultural frames of reference (Askew 2002, 10). The perspective of ethnographic fieldwork, based on the prolonged study and direct observation of people's activity in order to capture their experiences and the meaning given to their practices, has led them to pay particular attention to what people do and say they do with the media, on the one hand; on the other, their search for a systemic or holistic understanding of a cultural reality has led them to relate such practices to other aspects of the culture being studied.

As Elizabeth Bird stated in *Audience in Everyday Life* (2003), one of the problems in studying the media in relation to cultural production is that audience research has generally been based on studying the reception of a certain medium (press, radio, film, television, internet ...) or certain type of programme (game shows, series ...), yet this isolates the media's role in culture and the media are strongly anchored in internet culture, although this is articulated in widely diverse forms of people's experience (Bird 2003, 3).

Bird proposes not thinking in terms of audiences or publics but to focus our attention on the different points of articulation between the media and individuals. She proposes to study how the media - the media and cultural products - are involved in people's everyday practices. Specific and localised activities with the media should not be viewed as public practices but rather as different interweaving forms of media in cultural performativity. Bird suggests speaking of "media practices" rather than "media-related" or "media-oriented practices" to express all the things people do with and through the media, not only those related to the moment of media consumption.

This interweaving of the media in society can also be understood in terms of intertextuality. In "Performing media" (2005, 130), Mark Allen Peterson proposes shifting the characteristic of intertextuality from the media to social action.⁵ Cultural production's role through the media is not limited to consumption or reception practices; people incorporate them into their lives in a fragmented, idiosyncratic and personal manner; they recall, replicate and transform elements of cultural products to carry out other social actions. For example, they use a snippet of a film to make statements, dress up like a Na'vi (the extra-terrestrial civilization in the film *Avatar*) to protest Israel's partition wall⁶ or comment on articles from the sports press at the office to prove they keep up-to-date on the news.

Mark Allen Peterson's proposal can be extended to the social studies of new media that generally focus on the analysis of a cultural form (videogames, internet, mobile phones) and how they're consumed by young people, without taking into account how videogames, for example, relate to other cultural forms and practices with which they apparently have nothing in common. This is therefore not a study of social interaction on specific platforms such as Flickr or Facebook but rather an analysis of how users articulate new forms of mediation in social interaction and new ways to produce and share culture. Specific cultural practices that cut across the different technologies must be analysed, because the study of media practices in digital culture cannot be reduced to one sole medium or to practices directly related to interaction with one particular technology. This means recognising people's cross-media practices, which as Dena says about producers, is an activity that involves and interrelates different technologies and objects from a film to a mobile phone or a website (Dena 2004).

Understanding the media as a culture means analysing how media presence in many of our everyday activities is not always predictable or homogenous. Bird's definition of media practices

is useful because it examines how media genres and products have been incorporated into our everyday lives, for example how screenplays shape weddings and communion rituals or how people become famous from the sudden success of their online videos. However, Bird's approach continues to use the influence of mass media on culture as a referent and does not take into account the practical materials that, in themselves, constitute a fundamental aspect of cultural creation. Basset in *Cultural Studies and New Media* (2007, 234) criticises the fact that the theoretical approaches to media that focus on people's experience have left out technology's material aspects.

Thus, by expanding Bird's definition, media practices include all practices with the media, including our relationship with technologies and our material practices with and through technologies. Popular and mass culture intersect in media practices, defining not just a new context for relations between the culture industries and their audiences, between private and public spheres, between homemade, amateur and professional productions but also a new media culture that we might call "digital culture".

Participation, digital culture and creative agents

Media anthropology discusses the role of the media (in its broadest sense) in cultural processes, specifically the dialectic between cultural production and media (Grau and Ardévol 2005). According to John Postill and Mark Allen Peterson (2009), anthropology provides three fundamental aspects to media studies: the ethnographic method - an empirical approach to the object of study from a contextual perspective that takes into account the subject's experience, an intercultural, relativistic and comparative view that destabilises the central positions of Europe and the United States and a theoretical orientation that situates the media in the culture.

Contemporary media practices are local (they are anchored and have meaning in people's ordinary lives), transcultural (they extend to diverse, culturally differentiated contexts and interconnect them) and global (they share a common material and technological infrastructure). We can therefore speak of an emerging digital culture based on complex interactions between digital technologies and internet infrastructures that is transforming all fields of human activity. Digital culture can be understood as a broad series of practices, material devices and narratives related to contemporary cultural production on the basis of using digital information and communication technologies.

This loose definition of digital culture explicitly attempts to sidestep the limitations involved in centring on the study of cultural forms or specific technologies from a overly compartmentalised point of view or "media-centric" approaches (the influence of the media), "text-centric" approaches based exclusively on the interpretation of texts and cultural products or

"techno-centric" approaches (based solely on the analysis of new technology) to steer the study of digital culture towards practices based on different branches of the social sciences.

As seen in the tradition developed by writers such as Bourdieu and Certau in sociology or Hall and Du Gay in cultural studies, the notion of media practices is closely linked to the production of meaning. Schatzki's approach to practices allows us to incorporate materiality, corporeality and affectivity and Couldry's contributions to the field of communication studies and Bird's to media anthropology go much further in studying audiences. Finally, work by Latour and others in the social studies of science and technology allow us to incorporate the agency of technologies in the production of culture. In parallel, it can be seen how, in digital creation practices and creative internet practices in their broadest sense (art, photography, video, videogames, social networking), co-creation is used to refer to the different ways people (or "publics") are involved, yet rarely are there references to technology's involvement in these processes.

According to Hand, technologies are inseparable from cultural forms of social organisation; thus, digitalisation can be expected to bring to light innovative alternatives to established practices and conventions (Hand 2008, 6). Therefore, we can recognise that part of the agency in the new media's cultural transformation process lies in developing these technologies and speaking of the emergence of a digital culture. This idea has been worked on by many different authors in various fields of the social sciences and humanities; it may have originated in Lévy's very conception of a cyberculture (2001), later developed by authors such as Gere (2002), Hand himself (2008) and Karagnis (2008) and authors who addressed specific areas such as copyright destabilisation (Gillespie 2007), materiality in everyday life (van den Boom, Lamm, Lehmann Raessens, and Schäfer 2009) and citizen journalism movements (Deuze 2006).

Gere, for example, proposes following Raymond Williams in his concept of digital culture when he asserts that digitality can be thought of as a cultural agent because it refers to both the artefacts as well as the systems of communication and meaning that most clearly characterise our contemporary lifestyle (Gere 2002, 16). This approach is useful because it recognises technologies' creative role in its broadest sense in the cultural process. Just as we wish to return agency to people as cultural producers, when choosing the term digital culture to define the emerging culture of the new media context we also wish to return this agency to technology as well, yet without falling into technological determinism. Rather than in terms of consumption, media practices can also be analysed in terms of agency (Hughes-Freeland 1998, 4-5). People "do things" with technologies, yet technologies also "do things" to people.

Contemporary media practices are closely intertwined and sustained by complex interactions between digital technologies and internet infrastructures. The internet's infrastructure mediates the productive and consumption practices of media

objects, especially audiovisual media - yet, it also participates in many social and cultural practices that seem more remote by transforming the very nature of the object (Ardévol and Estalella, 2009). For example, the incorporation of digital cameras into mobile phones turns any moment in life into a production context; it creates new visual styles and allows for the emergence of new cultural media practices. This means that the same video content and its meaning should be understood in new terms, since often a video's goal is to be distributed and shared on the internet. What's more, videos available on the internet are consumed within a specific context of display and consumption with certain properties derived from software (tags, reviews, rankings, etc.) which also intervene in the subject's position and experience. Technologies have changed not only the meaning of our practices but also the very materiality of the objects we produce. Internet infrastructures and technologies mean the incorporation of an agency in the cultural process (Ardévol, Estalella, Domínguez 2008, 12).

Speaking of audiovisual or media objects allows us to highlight this transformation and the diversity inherent in cultural creation within the new media context and the emergence of new cultural agencies in the design of the programming, interfaces and mechanisms of interaction. In keeping with Latour, it should be recalled that, unlike those who wish to maintain agency either in technology or in society, it is possible to consider an alternative path in which all players co-evolve (Latour 1991, 117). By considering agency shared between people and technology in our analysis and contextualising media objects in relation to broader cultural practices, we can attempt to trace a theoretical framework broad enough to account for the complex processes of digital culture within the new media context.

Notes

- 1 The term "new media" appeared in the 1990s as a label for classifying the emerging cultural forms that depend on computers and digital technologies for their distribution and consumption. See MANOVICH, L. *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2001.
- 2 The English term "media" refers to both institutions and technologies directly related to the mediated communication (the most usual one), as well as the cultural practices and objects associated with that communication. This is clearly different from the Spanish term "*medios*" (or "*medios de comunicación*"), which only covers technological and institutional meanings and frequently causes problems and confusion, as evidenced by the difficulties involved in translating terms such as "media culture", "media objects", "media fans" or even "new media" itself into Catalan. Therefore, we have chosen to use the term "media" to refer to both the media as well as the communicative practices and products in which technological mediation occurs and the term "mass media" to refer to the stricter meaning related to the technological and/or institutional aspects of the mass communication media.
- 3 This idea is developed more extensively in Ardévol Piera, Elisenda.; Pagès Parra, Ruth.; San Cornelio Esquerdo, Gemma.; Alsina González, Pau David.; Roig Telo, Antoni. 2007. "Cultura lúdica i pràctiques mediàtiques". *Digithum. Les humanitats en l'era digital*, UOC, 2007.
- 4 For example, in the case of *Bus Uncle*, a video shot with a mobile phone camera on a bus in Hong Kong was such a hit that even the media interviewed the author, many parodies were posted on YouTube and a remake was even made as an advert for the Football World Cup in 2006.
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Bus_Uncle>
- 5 The notion of intertextuality developed by Bakhtin (1981) refers to the decontextualisation and recontextualisation of symbols or elements of discourse as a central feature of oral or written speech and has been used in communication studies to analyse cultural production as text. See, for example, Genette's definition of intertextuality as the way in which a particular text refers to or evokes other texts (in Marshall 2,002.70).
- 6 See the news article at <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/picture-galleries/worldnews/7222508/Palestinians-dressed-as-the-Navi-from-the-film-Avatar-stage-a-protest-against-Israelis-separation-barrier.html>>

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The new ecology of audiovisuals: new actors, old problems and new problems

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Abstract

For the last two decades, the audiovisual system has been going through a continuous process of change due to interest in the economic exploitation of technological innovation and its relevant applications. Terrestrial digital television, television platforms, video on demand and user generated content services are just some of the new circuits that make up the audiovisual landscape.

This article describes how new actors appear in the system and compete with traditional operators to control the new key points in the audiovisual value chain. In this way, old conflicts in audiovisual ecology return, but some new problems also emerge.

Key words

Audiovisual services, communication policies, media system, new agents, conflicts.

Resum

Des de fa dues dècades, el sistema audiovisual viu un procés continu de canvis, atès l'interès per l'explotació econòmica de la innovació tecnològica i les seves aplicacions en aquest terreny. Televisió digital terrestre, plataformes televisives, vídeo a la demanda i els serveis de continguts generats pels usuaris són alguns dels nous circuits que formen el paisatge audiovisual.

Aquest article descriu com apareixen nous actors en el sistema i rivalitzen amb els operadors tradicionals per controlar els nous punts clau de la cadena de valor de l'audiovisual. D'aquesta manera retornen vells conflictes en l'ecologia de l'audiovisual, i també emergeixen nous problemes.

Paraules clau

Serveis audiovisuals, polítiques de comunicació, sistema comunicatiu, nous agents, conflictes.

Some of the structural elements appeared in the mid-1990s that are currently establishing the audiovisual landscape, all closely related to the political, business and social interest in incorporating technological innovation in communication industries. This interest could be seen in the digitalisation of all phases in the production and distribution circuits of content and in the aim to converge cultural and communication industries and the information and communication technology sector (ICT, the result of integrating computing and telecommunications).¹ Now, this dual process is set within the international context of the liberalisation and deregulation of services, promoted since the end of the 1970s by the neoliberal ideological movement,² which has shaped the communication policies of market economy countries to date. Both phenomena have led to the transformation of the audiovisual ecosystem with new agents in play, the revision of some of the old problems and the appearance of new ones.

These structural elements appeared at the same time in the second half of the 1990s (1994-1998), once the economic crisis after the Iran-Iraq war (1990-1991) was over, which deeply affected a media industry in the midst of expansion. Within a short time a large part of the press and television initiatives either gave up or went through a huge crisis that had

started towards the end of the eighties, during the last expansive wave of the media system of the analogue era. This had happened due to the coincidence and combination of ideological and political pressures to eliminate public monopolies (which led to the widespread opening up of television to private management); the availability of better techniques that made it easier for the media to work and expand; the existence of abundant and growing advertising resources, which made it attractive to invest in the press and in the new television channels; and the first steps of the new generation multimedia groups by entrepreneurs such as Murdoch and Maxwell, who took advantage of the possibilities for the joint exploitation of the media.³

The media industry started growing again in the middle of the nineties, now in the direction of creating a digital ecosystem based on the following structuring elements:

1. The opening up of the internet for public and private use. In spite of the slow speed of its initial implementation, the internet has become the cornerstone to the present-day media system.

2. The interest of telecom operators to lead, as a natural extension, the process of technological convergence with audiovisuals. This led them to become involved in improving,

in technical terms, the cable networks of the eighties (in countries where regulations allowed this) and afterwards in expanding interest in and taking advantage of the telephone network to compete in distributing multichannel television via ADSL technology.

3. The transformation of satellite TV initiatives into digital platforms, which led to huge growth in the number of channels but, at the same time, made it even easier for large audiovisual firms to expand in the United States. These television platforms became alternatives to the cable network business, little developed in many European countries and technologically behind in the rest and in the United States because of the high cost and slow return of the investment required to digitalise its infrastructures and services. As has been mentioned, in the first few years of this century telecom operators provided a third agent in discord with the subscriber TV market and its ADSL services.

4. The drawing up of the first plans to implement digital terrestrial television (DTT), likely to multiply the number of channels and with a view to overcoming the limits to supply and competition between operators inherent in analogue transmission and competing with the services provided by cable and satellite television distributors, as well as opening up the provision of interactive services.

5. The implementation of DVD as a digital support, agreed in 1996 for the industry as a whole to sell physical copies of films and which afterwards spread as the new window of exploitation for TV series. The format's advantages and the interest of equipment manufacturers and content owners made it easier for DVDs to quickly replace video in households.

6. The consolidation of the videogame industry as an alternative audiovisual activity that led to disputes regarding access to the television and free time. A content publishing sector became established and some of the large ICT firms (Sony, Microsoft) entered into the competition between consoles, something that has been crucial in the evolution of the audiovisual landscape given their interest in promoting consoles as a device to access the rest of the services and their capacity to interrelate with the rest of the sector.

7. The start of the social phenomenon of distributing and accessing digital audiovisual content without respecting copyright (digital "piracy"). This started with the photographic industry as, at the end of this period,⁴ and in parallel with the spread of the use of the internet among the population, transmission capacity improved and it became popular to exchange programs between users (P2P), but this also quickly spread to the rest of the audiovisual sectors.

The key position of the internet in forming the digital system

These elements have gradually developed at the same time, in parallel and interrelated, but the sum of the political and busi-

ness actions to spread internet use and the improvement in its technical features have made it, in a short time, the epicentre of all the movements within the media system, be it provided by classic telecom operators, by those that have appeared as the sector became liberalised or provided by cable service operators that have invested in the implementation of broadband networks. This central position of the internet is the result (and this has justified the economic and political interest in promoting and expanding it) of its function as a vital technical interface for the convergence of communication services of all kinds, using the technologies available at any given time.

The focus of public and private actions on the internet⁵ has occurred in parallel with the process of overcoming a discourse generalised during its first few years that consisted of comparing it to a mass medium, applying the parameters of the functions and uses of the press, radio or television. The fact that it is now treated as an interface of digital convergence has made it easier for public policy regarding the internet and its uses to be aimed at the significant problems emerging: the outstanding examples being neutrality in the service of access providers⁶ and the effects on the economy of relations between the agents taking part in the production and distribution of social communication.⁷

On the other hand, the combination of several factors, namely this integration of the internet's development, uses and applications that has been encouraged, the fact that there were already some generations of citizens significantly literate with regard to ICTs, the inexistence of barriers of entry for internet-based services and the widespread dot.com boom between 1995 and 2000 has had far-reaching effects on the structure of the media landscape in the early years of the 21st century.

Firstly, it has weakened most of the traditional circuits for disseminating audiovisuals (cinema, DVD, television) and the rest of the cultural media and industries (to date, particularly the press and music industry), generating new distribution and access. At the same time, it has forced a review of the relations between the agents involved in the value chain of these media-industries and, ultimately, the reformulation of their business models. It has also allowed new figures and functions to appear within the media system (aggregators, searchers) and the entry of social agents hitherto alien to mass communication, among whom users themselves have acquired a leading role, transformed into providers of content, as well as the internet and ICT firms.

From within the pre-digital communication system, the dynamic of technological convergence, the initial deployment of the internet and the economic expectations generated encouraged large corporations to accelerate business integration. Operations had already occurred up to the nineties but strictly within the sphere of the media and cultural industries (Time and Warner, Bertelsmann, Canal Plus, etc.), with the singularity of the case of Sony, which focused on the integration of equipment-content⁸ and the first deals by the Murdoch group [News Corporation] with alternative telecom operators to AT&T

in the United States. But by the middle of the decade the pace of these initiatives had quickened, starting to point in all directions and including agents external to the traditional system of publishing and programming firms: internet access providers (American Online), telecom companies (Telefónica), computing (Microsoft, Apple), producers of electronic equipment and cable network operators. In this way, the pre-digital sector of the traditional media was definitively opened up towards its integration within a broader system that generically covered everything related to ICTs. Among these operations of the time, of note are the mergers of AOL-Time Warner and Vivendi-Universal-Seagram, which resulted in the two largest conglomerates of cultural industries but which, in the last few years, have been forced to divest many of their integrated activities. Over time, mergers have taken on diverse directions, the most outstanding being the attempt announced in 2009 to create a conglomerate in the United States that joined the largest cable and broadband operator (Comcast) with a major studio (Universal) and a network (NBC), previously integrated. This project, pending authorisation, once again involves the aggregation of network management, television services and the production of audiovisual content.

Revising the system's structures

From another perspective, the transformation of communication structures and particularly with the development of the internet, the concept of "communication medium" has been created, to the extent that it needs to be identified via the service and function it provides (socially recognised), separated from the technical-industrial-economic process which originally identified the press, cinema, radio and television as "media" (media-industry). Most important in this new scenario are the agents taking part, their movements and their relations above and beyond the value chains of each of the industries, in detriment of the broader approach of the previous stage, where media operators (television channels, broadcasters, editors) played a central role. In this way, the agents in charge of producing content and the distribution services by new circuits obtain the maximum autonomy and more weight. However, it must be recognised that the alternative to the "logic of media", which consists of a "logic of variable geometry" in relations between agents, was already present in the initial configuration of some of the medium-industry structures but started to become highly significant again as from the 1980s, when the aforementioned concentration of ownership occurred and created the multimedia groups.

The transformation of the concept of medium is not only important with regard to the new balance of relations between the system's traditional agents. Social participation services have also appeared in the environment of public communication that, supported by the internet, have become extraordinarily relevant in the new panorama. Blogs, photologs, websites

for distributing and sharing images and, later on, the so-called "social networks" today go to make up a very important part, in detriment to the traditional media and the public or business institutions that publish them,⁹ which have had no choice but to adapt to the new situation, given the effects on audience and the habits of use of the established circuits (the classic media), on their advertising and user revenue and on the provision of content.

In such a scenario, in which the value of the communication process is dispersed (and endangers the traditional circuits, business models and even some agents), the next step in the convergence in digital audiovisuals consists of separating the service-access terminal combination and the hybrid nature of the end of the channel, which gives pride of place to the suppliers of these devices. Insofar as the usefulness of a television set can be extended as an access terminal for private and public telecom services (email, internet services of all kinds), in the same way as the computer and mobile are becoming access terminals for linear television and new audiovisual services and video consoles are being added other functions (watching DVDs, internet access), manufacturers have an open door to extend their business towards the provision of services, in competition with the operators of other audiovisual distribution circuits.

In short, over the last few years we have embarked upon a path towards the radical transformation of the audiovisual system (in general, in communication and culture terms) in many of the aspects that determine its structure and how it functions: transmission supports, transmission formats, service formats, sales formats and the economy of services, agents involved and the relations between them, policies and regulations on the activities as a whole that are within their perimeter in an increasingly more extensive way, and the response of citizens when generating new practices in terms of the media and services.

The new digital audiovisual landscape

After the first few years of the 21st century, a decisive stage has started in the formation of a new digital audiovisual landscape. As a key element, there is the fact that the integration of services and agents is intensifying within a broader social communication system with interdependent components that are increasingly more solid and complex, expanding towards the incorporation of activities from the sphere of private communication. Within this new system, audiovisuals are still an important component but without the hegemony they had achieved at the end of the analogue era, given the dynamic expansion of typically relational services (on social networks and mobile communications) towards the terrain of public communication. There is also widespread acceptance of the broadband telecom network as a basic interface for the new integrated system, competing and cooperating with the traditional physical supports of the media-industry and awaiting the next step, the popularisation of mobile broadband communications.

Within this context, the large-scale implementation of broadband networks, the fast acceptance of some of the new services, the inexistence of economic barriers to entry for providing distribution and access services, and the impact of digital piracy significantly alter the expectations of the audiovisual proposals that seemed innovative in the 1990s and a new landscape has been configured in which non-linear audiovisual services play a strategic central role.

So DTT, which was at the centre of all television policies of the period, has ended up being considered as a technological substitution with added services, which especially provides competition (between operators) and self-competition and complementarity (between channels from the same operator) and threatens to cause a structural rupture in the old television order,¹⁰ as well as releasing radio frequencies for other uses.

Traditional generalist TV operators, which have been losing importance in audiovisual terms since the 1980s as they have had to face competition on many different fronts, have seen how the predictions of the nineties have not come about. They had accepted that the evolution involved competition between public and private operators and also *a la carte* television services. But the latter was related to the multiplication of themed channels and the increase in the supply capacity of multichannel subscriber television (Idate 2006, 138) which, with the possibility of digital transmission, spread very quickly in the middle of the decade, in spite of the initial fiascos in satellite and cable.

But within a short time, the expectations of digital television platforms for satellite, cable and ADSL also cooled off. They stopped growing in terms of subscriber volumes or started to grow very slowly and in most countries, in the first few years of the 21st century, mergers started to appear, looking for monopolies for each support in an attempt to make them viable. Afterwards, the resulting operators, controlled by telecom agents, have redirected their strategy towards the provision of many different services (telephony, broadband internet and television), with television taking a subsidiary role.

At the same time, throughout this period not only did competition spread within television but conceptually the ideas were reinforced of "non-linear audiovisuals" on the small screen and of "personal television". The transformation of television into a highly competitive medium-industry was accompanied by the arrival of successive devices that have been connected to TV screens: video player-recorders, DVD player-recorders, personal video recorders (PVR) and even video consoles. At the same time, from the first attempts by Microsoft with its 'mediacenter', the idea of transferring access to audiovisual content to the personal computer and turning it into a veritable multifunctional personal terminal has also accompanied the transformation of the landscape.

In the business of physical copies of audiovisual products, the perspectives have also worsened for the DVD market due to it being replaced by high definition, video games and music formats. The fast spread of comparable services supported online

and the availability of access to services indistinctively from any existing screen (television, desktop computer, laptop or other personal devices) have altered expectations and have deeply shaken the music and film industries.

Consequently, it might be considered that the change in scenario regarding the forecasts of the 1990s consists of the reinforcement of new poles of value around the production-promotion axis, in detriment to distribution. The need for distribution is assured for almost all content with the fast multiplication of non-linear (*a la carte*) audiovisual services that has occurred in the last five years, so that most platforms have lost their negotiation capacity with producers and other agents involved in managing copyright. Only platforms of agents with a high volume of users (by cable, satellite, web services, downloads or streaming) or with a high capacity to manoeuvre from one sector (equipment manufacturers, telecom operators, internet aggregators, social networks, some video club chains and large cultural or generic digital shops) have also become important in the new audiovisual landscape.

For their part, producers are increasing their negotiating power as they can force the conditions of exploitation in the various circuits - but with one significant drawback: the success of audiovisual products depends largely on the promotional actions around them. And, in the audiovisual system, this is still via the creation of social events such as premieres in cinemas and programming on generalist TV channels. This means that the traditional central agents of the system still play a key role, but they are threatened by the agents mentioned in the preceding paragraph, who might compete with this function.¹¹

Moreover, we should remember that, at least for some time (given that most of the population are slow to modify their uses), the main traditional service-circuits for distributing audiovisuals, and especially linear television, will continue to dominate the system, although the alternatives that have been appearing are forcing them to get moving in two directions. On the one hand, improving the supply of their original service (or services, in multi-activity corporations) and, on the other, by trying to compete in providing new services. Nonetheless, this second line of action, inevitable for all of them, is helping to accelerate the process of losing hegemony for the system's traditional circuits, albeit not necessarily immediately in terms of its operators: all studies measuring consumption and audience in the new platforms agree that the content most in demand continues to be programmes offered on television channels and cinema formats.

The new map of audiovisual services

The main aim of innovation in services has been to enable communicative uses that were not possible before or to improve how the services are provided. Consequently, they have aimed at generating service structures that allow the following:

1. Broadening the range of content in circulation, both in terms of diversity and plurality of sources, including content generated or proposed by citizens.

2. Diversifying the models of economic exploitation, proposing solutions between the extremes of complete financing with advertising resources or charged to users and, if necessary, with direct or indirect contributions from public funds.

3. Increasing the freedom of choice of citizens regarding access to content and its use, both in terms of the time and the circuit and device chosen.

4. Reducing the structural rigidity of the organisational model of the audiovisual production and sale process, providing alternatives in the bottlenecks that give more strategic importance to those who control them: relations between producer and broadcaster on conventional television, between television channels and multichannel TV distribution platforms, or between distributor and cinemas.

At the beginning of the digital audiovisual era, the evolution in all media-industry has led to new services being proposed based on offering access to content from particularly traditional circuits (but not exclusively) on the request of users, who are offered many different alternatives: with funding via advertising (before, during or after content is seen), by subscription or pay-per-use; either via a TV platform or by internet; with limited access to content in terms of time, by renting or owning a copy (downloaded from the distributor's system) or also via streaming.

These new audiovisual distribution circuits as a whole have been generically called "*a la carte* video services" or "video on demand", popularly known as VOD,¹² and have spread extraordinarily quickly in most countries¹³ supported by broadband networks, provided by a growing diversity of traditional communication agents (television operators, and film and TV producers and distributors, collective distribution platforms of content owned by cinema and TV agents, video clubs and cultural product establishments) and new communication agents. Among the latter we should particularly mention the online platforms of businesses, both cultural and generic; network internet access operators themselves; manufacturers of video consoles, computer systems and applications and suppliers of closed distribution systems-receivers and internet service providers (aggregators, search engines, portals). But moreover the inexistence of barriers to entry has also led to the appearance of VOD services being provided by a wealth of agents without any previous connection to the sector.

In the route taken to reach this point, the film industry started by extending access circuits to terrestrial television, cable television, the market of physical copies (video and DVD) and quasi *a la carte* TV (NVOD or Near Video On Demand), in the last five years forming part of the most valuable content within VOD services. But VOD film services have had to overcome the strong resistance of the firms holding copyright due to the harm this may cause to the business through conventional circuits.

For their part, after multiplying distribution circuits for channels (via cable, satellite and ADSL), TV publishers (of programmes, terrestrial channels and by platforms) evolved towards diversifying the models of exploitation on these supports, and from here to offering *a la carte* access to programmes, fragments of programmes and other content, broadcast or not, for which they have rights, to their own or external VOD services (on the internet or by means of cable platforms and ADSL or mobile communications).

The VOD strategies of TV operators are, today, diverse and often erratic, given the uncertainty hovering over the most favourable economic models. On the one hand, practically all have opted to have their own download or streaming services but there is no unanimity when committing to taking part in unit services of access to content of all programmers (with the operators holding shares or being managed by independent firms), or when accepting the sale of programmes via third party VOD services, open to all kinds of audiovisual products (iTunes, Amazon). There are also different strategies regarding presence on free access platforms (YouTube, DailyMotion, etc.), with fragments of programmes provided by users or with their own channels within the platforms.

However, there are some VOD service formats that seem to have consolidated their role as references. Firstly, the so-called "catch-up television", which allows TV operators to offer programming from previous days and other content via the internet to computers. Practically a natural evolution of TV websites, the normal format is individualised services by TV operators¹⁴ but joint catch-up service projects already exist or are being prepared between operators,¹⁵ although these reserve the right to decide what products they will cede and which they will exploit via their own services.

In a still developing phase, we should also note the work carried out with a view to offering VOD services via the internet to the television screen.¹⁶ And lately another concept has been generated, called "hybrid broadcast broadband"¹⁷ as a format to offer and provide unified access to content managed by TV operators, either by broadcasting or via the broadband network but always received via a television. To this end, TV manufacturers are reaching agreements with TV operators with VOD services to integrate access into the device itself.

For their part, multi-channel TV platforms have broadened their activities, going from being terrestrial channel distributors to offering competition with exclusive or shared channels, and afterwards opening up near video on demand services (NVOD) for films, sports and terrestrial television programmes.

Finally, within the range of VOD services, we should also note those based on the concept of shared content. These are services without any editorial aim, with content generated or provided by users or by other social agents (institutions that own content or rights with audiovisual potential, editors from other sectors, producers, etc.) and managed by internet access providers, ICT firms, aggregators and search engines, but also companies without any connection with the sector. Among the

most famous are YouTube (from Google), Dailymotion, Vimeo, MSN Video (Microsoft) and Apple TV (after several failed attempts). Given that access is free of charge, they have achieved a prime position in audience terms.

In all, neither these nor the VOD services of TV firms or film companies have definite models of exploitation (free, with advertising, total or partial payment, etc.) and this leads them to experiment with all kinds of methods in a search for viability, irrespective of the initial proposals.

Review of the classic problems and the appearance of new ones

The consolidation of the new communication ecosystem reveals notable changes in the agenda of problems and conflicts, based on the following aspects:

1. Overcoming the "media logic" as key to the new structure.
2. Integrating audiovisual industries with other sectors: telecommunications, computing, e-consumption, distribution services and retail trade.
3. Consequent extension of the kind of agents involved in audiovisuals and incorporating their kind of economic and regulatory logic.
4. Internationalising (globalising) content markets but with highly territorialised economic exploitation in distribution circuits that can cause this order to come apart.

Some of the problems of today's new audiovisual landscape come from the previous stage, passed on to the new environment. In first place is the instability of the system's financing, as the expansion since the 1980s has occurred with a fundamental dependence on advertising revenue, given the insufficient contribution from users, reluctant to pay for services they can access free of charge by some means. This problem affected the progression of pay TV platforms and currently the provision of VOD services and makes it the main threat to the system.

Closely related to this problem, and of great importance, is the practice of illegitimate access to audiovisual content. The first problems of illegal copying and reproduction arose with video tapes but the profits generated by this circuit for producers and holders of copyright allowed them to remain active. The appearance of digital supports (CD Rom and DVD) and the possibility to upload content onto the internet and share it among users has made this problem central due to the drain on revenue caused for cultural industries. Although this affected the music industry initially, forcing it to practically recreate its operational model in little more than ten years, afterwards it spread to film and TV productions, which have been forced to respond.

As a result, an excessive number of illicit content distribution services has been generated in spite of the evident resistance of traditional agents, although it is still early to evaluate their

impact on the stability of the system's structure: we will have to see which distributing agents end up becoming consolidated from among all the different types in existence. And, as has already been mentioned, the strategic value of content producers has been strengthened on the rebound. Moreover, we will have to see whether this circumstance boosts vertical integrations, as suggested by some recent operations, such as the integration of Endemol in the Fininvest-Mediset group, and evaluate the political actions in this respect.

At the same time, there are also historical problems that must start to progressively lose strategic importance given the large number of distribution circuits and agents. One of these is the policy regarding the granting of TV and radio licences, a scarce resource, that granted beneficiaries a decisive capacity to intervene in the sector and gave public authorities the possibility to control the system. The granting of DTT licences might well have been the last conflict of this type in many countries, if VOD services maintain the progress made in the period 2005-2010.

But the reduction in the strategic importance of granting licences will make it harder for policies to guarantee pluralism and to apply efficient mechanisms to limit corporate concentration in the audiovisual and communication sphere, encouraging a perspective aimed at guaranteeing competition in markets, in detriment to the communication perspective. The monitoring of internal subsidiarity between regulated audiovisual activities and others carried out by operators to protect traditional agents and the possible synergies in vertical and horizontal concentration will bring new problems.

Regulations on the conditions and restrictions in circulating content (a central issue in the analogue era) will also lose force. Advertising restrictions (in time and content), independent production quotas, national or European content quotas, the 'watershed' to protect minors, among others, will have to be reviewed within a scenario of competition between conventional television channels and non-linear services, given the problems in their application in these last few years. The European Directive on Audiovisual Media Services of 2007^{xviii} represented a first step in this objective but this will probably have to be reviewed within a short time.

Actions aiming to protect the chronology in exploiting audiovisual products in different windows will also lose importance. This policy has been key to the economy of the film business circuit but, in the future, might also affect other kinds of content. In addition to the challenges posed by piracy in distribution on the one hand, and the interest of producers and copyright managers in intensifying the pace of exploitation on the other, together with the difficulty in establishing the point on the timescale that corresponds to new circuits, we should also add the growing difficulty to protect rights on a national scale (the typical market where these are negotiated) when the internet helps service access networks to be global and protection measures are easily violated by users little used to VOD services.

From another perspective, the new environment means that

the role and weight must be reviewed of the public sector in audiovisuals, entering into a new dimension of conflict that started practically from the time commercial companies were allowed on television. Among other issues, this will affect the definition of the kind of activities that can be included within the perimeter of public service by public operators, and that can be carried out with a commercial function and funding (especially with regard to the new emerging services), which figures of cooperation with private agents can be authorised to develop services and platforms of access¹⁹ to audiovisuals, and a series of obligations and rights of operators of new platforms regarding the use of channels and content from the public sector ('must carry' and 'can't carry' rules).

Finally, at the same time that the problems of the previous stage are changing in dimension, new conflicts are appearing in the new audiovisual order. The first comes from the need to extend the transmission capacity of broadband networks to support the growing use, especially of audiovisual services. This problem affects telecom operators, with difficulties in passing on the cost of the necessary investment to users, given the competition within the sector, hence the request for internet service providers to meet part of the cost for using the networks. Alternatively, in the last fifteen years these operators have entered the business of content distribution platforms (in a way and with conflicts that are comparable to the traditional ones of cable TV networks, especially in the United States). This strategy, whether in VOD format or via television channels, has been accepted by content producers insofar as it reinforces their value in the audiovisual chain.²⁰

In parallel, another problem appears, namely the debate concerning the neutrality of networks (in reality, the operators) in the transition period to providing enough transmission capacity to avoid collapses and therefore the possibility to offer advantages to content from a specific origin, either by rights obtained by the operator itself or by commercial agreements established with content producers and distributors.

Notes

- 1 The United States opting to introduce the *National Infrastructure of Information* and the passing of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, facilitating the crossed participation between agents from these sectors, are two key facts in this process. In the European Union, the work regarding the *Green Paper on the convergence of the telecommunications, media and information technology sectors*, of 1997, shows the behaviour of the Commission regarding this proposal.
- 2 Robert W. McChesney (2002: 237) claims that it was neoliberalism that led the media system along the path it took, as the same technology could have been used to improve public media and not for the trans-national commercial development of television.
- 3 DYSON i HUMPHREYS (1990) propose four key words to identify the sector at the end of the 1980s: deregulation, globalisation, synergy and convergence.
- 4 Napster was set up in 1999, considered to be the first service for swapping music files, and the large record companies in the United States quickly sued it, making this new form of accessing music more popular on the rebound.
- 5 Two recent examples highlight this centrality of the internet. On the one hand, the report by the British government *Digital Britain* from 2009 <<http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/digitalbritain-finalreport-jun09.pdf>>, which gave way to the proposal and discussion still underway on the "Digital Economy Bill" <<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/digitaleconomy.html>>. On the other hand, the plan presented in March 2010 by the Federal Communications Commission of the United States (FCC) commissioned by President Obama, entitled *The National Broadband Plan. Connecting America*. <<http://www.broadband.gov/plan/>>
- 6 A brief but complete explanation of the origin, history and keys to the problem can be found in Palazuelos-Herrera (2010).
- 7 For an analysis of the internet's impact on the changes in economic relations of cultural industries, see Juan Carlos Miguel (2007).
- 8 Sony, after the mistakes made in the conflict between formats in the video market in the early 1980s, bought CBS Records in 1988 to transform it into Sony Music Entertainment, and in 1989 acquired Columbia Pictures to set up Sony Pictures. In this way it returned to the connection, when cultural industries were first developing, that existed between the manufacture of equipment and the publication of content.
- 9 Karol Jacubowicz (2009: 7) provides a summary of the transformations in the media concept within the new media scenario, with classic media, media created by new actors (political, cultural, economic, sports institutions, etc.), and also non-professional creators and new intermediaries (internet access providers, aggregators, etc.).
- 10 An analysis of the changes and repercussions, for the Spanish case, can be found in ACADEMIA DE TELEVISIÓN, 2010: "La industria audiovisual en España. Escenarios de un futuro digital".

- 11 The experience of rebroadcasting U2's concert throughout the world via *YouTube*, in October 2009, can be considered as the first incursion of new audiovisual distribution agents in publishing functions (production and programming). Some social networks (MySpace) and non-linear audiovisual services (Bebo, Hulu) have also started to produce their own programmes and series, in the same way that telecom operators (Orange) have now bought rights and create programmes for television and VOD, generating conflict with traditional publishers.
- 12 Nonetheless, the European Union established the denomination of this, as a whole, as "on-demand audiovisual media service" in the Audiovisual Media Services Directive of 2007 (article 1 g) and defined them as non-linear services provided "for the viewing of programmes at the moment chosen by the user and his individual request on the basis of a catalogue of programmes selected by the media service provider".
- 13 For the European case, we can see the rapid increase in supply in the studies carried out in 2007 and 2009 by the European Audiovisual Observatory in collaboration with the French public administration (Franceschini 2007, and Cross and Franceschini 2009).
- 14 The "3 a la carta" service by Televisió de Catalunya can be included in this section. On the other hand, one of the most popular is the *iPlayer*, by the BBC, which has led the name "player" to be used as a reference to services for accessing television on the internet on demand.
- 15 The current reference model is Hulu, with holdings by Disney-ABC, NBC and Murdoch, and operating only in the United States, although there are plans to roll it out to other countries. In the United States it has quickly become the second VOD service with the most users, after YouTube, according to data from Nielsen.
- 16 In the United Kingdom, we should mention the Canvas project, involving various TV channels, including the BBC, internet access providers, equipment manufacturers and gradually other agents. The main detractors are the providers of cable TV services (Virgin) and satellite TV (BSkyB).

In Spain, some TV set manufacturers have started to offer this service, still without a definitive name, with a prior agreement with video operators such as YouTube, and television companies such as Televisió de Catalunya, laSexta and Antena 3 Televisión.
- 17 Directive 2007/65/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 11 December 2007, amending Council Directive 89/552/EEC on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the pursuit of television broadcasting activities.
- 18 As a reference, the refusal of the British authorities to allow the BBC to develop the non-linear TV project *Kangaroo* with private operators and the obstacles being placed to the launch of the *Canvas* project, with opposition by large cable and satellite TV operators.
- 19 The 2006 edition of the *Digiworld* report describes the scenarios and advantages for these and others provided by this possible evolutionary path.
- 20 The 2006 edition of the *Digiworld* report describes the scenarios and advantages for these and others provided by this possible evolutionary path (Idate 2006, 125-126).

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Economic crises, digitalisation and techno-cultural change: elements for prospection¹

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Abstract

In the first place, this paper conceptually differentiates among different types of crises (financial, cyclical, regulatory and environmental) to conclude that ours is a systemic crisis, with signs of a crisis of civilisation. In the second place, it reviews the expressions of these crises within the realm of communication and culture, noting the crises in spending and advertising as well as its major peculiarities as a sector: a growing historical demand that is now stagnating circumstantially; the relevant beneficiary of technological change, now changing with increasingly intense uses; and its strong intra-sector competition and business models pending stabilisation, which has led to major uncertainties. Finally, as a prospective hypothesis, we argue that, because of communication and culture's nature as the drivers of techno-cultural change, their growing weight in the economy and their gradual eco-efficient use of resources, their expansive vocation and synergies for the entire system may make them, in themselves, factors in the recovery from the global economic crisis. However, ab initio, those who control the value chain (operators, search engines and platforms) and who are blocking the emergence of a diverse supply are being favoured. Content generators and users will have to confront them to make the cultural system viable.

Key words

Economic crisis, communication, culture, expenditure on culture, business model, the internet, networks, cognitive capital, techno-cultural change, concentration, pluralism.

Resum

En primer lloc es diferencia conceptualment entre els diferents tipus de crisi (financera, cíclica, de regulació i ecològica) per concloure que es tracta d'una crisi sistèmica, amb indicis de crisi civilitzatòria. En segon lloc es recorren les expressions d'aquestes crisis en la comunicació i la cultura, i es constata la crisi de la despesa i la publicitària, però també les importants peculiaritats del sector: una demanda històrica creixent que ara s'ha estancat conjunturalment; els beneficis rellevants dels canvis tecnològics, en mutació i amb uns usos cada vegada més intensos, i una forta competència intrasectorial amb els models de negoci pendent d'estabilitzar, fet que implica unes incerteses importants. Finalment, a manera d'hipòtesis prospectiva, se sosté que pel caràcter tractor en el canvi tecnocultural, el pes creixent en l'economia, l'ús ecoeficient gradual de recursos, la vocació expansiva de la cultura i la comunicació i les seves sinergies per a tot el sistema pot esdevenir un factor de sortida de la mateixa crisi econòmica global, però que ab initio afavoreixi els que controlen la cadena de valor (operadores, cercadors i plataformes) i bloquegen l'eclosió de la diversitat de l'oferta. Els generadors de continguts i els usuaris hauran de confrontar-s'hi per fer viable el sistema cultural.

Paraules clau

Crisi econòmica, comunicació, cultura, despesa cultural, model de negoci, internet, xarxes, capital cognitiu, canvi tecnocultural, concentració, pluralisme.

As the techno-social tools of economic, political and social agents, digital technologies have already shaken the foundations, relationships and balances of social culture and communication. Yet, the economic and financial crisis has exacerbated this in many ways.

Traditional culture industries and the media were already finding it hard to adapt to the paradigm shift in cultural customs. Yet now they have been hit hard circumstantially by the crisis in household economies, public spending and advertising, and structurally by uncertain business models, social trends and the entry of new dominant players in the value chain that have put the networks to use for now.

Hence, we should distinguish between the different types of

crisis and their background before addressing the major particularities faced by the different culture and communication areas and the place they may occupy in the eventual recovery from the crisis.

1. Economic crises and systemic crisis

The general and non-circumstantial crisis that began in September 2007, which has been called the "Great Recession" (Paul Krugman), has brought together various crises that coincide and intertwine. All these crises - and conceptually, four can be distinguished - are interrelated and

engender a single reality with multiple expressions, yet with cycles, periods and possibilities for different interventions.

In the first place, the most evident and immediate crisis is **financial** and is lingering in the dearth of liquidity and general access to credit alongside very timid restructuring processes in the financial world – regardless of the fact that public funds have come to the rescue with privatising measures.² Rewards have been showered on the irresponsibility of those who advocated ignoring the productive economy to create a fictitious and speculative economy, a casino economy that lacked any correspondence to productive capital stock and generated a fearful, volatile and socially harmful, rentier capitalism. Instead of channelling savings into investments, the banks funnelled them into financial assets that, furthermore, were nothing more than sub-products of a pyramidal chain. These *bank-ruptcies* are still not financing the productive system and household economies; they are still not investing in real economies and society. The international and Spanish financial systems are crying out for stricter regulation with taxes and charges that discourage past profligacy and nourish the public coffers.³

In the second place, the financial crisis has exacerbated a **classic cyclical crisis of overproduction** that is usually rooted in several factors: imbalances between the outputs of the productive investment sectors, intermediaries and consumption at a national and international scale, which all need each other yet operate with different time frames; the general imbalance between an economy's productive capacity and limited social and entrepreneurial demands; and the unequal growth among central, emerging and developing countries.

That crisis had been delayed thanks to the artificial financial bubble, with the subsequent high debt of businesses and households while they just carry on regardless. The crisis is expressed in under-consumption and cautious household spending, given poor quality jobs, declining wages and the increasing flexibilisation and deregulation of the labour market. This last, which is good for the private capitalist's profitability, is bad for the reproduction of capitalism as a whole. The recession has been even more severe in Spain's case, with its poorly diversified economy, real estate glut and specialisation in sectors such as tourism and the automotive industry, which are closely linked to household liquidity. The impact on the Spanish economy has been brutal, with unemployment close to 20% of the workforce and a rapidly growing public debt of 12% of GDP.

The third type of crisis is long-term and deeper - and conceptually more controversial - and has two dimensions: the spread (or not) of technological change and the systemic social regulation that may support it.

On the one hand, the last wave of **technological change** (computerisation, automation-communications, new materials and energies, green industry, biotechnology, organisational logistics, etc.), which began in the 1980s, brought with it a steady rise in the capital rate of return (only interrupted by brief recessions in 1990-1991 and the bursting of the dotcom finan-

cial bubble in 2001). After that, we witnessed the start of more reasonable businesses with new returns, yet confidence was lacking, since a sufficient rate of investment and accumulation for all sectors was not completely ensured.

The new technological paradigm - information, new materials, clean energies, etc. - has not achieved stable increments of productivity and returns with a productive origin and sufficient wages.⁴ Whole sectors have still not approached the new technological paradigm yet and are being displaced (except for services linked to the most locally based demand) by production either from more advanced economies or conversely, from emerging economies with low labour costs. This explains the certain slowdown today in the replacement of general technology, with the resulting investment, which has meant that growing productivities, competitive with production from emerging and Third World countries with low labour costs, have not been deployed to the fullest. Multinationals themselves are investing there in search of advantages in an increasingly integrated global economy in which patents, design, branding and distribution remain in the central countries and the rest is outsourced and globalised.⁵

Furthermore, we are witnessing a parallel crisis in the systemic social regulation model (social security, labour legislation, public services, insured pensions, social rights and minimums, progressive tax systems, collective bargaining agreements, neo-corporatist tripartite pacts among employers, government and unions), which is accompanied by the resulting crisis in public and social values.

The economy's rising tide from the 1950s to the 80s - Fordism - came wrapped in the pact of the Welfare Society. Along with investment and demands for business and exports, job incomes ensured a sustained demand for consumer durables. But in the 1980s, the "Welfare Society" and "popular capitalism" were undermined, with the attendant backslide in wages of several points in GDP during the past two decades. Neo-liberalism swept the stage in the 1980s on the basis of an irresponsible scenario whose only goal was high rates of profitability and accumulation and a regressive redistribution of income, while it ignored the system's medium-term sustainability and failed to replace earlier social regulation with other regulation capable of generating sustainable demand. Cheap credit, the thinning out of states, social welfare, etc. were the recipe.

Now, with precarious employment, especially for the new generations who are not paid in relation to their knowledge, the consumer chain has broken and can no longer be fixed by overly-high levels of household debt. Nor can the import of cheap immigrant labour solve the problem, since its remittances are exported. Interestingly, with the underpayment of young or immigrant workers, the accumulation process is returning to the nineteenth century model; the global economy is equalling out on the low side.

This structural weakness in demand has meant that investment is wary of the system, slowing down in R & D and taking refuge in the financial side or in exporting capital.

And in this confusion, one could even speak of “a historic crisis in the law of value”,⁶ as recently deceased philosopher Daniel Bensaid claimed, because it is hard to recognise real value added when jobs have largely been socialised and intellectual work has been massively incorporated. The detachment of the cash economy from the real economy is apparently structural.

Thus, there is no correspondence between accelerated technological advances, discrete productive applications and the very limited capacity of the investment and consumption markets to absorb and remunerate investments and offers. The current model of capitalist accumulation is in crisis. How can a new rising era be stabilised?

In the face of systemic regulatory crisis, a new social contract is lacking that would provide a feedback loop between the economy and society with a distributive social model that is sustainable on a planetary scale. A commitment to sustainable models that involve no or slowed-down growth increasingly seems necessary. And yet, what dominate discussions are more readjustments (labour and social security reform, etc.) as a short-term recipe for boosting profits.

To further complicate matters, the fourth crisis has to do with the planet, with its limited resources and species: the serious ecological crises and crisis of resources, proof of which are indisputable climate change, shortages in and higher costs of raw materials, the end of an energy model, food and water crises and others that shall not be dealt with here.

In no way is this a crisis of collapse but rather a systemic, functional and reproductive crisis with several elements that also suggest the beginning of a crisis of civilisation, to the extent in which a negative entropy is incurred with the planet - whole layers of society, dozens of countries and a continent remain outside the system's inclusive functioning; life is becoming more precarious for those in the most precarious conditions and we no longer know which values characterise and match our civilisations.

2. Culture and media in crises: a behaviour of their own

All the crisis cycles mentioned above are reflected in the realm of communication and culture, yet in a very peculiar manner. Like culture, communication is - and this is a novelty in economic history - at the epicentre of the shift in the technological paradigm and on the path to the sustainable consumption of the future. They are a substantial part of the knowledge society.

Certainly, the circumstantial crisis and glut in advertising has affected the audiovisual and print media. Yet all this is unfolding against a “cushion” of a steadily burgeoning demand throughout the decade before the recession (and in some ways even in the midst of it) since they are the relevant beneficiaries of technological changes with new agents. In few sectors is this true.

2.1 A growing sector until 2008 and on hold

a) According to the Ministry of Culture, there were 569,800 people in Spain employed in the culture sector in 2008 (approximately 2.8% of all jobs), a figure that had grown by 13.8% over four particularly strong years in the field of arts and entertainment, “other activities” and, to a lesser extent, RTVE or public television. In contrast, the number of jobs in publishing, the press, film and video was down percentage-wise, but rising in absolute terms.

There were no fewer than 70,109 companies in 2008, 18% more than four years before, although 83% of them had no salaried employees or had fewer than 5. Revenue from cultural activities was 31.146 billion euros and intellectual property brought in 39.404 (29% from informatics and advertising). The Ministry calculated its share of GDP at 3% and of Gross Value Added (GVA) at 3.2% (Yearbook of Cultural Statistics, Ministry of Culture, 2009),⁷ 38.7% of which came from the press and publishing (12.059 billion euros) and 30.3% of which came from audiovisual and multimedia (9.417 billion). None of this masks the fact that 2008 was a very bad year, 2009 even worse and 2010 unknown.

b) The global **culture industries** market, which encompasses digital cultural content, grew in the four years prior to 2008 at a yearly rate of 6.6% on average, making it one of the most dynamic markets in the global economy. In 2008, this figure reached 1.16 trillion euros.⁸

In Spain's case, the culture' industries business volume in 2008 was 15.858 billion euros, a growth of 3% per year between 2004 and 2008, albeit with a certain backsliding in 2008, compared with the previous year.⁹ All signs point to an almost certainly worse slump in 2009 across virtually all sectors, especially those most affected by the definition of the business model - recorded music and film. At any rate, their “cushion” allows them to fare somewhat better than other sectors buffeted by the crisis.

c) In Spain, the **digital** sector is making headway fast and partially displacing earlier media. It grew 82% from 2003 to 2008, compared with 15.8% overall for culture industries. The digital content culture industry brought in 4.982 - almost 5 - billion euros in 2008. Whereas digital content accounted for 20% of the entire culture content industry in 2003, five years later this had risen to 31%, a third of the total revenue, with a growth - during an era of recession - of almost 16% compared with 2007. In 2008, the driving sectors were online advertising (up 26%), DTT and videogames - the most dynamic item in the digital subsector, which now includes free and (freemium type) micro-payment online games.

The general ICT area behaved in a similar fashion. It maintained a certain momentum during the global crisis because it incorporates innovation at a faster pace than other sectors (new technologies, falling prices, new countries and emerging markets, etc.) and is a tool for improving productivity. In Spain's case, ICTs receive the most foreign investment, channelling up to 11% of the projects;¹² yet they still plummeted 9% in 2009

Table 1. Cultural content industries in Spain: trends in revenue, 2003-2008 (in billions of euros and annual increments)

	2003	2008	Increment in the five-year period (%)
Publications	6.965	7.864 ¹⁰	12.9
Audiovisual (RTV)	4.677	5.526	18.1
Videogames *	465	744	60.0
Music	457	254 ¹¹	-44.4
Film/video	1.052	860	-18.2
Online advertising	75	610	713.3
Total	13.691	15.858	15.8

* Not including hardware.

Source: Observatori Nacional de les Telecomunicacions i de la Societat de la Informació (National Telecommunications and Information Society Observatory) (ONTSI), 2009.

and are expected to slide 1.5% in 2010, according to the IDC consultancy firm, in contrast to global investments in technology, which grew by 2.9% in 2009.¹³ There is a danger that Spain will not insist on committing to R&D or industrial challenges but rather to social adjustments whose only metaphors refer to tightening belts and parts of a pie.

The medium-term trends are clear even in the thorny world of music. According to the ASIMELEC's report,¹⁴ online music distribution amounted to 2.586 billion euros worldwide, up 24.1% compared with 2007. In 2008, 21% of all revenue from the recording industry came from online distribution. Of course, this still does not solve the problem of stabilising artist-producer-distributor-user relational models.

At any rate, confidence is not merited in Spain's case. Alongside the advantages of its cultural tradition, its language's status in the world, the presence of a handful of large companies and many SMEs, etc., there are several hurdles facing the digital culture industry, such as an internet penetration rate below the European average, lack of a technological culture, groups distant from the new systems, weak cultural demand, etc.¹⁵

Table 2. The digital cultural content industries world-wide: trends in revenue, 2003-2008 (in billions of euros)¹⁵

	2003	2008	Increment in the five-year period (%)
Publications	271.478	305.998	12.7
Audiovisual (RTV)	202.293	290.721	43.7
Videogames*	18.863	83.514	342.7
Music	28.875	25.648	-11.1
Film/video	62.448	70.839	13.4
Online advertising	10.017	50.365	402.7
Total	593.974	782.086	31.6

* Not including hardware.

Source: Observatori Nacional de les Telecomunicacions i de la Societat de la Informació (National Telecommunications and Information Society Observatory) (ONTSI), 2009.

d) The trends in household spending reflect cultural demands that were soaring until 2008 in the case of communications (item 8 in the INE's Household Budget Survey) and saw significantly growth in the case of leisure, entertainment and culture (item 9), data which are confirmed by the most specific item in the Ministry's Yearbook.

e) However, a **strong internal reorientation** is taking place within household cultural spending in terms of intra-sector competition. Books and the press account for only 19.4% of all household expenditures on culture, while audiovisual and internet accesses and devices are the main beneficiaries. They now account for 40.7%, still a long way from cultural services (TV subscriptions, video rentals, museums, entertainment), which have now reached 30%.

Contrary to the widespread notion of a totally free culture of communication and culture, these items represent a growing expense, especially in terms of access (hardware) and enjoying specific content, to a lesser extent.

f) **Public spending** has also been growing in recent years.

Public cultural spending, especially by local and regional entities, which are the main decision makers, rose 41% in four

Table 3. Family budget survey, 1998-2008 (% of total family budget and amount, 2008)

	1998	2003	2008	Familiar budget 2008 (bill. euros)
8. Communications	1.25	2.36	3.04	36.8975
9. Leisure, entertainment and culture	6.69	6.71	6.89	16.2524

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE), 2009

Table 4. Estimation of household expenditure on culture

	2000	2003	2007
Household expenditure on culture. (Billion euros)	9.3099	11.2513	16.6125 3.2% of household expenditure
Spending per inhabitant	232.1 euros	268.4 euros	372.2 euros

Source: Ministeri de Cultura (Ministry of Culture). *Anuari d'estadístiques culturals* (Yearbook of Cultural Statistics), 2009.

Table 5. Public cultural spending in Spain (millions of euros, % vertical and euros per inhabitant)

	2003	2007	Contribution 2007	€ per inhabitant, 2007
State Admin.	795.3	990.8	15%	22.3
Regional	1,217.8	1,976.3	30%	44.4
Local/Provincial	2,645.8	3,613.6	55%	81.3
Total	4,659	6,581		148

Source: Ministeri de Cultura (Ministry of Culture). *Anuari d'estadístiques culturals* (Yearbook of Cultural Statistics), 2009.

years. Public spending (6.581 billion) is only a quarter of what households spend on culture (16.612 billion) and, although it grew by 41% in four years, it did so more slowly than household spending (47%), which is why the device and subscriber culture is making inroads. This does not include RTVE's public services (about 1.2 billion between subsidies and debt in 2008).

Public spending on culture definitely stagnated or fell in 2008 and above all, in 2009. The forecast for 2010 envisages spending to be trimmed back between 10% and 20% in almost all institutions.

2.2. Communication and ecological crisis

As for the **ecological crisis and the crisis in resources**, because of the nature of the new century's culture and communication as services with limited media use, they are profiting from a type of sustainable production that is very frugal with material resources, compared with their benefits. A few raw materials are exceptions, such as columbite, from which tantalum (used in almost all electronic devices) is extracted. The role of newspapers and books (large-scale devourers of forests) is partially giving way to more intangible supports such as e-books.

The unlimited production of content with the decreasing consumption of finite resources and limitless virtual storage for a sporadic immaterial use point to a greater eco-efficiency and more sustainable use in line with today's challenges, in addition to the multiplier effects on the value of human capital.

2.3 The crisis of overproduction in communication

The circumstantial crisis or cyclical crisis of overproduction

crisis is real, but would not be very troubling if it weren't for the uncertainties of intra-industry competition and business models that will have to be stabilised.

The cyclical crisis is expressed in at least two ways. First, by a **glut** of channels, media, programmes, rebroadcast content and online newspapers, etc., whose costs the market cannot absorb. And, secondly, with the somewhat more than circumstantial crisis of a central form of payment for the media system, particularly, **advertising**.

Subsidies and the rising debt of regional RTVs are responsible for the partial recovery of the audiovisual system and despite budget cuts in 2009 and 2010, their offer has grown (new television channels such as those in Murcia and Asturias, or second channels). To this should be added the RTVE's forced subsidy model.

Media workers have been affected. The "2009 Annual Report on the Journalism Profession" by the Madrid Press Association (APM) noted 5,155 journalists in the official records of the unemployed and 6668 job-seeking journalists.

2.3.1. The glut in content

The glut in content is evident in all the media; demand would have grown even more without the crisis, although never at the brutal pace of supply. At any rate, it was also clear that uses would be complementary in some cases and substitutional in others, within the limits of how much time is available each day.

In effect, new consumption habits have arisen at a certain speed: the analogue audience has been replaced by the generalist free-to-air DTT audience and complemented by internet radio, yet eroded by theme and subscriber channels; tradition-

Table 6. Structure of the audience by medium, indicator and period
(% of the population older than 14 years old)

	1998	2003	2008
Newspapers	36.9	39.7	42.1
Magazines	53.2	53.1	53.3
Radio	53.5	57.9	53.1
Television	91.2	90.7	88.5

Source: General Media Study. AIMC

al radio has been complemented by internet radio; traditional paper reading formats have been complemented or replaced by on-line reading; listening to CDs has been replaced by downloads or streaming, etc., and yet in most cases this is not paid for.

The media's stabilisation during the decade, the slight improvement in a few media (radio and magazines) during the crisis and the penetration of the internet are some of the data that stand out.

In **television's** case, there is an unsustainable free-to-air TV on offer of more than 1300 channels, a decision made by successive governments in an exercise of irresponsibility. The vast majority of them are local, in addition to online channels, but there are six private groups competing for free-to-air DTT at a national level.

This is joined by the slowdown in subscription contracts for digital channels, ADSL and cable, despite telecom operators' offers; losses in private regional models already up and running; waning audiences for public regional channels and their growing deficits; and local TV in non-primetime hours that faces fierce competition from national chains. And a TV company that was flourishing – RTVE – was stripped to dress up private competition in an unprecedented exercise in privatising public space and media concentration.

There are no problems in television demand, although its distribution is changing; demand is growing. According to Impulsa's Yearbook, TV consumption in 2008 had already reached 3 hours and 47 minutes. Despite the loss of young viewers and falling percentages of viewers, audience consumption is growing, as is revenue, although redistributed among more agents, especially when theme stations are gaining ground.

Whereas television revenue was 4.359 billion euros in 2003 (31% of which corresponded to subscriber TV – satellite and cable), in 2008 it was 5.64 billion euros, with subscriber TV accounting for 41%.¹⁶

In the case of newspapers, print newspaper reading grew in the decade and was joined by 6.4 million digital press readers

Table 7. Trends in penetration. Latest wave, February-November 2009

	1997	2007	Feb-Nov 2009
Newspapers	37.7	41.3	39.8
Supplements	32.4	24.9	21.9
Magazines	54.7	49.4	51.3
Radio	55.0	54.7	55.3
TV	90.7	88.7	89.0
Internet	0.9	36.2	34.3

Source: EGM: Twelve-month period, February to November 2009.

– a social success (representing nearly half of all print newspaper readers), but an economic hole because of the lack of revenue. Even with a slight growth in circulation during the decade, the entrance of all newspapers online and the advertising crisis are problems.

As can be seen, there are no problems in demand, yet there is a problem of paid demand and unmet preferences in demand. Therein also lies the dilemma for journalist organisations: being present means a deficit, but not being present means disappearing.

2.3.2. Declining advertising

Revenue from advertising has not been able to respond to the glut in television, which dilutes its effectiveness, nor to the side effects caused by the crisis in the consumer goods and services sector as a whole, with a consequent drop in advertising investment as the expendable expense that it is for most companies in times of recession. The press has been hardest hit in this area.

In fact, many years before today's deterioration of the conventional advertising model, advertisers had turned their attention towards unconventional media, which already accounted for 52.4% of all advertisement spend in 2008, although these unconventional media haven't been spared by the recent slump either. Conventional media fell by 11.1% and unconventional media by 4% (Infoadex 2009).

For their part, the press fell by 20% in 2008 (especially affecting the free press), magazines by 14.5% and TV by 11%. In turn, the internet grew by 26%, although it still only accounted for the modest figure of 619 million euros. In the case of unconventional media, some fell slightly and others, such as gifts, fairs, sports sponsorship, corporate publications and catalogues, practically went under to the benefit of more personalised or cheaper types (Infoadex 2009). 2009 was even worse, with an average decline in conventional media of 26.6% in the first nine months, which especially affected TV and the press.¹⁷

Boosting audiences, the prices of the pay press or television

subscriptions is no solution to this situation, because household economies are also going through hard times.

2.3.3. The lack of under-consumption

The household tendency to under-consume that is typical of crises is turned on its head in communication: communicative opulence during a full-blown crisis and low-cost use (only connection costs) in computing fields, in sharing and access to platforms and social networks.

In other words, in the knowledge era household economies are defending themselves from the risk of under-consumption by varying their focal points towards intra-social communication (face to face or online), non-paid content or content used free on the internet. This last measure connects two underlying trends: the unlimited technical potential for the cheap extension of knowledge, with a trend to zero-marginal costs, and old and new generations' questioning of the capitalist accumulation of knowledge. We should not forget that the quality of modern human capital is precisely the result of the pact of the systemic social regulation model (described earlier in this article) and which is being questioned today.

Of course, there is a lot of junk in the free social cyberspace, yet this is compounded by the infra-information of the unpaid press media and even the breakdown of professional values in the sectarian and doctrinaire mass media.

In any case, subscriber media should not complain too loudly about the medium term. Their experience of the intensification of multiple accesses and communications is collective training that is preparation for future remunerated consumption in terms of advertising and payment, although the culture industries and the media will have to win customers over by differentiating their quality and professionalism from what can be obtained free on the internet. It is not a useless time for the future valuation of capital; it is a time to prepare for a future explosion.

At any rate, a phenomenon that has hardly been studied up to now must be taken into account. Culture enterprises would now find new markets in non-finalist demand and intermediate services from institutions and companies in all areas (health and transport, etc.) because audiovisuals and communication are now strategic functions in almost all sectors' production. The creation of social networks with economic themes, relational wikis for managing reports or for teaching, educational videogames in different professions, museum multimedia, etc., has been a new open market for several years now and is growing exponentially.

The same applies to the new, already active music markets: especially concerts and secondary uses (mobile, audiovisuals, etc.).

2.4. Communication and financial crisis

The financial situation that started in 2007 has slowed down the restructuring of the media system that was in progress, although the mandatory actions to be carried out by TV (replacement of analogue by digital TV over time) were an

unavoidable challenge, in comparison with the slow road hesitatingly taken by the press.

The media's indebtedness due to their adaptation to technological changes has been aggravated by the financial crisis within a context of uncertainty about their own business models, making profitability and, of course, credit returns impossible.

The financialization of Spanish media companies had already taken place, which meant financial capital was in a strong position to drive communication, formerly linked closely to individuals or families. The explosion in the stock market and entrance of financial capital (be it foreign or Spanish investment banks or pension fund managers) in its share capital "kicked off a process in which the financial prevailed over the productive", as Núria Almiron has said, which would only encourage short-term gains, their vulnerability, the reduction of social responsibility, over-valuation in the capital market at the start and a disproportionate collapse of real assets later.¹⁸ The foreign presence is represented by Mediaset (Berlusconi), Bertelsmann, Agostini and Televisa, etc., as another counterpoint.

The result of all this (market problems, financialization, financial problems and regulatory compliance for DTT investment) was the basis for the internal financial capital pressure on the Zapatero government in two directions: to sweep RTVE from the advertising market and to authorise the concentration of companies that has already started within the realm of TV (the absorption of Sogecable by Telecinco, the discussions between Imagina and Antena3/Planeta) as a forerunner of those that may take place in other areas. Especially vulnerable was Sogecable's owner Prisa, whose sale of assets, especially its interests in local television, was not enough to cover its huge debts, and MediaPro, committed to an aggressive investment policy.

2.5. Crisis of business models, cognitive capitalism and socio-cultural regulation

We are facing a techno-cultural change. In the midst of the digitalisation process or shift in technological paradigm, the media are undergoing the as yet to be stabilised process of on-going innovation in uses, contents and technologies.

The result of the combination of the internet, wireless communication, digital media and new software has made it possible for interactive horizontal networks to connect the local and global at any time¹⁹ and they are joined by new vertical developments specialised professionally or by tastes (music, theatre, etc.), mixed formats, rapidly changing uses and user involvement in generating and transmitting content, etc.; some users even generate nanomedias.

Indeed, and contrary to what has been suggested, amateur proposals cannot dominate the field. Traditional media and the culture industries, historical owners of know-how, have already reacted to highlight this by reconciling old and new media. Yet, in the meantime, the emergence of the internet and user practices (P2P sharing, YouTube, Google, networks, etc.) have called all business models into question.

This breaks through all known barriers in terms of the amount of information being processed, access, interactive relationships beyond geography, possible narratives, forms of knowledge and time and space coordinates, etc., yet, since it is a time of transition, traditional uses are not disappearing and new forms of remunerating social uses, i.e. the productive-reproductive model for attending to them, have not yet stabilised.

2.5.1. Culture industries, the media and the internet

The past decade's technical change has brought with it the integrated management of multimedia content, mobile terminals and users, burgeoning bandwidth, increasingly intelligent benefits and growing interactivity. And the results are apparent: the gradual separation between infrastructures and services offered with open connectivity systems, the creation of services over other services, the digitalisation of content, the difficulty of launching new, unprofitable services, falling costs,²⁰ globalisation and the emergence of a new value chain in which telecom operators are ubiquitous.

As regards content, the arts and culture industry have found a new means of expression, but the media, adapting from multi-purpose journalism to formats with multiple windows opened up to them (online publication or broadcasting, telephone, platform), the opportunity for contact in any area within product definition takes precedence, for the time being, without remunerative markets.²¹ Economies of scale will be combined with network and club economies that give value to the products themselves, while each network has a different value according to its use.

Francisco Campos was absolutely right when he said of the first phase of the crisis that "media firms were hit hard by the global financial economic crisis when they were in the midst of changing growth with some structural repercussions, which turned into swift transitional change, without yet becoming transformational change",²² i.e. with constant changes but not many substantial disruptive innovations or ruptures in business models or in the commercial system.

However, there may be other hypotheses for the final stage of what is expected to be a slow recovery from the crisis. There will be times of profound change, risk and exploiting opportunities to displace the competition; of maturing formulas for stabilising several business models in the value chain, which will result in processes of concentration and consolidation (or the marginalisation) of institutions such as public service entities, and will put the very nature of intangible capital to the test in one sense (socialisation of knowledge) or another (expropriation).

2.5.2 The tricky combination of reinventing business models, respect for public space and distribution in the value chain

Business models have not been defined, nor do they offer clear results. Added to the uncertainty over the general economic crisis is the fact that internet activities have yet to reinvent user relations.

The Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade²³ foresees that the sale of music based on streaming and its financing through affordable monthly subscriptions or advertising will be of interest and that, as a new way of listening to music, it will also stimulate music sales via the internet and mobile phones.

At any rate, there are many models of profitability being tried out and, as J. C. de Miguel said (2008), some of them will eventually establish themselves. An attempt at a taxonomy would be advisable:

a) Mediating advertising

- Advertising or sites that allow music to be listened to free in exchange for viewing ads (Lala, MySpace, LastFM and Pandora) or their inclusion in catch-up TV services (TV on demand and re-runs) of the chain's editors; and every conceivable combination in terms of amounts of added revenue (advertising, downloads, subscriptions, merchandising and concert tickets) such as Spotify's.

• Advertising combined with fees and pay per view;

- Copyright owners' distribution agreements with shared-use video or TV programme platforms to access part of the advertising revenue;

b) Subscriptions

- Subscriptions (Sky in Britain or downloadable online press as in the US).

- Premium access for listening to music on the computer or mobile phone (iPhone and Android).

c) Pay

- Pre-paid downloads (from Google and Facebook).

- Free access to written information, with paid access after a certain number of articles have been read free of charge (The Financial Times only allows free access to up to ten articles per month).

- Pay per download or unit (iTunes, e-music) or discounted rates to listen to streaming (0.00097 euros per song in the UK) or different fees for professional or personal downloads (SGAE).

- Payments of one euro to listen to music for 24 hours.

d) Others

- Returns to user for services (e.g., for new subscriptions, etc)

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In addition to this, the internal competition within each industry and among industries is already fierce and, with respect to the internet, is capitalised almost entirely by oligopolistic business operators, search engines and platforms: the first two being collectors of fees and metering and the second two wholesale advertisers.²⁴

In the future, the readjustment in the distribution of revenue will depend as much on the pressure on household and public consumption spending as on the readjustment between the current beneficiaries of the value chain (vendors of hardware and systems, transport operators, key search engines, preferential servers and platforms, all of which are penetrating each other's areas) and content producers - today's big losers - who, rather than negotiating their positions in the chain, are curious-

ly lashing out against users who are fed up with not benefiting from lower prices.

It is surprising to see that the old press and flow model (Flichy) is gradually adapting and incorporating a certain localisation of the national press; whereas the ease of freely capturing editorial readers makes it more difficult to recognise the different units offered by publishers in the market.

In any case, the adaptation of advertising, the spread of flat rates (as a minimum base) and, based on this, a metered economy according to a quota of uses (Premium) or units (box office) may be the direction in which the combination of models will go.

2.5.3. New public space, cognitive capital and socio-cultural regulation

Nowadays, the opportunity for democratisation that comes from the interoperability of content, instantaneity, mobility, interactivity and usability is usually expressed as a communication overload from a large storehouse that makes it difficult to select cultural, entertainment and news content of interest and clashes with visibility, differential, creativity, consistent quality, reliability and contrasting sources, etc.

Although it is also true that "entering cyberspace involves accepting the decentralisation of information, the de-synchronisation of activities and dematerialisation of exchanges," it is more difficult to accept that it is "impossible [for cyberspace] to be concentrated in the hands of an industrial elite/media" or that "it does not accept attachment to any form of power, be it geographical, economic or political." In fact, the exact opposite is true.²⁵

Since "the global network of interconnections and the capacity to exchange information in real time (...) requires new forms of social coexistence, founded on the equal, free and independent relationship of its own members",²⁶ communication systems are part of power and unequal societies. The reality is that the global institutions that are experts in communication and knowledge management wish to turn the new system into a central area for this new accumulation and make the notion that the new system only depends on the use made of it seem naive. And this is happening regardless of the great social opportunity for a hypothetical and conflictive leap that would benefit the democratisation of knowledge and power.

We may be dealing with two fields that will be differentiating themselves in social communication: intra-social communication with a general repertory and communication for society, whether dominated by advertising or of a selective nature, paid-for, innovative, decisional, status-based, etc.

For their part, European institutions are taking measures in two directions. On the one hand, sensitive to pressure from the culture industry, they have already committed to persecuting downloads, whether by penalising servers or users as each state sees fit. On the other hand, they seek to facilitate agreements among the major players to establish common platforms for new business.²⁷ Their preferences are not on the side

of public space.

3. By way of a prospective general hypothesis

Communication and culture have been hard hit by the recession and financial crisis. However, they are expected to come out of it earlier and in better shape than other sectors, thanks to the sustained trend in demand and social disposition towards techno-cultural change. Nonetheless, in the medium term it is costly to channel structural mutations when implementing the new paradigm, the techno-cultural change itself, intra-sector readjustment with competing hegemonies, uncertain business models and the redefinition of a new socio-cultural regulation around stakeholders, rules and copyright.

In any case, in the long run and in terms of underlying trends, as a sector communication and culture have in their favour their nature as the driver of techno-cultural change, their tendency to take off (with a growing weight in the economy and demand), their gradual eco-efficient use of material resources and their desire to expand culture and communication as adaptive enzymes for society as a whole, with the resulting synergies for the entire system.

All this makes the communication and culture sector one of the elements that may contribute to the general exit from the crisis in the accumulation and profitability of the system and a relevant beneficiary in a possible recovery, which is expected to be slow and rampant. This hypothesis cannot overlook the sector's lack of autonomy and that also, *ab initio*, those who control the value chain (operators, search engines, preferential servers, aggregators and platforms) and today are blocking the emergence of a diverse supply will continue to be favoured. Generators of content and users will have to confront them to make the cultural system viable.

We shall see whether the conflict is settled in a new stage of cultural and communicational development or whether the opposite will be true. It will depend on the stakeholders, the social initiative for proposals and resistance and on public policies.²⁸

Notes

- 1 Seminar given at the 2nd Congress of the Spanish Communication Research Association. Malaga February 3-5, 2010.
- 2 Jean-Claude Trichet, President of the European Central Bank, reported that approximately 10 trillion euros of public aid has been made available to private banks around the world. In the European Union's case, the measures to support banks equalled 31% of the EU's GDP and in Spain's case, 22% of the Spanish GDP (one trillion euros), since the aid authorised by the ECB came to 220 billion euros, although only a small part has been used, given the Spanish banks' relatively healthy state. *El País* (10-11-09).
- 3 See TORRES, J; GARZÓN, A. "La crisis financiera: guía para entenderla y explicarla", ATTAC España, Madrid, 2009.
- 4 As for the long waves theory, the hypothesis should be posed of the simultaneous overthrust between declining technologies and the coincidence with the expansion of other new ones, which makes it difficult to know whether their economic effects in terms of productivities, profitability and accumulation are in a stage of decline from an earlier long wave or from another, new rising wave.
- 5 See ALBARRACÍN, D. *Capitalismo tardío: ¿Quo Vadis? Problemas contemporáneos para la teoría de las ondas largas*. A reinterpretation of Ernest Mandel's long-waves theory.
<<http://www.vientosur.info/documentos/Quo%20Vadis.pdf>>
- 6 BENSaid, D. "Y después de Keynes qué?" *Viento Sur*, no. 106. November 2009, p. 86.
- 7 Not by 4%, as has been claimed.
- 8 According to PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS (2008), "Global Entertainment and Media Outlook: 2008-2012",
<[http://kc3.pwc.es/local/es/kc3/publicaciones.nsf/V1/69A3DBAAE5284834C12574EA003CE883/\\$FILE/informe%20GEMO%202008-2012_%20Spain%20final.pdf](http://kc3.pwc.es/local/es/kc3/publicaciones.nsf/V1/69A3DBAAE5284834C12574EA003CE883/$FILE/informe%20GEMO%202008-2012_%20Spain%20final.pdf)>
- 9 See *Informe anual de los contenidos digitales en España 2008*, Ministeri d'Indústria, Turisme i Comerç i l'Observatori Nacional de les TLC i SI (Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade and the National Telecommunications and Information Society Observatory), Madrid, 2009, pp. 12-15.
- 10 Of the 321.72 billion euros, 4% of the total corresponds to e-books, according to the Ministry of Culture. "El Libro y las Nuevas Tecnologías. El Libro Electrónico". September 2009
- 11 A total of 29.2 billion, 11.5% of which corresponded to online and mobile sales, aside from the 309 million from live music.
- 12 Francisco Ros, Secretary of State for Telecommunications and the Information Society, also commented that the ICT sector accounted for up to 40% of the growth in the EU's productivity rate, with R&D investments representing a third. (Presentation of Fundación Telefónica's report entitled "La SI en España 2009". Agencias 22-12-09).
- 13 <<http://www.idg.es/dealerworld/IDC-pone-fecha-a-la-recuperacion-del-sector-TIC-finales-de-2010-/seccion-mercado/noticia-88975>>
- 14 ASIMELEC. "Informe 2009 de la industria de contenidos digitales". Consulted 15-01-2010.
<<http://www.asimelec.es/media/Contenidos%20digitales/II%20Informe%20CONTENIDOS%20DIGITALES.pdf>>
- 15 The ONTSI understands the "Digital Content Industry" in Spain to be made up of digital audiovisual services, digital video, film and music, interactive gameware (or video games), digital publications and portals.
- 16 GUALLARTE, C.; GRANGER, J. R. "El proceso de constitución del sector de contenidos digitales en España", *Telos*, no. 69. October-December 2006, pp. 85-86.
- 17 In effect, Digital Plus accounted for 1.541 billion – a certain stagnation - while cable with 347 million, IP with 185 million and mobile with 16.2 million euros were the pay formulas that grew the most, according to the Annual Report by the Telecommunications Market Commission (2009)
- 18 All media fell significantly. Film plummeted by 40%, magazines and Sunday supplements by 36%, TV by 28%, with even worse figures for regional television stations (-31.5%), newspapers by 27.1%, foreign advertising by 21%, radio by 18% and subscriber theme channels by 17.3%. In turn, the internet only grew 3.1% (Infoadex, Avances 2009).
- 19 ALMIRON, N. "La financiarización de los grupos de comunicación en España: el caso del grupo Prisa". Minutes from the 1st National Congress of the ULEPICC- Spain, 2009, ISBN 84-690-1432-3.
- 20 CASTELLS, M. "Comunicación y poder", Madrid, Alianza editorial, 2009, p. 88. The book uses the term "mass self-communication" in which the interpersonal and the mass overlap. It is not a broad enough term to cover the combination of interactive dissemination over the internet by many to many, point-to-point communication, mass communication and searches in virtual storage.
- 21 See RODRIGUEZ CANFRAC, P. "Tendencias en la industria de contenidos", *Telos*, núm. 69, octubre-diciembre 2006, p. 70-72.
- 22 This year, British channels (BBC, ITV, BT and Channel 4, etc.) launched a common platform on IPTV for access to their programmes on the internet with interactive management options, low-demand video and accesses to social networks.
- 23 CAMPOS, F. "La gestión de la transición del cambio mediático". In: CAMPOS, F. (ed.), *ob. cit.*
- 24 MINISTERI D'INDÚSTRIA (MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY) "Informe anual de contenidos digitales en España 2009", Madrid,
<<http://www.red.es/media/registrados/200911/1258625905407.pdf?acceptacion=e5a36a11167fa0fd8499c55b1da8a9db>>
- 25 Telefónica aims to charge Google – the dominant search engine, which controls 70% of all online advertising – for storing its services and applications on its network.
- 26 See PERICOT, J. "El ágora digital". In: *Informe de la comunicació a Catalunya 2005-2006*, Bellaterra, UAB-INCOM, 2007.
- 27 See PERICOT, J. *idem*.
- 28 On the one hand, Viviane Redding announced an agreement between communication service firms such as iTunes, Nokia and Amazon, and recording studios such as EMI and Universal as well

as several associations that manage authors' rights to generate internet music platforms, including a management model for authors' rights at a European scale. In the case of Spain, which is following in the wake of the British websites FindAnyFilm and Filmotec.com (Egeda) (which has a catalogue of some 1,200 Spanish films), the Spanish culture industry (including Promusicae with its five million songs) and the major US studios are preparing to launch a portal as a content aggregator in which it is easy to search and link to the online shops and portals of the studios themselves for paid downloads of both music and films in Spanish (national as well as American). (El País. Ramón Muñoz 11-10-09)

- 29 Elsewhere we have chronicled the social resistance and cultural policies needed for a landscape of techno-cultural change in terms of cultural diversity. See BUSTAMANTE, E.; ZALLO, R. "Conclusiones: las regiones ante las industrias culturales". In: BUSTAMANTE, E. (coord.) *Cultura y comunicación para el siglo XXI. Diagnóstico y políticas públicas*. Cabildo de Tenerife-Ideco 2007, pp. 263; and ZALLO, R. "Internet y cambios en el sistema cultural y comunicativo: revisar las políticas territoriales". Lecture at the meeting entitled "Las industrias culturales audiovisuales e Internet" in TEA- Santa Cruz de Tenerife 15-01-10. Pending publication.

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The economic impact of digitalisation and convergence in Spain's audiovisual sector

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Abstract

In this article, we will analyse the effects of digitalisation and convergence, both in the world of television and in the evolution of business models for firms in this sector. We will also refer to the convergence of business and technology in new intermediaries in the audiovisual market. Later on we will describe the public's increasingly important role and, finally, we will examine the possible scenarios for Spain's audiovisual sector in the second decade of this century.

Key words

Television, digitalisation, audiovisual, convergence, firm, audience, Spain.

Resum

En aquest article analitzarem els efectes de la digitalització i la convergència en l'oferta televisiva i en l'evolució dels models de negoci de les empreses del sector; també farem referència a la convergència empresarial i tecnològica dels nous intermediaris del mercat audiovisual; més tard descriurem el protagonisme creixent que està assumint el públic, i finalment suggerirem els escenaris possibles del sector audiovisual a Espanya en la segona dècada d'aquest segle.

Paraules clau

Televisió, digitalització, audiovisual, convergència, empresa, audiència, Espanya.

Spain's first taste of television came on 10 June 1948, during a technological exhibition at Barcelona's international trade fair. From this point on, developments continued until, on 28 October 1956, TVE inaugurated its daily television schedule. For half a century, the number of available channels grew slowly. From 1983, the public monopoly became a duopoly in some autonomous markets; in 1990 the transition to an oligopoly occurred, with the appearance of first three private channels. From the start of the 21st century, the market has enjoyed greater competition, at least for viewers with access to digital channels (García Matilla and Aranaz 2008; Prado [et al.] 2008).

An important milestone in the history of Spanish television was reached on 3 April 2010: the switchover to digital television. This brought about three fundamental changes: it improved screen quality, it encouraged the appearance of new value-added services, and it universalised the multi-channel home. On this date, television finished its journey from a system of offering channels to a supply and demand culture, with the public playing a decisive role.

Until now, the television market has formed the basis of the audiovisual sector; you only have to consider that the public spends an average of 226 minutes a day watching television

(TNS 2010), while the traditional alternative, the cinema, has much lower numbers: Spaniards only go to the cinema three times a year. New platforms have sprung up everywhere in recent years, above all computers and mobile telephones, which vie with television for the public's preferred way of viewing audiovisual products.

In this article, we will analyse the effects of digitalisation and convergence, both in the world of television and in the evolution of business models for firms in this sector. We will also refer to the convergence of business and technology in new intermediaries in the audiovisual market. Later on we will describe the public's increasingly important role and, finally, we will examine the possible scenarios for Spain's audiovisual sector in the second decade of this century.

A fragmented market

At the end of 1990, RTVE (through TVE-1 and TVE-2) monopolised 72% of audiences. Nineteen years later, Telecinco became the market leader, with a share of only 15.1%. The situation in 1990, with just a few analogue channels available

only via national terrestrial television, changed two decades later into a mosaic of highly diverse possibilities, driven by the transition from analogue to digital technology. Nowadays audiences enjoy channels with very different content (both general and thematic), geographical range (international, national, regional and local), distribution (terrestrial, cable, satellite and ADSL), ownership (public and private) and financing (public, subsidised and subscription).

The increase in competition has forced television companies to redefine their role because they now cannot “sell” mass audiences to advertisers (Gabszewicz [et al.] 2004). Consequently, they can neither obtain sufficient earnings to finance the payroll of thousands of employees nor pay for costly rights to cover sporting events and drama. The change in competition has been seen mainly in four aspects: the repositioning of each brand; a reduction in running costs; a search for alternative forms of funding to conventional advertising; and the start of the first steps towards concentration.

The brands’ new position has been driven by the appearance of channels with very varied market niches, taking audiences away from more general channels. Theme-based and local channels, which achieved a joint share of 4.8% of the Spanish market in 2002, increased their audiences to 20.6% at the end of 2009 (TNS 2010). Every fraction won by a themed channel represents a small loss for a general channel, until “channels for everyone” are in danger of becoming “channels for no one”.

As is the case with any market that sees a transition from scarcity to abundance, operators have been forced to reduce their focus, to choose a more delineated public. Strategic content-driven approaches can be based on ideological, demographic profiles, or on interests and preferences. Brands differentiate themselves and accentuate their identity (Park 2005; Hollifield 2006): they move from interesting the many a little to interesting the few a lot. Obviously, the transition has not happened dramatically and some channels still have programming that is aimed at a large number of viewers.

The reduction in running costs happens partly because of market fragmentation; boards of directors adjust their programming budgets to expected revenue: with audience ratings of less than 9% (which is the case with all private channels except Telecinco and Antena 3 TV) they cannot pay copyright holders or cinema and television producers the going rate from the era of oligopoly. In recent years, many contracts have been renegotiated and the extraordinary levels of inflation between 1990 and 2007 have ended, and seemingly for good.

Increases in efficiency thanks to new technology also help to control expenditure: digital technology brings reductions in production costs, management and distribution of content and boosts human productivity. Consequently, there are already some operators with market shares of less than 2% who nonetheless make a profit.

For these first success stories to become consolidated, television companies must find new alternative sources of funding other than conventional advertising. This need is due as much

to structural difficulties (audience fragmentation) as it is to difficulties with the current situation (advertising crises). On the one hand, the advertising “pie” is shared between more and more companies; on the other, television advertising has fallen by more than 31% in two years, from 3,470 million euros in 2007 to 2,380 million in 2009 (InfoAdex 2010).

Although the advertising sector is expected to recover in the next few months, television is losing its hegemony in advertising markets. In Spain it still controls 42% of total media expenditure but, significantly, in Great Britain the internet became the top choice for advertisers after half a century of television dominance.

The end of advertising on RTVE, effective since the beginning of 2010, has “liberated” 500 million euros and provides a lifeline for private operators. Autonomous channels are also likely to limit – and in some cases get rid of – advertising time. But these decisions will not be enough for many private channels to survive if they don’t find new sources of income, such as selling their content, interactive services or subscriber content for mobile phones and the internet.

Mergers and acquisitions are also an indirect consequence of digitalisation: the appearance of new channels has caused a noticeable slump in average profitability for the sector. Under such circumstances, managers always react in the same way: they try to concentrate businesses in order to reduce costs and recuperate any losses. Telecinco and Cuatro on the one hand, and Antena 3 TV and laSexta on the other, could become the two largest audiovisual groups in the Spanish market. If these mergers happen, the audiovisual landscape would be similar to those in our nearest neighbouring countries, in which two or three large audiovisual firms control a high joint audience share together for private channels.

With the current “merger fever”, which will affect small operators in the future, the large private companies (Antena 3 TV and Telecinco) are confident of recuperating part of their lost profitability, while the owners of more recent and smaller channels (Prisa and Mediapro) hope to resolve their excessive levels of debt. These activities are possible because, in 2009, the government modified the legislation governing concentration in the industry: it’s now legal for one shareholder to own various channels as long as its total audience does not exceed 27% of the market (Act 7/2009).

Media ownership concentration in the Spanish audiovisual market will have various consequences. First, the public will become aware of collaborative advertising agreements between channels that belong to the same company. However, the owners aim to respect the identity of each brand, and its viewers, at least initially, will not perceive a reduction in quality or in the variety of what is on offer. Second, television companies will offer more varied deals and packages to advertisers, possibly by broadcasting the same commercials simultaneously on various platforms. However, the perennial problem these companies will face is culture shock, aggravated by the different editorial profile of the merging channels.

Third, and finally, producers and copyright holders will have fewer buyers but these will be more solid, both economically and financially. They will therefore ease the current situation of price cuts and, in particular, the alarming delay in payments, which causes huge cash flow problems for content providers (Fernández-Quijada 2009). The increase in broadcasting hours will not be accompanied by a similar growth in production hours: the growth in audiovisual groups that own various channels, and the pressure for good economic results, will encourage channels to repeat entertainment and drama programmes.

If concentrated media ownership becomes consolidated, the main risks for the new market will come from the possible abuse of power by major players: their privileged position with content providers and advertising companies can make survival difficult for smaller organisations. If regulators are not vigilant, a return to the age of oligopoly will mean that imitation strategies reign supreme, pacts are made to share out the market and the current abundance of channels will become a landscape of only apparent variety.

The new intermediaries

As well as media directed at “end users”, some firms will act as intermediaries in audiovisual markets. The concept of the “intermediary” in terms of content is a useful tool for describing and analysing both the present and the future of markets (Hess and von Walter 2006). For example, Google aspires to organise information worldwide: it doesn't create content but makes it visible and available to audiences. Google's intermediary role has generated suspicion in the audiovisual sector because it could lead to an abuse of power.

Content available through Google is usually a *commodity*, in a market where the capacity to offer premium content is increasingly more decisive, as illustrated by those firms that have cemented their growth in exclusive sporting rights: BSkyB (UK), Canal Plus (France and Spain, amongst others), Foxtel (Australia) and DirecTV (North and South America).

Strict European regulation applicable to commercial channels has decreased their ability to make a profit from advertising when showing sports events and films. In fact, the legal framework has favoured the development of pay television and, to increase their capacity to attract investment, these channels have dedicated many resources to acquiring content that is particularly appealing to audiences. However, competition with rival companies can make these acquisitions unprofitable: in Europe, this phenomenon particularly affects football leagues.

Pay channels are increasingly finding themselves at a crossroads: they have to spend excessive amounts of money in their programming or they won't achieve sufficient numbers of subscribers. Internal investigations at British company BSkyB revealed that, years ago, it would lose half its subscribers if it

stopped offering Premier League games (Hammervold and Solberg 2006). Moreover, in addition to inflated sport broadcasting rights, there is also a legal issue: controlling bodies are usually opposed to long-duration contracts between channels and rights holders because they think that it's good for the public if the market remains open to new operators.

On the other hand, digitalisation and the development of new consumer devices have made it more difficult for those in the communication market to protect content copyright. The most common ways of breaking the law include music and film pirate copies and illegal sales, exchanging files peer-to-peer, piracy of pay television signals, access to subscription websites by false passwords, distribution of protected audiovisual content by video portals, and plagiarising newspaper content on the internet. The spread and diversity of international law in this field does not help to effectively clamp down on digital crime (Artero 2009).

The television syndication industry, which has a long tradition in the United States, is currently undergoing a notable transformation. The increase in the number of channels, which is much greater than the growth in audiovisual production, favours the development of syndicated programming and programme repeats and adaptations. Consolidating television on the internet and broadband could add new distribution methods for this market (Oba and Chan-Olmsted 2006).

Changes in the management of exclusive content have as much an impact on pay channels as on public television. When considering the industry alongside diverse sources of content, distribution and devices, four main business models can be identified (Berman, Abraham, Battino, Shipnuck and Neus 2007):

Traditional media. The core idea of this system is brand content (created by professionals) distributed through conditional access settings and specific devices. Nowadays most communication companies operate according to this model.

Closed communities. These are based on the distribution of content generated by users within a wall or environment with conditional access and via specific devices. Typically these are traditional businesses that allow contributions from users. For example, NTT DoCoMO has some 95,000 communities which access its service through their devices. And Comcast has just announced an agreement with Facebook to produce a television series with user-generated videos.

Hypersyndication of content. This is about making professional content accessible on open channels, without specific devices or access suppliers. Examples include American channels that offer content through their own websites and communal projects such as Hulu.

Aggregation of platforms. This more extreme model is based both on user-generated content as well as on open distribution platforms. It's the most disruptive model, since neither the traditional producers nor distributors hold any advantages. In this case, it's obvious that aggregators are guided above all by users, such as with YouTube, MySpace or Second Life.

In the next few years, a clear winner is unlikely to emerge from these four business models. In fact, all that can be hoped for is that the different companies opt for different models and unique combinations that play to their strengths and traditional assets. As a result, the market landscape will be extremely varied and even chaotic.

Whatever happens, the internet will increasingly become an important platform for distributing videos to users. It's also hoped that video will capture a growing portion of internet traffic. This offers opportunities for new content providers and online distributors to efficiently reach a wide audience but it also presents challenges for traditional producers and distributors. These companies are losing control over what users see and when and how they see it, including their own protected content. The clash between opportunities and challenges for internet video production and distribution can also be seen in the legal aspects. The intersection between the growth of broadband and innovative methods of creating and distributing online video will continue presenting new challenges for production and distribution business models (Meisel 2009).

With an average of three and a half hours of daily viewing, the big players of the audiovisual world seem relatively unbothered by user-generated content on the internet. Producers do not think this phenomenon will bring about the emergence of a community-based model of content distribution but rather another path towards piracy. However, the question is whether this model can be ignored, taking into account the fact that the public creates and distributes its own programmes with extraordinary ease (Mabillot 2007).

Sites that distribute videos on the internet have moved from occupying a marginal space on the sidelines to a central position in the media landscape. Available videos often include a mixture of content generated both by users and professionals, and channels fear that the availability of content on the internet will depreciate television consumption. Before the growth of more or less independent video sites, such as YouTube, channels responded by offering their content on their own sites or on groups, such as Hulu.

The effects of internet distribution have been noticed on the patterns of traditional television consumption, especially among the younger population. Although there is evidence that traditional ways of watching programmes have been replaced by internet use, the time invested in watching programmes on the web vastly exceeds the minimal reduction in traditional viewing. In any case, time invested grows when conventional television can be seen on the channels' websites (Waldfogel 2009). Both platforms – television and web – can offer free proposals for users, unlike operators who charge, such as Amazon, iTunes, Netflix or TV Everywhere.

Most of the new business models in this sector have not been very profitable to date. Technological advances (in most cases, broadband currently does not allow for optimum viewing), changes in consumer habits (mainly migration towards the internet by younger audiences) and uncertainty about piracy

justify attempts to find new strategic possibilities in the audiovisual industry.

It's still impossible to judge whether new consumer windows – the internet, mobile phones, video consoles or any other method – will end up either dominated by traditional operators (the large communication groups) or controlled by new intermediaries. The former have gained a dominant position in content production thanks to their competitive distribution advantages. New intermediaries, on the other hand, are attempting to position themselves in other functions on the value chain to capture part of the revenue. In this competitive environment, audiovisual firms that have been dominant until now have resisted entering into distribution networks with new operators for fear of weakening the entrance barriers.

New audiovisual intermediaries are trying to get as much revenue as possible from the new value chain. In this battle, in-between traditional audiovisual firms and consumers are telecommunications operators such as Telefónica or Verizon; information technology firms such as Microsoft or Apple; internet companies such as Google and Yahoo; and the consumer electronics manufacturers, from Sony to Nokia.

Within this scenario, audiovisual firms act as the fifth fundamental player. Historically they've been the most important player but it's difficult to predict what their strategic position will be when new business practices, technological developments and consumer habits are consolidated. The moment of truth will come when internet users in developed countries get closer to one hundred per cent penetration, not just based on the younger populations, which do not coincide with the greatest purchasing power. Also by then technology will have generated disruptive innovations whose effects are difficult to predict in the long term.

Communication companies are redefining their role, both in society and in their own core business. They often see themselves as audience sellers and content providers more than as technology firms. Their research and development is heavily outsourced to external technological and information technology providers. Their biggest threats come from legal and regulatory aspects (including copyright), technological uncertainty, audience fragmentation and from some restrictive practices by the competition. The most innovative firms suffered a tough reversal in fortune when the technological bubble burst but their leaders know that their future requires them to embrace and completely integrate digital strategies (Dennis, Warley and Sheridan 2006).

The public's role

When redefining themselves, communication firms must consider the special role that users play, as these have gradually become more active not only in consuming but also in configuring and creating their own audiovisual content.

Direct payment for audiovisual content marked the start of a

relationship with the audiovisual medium in which television subscribers could show their preferences. In this first stage, taking out or cancelling a subscription to a channel ("churning") were the only ways in which they could show their satisfaction. A channel's fundamental strategy centred on gaining their subscribers' loyalty and finding out what caused people to cancel. With the development of multi-channel offers, when digital television became integrated into cable and satellite, subscribers could choose their own packages of channels, according to any given offer. This freedom for users to show their preferences grew. The development of pay-per-view systems allows users to indicate their preferences for individual content, and also introduces flexibility in when the content is consumed (Herrero 2003).

Pay platforms for cable and satellite were the first to introduce more flexibility into their television schedules, offering multiplex channels on which repeats from the main channel are broadcast. Afterwards, they incorporated the possibility of pay-per-view films and sporting events. The second step, known as "video on demand", increased users' opportunities to access content whenever they wished.

In pay television, the idea of flexible consuming at the user's demand really took shape with digital video recorders. Digital video recorders record lineal content on a hard disk, which allows users to enjoy it whenever and however they choose. Users choose what they want to record through an electronic programme guide in a way that introduces and stores their preferences; the DVR also can make recommendations.

The leader in the market is TiVO, which has managed to identify the activity of the digital video recorder with its brand. Together with Carlson, the DVR clashed with three established practices in the television business. First, the flow of content on traditional schedules; second, the idea that television viewers watch adverts that are broadcast between programmes; and third, the need to measure audience numbers to establish ratings and set prices for advertisers (Carlson 2006). However, central to the DVR's concept is *timeshifting*, where the viewer can avoid advertising.

The potential for personalisation allowed by TiVO leads to the paradox mentioned by Carlson. While users apparently control what they want to watch without any advertising, the DVR will increasingly allow companies to process audience facts, such as demographics and television preferences, which are worth a lot to both content providers and advertisers. Users therefore gain control over programming but television channels and advertisers can control individual information and, therefore, target advertising.

With the development of mobile media for enjoying audiovisual content, users not only enjoy flexibility in terms of when they listen to or watch something but also where they do so. With mobile phones and iPods and other portable methods that allow multimedia downloads, the differential advantage over other methods lies in what is called *placeshifting*, or overcoming barriers of space to access content. Overcoming time

and space limits can therefore be summed up in the concepts of *placeshifting* and *timeshifting*, possible thanks to the development of media that allow increasingly more personalised audiovisual offers (Steinbock 2005).

This evolution clearly demonstrates that audiovisual content is moving away from being viewed as only for mass consumption, as was the case at the beginning. The very nature of the medium, and the financing behind the activity encouraged this belief. However, the personalisation of consumer methods (time and place) and the possibilities of showing preferences have led to a new generation of audiovisual content that offers more possibilities for satisfying the needs of individual users, as well as giving them a major role.

Developments in how audiovisual content is distributed on the internet have brought about an enhanced role for users, who now not only choose what they want to see (and when and where) but who can also create and distribute content. In fact, the barriers of time and space are broken via the internet but users also acquire a more important role. Over the last few years, an interesting process has also been developing: from the spreading of audiovisual content from the programming grid to the internet, we are now evolving towards the creation of content on the internet by users that then goes onto the small screen. Successful examples of this already exist, showing how the internet has become a breeding ground for potential talent for channels, with interesting new stories and unknown talent becoming known through video blogs.

As a method of distribution, the internet is an extremely flexible network of networks. Moreover, it's not restricted to certain geographical territories and its very structure makes it universal and accessible from anywhere. Legal barriers (range of distribution, concessions, etc.) and geographical barriers are non-existent; only language presents difficulties for content travelling equally to any place in the world.

The first forms of User Generated Content (UGC) date back to the beginning of the 1980s with *Usenet*, a global discussion network, which enabled users to share comments and experiences on a given topic. At the end of the 1990s, "ratings sites" were created: users ranked themes or matters according to a number of criteria, from physical appearance to professional competence. Finally, discussion forums were another early form, allowing users to communicate with each other on different themes. UGC was all about primordial forms of participation, which favoured a certain configuration of content and made use of the internet's own interactivity.

However, with the evolution of Web 2.0 a more demanding concept was developed of what is now understood as user-generated content. As a concept, users can be defined by three main elements (OECD 2007). First, user-generated content can be published without restrictions or barriers, but it is not done for interpersonal communication, like email. Second, it requires a certain creative effort: good for drawing up new content or adapting already existing content. Finally, the creation of this content remains outside professional practices and routines.

Types of UGC include blogs, wikis, podcasting and social networks.

User-generated content is also called consumer-generated media (CGM). This definition widens the generic consideration of content to that of the media, with its more integrating function as a communication market agent (Interactive Advertising Bureau, 2008). UGC has specific characteristics, some of which can be applied especially to audiovisual content. First, the content gives rise to a strong feeling of ownership of the medium. It allows relationships between common cultural interests and also facilitates social integration. The result is the recognition and development of amateur creators, who are then discovered by agencies, producers, internet sites and communication firms (OECD 2007: 36).

UGC blurs the boundaries between editor and user, with the resulting problems of authorship and attribution. Consequently, this has given rise to content piracy, minimising the perception of illegality and crime. On the other hand, content is frequently of low quality, although sometimes it can be considered a hotbed of talent.

The accessibility of the internet, low production costs and zero marginal costs mean that it has become a convenient platform for distributing homemade audiovisual content. The internet's very nature makes creative endeavours possible with few barriers. Before the arrival of the internet, for audiovisual products to be produced and accessed by an audience it was necessary to go through a large number of competitive processes which often, sometimes for commercial reasons, stopped them from coming to light. However, many of these processes act as quality controls. In the absence of obstacles to creativity, a lot of user-generated content aims specifically to rebel, be irreverent or erotic: aspects that would make it difficult to broadcast on television channels and that, to a certain extent, is the result of a desire to make a claim, to integrate socially, etc. A lot of this content is not artistically or technically of high quality.

Some producers have already made the leap from internet to television. One of the first successful cases was *Qué vida más triste* (What a sad life). This programme, broadcast on laSexta, originated in a video blog created by Rubén Ontiveros, scriptwriter for the ETB programme *Vaya semana* (What a week), who started recording small homemade pieces for the internet. With hardly any budget, Ontiveros wrote the scripts, recorded the videos and posted them on *YouTube*. The programmes were a kind of personal blog where he humorously recorded how his week had been, his problems, relationships with friends, etc. The series' first online phase attracted 50,000 visits a week. The producer K2000 decided to give this video blog a television format on laSexta.

Digitalization and the development of the internet as a platform for audiovisual content have brought about a changing role for users, ranging from the flexibility of when they watch or listen to something (overcoming barriers of time and space) to the creation of new content, hotbeds of talent for audiovisual firms.

From the point of view of both the industry and the market, companies must prepare themselves in order to compete in a setting characterised by versatility and uncertainty. Until now, competitive advantages have been based on size, fame and acquired knowledge, on production capacity and the relationship with suppliers and producers. These aspects lose value against other, more decisive assets in the new audiovisual scenario: speed, flexibility, an innovative culture and the commitment and motivation of the people involved.

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The crisis in youth radio consumption in Catalonia

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Abstract

For approximately a decade, traditional Catalan and Spanish radio has been noting a gradual loss of radio penetration among the population's younger segments. This phenomenon, which is affecting most developed countries, is closely related to the development of ICTs and communication networks. This paper aims to examine the causes of this crisis by studying broadcast radio reception among young people aged 14 to 24 and living in Catalonia.

Key words

Conventional radio, youth, the internet, digital environment, reception studies.

Resum

Des de fa aproximadament una dècada, la ràdio convencional catalana i espanyola ha detectat una pèrdua progressiva de penetració del mitjà entre els segments més joves de la població. Aquest fenomen afecta la majoria dels països desenvolupats i està relacionat fortament amb el desenvolupament de les TIC i les xarxes de comunicació. L'objectiu d'aquest article és aprofundir en les causes d'aquesta crisi a partir de l'estudi de la recepció radiofònica dels joves de 14 a 24 anys residents a Catalunya.

Paraules clau

Ràdio convencional, joves, internet, entorn digital, recepció.

1. Introduction

As noted by the General Media Study (*Estudi General de Mitjans* or EGM and the *EGM Ràdio Catalunya*),¹ young people aged 14 to 24 in Catalonia have been listening less and less to the radio for a decade. This loss of audience is a phenomenon that also is playing out throughout Spain in general and even in other international markets, which concerns both public and private operators (EBU-SIS 2008 2-3).

A thorough examination of radio's role in the new digital environment must be undertaken if it is to survive; otherwise, its future is unclear (Tacchi 2000, 289-298). This process is key

to developing strategies aimed precisely at reuniting the media and the youngest listeners, obvious examples of a new kind of consumer who is increasingly mediated by communication technologies (FUNDACC 2009b); (Tabernero, C.; Sanchez Navarro, J.; Tubella, I. 2008, 273-291).

This article presents the most significant conclusions drawn from the *Informe sobre la Ràdio i els Joves. Problemàtica actual i tendències de futur* (Report on the radio and young people. Current issues and future trends), prepared by the Observatori de la Ràdio a Catalunya (GRISS-UAB),² the result of an collaborative research agreement signed by the Associació Catalana de Ràdio (Catalan Radio Association-

ACR) with the support of the Catalan Government's Department of Culture and Mass Media.

The scope of the object of study in Catalonia was the degree to which the radio ecosystem has developed in relation to other markets in Spain on the one hand, and the international recognition that public Catalan radio has received because of its level of experimentation and innovation on the other. The study's main intentions can be summarised by the following points:

- To explore and identify the parameters that define the current relationship between young Catalans and conventional aerial radio
- To investigate and verify young people's expectations of the radio medium in Catalonia
- To analyse young people's current radio use and consumption habits within the new media context
- To determine the short- and medium-term opportunities that new technologies are offering for incorporating young Catalans into the radio audience through both terrestrial and online radio
- To propose measures Catalan radio stations can take to boost radio consumption by this population sector

To achieve this, we have constructed a methodology that combines quantitative and qualitative parameters. In relation to the former, we have analysed data from the 1996-2008 calendar years provided by the Asociación para la Investigación de Medios de Comunicación or AIMC (Mass Media Research Association) in the *EGM and EGM Catalunya Ràdio*, a private body responsible for publishing a follow-up of the State radio offer in Spain, as well as the results for the 2008 calendar year of the *Baròmetre de la Cultura i la Comunicació* (Culture and Communication Barometer) by the Fundació Audiències de la Comunicació i la Cultura or FUNDACC (Culture and Communication Audiences Foundation), in which the major operators take part and which defines the Catalan population's media diet. Both studies are benchmarks for Catalan radio programmers and have provided us with a snapshot of the audience's evolution in quantitative terms. In order to complement, further examine and detect trends in youth radio consumption

in Catalonia, we also designed a telephone survey in which 1002 subjects³ distributed throughout the region of Catalonia participated; the sample was based on indicators from the Idescat (Statistical Institute of Catalonia) corresponding to the distribution of the region's 14- to 24-year-old resident population in 2007.⁴ In this sense, our survey addresses the gender perspective that is not included in the benchmark studies that measure the Catalan radio sector's audience, although it does not examine the influence of its socio-economic aspects.

The resulting sample appears in Table 1. Although an important factor was representing the young Catalan population as a whole, the subsequent exploitation of the data revealed no significant differences between provinces.

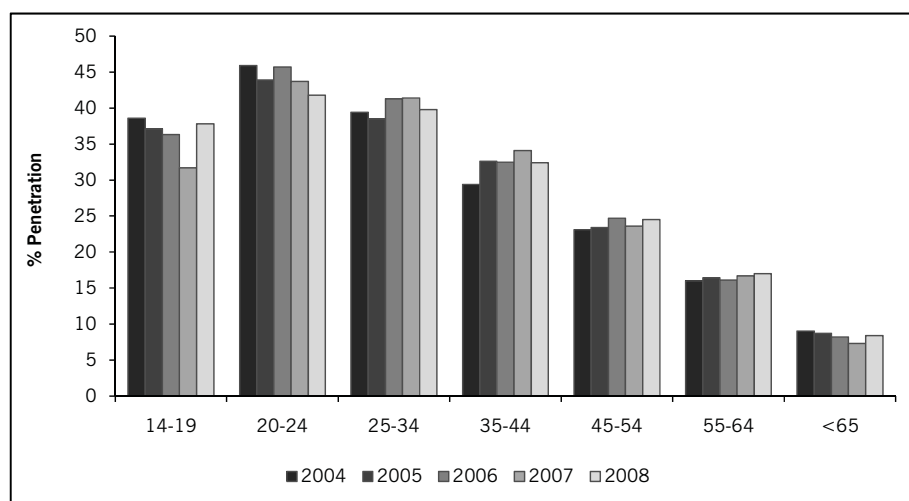
The qualitative side was approached from the perspective of reception by organising and conducting two focus groups (one with 14 to 18 year olds and the other with 19 to 24 year olds)⁵ that consisted of eight people each and focused on different age groups, since the circumstances surrounding them were quite dissimilar. The younger age group was composed of economically inactive secondary school students, while the older age group included university students, two of whom held jobs. Although the number of males and females in each group was supposed to be the same, there were five females and three males in the 19- to 24-year-old focus group; however, we believe that this imbalance does not affect the reliability or quality of what the group had to say about radio consumption.

In keeping with the Delphi method, the broadcasting viewpoint was achieved through a professional meeting with the eight heads of programming from the main public and private music channels operating in Catalonia, since data from audience survey studies suggest that this is the favourite programming model of young people of these ages. At the meeting, these professionals reflected on the medium's current status and brought to the table their particular vision of the youth audience's future. The Delphi's main themes revolved around the relationship between radio and the music industry, the involvement of new technologies in defining the medium's role in this new context and the profile of captive and lost listening audiences.

Table 1. Distribution of the telephone survey sample according to age group and province

	Males		Females		Total province
	14-18	19-24	14-18	19-24	
Total Barcelona	82	123	77	119	400
Total Gerona	42	61	39	58	200
Total Lerida	41	62	38	58	200
Total Tarragona	41	62	39	59	200

Source: In-house.

Figure 1. Trends in music radio audiences in Catalonia by age group, 2004-2008

Data: Percentage of the total horizontal universe. Cumulative audience from February to November, Monday to Sunday.

Universe: Persons 14 years old or older residing in Catalonia.

Source: Prepared in-house based on data from the EGM Ràdio Catalunya.

2. Radio in young people's imagery

Radio's symbiosis with music has deep roots among 14 to 24 year olds, although the focus group participants noted that they regarded the medium as being more appropriate for adult audiences. In this sense, the *EGM Ràdio Catalunya* revealed that the music radio listener's average age in Catalonia is currently around 38 years old,⁶ with the highest population segment share corresponding to 20 to 24 year olds (41.8% of all listeners), followed closely by 25 to 34 year olds (39.8%) and 14 to 19 year olds (37.8%), while fourth place was occupied by 35 to 44 year olds (32.4%). Music radio is clearly facing a steady loss of listeners in the youngest audience segments.

Nevertheless, music radio is still a prescriber of music, in line with the technology and gadgets available to the youngest listeners, as was mentioned within the context of the focus groups. These listeners commonly consult hit lists, usually online, as a resource for updating their own playlists. Thus, the radio provides very interesting information, while making it easier to research and then download the chosen tracks. However, this seems to be the online medium's only attraction, because these listeners do not consume podcasts, since they are unaware of their subject matter and view downloading them as complicated.

The discussion groups showed a lack of an emotional attachment to the radio, which, moreover, can hardly compete with the portable audio devices (MP3 players, MP2 players, iPods and mobile phones, among others) that allow them to manage content personally. This is these devices' most highly prized feature, compared with the radio, which offers a repetitive and unchanging continuum. Other studies have shown that MP3 technology is the favourite format for listening to music and

that radio is only consumed in certain situations (Albarran [et al.] 2007, 92-101).

3. The radio in young people's media diet

Young people's media and cultural consumption displays a marked trend towards new media and in general, the most modern technology (Arbitron & Jacobs Media 2007). Mobile phones are the most highly valued of all their devices because of their multiple uses, while traditional media such as television and radio are described as old. Young people's lives are increasingly being mediated by information and communication technologies (Livingstone 2002, 30).

Given this scenario, it is indisputable that radio's waning social penetration may be further aggravated by its audience's lack of rejuvenation. In fact, radio's presence in young people's media diet seems to be purely circumstantial and always comes after the internet and television in the main. The situation in Catalonia is very similar to that of other European countries, such as France, which saw penetration fall by 18.4% in the decade from 1997-2007, or Denmark, with even more alarming figures, given the 40% plunge in the 19- to 29-year-old audience in seven years (EBU-SIS 2008, 3). Aside from these examples, the panorama on the European continent is not too different from the one in the US (Arbitron & Jacobs Media 2007; Albarran 2007, 92-101).

What is happening in Catalonia? According to the research team's ODEC survey, 90% of the young people interviewed said they consume radio on a regular basis, preferably on weekdays (98.1%) rather than weekends (74.5%). While the *Baròmetre de la Cultura i la Comunicació 2008* also reflects this trend, it

found that 75.2% of the respondents listened to the radio on weekdays, compared with 24.8% on the weekends. This confirms that the type of radio use varies according to time of week, which is also true of other media (McClung et al. 2007, 103-119).

Anticipating this disparity in percentages between the two studies, which is the result of the respondents' perception of what they say they do and what they actually do, our survey requested specific information about the programmes they listened to most often - a maximum of three and in order of preference.

The responses to these questions allowed us to determine more accurately the distribution of young people's radio consumption during the week and their degree of recognition of the radio on offer. Regarding the first question, the most popular programmes fell mainly in the period from Monday to Friday (74.4%), as can be seen in Figure 2. This was followed by the weekly option (17.1%), i.e. programmes broadcast during the week that offer the latest sports news, in this case. The lowest percentage corresponded to the weekend (8.5%) with more varied types of content. With some data closer to the Barometer's, this confirms that young people listen to the radio more often on weekdays than on weekends.⁷ Our study did not reveal any attitudinal differences by gender and/or age group.

Music content rules young people's radio consumption, regardless of whether reception is by conventional aerial radio or online. At present, the internet option is still a practice with shallow roots⁸ and therefore circumstantial when deciding what to listen to. Aspects such as programme, D.J., time slot and others have little specific weight in determining audience, regardless of gender. Thus, music radio ranks above other types of programming (81.4% of all responses).

However, an analysis of our survey data shows that, aside from musical content, there are other areas that arouse a certain interest among this audience sector, such as news

(13.1%), comedy (12.7%) and lastly sport (11.6%). From a gender perspective, while the news reached a similar percentage of males and females, this was not true of comedy, which was preferred by more males (15.4%) than females (9.9%), or sport (19.6% for males and 3.2% for females). Following sports news and broadcasts is key to interpreting the presence of generalist radio among some of the favourite options, largely corresponding to males. Although participation showed an insignificant rate (3%) in the area of favourite content, it should be noted that this is the only area in which females (3.8%) scored higher than males (2.2%).

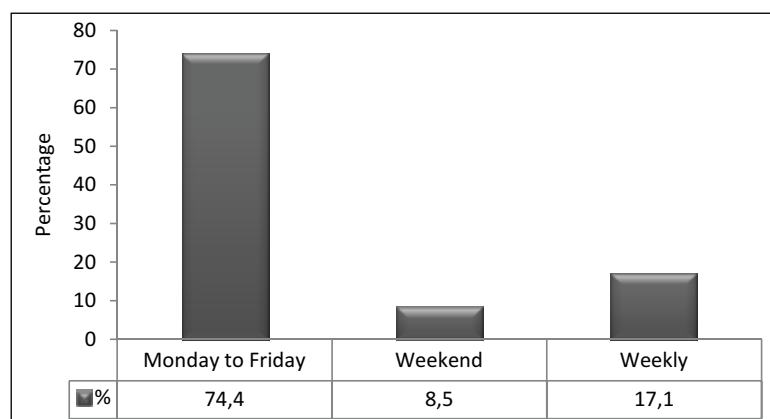
3.1. Quality of listening

The degree of recognition of the programmes, based on identifying the radio products young people claimed to consume, allowed us to verify the quality of listening for this sector of the audience. Table 2 shows the response rates for each option.

An analysis of these data points to trends not only in terms of what young people consume but also in terms of what their consumption is like. The fact that the percentages for correctly naming programmes are higher in the second (60.62%) and third options (48.07%) in relation to the first (40.10%) shows loyalty to very specific communication proposals that clearly belong to this audience sector's radio diet on the one hand, and a fairly undiversified youth consumption on the other, since most individuals found it hard to name more than two programmes correctly. Only 208 individuals were capable of naming a third programme.

In this sense, one aspect of particular significance is the percentage corresponding to the "Don't know/No answer" category (45% of the total), since the respondents were self-defined radio listeners. Their inability to provide a single piece of the most basic data - a programme name - enables us to assert that radio serves as background noise or accompaniment and that young people do not listen to it very attentively.

Figure 2. Weekly distribution of the 14- to 24-year-old Catalan audience according to favourite programme



* The sum of the values is greater than 100% because one individual can be in two or more categories.

Source: Radio and Youth Survey (The OBS and ODEC, 2009).

Table 2. Recognition of radio programmes by 14- to 24-year-old Catalans, 2009

Programme of recognition	Correct responses	Total responses	Recognition rate
1st option	399	995	40.10%
2nd option	234	386	60.62%
3rd option	100	208	48.07%

Source: Radio and Youth Survey (The OBS and ODEC, 2009).

3.2. The evolution of the youth audience

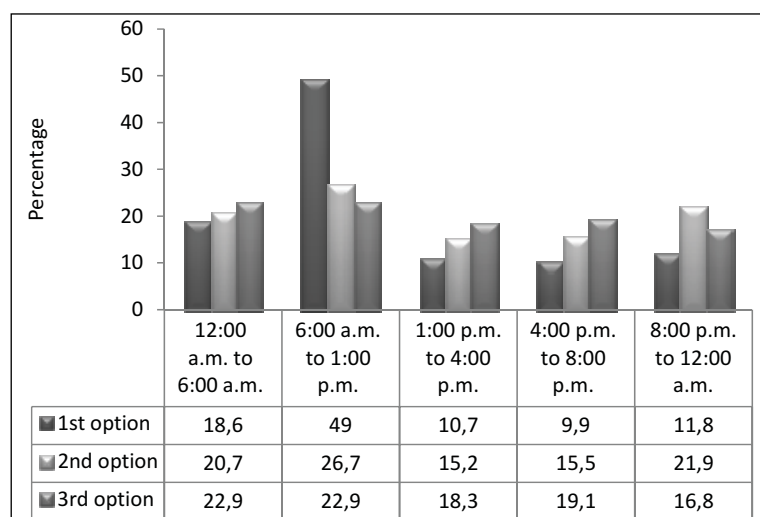
As for the dynamics of young Catalans' radio use and consumption, 90% of the young people who participated in the ODEC survey stated that they listened to conventional radio mainly on private transport (79.5 %), at home (70.4%) and, to a lesser extent, on public transport (30.5%) or at work (15.3%). Consumption while travelling by either public or private means was very common.

According to the *Baròmetre de la Cultura i la Comunicació 2008*, 45.1% of young Catalan listeners devote "3 to 6 hours" to media consumption in general and 23.1% said they spent "six hours or less". Consumption is lower within this framework, as the ODEC survey reveals. A total of 42.7% of the respondents said that they listened to the radio between 15 minutes and 1 hour a day on weekdays, followed by 25.3% who said they spent 1 to 2 hours doing so. As for the weekends and holidays, the former variable is 28% (14.7 percentage points lower), while the latter is 20.7% (4.6 points lower). Although the distance between the two options is narrower during the weekend, a significant proportion of young people recognise that they spend less than an hour a day listening to the radio.

Matching correctly named programmes to their broadcasting slots allowed us to conclude that the morning slot (6:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.) is the time of day with the most young listeners in general. In other words, morning programmes are the most popular among young people who admit to listening to the radio, a trend that corroborates the general data in the *EGM Ràdio Catalunya* and the *Baròmetre* benchmark studies. However, an analysis of the ODEC survey allows us to observe several other interesting aspects.

According to Figure 3, with the exception of the morning slot (6:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.), the other slots are less popular, although popularity rises slightly at night (8:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m.) and in the early morning (12:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.), even though the incidence varies according to option. However, it should be recalled that only 100 people were able to name a third programme correctly.

Our data confirm the highlights in the *EGM Ràdio Catalunya* and the *Baròmetre*, as we explain below. The distribution curve for total cumulative audience according to time and programming type from February to November 2008 (*EGM Ràdio Catalunya*) indicates that each type of programming reaches a second peak audience at different times of day. For music

Figure 3. Distribution by time slots according to 14-to-24-year-old Catalans' three favourite programme options, 2009

Source: Radio and Youth Survey (The OBS and ODEC, 2009).

radio, this falls between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., while for news, it falls between 9:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. As for the generalist radio, the second peak begins around 11:00 p.m. and ends at 1:00 a.m.

According to the *EGM Ràdio Catalunya*, young listeners' general consumption habits do not differ greatly from the radio audience as a whole, when time slot distribution is compared with favourite programmes (see Figure 3, the time slot distribution reference for the three options). A comparison between the two results seems to underscore the notion that the youngest segment's consumption is in line with the general audience's parameters.

The study conducted by the *Baròmetre* on young people and the radio furnishes other perspectives of the distribution of weekly radio consumption according to programming model. Firstly, 14 to 24 year olds primarily consume music radio during the day.

Secondly, music radio reaches its peak audiences between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Both of these time slots coincide with those in the *EGM Ràdio Catalunya*. It should be noted that this *EGM* refers to the audience as a whole.

Thirdly, percentages for the generalist radio remain steady throughout the day, overtaking music radio during two different time slots in the programming: from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. The latter coincides with the sports programmes that Catalan radio stations began to air at 11:00 p.m. in 2008; national radio stations broadcast similar programmes at midnight. Except for night and early morning, the generalist radio fluctuates less than music radio does. On this occasion, the results once again converge with those from the *EGM Ràdio Catalunya*. In fact, at least as regards peak audience, 14 to 24 year olds follow the same pattern as other listeners.

4. The impact of new radio technologies on the radio/youth relationship

Immersed in technological change, young people are using today's communication devices and tools and have naturally integrated the internet, mobile phones and portable music players into their daily routine (Livingstone 2002, 15). But what about radio? Is conventional radio's waning young audience a result of a change in reception devices or new consumption practices with podcasts or on-demand listening?

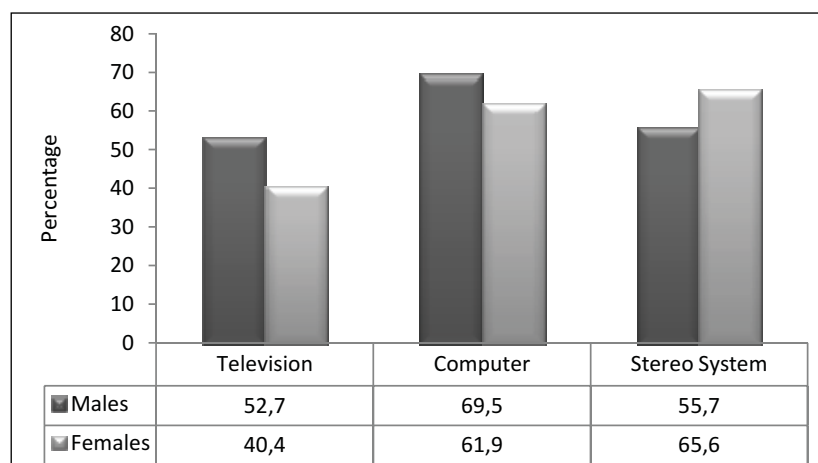
One possible cause for the slump in the youth radio audience which can be ruled out is related to access to reception devices, both analogue and digital, since 91.9% of respondents stated that they had at least one radio at home. Similarly, the penetration rate for DTT reached 84.3%. Both devices use radio signals.

There is a high penetration of stereo systems in homes in general (93.9%) and in bedrooms in particular (60.5%). Computers are also present in many bedrooms (65.8%) and, to a lesser extent, so is television (46.7%). However, the devices vary by gender, as shown in Figure 4, which shows the importance of computers to both genders on the one hand, and the relevance of stereo equipment in girls' bedrooms, on the other.

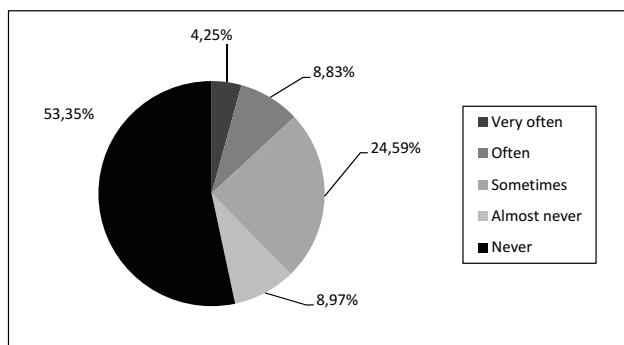
Although 92.9% of the sample said they listened to music at home, they also do so while travelling on either private (79.5%) or public (63.4%) transport. Individually used devices such as MP3 players are young people's main source of music (72.8%). In fact, 85.6% owned such a device and almost half of the respondents (49.9%) claimed to use it every day. Our data showed no significant differences between genders.

Car radios (73.4%) scored slightly higher than MP3-type devices as a source of music. Likewise, most private vehicles (63.4%) have CD players. It is noteworthy that nearly half the respondents, without significant gender distinctions, use

Figure 4. Devices in the bedrooms of 14- to 24-year-old Catalans, 2009



Source: Radio and Youth Survey (The OBS and ODEC, 2009).

Figure 5. Loyalty of visits to radio station websites by 14-to 24-year-old Catalans, 2009

Source: Radio and Youth Survey (The OBS and ODEC, 2009).

mobile phones to listen to music (45.2%), with 14 to 18 year olds (56%) more likely to do so than 19 to 24 year olds (38.1%). The high penetration of mobile phones in this population sector is overwhelming (98.1%), as is the percentage for internet access (97.9%). In fact, most young people consider the internet a device for leisure time (97.1%).

One prominent feature of the relationship between young people and the internet is their membership of social networks (72.9%) such as Facebook or MySpace. The balance clearly inclines towards females (79.6% of all female respondents versus 66.6% of the males). Around a quarter of all young people (24.1%) wrote blogs, although females (25.9%) were once again more active than males (22.3%). After crossing age and gender, we observed that 41.7% of all female respondents aged 14 to 18 maintained a blog (compared with 26.7% of the males this age). By segmenting the population into two age groups in the study, a pronounced difference in blogging between the younger segment (33.1%) and older age group (18.1%) can be seen.

Another interesting statistic is that 74% of the young respondents use P2P sharing networks such as eMule, eDonkey or Kazaa to download files of all kinds. Music is by far the most downloaded item (96.9%) from these networks, followed by films (63.6%) and software programs (50.4%). However, pay music downloads remain at 4.9%.

4.1. Online radio

According to radio operators, the internet is where the hopes of "capturing" the young lie. Thus, it is noteworthy that, according to the survey itself, over a quarter of all young people (27.6%) are unaware of the existence of radio station websites: only 72.4% could name a station with a web space. The results show that young men are more knowledgeable about websites (74.8%) than young women (69.9%), which may explain why fewer than half (46.7%) declared that they visit radio station websites and only 28% of these can be considered a loyal audience, describing their frequency as "often" or "very often", as shown in Figure 5, however, with a higher proportion of males to females.

Regarding internet radio consumption, 35.6% of all young respondents could be considered cyber-listeners, compared with the 64.4% who still listen to conventional radio. Furthermore, internet listening can be described as sporadic (56.4% of bitcast consumers). It is alarming that the percentage of young Catalans who claim to listen to internet radio every day is no higher than 5% (4.62%).

In relation to the type of listening, 88.1% of online listeners say they listen to live programmes, 24.2% listen to snippets of songs or on-demand programmes and only 13.8% use podcasts (generically intended to mean downloading and listening later.) From the gender perspective, girls are more active in the different listening possibilities offered by the internet.

Online radio is mostly consumed on weekdays. In fact, 35.9% of those who listen to bitcasts state that they do not listen to them at the weekend or on holiday. The most common length of listening time ran from 15 to 60 minutes, both on weekdays (47.2%) and holidays (28%). This was followed by one- to two-hour sessions on weekdays (20.5%) and holidays (15.4%). Consumption of less than 15 minutes accounted for 11.9% of all listeners on weekdays and 7.9% on holidays. A total of 10.1% of all declared online listeners said they listened for more than two hours a day on weekdays and 9.7% stated that they listened for more than two hours when on holiday.

5. Radio appropriation according to reception type

Although the impact of online listening is still low and sporadic, we have compared its trends throughout the day with conventional radio, as shown in Figure 6. The sum of the values exceeds 100% because the options were not mutually exclusive.

The first observation is related to the strength and exclusivity of conventional radio during prime time in the morning time slot. This is when its leadership is uncontested, since although its dominance extends until 4:00 p.m., at the same time its percentage distance from online reception gets narrower. From early afternoon until early morning, 14 to 24 year olds' radio

consumption combines conventional and online radio, although the latter has higher percentages and interesting nuances from the gender perspective. The afternoon time slot is females' favourite time for listening online (57.2%), while night is the time males prefer (51.6%).

This circumstance may be logical to some extent, since the possibilities for internet connection probably rise during the afternoon and night, as the school and/or work day comes to an end. It should be recalled that online listening takes place in a fixed site, since 88.7% of all young people who do so claim to use the modality to listen live and, therefore, probably from a personal computer.

Irrespective of the reception mode, most 14- to 24-year-old Catalans consume 15 minutes to 1 hour of radio Mondays to Fridays on average, as seen in Figure 7. As listening time increases, the percentage values fall in line with online reception. This is surprising since the stability required by an internet connection, which could lead to longer consumption periods, is not reflected in the data. Furthermore, online reception overtakes conventional radio when listening sessions do not surpass 60 minutes.

The most common length of listening time during the weekend remains from 15 minutes to an hour. Furthermore, conventional reception continues to outpace online listening, in keeping with the rest of the week. Yet overall, its influence drops, since 35.9% of the respondents claimed not to listen to internet radio on the weekend, compared with 6.4% on weekdays. No significant differences were seen in relation to listening time from the perspective of gender and age group.

Conclusions

In most developed countries, industrial research on radio audiences indicates a trend towards fewer young listeners; this is true in Spain as well. Furthermore, public and private operators

perceive this problem as hard to solve. Yet, at first glance, the data in our study may seem to contradict radio operators' benchmark studies on audiences and consumption, since one of our findings is that young Catalans **do listen to the radio**. What happens is that, in the main, they **do not listen on a daily basis and they listen sporadically**, primarily during the morning time slot (while going to school or work) or at night (at home), which reinforces the results of other studies conducted primarily in England and the United States (McClung [et al.] 2007 103-119).

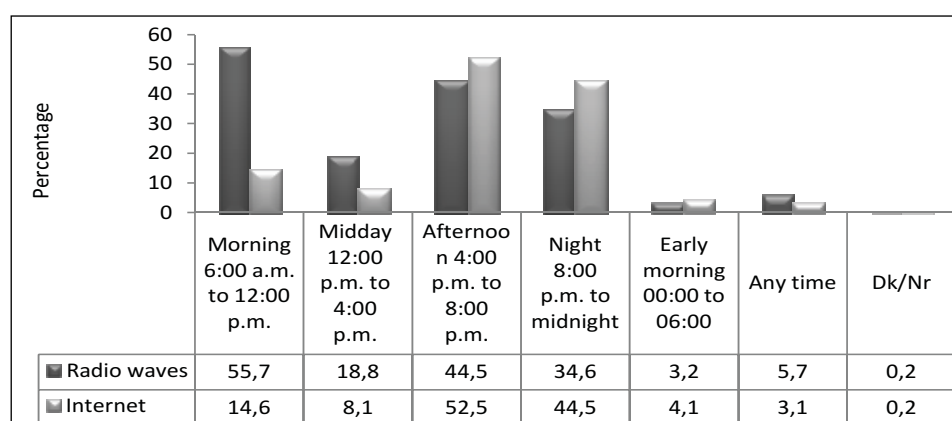
What is true is that although young people listen to the radio, **they are listening less**. But this is not just happening to radio; as a generational group, young people today tend to switch activities often and even multitask. One might say that, as a group, **they are multifunctional** and one consequence of this is the reduced attention span they devote to the tasks they perform. From this perspective, it could be said that what has changed is the quality of listening and programmers should take this into account, spoiled as they are by a kind of listening that takes place within an almost exclusive regime.

Coinciding with the benchmark studies, we observed that **music content is preferred** over others (sports, information, comedy, etc.) and logically, music stations and/or chains are also listened to most. This interest is reflected in music radio consumption, reserving generalist listening for sports content.

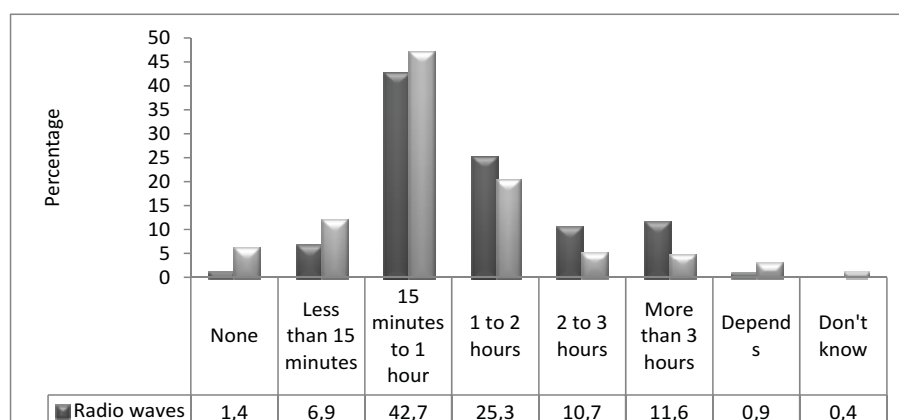
Within this context, the **emergence of the internet and young people's natural incorporation into the digital environment has exacerbated the crisis**. On the one hand, young people have devices at their disposal that capture conventional radio signals via radio receivers or DTT. On the other hand, they are technically equipped for exposure to online radio content, although the data demonstrate its limited impact. In this sense, conventional radio has limited uses at this digital stage (Albarrán 2007 92-101).

Radio is no longer emotionally close to young people. The **emotional disengagement** of 14 to 24 year olds from the radio,

Figure 6. Listening times of 14-to-24-year-old Catalans according to type of broadcast, 2009



Source: Radio and Youth Survey (The OBS and ODEC, 2009).

Figure 7. Radio listening times of 14-to-24-year-old Catalans by reception modality during weekdays, 2009

Source: Radio and Youth Survey (The OBS and ODEC, 2009).

reflected in the form of consumption, will have a short-term impact on general audience ratings. Radio has far to go but not much time to put together production strategies for new elements of service and identification. The youngest segment shows a depersonalisation; in surveys they are unable to recall the names of most programmes or their DJs; they therefore lack an imagery of personalities who predict their musical tastes, as was true of the 1980s and 90s.

Although it was not the aim of our study, it can be extracted from many of the data obtained that radio programming in Catalonia, as elsewhere, finds itself at a complicated crossroads. Young people don't become hooked to an overly conservative and highly automated musical programming. The hope lies in the internet, yet the merger with the internet must be filled with programming proposals that awaken interest and meet the expectations of new generations; from this perspective, gender and age will become fundamental.

Notes

- 1 The *Estudi General de Mitjans* (EGM – General Media Study), developed by the Mass Media Research Association (AIMC), has become the benchmark on media consumption by the Spanish population. Its data largely determine broadcasters' programme policies and strategies. Since 2003, the AIMC has conducted a specific EGM for Catalonia, *EGM Ràdio Catalunya* (25,000 personal interviews of Catalan residents over 14 years of age) divided into three annual waves.

- 2 L'Observatori de la Ràdio a Catalunya (OBS- Catalan Radio Observatory) is part of the Grup de Recerca en Imatge, So i Síntesi (GRISS-Image, Sound and Synthesis Research Group), a consolidated research group recognised by the Catalan Government (2009SGR1013 Group), and attached to the Department of Audiovisual Communication and Advertising at the Autonomous University of Barcelona.
- 3 Design of the survey by the OBS and developed by the specialist firm ODEC.
- 4 The last official census available when the fieldwork research was being conducted.
- 5 Participants were recruited by the VI-VA Comunicació firm and the research team was responsible for its dynamics and implementation.
- 6 According to data from the EGM and EGM Ràdio Catalunya, in 2001 the average age of the music radio listener in Catalonia was 34.5 years old. In the past seven years, there has been a progressive aging of the music radio audience, which reached 38 in 2008.
- 7 These premises are also verified by the *Estudi d'opinió pública sobre els mitjans de comunicació a Catalunya 2009* (The 2009 public opinion study of the mass media in Catalonia), prepared by the Catalan Audiovisual Council (CAC), which showed a lower radio consumption on weekdays (23.4%) than on the weekends among the 18- to 34-year-old population.
See <<http://www.cac.cat/web/recerca/estudis/llicitat.jsp?MjU%3D&MQ%3D%3D&L3dIYi9yZWNIcmNhL2VzdHVkaXMvbGxpc3RhdENvbnRlbnQ%3D#>> [Consulted: 29 September 2009].
- 8 According to the *Estudi d'opinió pública sobre els mitjans de comunicació a Catalunya 2009* (CAC 2009) 18 to 34 year olds are those who most listen to internet radio. The sample population for this study was 18 to 65 years old, i.e., the 14- to 17-year-old population did not take part.

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Comparative analysis of audiences and cultural consumption of foreigners in Catalonia¹

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to provide an overall view of foreigners' media consumption in Catalonia as part of all that is offered by the media and culture, to show their consumption patterns and to note the differences and similarities of consumption patterns between foreigners and natives and also within the different groups of foreign consumers. In order to do so, we analysed the data from the longitudinal surveys carried out by the Baròmetre de la Comunicació i la Cultura throughout 2008. Summing up, the analysis shows some particularly distinctive media consumption practices by foreigners but without substantially changing Catalonia's dominant media system.

Key words

Audiences, foreigners, media consumption, cultural consumption, acculturation.

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Resum

L'objectiu de l'article és oferir una visió general del lloc que ocupa el consum de mitjans dels estrangers residents a Catalunya en el conjunt de l'oferta mediàtica i cultural, fer-ne visibles els patrons de consum, les diferències i les similituds d'aquests consums en comparació dels dels ciutadans autòctons i entre els diversos col·lectius d'estrangers. Per fer-ho, s'han analitzat les matrius de dades de l'enquesta longitudinal realitzada en tres onades pel Baròmetre de la Comunicació i la Cultura durant el 2008. En síntesi, l'anàlisi ofereix un panorama de consums amb algunes pràctiques distintives dels estrangers que, de fet, no han alterat l'equilibri del sistema mediàtic imperant.

Paraules clau

Audiències, estrangers, consums mediàtics, consums culturals i aculturació.

1. Introduction

Immigrants arrive in their host countries with cultural consumption habits that are strongly influenced by the structure of the media system in their country of origin. Each immigrant therefore settles in Catalonia bearing a series of cultural practices that have to be modified or developed anew.

One line of research that has been quite widely studied in this respect is based on the theory that immigrants undergo acculturation processes. These processes are dynamic processes of cultural change resulting from direct, concentrated contact between two or more different, autonomous societies. Within non-authoritarian social contexts, acculturation is the result of harmonising the tension created between the cultural patterns acquired in the society of origin and the dominant cultural patterns in the host society (Kim, Y.Y 2001). What occurs is known as cross-culturalism.

The acculturation of immigrants does not mean they lose their original cultural practices to a single cultural practice from the host society. The complexity of modern cultural systems means that there is no such thing as a single culture and it is more appropriate to refer to diverse or superimposed cul-

tures based on different ways of seeing and understanding life. An appropriate image is that of a cultural system in which many different subcultures live side by side. These subcultures are expressed in a wide range of forms and some of these are dominant while others are marginalised. A good way of observing the tension between these subcultures is through the differences in how culture and the media are consumed.

Most foreigners living in Spain occupy subordinate areas within the social structure which, according to Javier Callejo (2005), means they have a different idea of what culture is. For Callejo, citizens in these subordinate positions tend to resist dominance by means of a broad conception of culture: for them culture is "what they do" (Callejo 2005, 483). The dominant sectors, on the other hand, have a more restrictive and elitist view of what culture is.

Callejo's studies of this broad conception of culture (typical of positions with less power) also indicate that this is more integrating, collective and group-based, with the culture industry occupying a central position and where they aspire to share a common language with the rest of the groups in society. This common language is that of marketed culture: i.e. ultimately that produced by the mass media.

In Catalonia, with the increase of more than one million foreign immigrants in the last ten years, several different ways co-exist of watching television, listening to the radio and reading the press. There is a range of cultural consumption patterns and various uses of the internet in which the consumers' country of origin is a decisive factor. What we don't know are the distances separating the different cultural practices and consumption habits between the different groups and particularly among foreign and native citizens.

The aim of this study is, on the one hand, to specify the practices in which this differentiated sense of culture becomes crystallised. By means of a comparative analysis of the media and culture consumption patterns of both foreign and native citizens, we can specify those areas where these differences are most marked. On the other hand, observing the age profiles, length of time in Catalonia and education, among other variables, of the different groups among foreigners, we can note correlations that serve to explain some of the reasons behind such consumption patterns.

Most of the research carried out to date in Catalonia on communication and immigration has basically focused on studying the production of content aimed at groups of foreigners, on the one hand, and on understanding qualitatively how foreigners relate to the media. This present study provides a cooler and more distant perspective, characteristic of quantitative studies, but we believe it is necessary to complement more in-depth approaches in the future.

1.1. Method

In order to answer these questions, we have analysed the findings of the different waves of surveys carried out by the Baròmetre de la Comunicació i la Cultura² throughout 2008. This survey carries out audience and cultural consumption surveys in Catalonia, the Balearic Islands and the Valencia region. With regard to Catalonia, the total sample size is almost 30,000 individuals. The sample of foreigners interviewed in

the different waves is between 5,000 and 6,000 individuals over 14 years of age who were born outside Spain.

The sample of foreigners interviewed by the Baròmetre is therefore broadly as follows:³

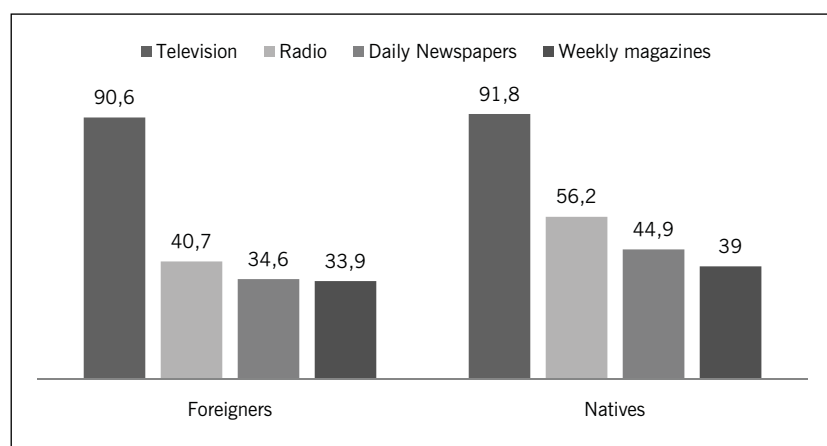
- 57.8% of those interviewed live in the province of Barcelona, 16.7% in that of Tarragona, 13.1% in that of Lleida and 12.4% in the province of Girona
- 52.5% are men and 47.5% are women.
- The largest age group is between 25 and 44, accounting for 61.7% of the sample, followed by those aged between 14 and 24, with 21.7%, those aged between 45 and 64, who account for 14.7% and those over 65, with 1.9%.
- The group of Latin Americans, who go to make up 50% of the sample, are over-represented. North Africans account for 16.4%, Eastern Europeans 12.1%, those from the 15 European Union countries 8.7%, those from Sub-Saharan Africa 4.7% and the remaining 8.1% are from other areas.

From the huge volume of data available we have concentrated, on the one hand, on the figures that provide the clearest image of the basic structures of media and cultural consumption and, on the other hand, those findings that express significant nuances or differences in the groups that go to make up the universe of foreign residents in Catalonia. This focus is clearly relational in nature, insofar as it attempts to present the data always compared with the figures for the different groups. Often this comparative analysis is difficult to explain merely in words and we have used quite a few graphics that clearly extend the cross-referencing of results.

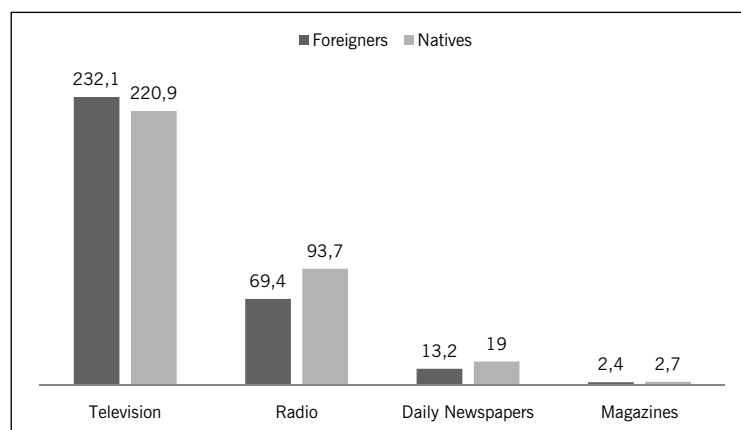
2. The cultural consumption of foreigners and natives

The findings provided by the Baròmetre during 2008 show a basic structure of media consumption that is similar among foreigners and Spanish people resident in Catalonia (Graphic 1).

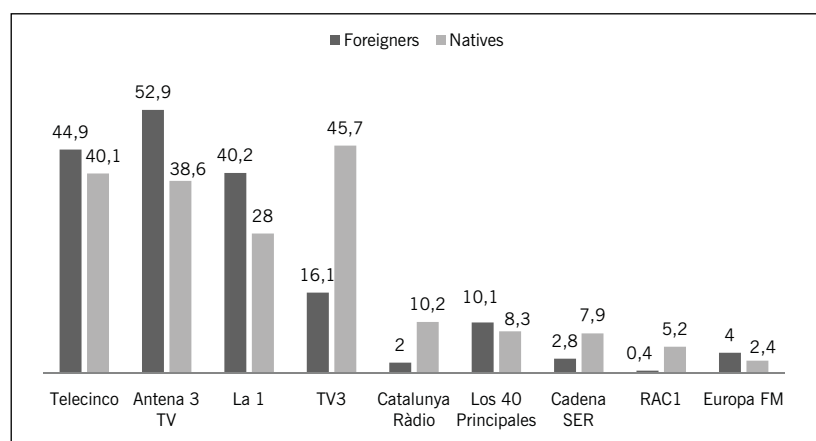
Graphic 1. Media audiences according to country of origin



Source: Baròmetre December 2008

Graphic 2. Media time consumption according to country of origin (minutes/day)

Source: Baròmetre December 2008

Graphic 3. Television and radio preferences according to country of origin

Source: Baròmetre December 2008

Within this structure, there is clear dominance by television as the medium consumed by the majority, compared with radio and, even more so, with newspapers and magazines. However, the media analysis shows slight differences between groups, especially in radio audiences and in reading the daily press. In spite of the wide range of printed media available in Catalonia, with the recent inclusion of free newspapers, media consumption here continues to be dominated by audiovisual products.

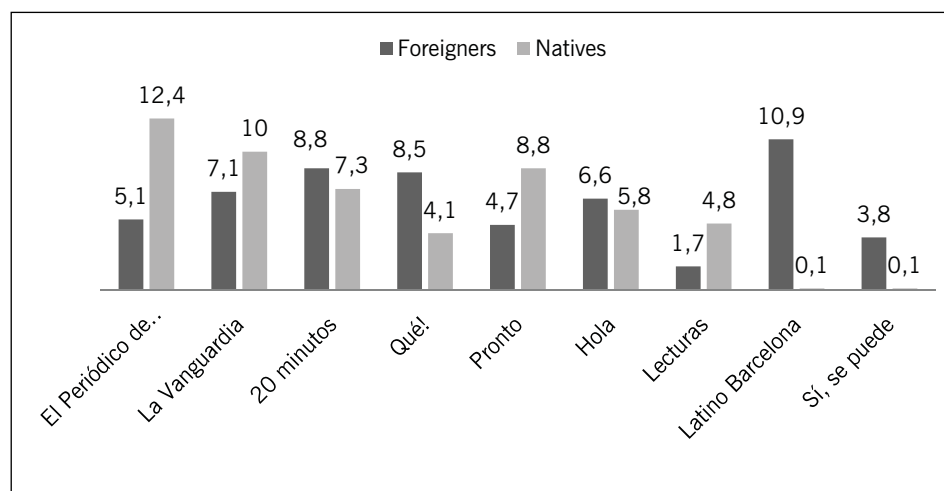
The differences between media types is seen again when examining the consumption time, with audiences dedicating much more time to television than any other medium (Graphic 2). But, unlike the previous graphic, foreigners devote more time than natives to watching television. In other words, there are slightly fewer foreigners who watch television but, those who do, devote more time to it.

Some of the most marked differences between natives and foreigners appear when we look at preferences for the communication products consumed. The order of preference for natives, with regard to television, is headed by TV3, followed by Telecinco and Antena 3 TV, and is quite different from the

ranking for foreigners (Antena 3 TV, Telecinco and La 1) (Graphic 3). The television channel in Catalan highlights clear differences between the two groups.

There are also significant differences associated with the Catalan language in the case of radio. Neither Catalunya Ràdio nor, even less so, RAC1 are among the leading radio stations listened to by foreigners. But, apart from language, the differences between foreigners and natives in radio preferences are also associated with the type of product. Music stations or formula radio appear in the top five spots of preferences for foreign immigrants, while generalist stations are more typical for natives.

One explanation for these radio preferences among foreigners can be found if we look at the demographic profile of the listeners in each case. Listening to the radio seems to have become a practice for older people among native citizens, while it is not so markedly generational among foreigners. Young foreigners aged between 14 and 24 listen more to the radio than young natives of the same age (in a proportion of 20.4% the former compared with 13.5% the latter). On the other hand,

Graphic 4. Newspapers and magazines preferences according to country of origin

Source: Baròmetre December 2008

foreigners aged between 45 and 65 listen less to the radio than natives in the same age range (in a proportion of 17.2% the former compared with 28.3% the latter).

It is in this more minority media consumption, even marginal in the case of magazines, where the most differences are detected between foreigners and native citizens. The distinction between them is influenced, firstly, by economic reasons. The consumption of the printed press among foreigners tends clearly towards the free press (Graphic 4). But this statement needs some provisos when evaluating the penetration of the pay newspaper *La Vanguardia* among foreigners, third in their audience ranking. In this case, the battle between the two leading newspapers in Catalonia, *La Vanguardia* and *El Periódico*, is won by the former newspaper, from the Grupo Godó, while it's the opposite among natives. This situation raises doubts as to the popular image traditionally given by the newspaper from the Grup Zeta and also breaks with the elitist stereotype that accompanies *La Vanguardia*.

The newspapers *Latino Barcelona* and *Sí, Se Puede* warrant special mention, appearing as the most popular weekly press among foreigners. These two magazines, produced by the immigrants themselves and aimed particularly at the Latin American public, achieved a monthly average of more than 100,000 readers in 2008 for the first publication, and a little over 40,000 for the second.

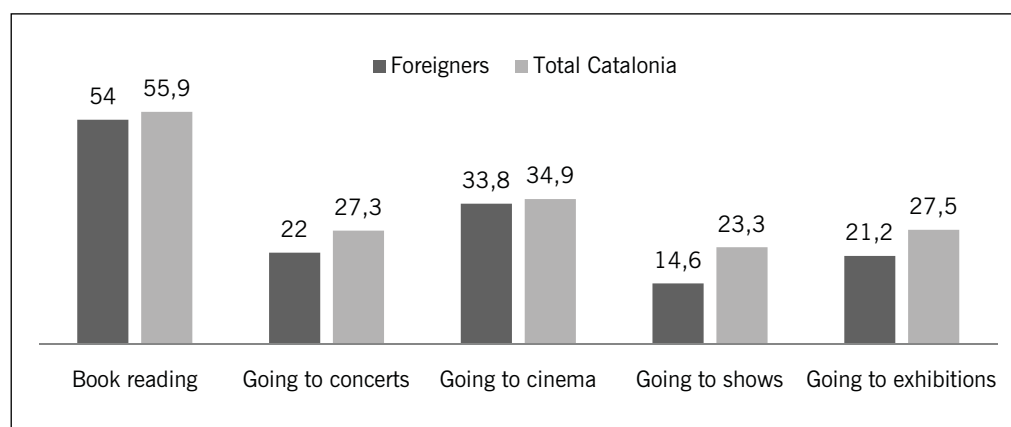
Findings in other areas should also be noted, such as the reading of books, going to the cinema, concerts, exhibitions, etc. We consider all this cultural production as different from that of the media insofar as it requires different uses and practices. It demands greater commitment on the part of consumers when deciding what to choose, when compared with the more passive nature with which television, radio and now the free press are received. Moreover, price also represents an obstacle to achieving levels of consumption similar to those of

free cultural products and consumers' purchasing power appears strongly as an independent variable. But, apart from these differences, books, exhibitions, concerts and plays all form part of the cultural system as a whole and have increasingly adapted to the media logic that governs this system (Berrio 2009).

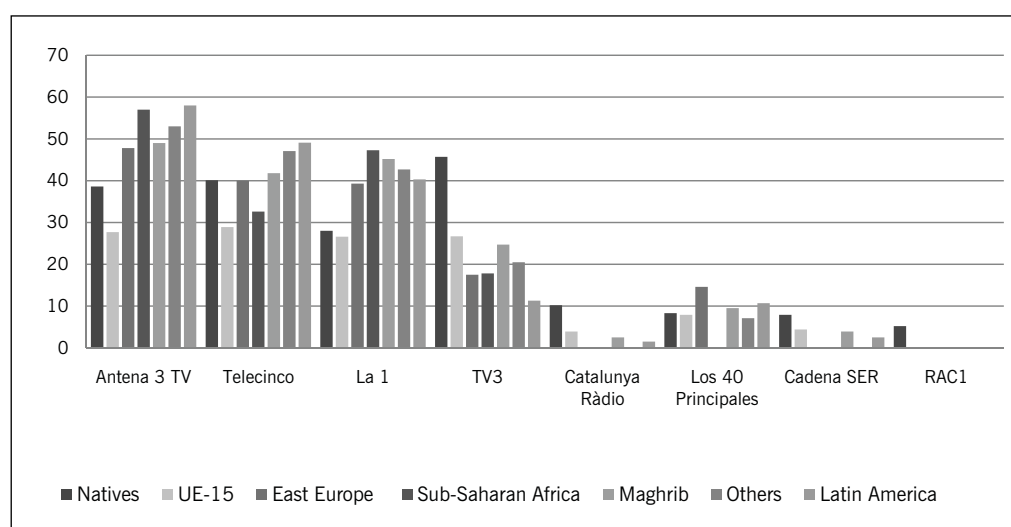
As we can see (Graphic 5), there are very few differences between the cultural consumption habits of foreigners resident in Catalonia and those of the Catalan population as a whole. We should note, therefore, that, as no broken down data are available, in this case the comparisons are not made with the data on natives but with the population as a whole, including foreigners themselves, so that the differences may actually be slightly higher. Throughout the year, more than half the foreign citizens have read a book, a third have gone to the cinema and around a quarter have gone to a concert. The distribution of the consumption patterns for these cultural products does not, therefore, show any significant differences, apart from the fact that the figures for foreigners are always a few points below those for citizens as a whole.

The results from the surveys offer some interesting data in terms of the social attributes of consumers, such as the fact that, among those aged over 65, reading is a more widespread practice among foreigners than the rest. The level of reading among older foreigners is 20 points above the general level of reading for the elderly in Catalonia.

In general, the cultural habits measured both of foreigners and citizens of Catalonia as a whole coincide in, for example, going to the cinema or concerts being a more habitual practice among the young than those in middle age or later years, attending exhibitions is more typical among the middle aged, and all these cultural consumption habits are slightly greater among the higher social classes.

Graphic 5. Volume of readers, at least, of a book and going to an event, in a year according to country of origin

Source: Baròmetre 2007.

Graphic 6. Audiovisual media preferences according to groups of public

Source: Baròmetre December 2008

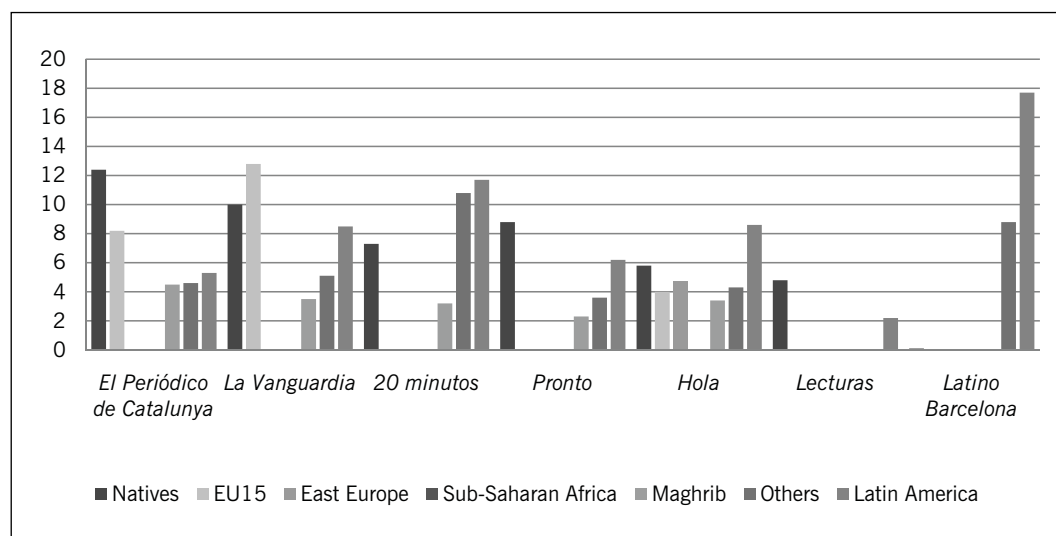
2.1. Heterogeneous group

The differences between groups of foreigners are well-defined when we look at the detailed rankings of the television channels, radio stations and newspapers consulted (Graphic 6). These rankings measure the preferences for a television or radio channel within each of the groups studied. For example, Latin Americans prefer to watch Antena 3 TV (58%), followed by Telecinco (49.1%), then La 1 (40.3%) and TV3 with 11.3%.

We can therefore see that Antena 3 TV is the most watched television channel by Latin Americans and Sub-Saharan Africans. It can also be seen that this broadcaster, in general, achieves a higher audience among all groups except those from the EU-15 countries and native citizens, whose preferences are also different from each other. The former have similar audience figures for all the channels mentioned, while for

the latter most of the public is taken by TV3. We can also see how La 1 and Telecinco are almost always secondary in the different groups. Lastly, the graphic clearly illustrates the little audience for TV3 among foreign groups, strengthening the perception of the Catalan channel as a medium to be consumed "by those at home".

With regard to radio audiences, a similar phenomenon can be seen as to that with television stations. The preferences of native audiences differ greatly from those of foreign groups. The only broadcaster that appeals equally to natives and foreigners is the music station *Los 40 Principales*, which is particularly attractive for those from Eastern Europe. Generalist stations, on the other hand, appeal far more to natives than foreigners. The only one of these broadcasters to have a certain following among foreigners, especially from the EU-15, North Africans

Graphic 7. Newspapers and magazines preferences according to groups of public

Source: Baròmetre December 2008

and Latin Americans, is Cadena Ser. Lastly, among the radio preferences of most foreigners, except those from the EU-15, the generalist broadcasters in Catalan, such as Catalunya Ràdio or RAC1, are practically inexistent.

A comparative analysis of the preferences of the groups in terms of printed media also provide interesting results (Graphic 7), which have also been observed in previous research (CAC 2008) and appear once again at the end of 2008. At one extreme, of note is the high level of penetration of the free magazine *Latino* among those from Latin America, with almost 18% of readers within the group. At the other extreme of the graphic we find that the two leading newspapers in Catalonia (*El Periódico* and *La Vanguardia*) are much more read by native citizens and those from the EU-15 than by the rest of foreigners. The latter, in general, prefer free newspapers and, in the case of Eastern Europeans, there is also a high level of penetration for the magazine *Hola*, a gossip magazine that is also published in other European countries.

Media evaluation

All foreigners recognise the news quality of TV3, and the news credibility and quality of Catalunya Ràdio, and in both cases they are either first or second in the ranking, but these evaluations are not so strong as to consume Catalan media.

On the other hand, the most popular television channel among foreigners is Antena 3 TV, while for natives it is TV3; the most popular radio station for foreigners is *Los 40 Principales* and for natives Catalunya Ràdio. These results do coincide with the general consumption patterns of foreigners. This correspondence only alters in the case of the daily press, where foreigners believe *La Vanguardia* to be more interesting and, in second place, the free *Qué!*, while for natives the most interesting is *El Periódico* with *La Vanguardia* in second place.

In the printed press, whether the editions are free of charge is the clearest motivation for consumption. Although *La Vanguardia* is believed, among foreigners, to be the most credible, the most interesting and providing the best local information, it is only the third newspaper among foreign audiences, behind two free newspapers.

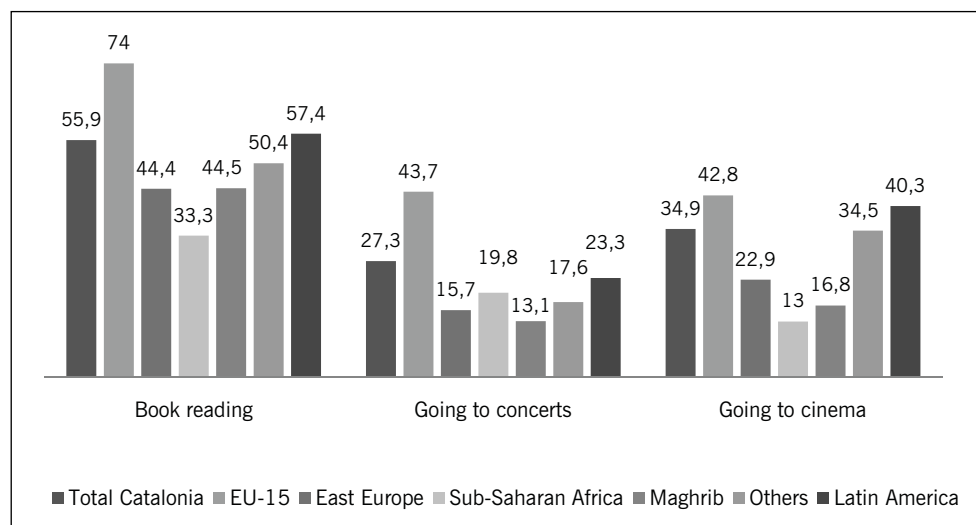
Other cultural practices

With regard to other, not so common cultural habits such as book reading, going to concerts or to the cinema (Graphic 8), these are practices whose results are more sensitive to the different socio-demographic variables of groups of foreigners.

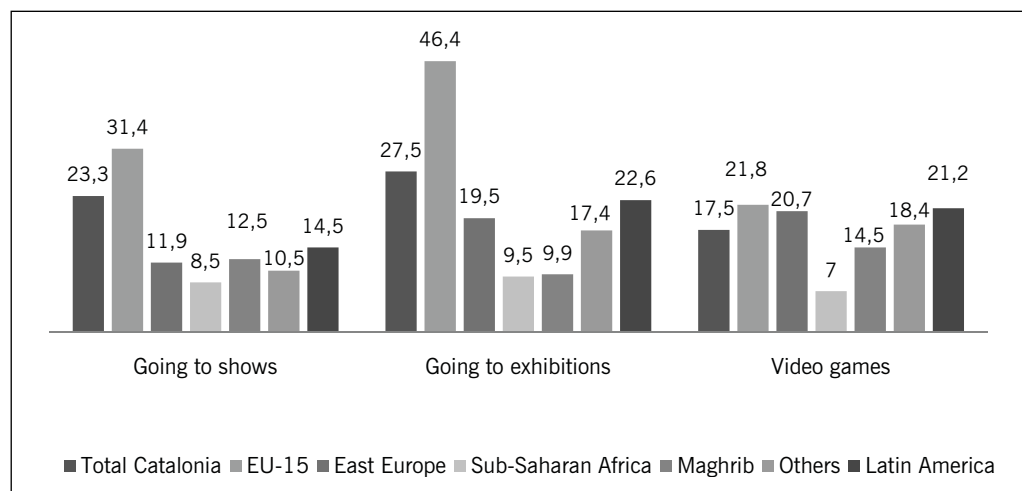
The results for foreigners as a whole indicate that, in general, there are more readers than filmgoers and even fewer concertgoers. Of note in all these cultural practices are foreigners from the EU-15, with the highest rates of all groups for book reading and going to the cinema and concerts. Although there are no broken down data on the practices of native citizens, those from the EU-15 countries have even higher levels than for all residents in Catalonia, among whom they are also included. The second highest group for these consumption practices are Latin Americans.

Other habits, such as going to shows, attending exhibitions and consuming videogames are, in general, less frequently practised than the previous ones (Graphic 9). The differences by group are reproduced here as in the habits for the previous graphic, with a high penetration among people from EU-15 countries and with Latin Americans as the second group, although at a long distance from the first group.

The different levels of penetration of the cultural consumption habits presented in the last two graphics suggest that there are many other factors behind the differences between groups apart from their country of origin. One of these is the level of

Graphic 8. Book reading, going to concerts and cinema, according to groups of public (once or more in a year)

Source: Baròmetre December 2008

Graphic 9. Going to shows, exhibitions (once or more in a year) and use of videogames (last three months), according to groups of public

Source: Baròmetre December 2008

education of the consumers, which is higher among foreigners from EU-15 countries. A second factor is social class, which helps to explain why immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa, with a very low social level, are those with the lowest levels of penetration in almost all the cultural practices analysed. Lastly, a third factor found is age, which is directly related to practices such as the use of videogames, so widespread among young people, or attending exhibitions, more frequented by the elderly.

3. Language and consumption

On a base of significant mastery of Spanish and a timid growth

in Catalan, especially among younger citizens, we will now look at the overall ability of the foreign population to access the media and culture produced in our society.

The criterion on which any measure of this access is based is the ability of foreigners to understand the two languages mostly used to channel this culture, namely Spanish and Catalan. All foreigners state that they understand Spanish, while only three quarters state that they understand Catalan.⁴

Associated with this level of understanding of the two official languages in Catalonia, a mastery of Spanish is absolute if we observe that, in the findings on media consumption, all the foreign audience understands Spanish (Graphic 10). It is not the same situation with Catalan, where only three quarters of foreigners who watch television understand Catalan, more than

ten points lower when compared with the foreign users of the internet who do understand it.

Out of all foreigners who consume audiovisual media, a little more than one third understand Catalan, while among foreigners who read and use the internet there is a larger number who understand Catalan. There is the paradox that, those sectors of the media where Catalan has more penetration in society in general, as in the case of television and radio, have fewer foreign audiences who understand Catalan. In sectors such as the daily press or magazines, with an almost anecdotal presence of printed media in Catalan with large circulations, this is where the relative number of foreign publics who say they understand Catalan is higher. However, it is one thing for these foreigners to understand Catalan and another for them to watch listen or read media in Catalan.

Foreigners who watch television in Spanish, listen to the radio in Spanish or read the press in Spanish are far greater in number than those who do all this with media in Catalan (Graphic 11). For example, only 4% of all foreign residents in Catalonia read newspapers in Catalan. Here, unlike the previous graphics on foreigners who understand Catalan, we can see, however, that the differences between Spanish and Catalan are greater in the printed press than in the audiovisual media.

Consequently, foreigners actually consume much more television, radio and press in Spanish but the differences in media consumption levels in Catalan and Spanish are proportionally less in the audiovisual sector than in the printed press.

The little weight of television and radio stations in Catalan among foreigners relates to the channels provided by the Corporació Catalana de Ràdio i Televisió (Graphic 12). With regard to newspapers and magazines in Catalan, the figures provided by the Baròmetre survey are insignificant but among the products most mentioned are *El Periódico* in Catalan and *Segre*, for newspapers; in magazines, the free publications dominate that are distributed in counties outside the metropolitan area of Barcelona.

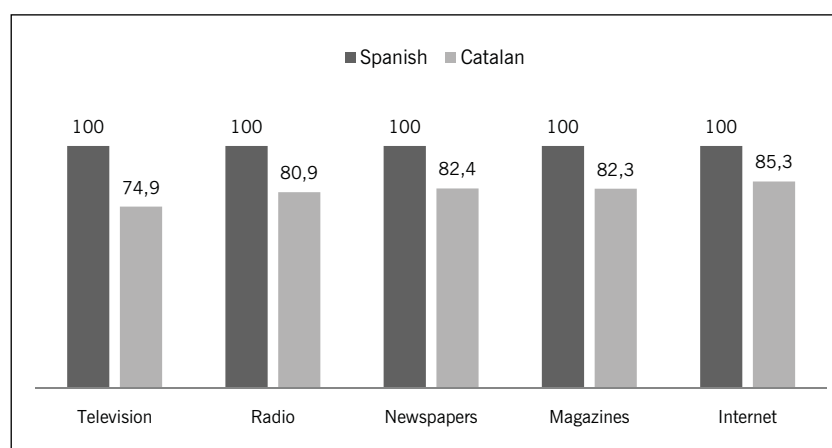
In general, the group with the most consumers of media in Catalan is the European Union, followed by North Africans. In the preferences of foreigners for TV3, when this occurs, certain values are involved such as the quality of the news. The Catalan broadcaster is considered to be the second TV channel with the best news, after Antena 3 TV. This belief is decisive in the case of EU-15 foreigners and North Africans, for whom TV3 provides the best information. The rest of the groups place this second but very close to Antena 3 TV.

Certainly Spanish has become the “lingua franca” of immigration in Catalonia. All the immigrants interviewed by the Baròmetre claim to be able to understand and speak it, and 96% also write it. And this is the case although Spanish is not, for some, their usual language nor, even less so, do they consider it to be the language they identify with. The distance between Spanish and the rest of the languages used by immigrants is very large. Their contact with the Catalan language through the media is particularly through television but we cannot ignore the influence that may be exercised by seeing this language in the free bilingual newspapers, the most widely read daily press among foreigners.

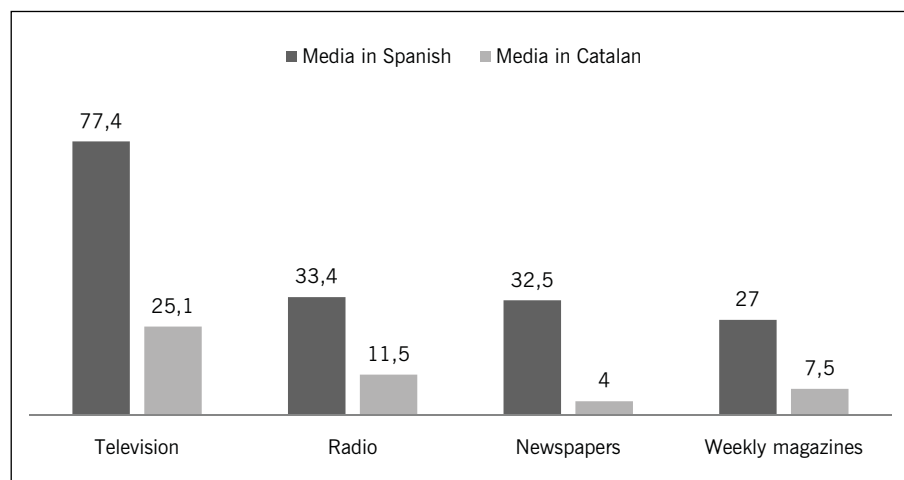
The newspaper *20 minutos*, the most widely read by foreigners, has a distribution of news items of 63.4% in Spanish and 36.6% in Catalan.⁵ The newspaper *Què*, the second in the ranking, has 94.2% in Spanish and 5.8% in Catalan. *ADN*, the fourth in the ranking, is 84% in Spanish and 16% in Catalan and *Metro*, the fifth, has 65% in Spanish and 35% in Catalan. However, we cannot forget that the consumption of this kind of press is more related to the type of distribution than the language in which its news is written.

This means that language is not an insuperable obstacle or, at least, is not the only obstacle to achieve an audience among foreigners and that, through this, Catalan becomes more present among a group where it has traditionally played a marginal role.

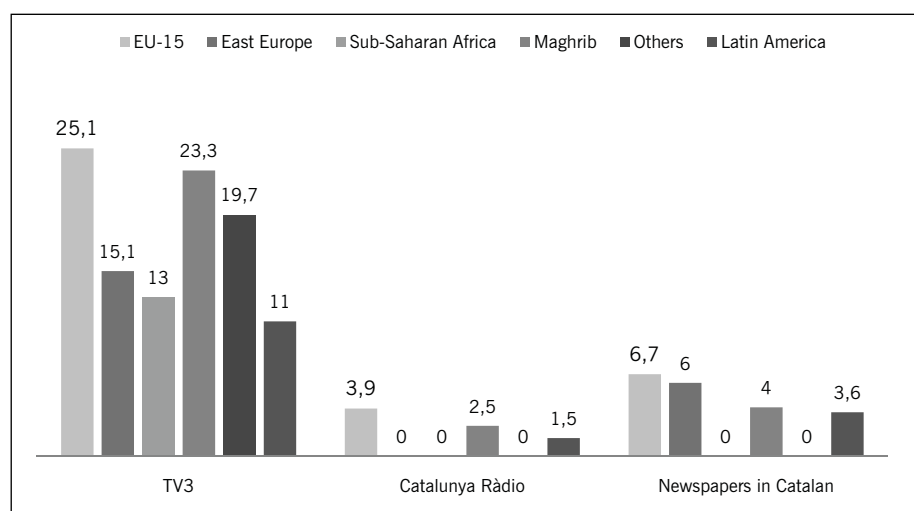
Graphic 10. Percentage of people that understand Spanish and Catalan among foreigners, according to media consumption



Source: Baròmetre December 2008

Graphic 11. Penetration of Spanish and Catalan media among foreigners

Source: Baròmetre December 2008

Graphic 12. Audiences of TV3, Catalunya Ràdio and the principal newspapers in Catalan according to foreigner groups of public

Source: Baròmetre December 2008

4. Internet use

Those foreigners for whom the internet plays a leading role are young people, especially because of the possibility to access cultural products in various languages (Kong 2009). Using the internet combines access to and the consumption of traditional mass media with new forms of interpersonal communication. In accordance with the theories of Young Yun Kim (2001) on the acculturation processes of foreigners in host societies, interpersonal communication with native citizens and with other foreigners is the main vehicle for the acculturation of an immigrant, while the mass media play a secondary role, so that the role of the internet should be very much taken into account (where interpersonal and mass communication combine) as a powerful catalyst for acculturation processes.

The few cases studied in Spain, mostly qualitative, on internet use among immigrant communities show that, before emigrating, people usually make prior consultations on their destination via new technologies (González and Barranquero 2008). Other studies explain the use of the internet among immigrants as a function of the “myth of return”, a way of returning to their country of origin but in a virtual sense (Cavalcanti 2004). Far from being able to generalise in this respect, where these studies do agree is that the internet has become a practical instrument for the migratory phenomenon and that those who used to use the internet in their original countries find practical purposes for its use in their host country.

However, foreigners who come to Spain come to one of the places in Europe with the lowest rate of frequent internet users. The figures for Spain as a whole at the beginning of 2009, pro-

vided by AIMC, were 48.2% of users, while the total data for France for the same period, provided by Mediametrie, were 63.5%.⁶ The data available on internet use among foreigners resident in Spain show that 34.1% had used the internet the day before the survey.⁷

Internet connection. Close to half the foreigners resident in Catalonia have computers with an internet connection in their homes. The findings of the Baròmetre on technological equipment among foreigners are directly linked to economic capacity, as seems to be shown by the fact that foreigners from the EU-15 countries are the best equipped (72.3% have an internet connection), while those from Africa are the least (23.7% of North Africans and 21.7% of Sub-Saharan Africans have an internet connection). It cannot be said, therefore, that foreigners access the internet under equal conditions.

Frequency of use. Given the unequal weight of the different groups of foreigners, it is more illustrative to look at the level of internet penetration in each group rather than the absolute figures on consumption. Consequently, among those who come from EU-15 countries, 72.4% use the internet almost daily, while among foreigners in the "Other" category, made up mostly of Chinese and Pakistani immigrants, 54% are practically daily users. Similar figures are shown by those from Eastern Europe and Latin America. The groups with the least frequent use are those from Africa, both North Africans and Sub-Saharan Africans, of whom only 28.2% use it daily.

The results of the Baròmetre on internet use at the end of 2008 show few differences between the total percentage of users for Catalonia and for foreign users. Only three tenths of a point separate them, from 34.5% for the former and 34.2% for the latter. Although the internet is good for easily overcoming distances for cultural consumption and communication with the country of origin, foreigners will certainly use many other ways to communicate with their culture of origin.

The digital divide. In absolute terms, the largest number of internet users can be found in the 25 to 44 age group because it is also the largest age group in Catalonia. But if we look at the data in terms of internet penetration in the different age

groups we can see that there are fewer internet users as age increases (Graphic 13). Among all young people aged 14 to 24 living in Catalonia, the use of the internet is much more widespread (64.1%) than among those over 65 (5.5%).

The phenomenon of the digital divide between generations is clearly reflected in these data. But this circumstance is much slighter among foreigners thanks to the much higher percentage than average of use among the elderly (18.7%).

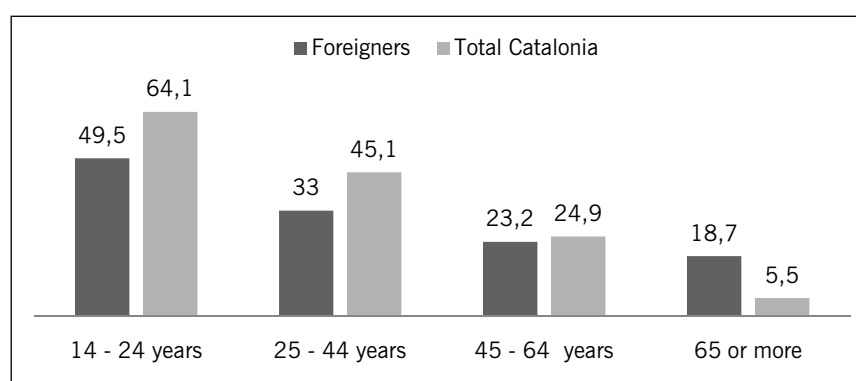
Internet surfers. If we widen the focus on the sub-sample of foreign internet users to see the uses made of the internet in the last 30 days, we can also find out some details concerning the sites they visit, the amount of time they devote and the time of day when they use the internet. The findings provide some interesting data to help us understand, in general, the role played by the internet in their lives.

The vast majority of them used internet at home (81.1%) and very few accessed it from work or internet shop, only around 10%, respectively. Access was only higher in those cases of internet users from Sub-Saharan and North Africa, 19% and 32%, respectively.

The availability of the internet at home is an outstanding aspect of this use because it allows them to devote quite a long time on the internet. A little more than half are connected between one and four hours. Although the data from the Baròmetre do not allow us to draw any direct conclusions concerning whether immigrants use the internet to keep their links with their original culture, we can find some indications of this in the times of day they connect, as can be seen below.

With regard to the "prime time" for connecting, 40.8% use the internet between 4 pm and 7 pm, a timetable that does not seem to be conditioned by time zone differences, between four and six hours behind in Latin America and greater in Africa. In other words, African, Latin American and Chinese immigrants have similar connection patterns in terms of timetable, which indicates that these uses are conditioned by their everyday lives in the host society and their use of the internet is not at all adapted to the pace of everyday life in their country of origin. This is the favourite time band for all groups of foreigners.

Graphic 13. Use of internet the day before by age group according to country of origin



Source: Baròmetre December 2008

Where there are significant variations in this respect is in the second most popular time band for surfing the internet for foreigners, which in the case of Africans and Latin Americans is between 7 pm and 9 pm, while for Eastern Europeans, those from the EU-15 countries and Orientals, it is between 9 am and 1 pm. Certainly, the groups that come from time zones that are earlier than that of Catalonia use the internet more in the morning and those from later time zones, such as Latin Americans, use it more in the evening, although the variations are not very significant (31% use it from 7 pm to 10 pm and 28% between 9 am and 1 pm).

Another notable finding is related to internet use by how long the immigrant has lived in Catalonia. In absolute data, the largest number of foreign internet users, more than half, have been living in Catalonia for more than five years, and a third have lived here between two and five years. However, these results change when they are analysed in terms of the penetration of internet use by length of residence. Among those who have lived in Catalonia for more than five years, only 33.2% are internet users, while among those who have just arrived, less than two years ago, internet use increases to almost 40%. In other words, those who have arrived recently use the internet more than those who have been here for some time. This might be related to the profile of the new arrivals.

In general, what foreigners consult on the internet coincides quite strongly with the surfing habits of all users in Catalonia (Graphic 14). Foreigners, like the Catalan population as a whole, have a marked preference for search engines in more than 90% of the cases of internet users. As can be seen in the graphic, there are only small variations in visits to the websites of banks and savings banks, less frequented by foreigners, and in the case of reading the generalist press, slightly higher among foreigners than natives.

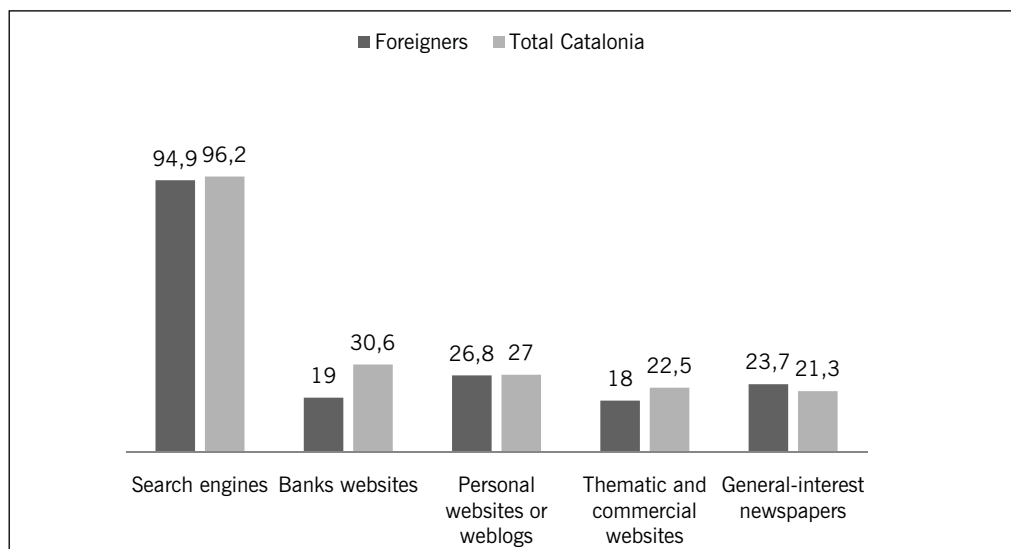
The second most visited kind of website is where differences appear between the groups of foreigners. For those from EU-15 countries, Latin Americans, Sub-Saharan Africans and the group of "Others", reading online press sites ranks second (46.4%, 29.9%, 12.9% and 32.2%, respectively), whereas for Eastern Europeans, personal sites or weblogs rank second (23.4%) and for North Africans they are "other" kinds of websites (22.1%).

5. Ethnic media

With regard to the consumption habits of ethnic media, described by Arnold and Schneider (2007) as the remote consumption of products produced in the country of origin, in Spain there are almost 800 television channels that can be received directly via parabolic aerials or indirectly via subscriber digital platforms (Amenzaga et al 2001). Some studies indicate that, in Spain, 4% of immigrants watched international TV channels in 2006 (Observatorio de las Migraciones 2006). Although there is little data on the degree of penetration of different satellite TV channels among the foreign population in Catalonia, the number of parabolic aerials can give us an idea.

According to the Baròmetre de media for 2009, the number of parabolic aerials connected to the homes of foreigners was almost 13 points higher than for the total of Catalonia. 36% of the television sets of foreigners are connected to satellite receivers. Most of those who have parabolic aerials are families that have been living in Catalonia for more than five years (60%), while those who have been here for between two and five years account for 31.5%, and those who have arrived recently do not reach 8% of foreigners with parabolic aerials.

Graphic 14. Most visited websites according to country of origin



Source: Baròmetre December 2008

However, observing each segment separately, we can see that the decision to acquire a satellite receiver must be one of the first decisions taken by foreigners when they settle in Catalonia. Within the segment of new arrivals, almost 25% have a parabolic aerial.

With regard to the ethnic media produced by foreigners themselves (Arnold and Schneider, 2007), in many countries these have become key agents in explaining the adaptation of foreigners and represent powerful cultural vehicles. For example, in the state of California alone (United States), in 2005 45% of adult residents from Asia, Africa, Latin America or the Middle East preferred ethnic media (Deuze, 2006).

Studies carried out in Spain have also highlighted the presence of ethnic media among groups of foreigners resident in the country (Observatorio de las Migraciones, 2006; CAC, 2008; Santos, 2008). Data for 2007 from the Media for Immigrants Study (EMI) indicate that the weekly publications most widely read among immigrants were *Latino*, followed by *Sí, Se Puede*, *El Comercio del Ecuador*, *Noi in Spania* and *Nova Duma*, while the monthly magazines were *Ocio Latino*, *Toumai*, *Grupo Raíz*, *Pasión Deportiva* and *Pueblo Nuevo*. Some of these studies point out that the supply of these media in Catalonia is quite widespread and includes the press, radio and television (CAC 2008). Magazines can be found written in Urdu, Romanian, Chinese, etc. but the largest supply is concentrated in publications for Latin Americans (Santos 2008). These are not only vehicles through which immigrants can get information on their countries of origin but have also become veritable business platforms (Santos 2008).

Concerning the audiences measured by EMI in 2008, only in Barcelona, *Latino*, *Sí, Se Puede* and *Nova Duma* are the leading weeklies among foreign titles, read by 22.7% of foreigners. The data from the Baròmetre referring to the whole of Catalonia with regard to this kind of media are not very revealing. At the end of 2008, the free weekly *Latino* was the leader among foreigners with 10% of foreign readers in all Catalonia, while the other big free weekly, *Sí, Se Puede*, came fourth with 3.8%, behind the Spanish magazines *Hola* and *Pronto*.

Almost all readers of these two ethnic magazines are from Latin America and are concentrated in the metropolitan area of Barcelona. The magazines are distributed quite homogeneously among this segment of foreigners. On analysing the data from the Baròmetre throughout 2008, no significant audiences can be found for any other ethnic medium, neither press nor audiovisual.

Ethnic media form part of the media offered in Catalonia but, in reality, we do not know the exact size of their consumption in sectors such as television or radio as many media are not officially recorded and are not measured. This presence is more visible in the sector of periodicals and the surveys carried out to date do not detect as significant audiences comparable with the ethnic media in other western countries.

Conclusions

The practices that most distinguish the media consumption of foreigners from natives are particularly associated with the consumption of music radio and the free press. In general, these cultural practices have remained quite constant over the years, although there has been a slight increase towards the consumption of pay press and media in Catalan among those who have lived in Catalonia the longest.

When we look at attributes of a socio-demographic nature, such as age or education, the findings paint quite a heterogeneous picture. Reading books and the pay press are more habitual practices among those with more schooling, such as people from the European Union. The levels of consumption for free media products, on the other hand, are higher among groups with a lower average social class, such as those from Sub-Saharan Africa.

Regarding language, the findings of the Baròmetre indicate that the dominant option is Spanish and that the media through which foreigners come into contact with Catalan are principally television and free bilingual newspapers. Preferences for media in Catalan are only higher than those for media in Spanish among immigrants from EU-15 countries, principally, and North Africans. On the other hand, the group that is potentially closest to Catalan, linguistically speaking, i.e. Latin Americans, hardly consume any media in this language.

The degree of internet use among foreigners is usually lower than for Catalonia as a whole. Differences between foreigners and Catalans as a whole appear when we look at these data by age group. It is clear that young people have quickly taken on new communication technologies, whether they are immigrants or not. But when we look at the elderly the rate of penetration among immigrants is three times higher than among retired people as a whole in Catalonia. The experience of migration may have stirred up old immigrants enough to bring them closer to new technologies.

On the other hand, one kind of media and cultural manifestation that is typical of migratory processes, namely ethnic media, seems to present problems of visibility given the lack of data on their presence. The direct consumption of these media has only been measured among Latin American immigrants, although this has also been seen indirectly among North Africans, if we look at parabolic aerials. However, the media consumed by immigrants in Catalonia seem not to have reached the critical mass required to ensure the most ambitious initiatives for ethnic media are successful.

In summary, and in line with the general view provided by the surveys' findings, the intensification of migratory flows towards Catalonia in the last few years does not seem to have altered, to any great extent, the balances of audiences for media and cultural consumption. Consequently, we cannot talk of cultural impact nor of cross-culturalism insofar as foreigners' consumption habits have not led to any significant changes in the media system or to the emergence of new products associated with such consumption.

Notes

- 1 This article is a summary of a more extensive report produced on commission from the Fundació Jaume Bofill. I would like to thank Mònica Nadal, from the Fundació Jaume Bofill, and Caterina Masramon, from Fundacc, for their collaboration and the improvements they have made to this work.
- 2 The Baròmetre de la Comunicació i la Cultura is a longitudinal survey carried out by the Fundació Audiències de la Comunicació i la Cultura (Fundacc), which we will refer to from now on as the "Baròmetre".
- 3 For a more detailed description of the characteristics of the universe in question, see the report by the Fundació Jaume Bofill entitled "Anàlisi comparada d'audiències i consums culturals dels estrangers a Catalunya".
- 4 It should be noted that the Baròmetre de la Comunicació i la Cultura first samples the citizens to be interviewed and afterwards questions them provided they understand just one of the two languages, Spanish or Catalan, in which their questionnaires are written.
- 5 The data come from the unpublished work by Xavier March Cabal from the Universitat Abat Oliba CEU, which measures the space devoted to each language in the four free newspapers with the highest circulation in Catalonia during the first half of 2008. This work is the most precise to date on bilingualism in the free press in Catalonia and has the particular feature of taking, as its unit of measurement of language, the number of informative units from the edition and not only the area written in Catalan on the front pages of the newspapers.
- 6 The internet data for Spain and France refer to internet use at least once in one month. The AIMC data are based on users aged over 14 while the universe for Mediametrie are users aged over 11.
- 7 AIMC survey from 2005.

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Electoral blocks in the public media in Spain: an exception in Europe

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Abstract

Spanish and Catalan Public broadcasters allocate the time for election news coverage in daily news programmes in a way that is directly proportional to the results obtained by each party in the previous elections. This system has become a controversial way of protecting pluralism. This paper describes the history of this mechanism in Spain and compares it with the pluralism policies in another nine European Union countries. The results show a relevant degree of politicization in the Catalan/Spanish case.

Key words

Mathematical time distribution ranges in election news coverage, regulation, public media systems, news, Spain, Catalonia, Europe.

Resum

El mecanisme dels blocs electorals que s'aplica durant les campanyes electorals als mitjans públics tant catalans com de la resta de l'Estat constitueix un sistema controvertit de protecció del pluralisme. Aquest article descriu la història de l'aplicació dels blocs electorals a l'Estat espanyol i contrasta aquest mecanisme amb els mecanismes de protecció del pluralisme polític aplicats a nou països de la Unió Europea. El resultat mostra una politització considerable del cas català/espanyol.

Paraules clau

Blocs electorals, regulació, mitjans públics, informatius, Espanya, Catalunya, Europa.

1. Introduction

Political and social pluralism in the media is considered to be one of the keys to making the media veritable instruments in strengthening and developing how democracy is played out. In order to ensure that the media are not instruments in the hands of spurious interests or simply for the beliefs of a few, the majority of media theories agree that, in a democracy, they must be the expression and reflection of the plurality existing in society (for example, see Christians *et al* 2009: 8, 10, 21, 24, 40, 48, 57, 59, 107 or 152). According to this view, media's educational and informative potential, and therefore its potential to form opinion, tastes, habits and identities, must be within reach of all ideologies and cultural and social expressions, at least of democratic ones.

Consequently, most democracies' fundamental rules and/or specific legislation mention the protection of pluralism (the former in general terms and for all media, the latter primarily for broadcasting)¹ as a priority and objective in constructing media with the spirit of public service. In this respect, in the

protocol of the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam, which would be added to the Maastricht Treaty, it is stated that the public broadcasting system of the Member States "is directly related to the democratic, social and cultural needs of each society and to the need to preserve media pluralism" (European Union 1997: 87, quoted in Hardy 2008: 165). The public media are therefore considered fundamental to constructing democracy even in the European Union which, since it was founded, has been dominated by commercial interests.

Preserving pluralism is particularly important in the news programmes of the broadcast media, public or private, given that these media, and most especially television, are still the main channel of information for most citizens.² At election time, television becomes a persuasive informative platform *par excellence*. Handling political pluralism at such times is therefore especially important.

The authors of this article have analysed how political pluralism is protected in the regular news programmes of the public media in nine countries of the European Union, both during election periods and not, and we have compared the

models identified with the model applied in our country. The results of the study show that the block system applied to the public media in Spain and Catalonia is an exception. First we will describe our model and, secondly, what occurs in the main countries in Europe to specifically protect political pluralism in news programmes.

2. The Spanish and Catalan case: 25 years of electoral blocks

In Spain, and in Catalonia, political pluralism is specifically protected by article 1 of the Constitution, apart from it being mentioned in rights related to free speech in article 20. Article 149 of the founding regulation, in provision 27, also mentions the state's exclusive authority in establishing the basic rules governing the press, radio and television and all media in general, without prejudice to autonomous communities' powers. However, and in spite of the above, neither the Constitution nor special broadcasting legislation coming from the state or autonomous governments, due to the powers they are granted, has the last word concerning political pluralism during election periods. Spain is one of the few European countries where electoral legislation has this power and is probably the only one where an Electoral Board, a legal-political body here, can regulate political pluralism in the media and apply criteria of political propaganda to the information given.

We have to search for the reasons behind this singularity of Spanish electoral legislation, led by Organic Act 5/1985 of 19 June, on the General Electoral Regime (LOREG in Spanish). In its article 66, the LOREG establishes as follows:

"Respect for political and social pluralism, as well as information neutrality in the state-owned media during election periods, shall be guaranteed by the organisation of these media and their control as provided for by law. The decisions of the administrative bodies of these media within the indicated election period may be appealed against before the Electoral Board in accordance with that provided for in the previous article [art. 65] and according to the procedure employed by the Central Electoral Board".

Given that there is no specific regulation for political pluralism in Spain beyond generic requirements to protect this, unlike in Europe where this is habitual, and given that political parties traditionally appeal to the relevant Electoral Board (for the province or state) during campaigns, making use of the prerogative granted by the aforementioned article, the Central Electoral Board (JEC in Spanish), the last electoral instance, becomes *de facto* the main regulating authority of political pluralism in the public media in election periods.

The LOREG also grants the Electoral Board the function of attributing time for free party political broadcasts. To this end, article 67 specifies as follows:

"To determine the time and order of broadcasting the political broadcasts to which all parties, federations or coalitions

that are standing for election are entitled, in accordance with that provided for in this Act, the relevant Electoral Board shall take into account the preferences of the parties, federations or coalitions in function of the number of votes they obtained in the previous equivalent elections".

The electoral act therefore differentiates between party political broadcasts and news programmes and stipulates that time should be distributed in weighted blocks only for the former. However, this has also traditionally been the criterion applied by the JEC for election news, when an appeal has been brought before this Board. This has led some actors to state that blocks are a requirement of the LOREG for election news, but the application of the criterion for political propaganda to journalistic news is an internal decision of the JEC, as we will see, in its interpretation of the attributes given it by law, in spite of the fact that article 66 of the LOREG also makes it very clear that it is the administrations of public bodies that should establish how pluralism is protected.

This legal interpretation of the JEC is not by chance but is clearly determined by a traditional context of political parties' mutual mistrust in the use and misuse of the public media in Spain. A mistrust that is passed on directly to the Central Electoral Board, which is made up of five members chosen by the political parties and eight members chosen by the General Council of Judicial Powers, the latter chosen in turn by the two houses of the Spanish parliament by means of a controversial system of quotas agreed between the political parties.

An analysis of the JEC's doctrine reveals that, in practice, it has merely endorsed the criteria of the political parties, criteria that were actually first promoted by the administrative council of the public body RTVE (the Spanish state-owned public service broadcaster) of the first socialist government after the Transition.

2.1. The blocks on TVE

Although electoral blocks did not exist during the first few years of democracy, they did not take long to appear once the Spanish socialist party (PSOE) came to power as from 1982. The management of RTVE then implemented the "minuting" of election news coverage, consisting of distributing the time (in minutes) spent on political news in function of the number of votes obtained in the previous equivalent elections, the so-called "blocks". The specific moment and official shape of this decision has not been identified over time but, as early as 1984, José María Calviño, at that time the Managing Director of RTVE, stated that all TVE news programmes were governed by blocks (albeit without using this term, he talked of "minuting" or "time distribution") in covering political news, whether or not electoral (*El País*, 24/10/1984).³

On the other hand, the consensus among the political classes concerning this issue is explicit as from the early 1980s. The opposition was not only against blocks but actually complained that TVE did not apply the direct vote correctly in proportional terms (for example, see *ABC*, 19/12/1982 or *La*

Vanguardia 15/05/1986). This allows us to state that the theory that, in order to guarantee pluralism, the minutes of the news given must be measured in relation to election results, was assumed as from that time by the Spanish political classes.

In this respect, a particularly notable event took place in 1989. The predominance of time dedicated to the socialist government on public radio and television (*La Vanguardia*, 14/01/1984) led to an alliance of all the opposition in favour of TVE effectively applying measured blocks of time for election news but to do so scrupulously, following the criteria stipulated by the LOREG for party political broadcasts. In a document signed by the PP, CD, CIU and Izquierda Unida on 28 September 1989, these parties explicitly demanded the application of the criteria for party political broadcasts to journalistic news, among other issues. This document was publicly addressed by the parties to the Central Electoral Board, demanding that it take on board the criteria stated therein (*La Vanguardia*, 29/09/1989).

Since that time, electoral blocks, i.e. the distribution of time spent on election news on TV news programmes according to the votes obtained in the last equivalent elections, has been a constant on TVE during election campaigns.⁴ And all attempts to apply more professional criteria by the public body's subsequent managers, slightly adapting the proportionality with regard to the votes, would be appealed against by the political parties in opposition before the JEC, which would effectively and gradually take on board the criterion of the opposition pact of 1989, as we will see below.

2.2. The JEC's doctrine

An analysis of the doctrine published by the Central Electoral Board on its website offers a view of the evolution in the decisions taken by a body whose composition, we should remember, is subject to the political parties, which choose its members directly or indirectly. This analysis shows a confused and sometimes contradictory doctrine, and in all cases much less homogeneous than some wish to believe (when it is claimed that the JEC *limits itself* to applying the LOREG). Notwithstanding this, it is possible to identify three different stages in its doctrine regarding election news coverage from 1977 up to the present day.

The first stage (1977-1988) is one of a JEC still without an explicit criterion with regard to election news coverage, principally limiting itself to ratifying the criteria applied by RTVE, endorsing these criteria as a guarantee of pluralism.

At the same time, in this first stage we also find unequivocal signs that direct proportionality is not considered by the JEC as applicable to election news. The first sign we find on 19 May 1986, the date of registration for the agreements from that session on the petition by the (political parties) Partit Reformista Democràtic⁵ and Convergència i Unió that article 64 should be applied to news programmes (determining the mandatory duration of party political broadcasts and which

parties are entitled to this time). This first petition was explicitly denied, as would subsequent petitions in this period.

During this initial stage, the JEC's decisions corroborate the proportionality applied by TVE while explicitly denying strict proportionality. It is interesting to note that one of the arguments given by the JEC for considering the criteria of TVE⁶ as pluralist is that they had not been explicitly rejected by most political bodies when they were approved (Agreements of 3 October 1989, for example).

The second stage (1989-2005) was delimited by the JEC's gradual assumption of the criterion of proportionality as a criterion per se resulting from legal interpretation, no longer as a mere ratification of RTVE's criteria. On the other hand, some calls started to be heard for direct proportionality.

The autumn of 1989 was an eventful time for the Central Electoral Board. In September it received a communication from the entire political opposition urging it to apply the criteria for party political broadcasts to election news, while in subsequent weeks it received numerous appeals of a similar nature (in the midst of a general election campaign), to which it would often give a contradictory and confused response. We consider this moment to be the turning point towards its present doctrine.

Firstly, the JEC responded to the parties involved in the September appeal with the already known ratification of RTVE's criteria, explicitly recognising that it was not within its authority to establish prior criteria of any kind (Agreements of 3 October 1989). These would be established at later dates, however.

On 26 October, as a result of the documents presented by the PP, CDS and IU, the JEC warned all state-owned media that election news on the "day of reflection" (the day before an election) had to respect the "proportionality and equality" of the candidatures, without specifying how to do both at the same time. The next day (Agreements of 27 October 1989), as recorded in the session for that day, the JEC required TV3 to re-establish the balance lost by having held a debate between just two parties, which had "altered" proportionality, suggesting that, in the case of debates, direct strict proportionality had to be respected, again without providing details of how this might be accomplished.

Four years later, the CDS demanded before the JEC to appear in a debate on TV3 and be included in the candidate interviews on Catalunya Ràdio. But this time the JEC answered that it could not demand strict proportionality from Catalunya Ràdio because this criterion is established in article 64 of the LOREG for free spaces (party political broadcasts) (Agreements of 5 March 1992). Paradoxically, on the same date the JEC also ruled that the CDS deserved to be included in the election news coverage by TV3 directly proportionally to the votes obtained in the last equivalent election.

Ultimately this does not stop us from seeing how, following the decisions of the subsequent years, the JEC gradually consolidated proportionality as its own criterion (strict or nuanced,

depending on the moment) and no longer as a mere ratification of RTVE's criteria. In short, the JEC ended up taking on the criterion of proportionality as its own and, although admitting that it did not have the authority to determine criteria, ended up demanding strict allocation according to the number of votes also for news coverage each time an appeal was brought. By way of example, from many possible illustrations, in the Agreements of 7 May 2003 the following application is recorded:

"Request that it be notified to the Provincial Electoral Boards and the management of RTVE that the criterion to be used in the news coverage of the coming elections of 25 May 2004, as well as for sharing out free time, interviews, etc. is that of the number of votes and not that of the seats obtained".

As from 2005, the decisions of the JEC are contradictory. For example, in the session of 31 March 2005, one of the appeals is upheld, brought for the Basque Parliament elections, because the JEC understands that the "duration assigned to each of the interviews" programmed in RTVE's Coverage Plan "does not meet the criterion of reasonably *well-balanced* proportionality imposed by respect for the principles of political pluralism and news neutrality". While on 26 May of the same year, regarding the news coverage Plan of TVE and RNE for the elections to the Galician Parliament, the JEC demanded from RTVE that "the news coverage of the campaign acts of the different political bodies attend *strictly* to the results obtained in the previous (equivalent) elections". However, on 7 February 2008, as a result of the general elections the following month, it demanded the application of a criterion "proportional to the number of votes obtained in a *well-balanced way*" in the equivalent previous elections (the italics are ours).

Although it is impossible to establish a clear doctrine with regard to whether proportionality must be strict or well-balanced, what is clear is that the JEC has fully taken on board the criterion of proportionality and, as from 2005, would go even further, establishing repeatedly more specific criteria, such as the order of appearance of news blocks drafted in this way (Agreements of the session of 25 June 2005, 1 June 2006 and 6 June 2006, for example) or the explicit demand that "minuting" should be daily (Agreements of the session of 7 February 2008, among others).

It's therefore possible to say that an analysis of the JEC's doctrine, especially observing it in the first stage (1977-1988), highlights how this does not come from an interpretation of the LOREG but from a gradual and changeable assimilation of the criteria of political parties, embodied in various ways depending on the place and time but agreed based on the idea of proportionality in terms of previous votes, especially on the part of the dominant parties.

2.3. The blocks on TV3

Set up in 1983, TV3 inherited this scenario, as did the rest of the autonomous broadcasters, all of them equally subject to

the provincial and central electoral boards regarding appeals by political parties. Paradoxically, twenty years after the pact of 1989, most Catalan political parties and those related to it also brandish the JEC's criterion as proof that blocks must be applied by legal mandate and that not doing so is breaking the law (particularly CIU and PSC, for example see *Avui*, 30/05/2009),⁷ forgetting that it is the parties themselves, principally the large ones, that have shaped the JEC's criterion since the 1980s and that the LOREG in no way stipulates that the protection of pluralism or news neutrality must be translated into calculations of time or orders of frequency of any kind in election news.

Within this context, the complaint by Catalan public professionals has forced managers of, firstly, the Catalan Radio and Television Corporation (CCRTV) and of the Catalan Corporation of Audiovisual Media (CCMA) afterwards, to make different attempts to make the blocks more flexible. The criticism of Catalan professionals, the ones most active in Spain against blocks, has always essentially come down to three issues: electoral blocks trample on the right of professionals to freely inform; they result from an agreement between political parties with parliamentary representation; and they remove citizens even further from the political classes and politics in general by generating news coverage distorted by the interests of political parties (*El Periódico*, 16/06/2009).

The first complaint against electoral blocks comes from 1996 on the part of the Union of Journalists of Catalonia. As from 2003, complaints by professionals are constant. That year, on 29 October, the professional committees of TVC and Catalunya Ràdio, the corporate committees of TVE, RNE, COM Ràdio and BTV and the editing team of TV L'Hospitalet signed an initial joint manifesto against electoral blocks, claiming that following strict proportionality violated professional criterion and that time fixed by the two large Catalan parties (CIU and PSC) was out of proportion while that fixed for the smaller parties such as ICV-EuiA was insufficient (*La Vanguardia*, 30/10/2003). This complaint by Catalan professionals spread gradually among professionals in the rest of Spain and, in 2008, the College of Journalists of Catalonia, the Press Association of Madrid and the Professional College of Journalists of Galicia jointly brought a contentious-administrative appeal before the Supreme Court against the agreement adopted by the Central Electoral Board (JEC) on 14 February of that year, with regard to the News Coverage Plan for the RTVE corporation for the general elections of 9 March. The Supreme Court did not hear the appeal (in a ruling that would not arrive until November 2009) after listening to the reasons of all parties, including documents from *Convergència i Unió* and the Basque Nationalist Party defending the blocks established by the JEC.

For its part, the Consell de l'Audiovisual de Catalunya has attempted to establish its own doctrine in order to overcome the rigidity of the electoral block system by means of a mechanism that might be accepted by the political parties, in order

to avoid appeals being brought before the JEC, and by journalists, in order to avoid their public complaints. For this reason, in 2007 some recommendations were published that proposed four reference criteria for the news coverage of election campaigns (CAC 2007a): fairness, professionalism, news interest and equal opportunities. These criteria take into account the previous electoral representation of the parties and coalitions to allocate news coverage time but adjust proportionality - hence the term "fairness" - with professional criteria based on news interest and also take into account those candidatures without parliamentary representation.

Based on these criteria, the board of governors of the CCMA approved a coverage plan for the general elections of 2008 that established a range of time allocation among parties of between 1 and 2.5 minutes (strict electoral proportionality placed this range between 1 and 7 minutes) and the same was done for the European elections of 2009 without any political party bringing an appeal before the JEC. Both plans, however, were criticised once again by professionals who felt that, in spite of the weighting carried out proportionally, they were still forced to calculate time mathematically, with the contradiction this entailed for professionalism and news interest. The CAC, which had supported the plans of the CCMA, has constantly criticised these complaints by professionals, considering that they harm the credibility of the public media and do not recognise the efforts made to make strict proportionality more flexible (CAC 2007b; CAC 2008 and CAC 2009b).

On the other hand, research into this area has not been able to show clear benefits for pluralism by using blocks. A study carried out by the CAC for the period 2003-2005 concluded:

"The data analysed, based on a specific case study, do not allow us to reach definitive conclusions on the need for electoral blocks to ensure pluralism. Although electoral blocks distribute the presence of political parties very clearly according to their representativeness, the situation is not so different outside election campaigns, at least not during the period 2003-2005" (Ortín 2006: 64).

Another study, also carried out by an analyst from the CAC, this time on the presence of political actors in TV news, pointed to the same conclusions. The media presence between January 2003 and December 2005 of political actors on the channels studied (TV3, TVE a Catalunya and BTV) provided, among other elements, the following conclusion: "The ordering of parties according to the respective speaking time reproduces, in general terms, the composition (the order according to the number of seats) of the parliaments" (Rodas 2006: 53). In other words, when there are no fixed blocks, it seems that news ends up, in terms of duration and order, structured in a very similar way to the distribution of political forces in the parliament.

And, in fact, this is what happens in most western countries: political news in ordinary periods and political news in election periods does not undergo any qualitative leap

between periods. And although electoral blocks as we know them today have sometimes not existed in some period, at least these are the results of a comparative study carried out on nine European countries, whose conclusions we summarise below.

3. Political news coverage in the European public media

The study carried out⁸ aimed to identify the formula to guarantee political pluralism in the news programmes of the European public media, both for ordinary periods and elections. It did not study either party political broadcasts or special news programming (debates, interviews, round tables, etc.), for elections or otherwise. The case studies chosen (Germany, the Flemish community of Belgium, Finland, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, the United Kingdom and Sweden) were selected for their political and historical relevance to the European Union, for their geographical representation and for their different media traditions. Not including eastern European countries in the sample was not considered to be a drawback as most of these countries had only very recently developed their regulations or mechanisms to protect pluralism and had almost always taken into account, as a model, one or more of the countries already included in the sample.

The methodology employed by the research was based on document analysis (similar research, national legislation and documentation by the specific broadcasting authorities in each country); in-depth interviews (with representatives from public channels, broadcasting authorities, professionals and representatives from groups of journalists and academics); a survey carried out on broadcasting authorities (carried out through the European Platform of Regulatory Authorities, EPRA);⁹ and specific consultation with academic and business specialists and professionals.

The study of the public media's coverage of political actors in these nine countries provides the following conclusions.

3.1. Instruments to protect pluralism

Of the nine cases studied, only Portugal granted jurisdiction over the media to an electoral body (la Comissao Nacional de Eleicoes), whose function was to safeguard pluralism during election campaigns but in no case impose any time allocation for election news. In Finland the Party Act refers in general to political news coverage (in general, both in ordinary and election periods) but specifies that, in all cases, all political parties must be treated impartially and uniformly. In the rest of the countries the fundamental regulations, broadcasting legislation, broadcasting authorities and/or self-regulating mechanisms of the channels themselves are the main instruments to protect political pluralism, both during election campaigns and at other times.

3.2. Control mechanisms

Broadcasting authorities¹⁰ are the main instrument of external control in half the cases studied in the area of pluralism (in the Flemish community in Belgium, France, Italy, Netherlands and Sweden). Portugal also grants the control of pluralism to the broadcasting authority but this control is shared in election periods with the national electoral committee, with the characteristics specified in the previous point. In the remaining three cases (Germany, Finland and the BBC in the United Kingdom),¹¹ control of public broadcasters is internal, because the broadcasting authorities have no authority over the public channels.

3.3. Types of regulation

The types of regulation detected in the nine cases studied can be classified in terms of the criteria applied. These criteria are essentially of two kinds: qualitative and quantitative.

By qualitative criteria we mean the use of generic criteria (objectivity, impartiality, independence, non-discrimination, accuracy, etc.) that might be very conscientious but do not entail any quantification, either implicit or explicit. These criteria are particularly related to the quality of the journalistic information and can be considered of a professional nature, i.e. they are traditionally related to the usual guidelines for quality journalism. These criteria can be found in the regulations of all the cases studied to a greater or lesser degree.

By quantitative criteria we mean the use of specific criteria of proportional or fair allocation of time that, in this case, can include quotas, blocks or mathematical distributions of time. Here the criteria can be implicit (referring to fairness, equality, balance, etc., always in relation to representation in parliaments) or explicit (referring to proportionality and/or distribution of a mathematical calculation of time). Quantitative criteria are particularly related to the concern of political parties for equal or proportional allocation of time among political forces and they can therefore be considered as political in nature, insofar as they subject news coherence to non-journalistic criteria.

In all the cases studied, only in France do we detect explicit quantitative criteria (apart from Spain) but always for ordinary news not for election news. On the other hand, we find that France, Italy and the United Kingdom mention the previous parliamentary situation as a reference for measuring election news, what we would constitute as implicitly quantitative references but without mathematically specifying the allocation of time.

Germany and Portugal also make implicitly quantitative demands but these countries do not take the parliamentary situation as their reference but rather talk of applying criteria of equality, both during ordinary periods and at election time.

In summary, the situation observed is as follows:

Only **France** applies explicit allocation criteria for political news time under the principle of political pluralism.¹² During election time, this principle is applied to non-electoral political

news while, for election news, criteria are applied *ad hoc* for each assignment, taking parliamentary representation as their reference and the effectively involving extra-parliamentary parties, although this is not mathematically explicit. In **Italy** and the **United Kingdom**, the reference of parliamentary representation is taken for election news coverage but neither country specifies this reference with a mathematical range to allocation time. In the British case, the need to take other factors into account is highlighted, in addition to support in the previous election (the appearance of new parties, division of parties and other evidence of potential changes in support that might have occurred during the period between elections).

We must not confuse the obligation to calculate the time dedicated to each party in the news with the counting of time that may be carried out *a posteriori* by broadcasting authorities. Three countries of those studied control the number of minutes political parties appear in election news during the campaigns: **France**, **Italy** and **Portugal**.¹³ These controls are carried out *a posteriori* by the broadcasting authority and only in the French case have they had any effect on regulation.

Outside the countries mentioned in section a, in the remainder of the cases, both for election periods and ordinary periods, the protection of political pluralism is always regulated by qualitative criteria, i.e. there is no obligation for journalists to time coverage. Specifically, at election time, **Germany** establishes that election news must be covered with balance, without discrimination and with equality; the **Flemish community in Belgium** specifies that all points of view must be treated equally; **Finland** talks of the impartial and uniform treatment of all political parties; the **Netherlands** refer to taking social balance into account; **Sweden** mentions the need for impartiality in coverage; and **Portugal** talks of equality and non-discrimination in treatment.

4. Conclusions

The daily coverage of political news in the public media of nine of the main states in the European Union (German, Belgium - in its Flemish community, Finland, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, United Kingdom and Sweden) are subject to a range of regulatory criteria but, as a whole, it can be stated that the parliamentary representation of the political actors is not a decisive criterion except in one case, France (and, paradoxically, not applied to election news) and is a noticeably and explicitly stated reference in two others (more explicitly in Italy and more nuanced in the United Kingdom). For the rest, although logically the relation of the political forces is an underlying reality that is recognised implicitly, the regulations, however, place more emphasis on equality and non-discrimination or refer to qualitative criteria that appeal to professionalism in order to guarantee pluralism (impartiality, independence, objectivity, accuracy, etc.), both for ordinary and election periods.

The mechanism of electoral blocks and the jurisdiction held in Spain by an electoral body such as the Central Electoral Board have no reference in Europe, at least in the cases studied, and this indicates the high degree of politicisation of the regulation and of its interpretation in our country. However, this is completely in line with how researchers into media systems see the Spanish state, namely that it is characterised by a low level of professionalism and self-regulation and a high level of media instrumentalisation by the political parties (Hallin and Mancini 2007).

Notes

- 1 Exceptional cases are those where, as in France, the press is still partially governed by law (Loi n. 86-897 du 1 août 1986. *Portant réforme du régime juridique de la presse*).
- 2 In Spain, the penetration of television among the population was 88.5% in mid-2009, followed by radio with 54.4%, magazines with 52.9%, newspapers 41.6% and the internet 31.7%, according to the first wave of the General Media Study (AIMC 2009). Although internet consumption among the population is greater than that for television in some age groups, on average nine out of every ten Catalans (89.8%) declared that they watched the news on television in April 2009, a proportion that is also maintained for groups aged between 16 and 44 (CAC 2009a).
- 3 "Calviño stated that, in the TVE news programmes, the time is directly related to and in proportion with the number of votes obtained by the parties in the elections of October 1982", quoted in *El País*, 24 October 1984 as part of the item "Calviño afirma que los telediarios de TV-3 dedican un 82% de su tiempo a Pujol" [Consulted online on 28 December 2009].
- 4 A criterion that would be used by a large number of autonomous television broadcasters (explicitly in some cases in their legal texts on access to party political broadcasts, debates, interviews, etc.).
- 5 The name adopted by the political coalition led by Miquel Roca in Spain.
- 6 We have not been able to find, officially, the criteria of the administrative council of RTVE during this period but it is possible to infer, from the news items appearing in the relevant press and based on comments by the JEC, that the public entity had applied a proportionality that was considered direct by the body (see footnote 3) while the opposition did not agree (for example, see the aforementioned *ABC*, 19/12/1982 or *La Vanguardia* 15/05/1986).
- 7 In fact, Iniciativa per Catalunya and Esquerra Republicana have at times taken up a position against blocks (such as when they accompanied professionals in presenting their manifest against the blocks at the College of Journalists in 2003, mentioned later on).
- 8 The original study, entitled "La regulació de la informació sobre els actors polítics als mitjans públics europeus amb especial inci-

dència als períodes electorals", was commissioned by the administrative council of the Corporació Catalana de Mitjans Audiovisuals a l'Institut de la Comunicació (Incom-UAB). The findings were presented to the CCMA in December 2008. A more detailed explanation of the comparative findings can be found in: ALMIRON, N.; CAPURRO, M. and SANTCOVSKY, P. (2010): "The Regulation of Public Broadcasters: News Coverage of Political Actors in Ten European Union Countries" in *Comunicación y Sociedad*, vol. XXIII, no. 1.

- 9 The questionnaire sent to the EPRA was processed thanks to the efforts of Professor Joan Botella, from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.
- 10 It should be remembered that Spain still did not have a state broadcasting authority in 2009, while such a body did exist at the level of autonomous community in Catalonia, Andalusia and Navarre.
- 11 We only studied the case of the BBC in the United Kingdom and not that of Channel Four, also public, which does come under the British broadcasting authority (Ofcom).
- 12 In June 2009, the CSA replaced the rule of three thirds and the reference principle, which had been enforced up to that time, with the so-called Principle of political pluralism. This principle establishes that the speaking time granted by the media to the parliamentary opposition cannot be less than half the accumulated speaking time for the parliamentary majority (which, in addition to including the members of parliament who make up the majority, also includes members of the government and collaborators of the head of state when making statements relevant to political debate).
- 13 In the United Kingdom and starting recently, the BBC also counts up the time at the end of election campaigns but the nature of this monitoring is totally internal and voluntary and has no formal basis.

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The social representation of gender-based violence on Mexican radio

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Abstract

This work has been developed in the framework of wider research whose aim is to promote the human rights of women and children, namely "The influence of media in the social representation of violence against women and girls in Mexico". The research has the goal to promote the Media Observatory for the Human Rights of Women and Girls. The Observatory, which is in an initial phase, aims to analyse the role played by the media and cultural industries in women's human rights. This article is based on content analysis of the highest-rated radio stations programming in Mexico and points to the responsibility of these institutions in the social representation of the gender violence, in order to call upon its eradication.¹

Key words

Women, Girls, Human Rights, Gender-Based Violence, Social Representation, Radio Agenda.

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Resum

Aquest treball ha estat desenvolupat en el marc d'una recerca més àmplia que té com a finalitat promoure els drets humans de les dones i les nenes, titulada "La influència dels mitjans de comunicació en la representació social de la violència contra les dones i les nenes a Mèxic". Un dels objectius centrals d'aquest projecte és l'impuls d'un Observatori de Mitjans dels Drets Humans de les Dones i les Nenes. L'Observatori, que es troba a la seva fase inicial, té l'objectiu d'informar sobre el quefer de les indústries de la comunicació i la cultura en l'impuls dels drets humans de les dones. Part dels productes derivats d'aquest Observatori es comparteixen en aquest article, que, basant-se en una anàlisi de contingut de la programació de les estacions radiofòniques de més audiència i cobertura a Mèxic, apunten a la responsabilitat d'aquesta indústria en la representació social de la violència contra les dones amb l'objectiu de convidar-la a contribuir a la seva eradicació.

Paraules clau

Dones, nenes, drets humans, violència de gènere, representació social, agenda radiofònica.

1. The context. Gender-based violence: the obstacle to achieving human rights for women and girls

The adoption of United Nations statutes in 1945 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, forcing member states to globally recognise, set up, protect and strengthen human rights, did not establish the principle of universality to which it alluded. The principles were expressed in masculine terms, which stopped legal instruments and application mechanisms from including women.

It took the Worldwide Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, in 1993, for women's human rights to gain status in international legislation,² derived from the specific recognition of gender-based violence as a major obstacle blocking women's access to human rights.

Within this context, the recent approval of the *Ley general de acceso de las mujeres a una vida libre de violencia* (General Act on Women's Access to a Life Free from Violence)

(2007), published in Mexico, shows that violence against women and girls constitutes a structural problem that, if not eradicated, will stop Mexico from achieving the full democratic status to which its society aspires.³

Information that supported the urgent need to pass this law comes from *Investigación diagnóstica. Violencia feminicida en la República Mexicana* (Diagnostic Research. Femicide Violence in the Mexican Republic).⁴ This research on the violent death of girls and women in the country, documented in official information,⁵ has revealed the authorities' impunity which, summarising the precarious conditions under which most women live and the prevalence of violence throughout their lives and in all social classes and ethnic groups, leads to femicide.⁶

Unfortunately, data gathered in the course of this research reveal that:

- 1,205 girls and women were killed in the country in 2004
- 4 girls and women were murdered each day

- 1 girl or woman was killed every 6 hours
- 106 girls and women were killed in Mexico City in 2004
- More than 6,000 girls and women were killed in the country in 6 years (1999-2005)
- 3 girls and women were murdered in Mexico City in these six years (Special Commission for Femicide, Chamber of Representatives, 2006).

It's also shocking to realise that this is common worldwide. Numerous investigations show that different types of violence are committed against women around the world. The statistics corroborate this:

- every year in the United States, one-and-a-half million women are subjected to physical or sexual violence by someone they know well (Now Legal Defense and Education Fund 2005)
- in Sweden, one woman dies every ten days at home as a result of domestic violence (IORTVE 2002)
- in Russia, in 1993, 14,000 women were murdered by their husbands and 54,000 suffered physical and psychological abuse (Seager 2001)
- in Spain, official figures show that there were 25,000 reported female victims of domestic violence, although this figure represents only 10% of the real situation (IORTVE 2002)
- and in Canada the situation is no less worrying, given that 29% of women experience some type of violence in the home (Seager 2001).

In poorer countries, the situation becomes more difficult: in India, between 1988 and 1993 more than 20,000 women were murdered in cases of domestic violence. In Vietnam, 70% of registered divorces in 1991 cited violence against women as their reason (Seager 2001).

Faced with the unavoidable and universal evidence of violence against women and girls, and promoted by the feminist movement, international organisations and governments have been tasked with taking action to tackle and eradicate this problem, recognising that its prevalence, which confirms the violation of human rights for both women and girls, represents an obstacle to peace, democracy and development.

As a result, in 1979 the General Assembly of the United Nations passed the creation of the *Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*, which constituted the first international means by which women's and girls' human rights could be dealt with extensively. It also stated that violence is a threat to life and clearly established the legal boundaries so that all forms of gender discrimination and violence could be eradicated. Regionally, in 1994, the members of the Organization of American States, to which Mexico belongs, met at the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women, known as the *Belem Do Para Convention*. One year later, in September 1995, the Fourth World Conference on Women adopted the Beijing Declaration, and the Platform for

Action established that the end of violence against women was essential for equality, development and peace in all nations.

Mexico has ratified these agreements. The *Ley General de Acceso de las Mujeres a una Vida Libre de Violencia* (published in the Federation's Official Gazette on 2 February 2007, and agreed with the *CEDAW* and with *Belém Do Pará*) represented an opportunity for Mexico to assume responsibility for the eradication of this structural problem.

2. Violence against women and girls

When we talk about violence against women, we are using scientific terms that have been widely defined and discussed by feminism and which underlie the legal instruments we refer to.

Violence against women and girls can be considered as negative conduct directed against them that includes any aggression, be it physical, psychological, sexual, asset-based, economic or femicide, merely because they are women (Lagarde, 2006). It is a type of violence that occurs within a philosophy of unequal power, which seeks to subjugate and control women and girls, which harms and injures them, and which violates their human rights. In this way, the patriarchal system establishes and normalises hierarchies between men and women, giving men power and authority and turning women into objects of subjugation and discrimination, while violating their human rights. Consequently, the act of discriminating and committing violence against women means denying them their humanity: not only their rights but also their very existence.

Violence against women and girls is also used by men to safeguard their position of power and its associated privileges. It has been built into our structures and ideologies and is permitted in a series of social conventions, laws and conventions; it is "a way of conducting business", and yields enormous economic benefits to men (Kaufman 2009). Together with the control of power, the perception that men are entitled to privileges (for example, to insult or hit their spouse, believing that they own them; or to harass and even rape a woman on the basis that pleasure is their right) forms the basis of this violence. Within this framework, violence against women constitutes a way of re-establishing masculine power and is used by men to affirm their virility in the eyes of the world. Violence against women and girls is therefore an individual compensation mechanism for each man, while it constitutes a socially acceptable way of affirming male control and power:

"Such a feeling only heightens masculine insecurities: if manhood is about power and control, not being powerful means you are not a man. Again, violence becomes a means to prove otherwise to yourself and others" (Kaufman 2009).

For this reason there is an urgent need to dismantle the power structures and privileges for men and to eradicate the cultural acceptance that allows them to threaten the life and dignity of women and girls.⁷

The types of violence against women and girls include violence that is *physical, psychological, sexual, economic, wealth-based* and *femicide*. Types of violence in terms of where it is perpetrated are *at home, at work, in education, in the community* and *in institutions*.

3. The media's responsibility in supporting the human rights of women and girls

The media have been flagged as an institution that has a vital responsibility in eliminating violence against women and, consequently, in promoting their human rights. Since the media have become a source of both formal and informal education in society, alongside the family and school, they play a major role in the search for solutions.

The particular importance of media industries – and communication as a whole – in promoting women's human rights was added to the United Nations' agenda in 1995, and embodied in the World Conference of Women held in Beijing that year. For the first time, the right to communication was recognised as a condition for gender equality to be achieved. In the Conference's Platform for Action, Chapter J, "Women and Broadcast Media", was included, which established a series of recommendations for the member states, human rights organisations, media owners and advertising agencies and professional communication associations. The intention was for them to examine the consequences of reproducing sexist stereotypes in their content, including adverts that promote gender violence and discrimination, and to adopt measures to eliminate these negative images, with the hope of promoting a society based on principles of equality and respect: essential for development and peace in all nations. Also to promote the idea of women taking part as owners of these industries and as producers of content, encouraging those responsible for producing content to establish professional directives and codes of conduct. Finally, it drew people's attention to the important function of the media in informing and educating the public about the causes and effects of violence against women, and to stimulate public debate on this topic.

Although Mexico signed up to these agreements, it was not until very recently that definite actions were carried out to legally encourage the media to contribute to eliminating violence against women in all its forms and to bring about respect for the dignity of women. It was the *Ley general de acceso de las mujeres a una vida libre de violencia* that first involved the media in clearly establishing a series of recommendations.

Published on 1 February 2007, this **General Act** highlighted

the following, in its Title III, Chapter II of the Integral Programme to Prevent, Attend to, Sanction and Eradicate Violence Against Women:

Article 38 – *The Programme will contain actions with a gender perspective to:*

I. To promote and encourage knowledge and respect for women's human rights;

II. To transform socio-cultural models of conduct for women and men, including the formulation of programmes and actions in formal and informal education, at all educational and instructional levels, with the aim of preventing, attending to and eradicating stereotypical behaviour that allows, encourages or tolerates violence against women;

VIII. To ensure that the media do not encourage violence against women and that they instead encourage the eradication of all types of violence, to strengthen respect for human rights and the dignity of women;

Article 41 – *These are the powers and obligations of the Federation:*

XVIII. To ensure that the media do not promote stereotypical images of women or men, and that they eliminate standards of conduct that condone violence.

Article 42 – *Corresponding to the Governance Secretary:*

X. To ensure that the media encourage the eradication of all types of violence and strengthen women's dignity;

XI. To penalise, in accordance with the law, those media that do not comply with what is stipulated in the above section.

4. The theoretical-methodological strategy

With the aforementioned basis, this article's aim is to *analyse and determine, from the perspective of gender, the representation of violence against women and girls in Mexico's radio agenda*, to contribute to the generation of proposals that promote the responsible coverage and broadcasting of this problem, in such a way that this medium incorporates its elimination in educating and raising the awareness of society.

Particular aims that have been established are:

1. To identify, from a feminist perspective, radio content that deals with violence against women and girls.⁸

2. To determine, from a feminist perspective, the way that radio programmes treat violence against women and girls.

3. To corroborate if radio provides evidence of gender inequalities which lead to violence against women and girls.

Agenda setting is the key theory in analysing this communicative process. It represents a useful tool for determining how the media build their agenda and contribute towards reproducing the social agenda concerning the problem in question. In line with Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972), through their content the media thematise⁹ an agenda that passes on to the public themes that they should have an opinion on. However, this theory also recognises that what the media cannot influence is how society makes sense of these themes, since a series of mediations are involved in this process that go beyond the media's agenda, such as: gender, age, educational level, socio-economic level, socio-historic context, etc.

From this perspective, we can recognise the form and mechanisms through which radio programming builds a discourse around gender violence against women and girls.

Representation is the unit of analysis used in empirical work, since it allows us to understand the social construction of meaning and, in particular, to locate the process through which social groups and institutions (including the media) appropriate at the same time as they make and reproduce meanings. To define this, it has been necessary to refer to the field of social representation, inaugurated by Moscovici (1976), which are defined as places of social knowledge that possess a symbolic nature and that are constructed from the experience of the subject with its environment. Social representations constitute a never-ending daily process of reconstructing what is real, of relations between subjects and society, thanks to which people make sense of reality. These representations have at least four functions:

- 1) Knowledge, in as much as they enable the subject to understand and explain reality;
- 2) Identity, which allows the subject to identify him or herself with a social group with which he or she shares certain rules and values;
- 3) Orientation, providing codes by which subjects structure their practices and behaviours; and
- 4) Justification, which allows subjects to justify a type of behaviour before a social group (Abric 1994).

In this, gender constitutes a fundamental representation of the social system, a place where discourses, beliefs and rules intersect on what female and male identities represent and on the power relationship between both genders that deprives, and which has historically been translated into male supremacy over female subordination. These discourses, stereotypes and beliefs are seen in inequalities between genders, expressed in a social dimension as well as in economics, law, politics and culture, leading to the discrimination of women (Flores-Palacios 1996).

On this point, we recognise that key social institutions such

as the family, education, government, political parties and the media create and reproduce this social representation, through distinct and varied social technologies (from Lauretis 1987). And that's why this piece of research has concentrated on the area of social representations, since they give us the chance to ask questions, as Margara Millan states, "about language and its forms, what they include and what they leave out" (1996, 179). We also examine how the media standardise and dichotomise the organisation of gender relations and how they therefore play a key role in the production of such representations, as:

"They label and organise what is 'real' (and, furthermore, what is considered legitimate and institutional), which becomes entrenched in how individuals act and behave in society; they establish and reinforce power relations [...] This implicitly involves dominance, in discourse terms, of those ideological perspectives with the greatest weight in the social structure: the middle class order, patriarchal order [...]" (Pedraza 2008, 41).

The media is important in social representations because of its power to create beliefs and opinions which then become social rules. Of course, the media bring about such representations by following the rules and principles for constructing the reality of the social group. However, they have the power to influence social awareness and therefore to transform reality itself.

It is particularly important to draw attention to one of the risks involved in the media's oversimplified construction of the social representation of gender: stereotypes. If the media refer to production demands as a conditioning factor and even an obstacle, providing a wealth of explanations regarding the causes and consequences of social problems (which is what happens), then they are very unlikely to become a vehicle for social change that promotes equality between women and men.

Consequently, it is believed that representation as a unit of analysis makes it possible to accurately deconstruct the forms, spheres, subjects and objects that prevail in media discourse concerning gender violence against women and girls.

Content analysis is a useful study tool and technique for identifying what has been defined as *Spheres of representation*:

- Characteristics of representation. Refers to the characteristics of the messages in which violence against women is represented.

1. Medium
2. Type or format (news item, song, tabloid press piece, advertising, etc.)
3. Appearance schedule
4. Number of times represented (totals)
5. Description of content

- Subjects of representation. Refers to the subjects and institutions included in the content.

1. Woman or Girl who is the object of violence
 2. Aggressor
 3. Authorities
 4. Civil society
 5. Catholic church
 6. Political parties
 7. Academia
- Forms of representing subjects. Refers to the assessment of the action of subjects and institutions.
 1. Ways in which women and girls are seen as objects for violence
 2. Way in which the aggressor is seen
 3. Ways in which the authorities are seen to act
 - Types and modalities of representation. Refers to the types and modalities represented of gender violence against women.
 1. Physical violence
 2. Psychological violence
 3. Sexual violence
 4. Economic violence
 5. Wealth-related violence
 6. Femicide violence
 7. Family violence
 8. Industrial and educational violence
 9. Community violence
 10. Institutional violence
 - Contexts of representation. Refers to the space in which violence is represented.
 1. Public space
 2. Private space
 - Valuation of representation. Refers to the rating and/or description received by violence against women via the medium.
 1. Represents a problem
 2. Does not represent a problem
 - Meaning of representation. Refers to the objective expressed by the content of the discourse.
 1. To denounce
 2. To trivialise

5. Empirical data

Within the context of this article, the radio agenda was analysed broadcast by Mexico City's five stations with the biggest audiences and highest ratings and with relay stations in the country's different states,¹⁰ during the 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 16 of June 2007, between 6.00 am and 11.00 pm. In each case, these are private radio stations^{xi} predominantly listened to by young people and housewives:

- La Z, which belongs to the Grupo Radio Centro (GRC), is the most listened-to station in the Valley of Mexico and is classified as a broadcaster of pop music, associated with styles such as *ranchero*, tropical and reggae. Played in all the station's programmes, some of whose songs denote the sexist

nature of their content – *Los adoloridos* and *El club de los chóferes*.

- Stereo Joya, also owned by GRC, and classified as a Spanish romantic music station, has housewives as its target audience. Its main programme – “Mañana con Mariano” – is broadcast from Monday to Sunday, 6.00 am until 1.00 pm and consists of sections such as “Narration”, “Mariano in your life” and “Reflection”, in which Mariano relates stories about women who are discriminated against (a couple of titles include *Arráncame la vida* and *Salto de amor por la vida*). However, these stories do not delve into the causes or consequences of violence and in some cases suggest that women are responsible for any violence committed against them.

- 97.7 – a Spanish pop music station – also belongs to Grupo Radio Centro, with a predominantly young audience. Its main programmes are “La Chicharra”, “Metrónomo 97.7”, “El break de Rosalet” and “Konecta2”. The station's most popular genre is reggae.

- WFM 96.9 is owned by the firm Televisa and by the Spanish group Prisa, which owns 50% of Radiópolis. It is classified as a talk station (topics and news items). Its main bulletin, “Hoy por Hoy”, has three daily broadcasts (morning, afternoon and evening), as well as “El Weso”, which is promoted as political satire, although Televisa has always been accused of a pro-government editorial policy and of supporting the economic interests of its owners. The station's other main programmes are “OK! W” and “Martha Debayle en W”, which are sensationalist and mainly centred on celebrity gossip.

- Reporte 98.5 belongs to the communication group Imagen, to which the newspaper Excelsior and television channel Cadena Tres also belong. As with WFM, its programming makes it a talk station, focused almost exclusively on news items.

6. The findings

Within the context of this article, 525 hours of radio programming were analysed. The total representations recorded were 682, comprising the following types: musical (468), advertising (209), magazine-style and gossip (22), news (13). (See Table 1).

The most mentioned types of violence against women were: psychological (436) and sexual (45), mainly portrayed in domestic settings (178) (see Table 2).

Regardless of programme type – music, news, advertising or entertainment – radio programmes favour representing women as responsible for acts of violence committed against them (179), acting as an argument to justify its use. To a lesser extent, women are represented as victims (63), subjects of other people's actions, and never as empowered individuals with the ability to act with liberty and autonomy (See Table 3).

Table 1. Total number of representations of violence against women and children on Mexican radio

Station / Type	Music	Advertising	Magazine	News	Total
Stereo Joya	135	170	16		321
97.7	38				38
La Z	265	21			286
WFM		18	3	10	31
98.5			3	3	6
TOTAL	468	209	22	13	682

Source: In-house.

Table 2. Types and modalities of violence against women and girls on Mexican radio

Type and Place / Genre	Music	Magazine	Advertising	News	Total
Psychological	242	18	170	6	436
Sexual	44	1			45
Physical		1		5	6
Femicide		1		4	5
Family	6	12	160		178
Work				7	7

Source: In-house.

Table 3. Representation of women who are subject to violence on Mexican radio

	Music	Magazine	Advertising	News	Total
Responsible for violence	176			3	179
Victims	60			3	63

Source: In-house.

6.1 Music programming

Music is one of the most popular types of programming with Mexican radio audiences. Three of the stations with the highest ratings are music stations and they are analysed in this research: *Stereo Joya*, which is a romantic music station aimed at housewives; *97.7*, which targets young audiences with reggae and Spanish pop music playlists; and *La Z*, a station that concentrates on both audience groups and plays popular styles such as *ranchero*, tropical music and reggae. On all these stations the same tendency is seen: the same 10 or 12 songs are broadcast during the day, and the conclusion that can be drawn is that they contribute to the perpetuation of the idea that the only way to be a man is by denigrating women.

Without exception, the lyrics of the most popular songs in Mexico are misogynistic in nature, as they justify discrimination and violence against women. Reggae – one of the most-listened to genres nowadays – invariably refers to women as sexual objects, reinforcing the idea that women should be

exploited sexually and that their only value is as sexual objects. This can be seen in the songs: *Pásame la botella*, *Impacto*, *La gasolina* and *Ven y báilalo*. One of the most played songs – *Muévelo* – is by a reggae group called Los Súper Reyes, and its lyrics reflect how music, as a cultural product, constitutes a way of reproducing and naturalising violence against women into social conduct:

*Deja que te gocen
Dales lo que piden, sólo por esta noche
Danos ese cuerpo sin censura
No te detengas nena, danos tu calor*

*[Let them enjoy you
Give them what they want, just for tonight
Give us your body freely
Don't delay, girl, give us your heat]*

Ranchero and pop band genres are enjoyed by listeners. They originate from the north of Mexico and are broadcast throughout the country nowadays, as well as in the United States (amongst the migrant Mexican community). In these, suspicions concerning women are the main theme. Songs such as *Vas a sufrir*, *Alma de metal*, *Me quedé sin nada*, *Mil heridas* and *Antes muerta que sencilla* all threaten women, justified by them being unfaithful. An example of these lyrics is from the song *Humíllate*, from the group *Pesado*:

*Humíllate, pídemle perdón llorando de rodillas
Háblame, dime que sin mí tu vida no es la misma
Implórame que vuelva a besar tus labios con ternura
Ruégame que vuelva a llenar tu cuerpo de caricias
Convénceme que no voy arrepentirme si te quedas*

[Grovel, get on your knees and beg me for forgiveness
Talk to me: tell me that without me your life won't be the same
Beg me to kiss your lips tenderly again
Beg me to fill your body with caresses once again
Convince me that I won't regret it if you stay]

The situation is the same with tropical music (*cumbia*, *salsa* and *merengue*). These songs justify women being raped if they forget their place in society, as is the case in *Te va a doler*, by Maelo Ruiz:

*Es una pena que tú seas así,
Que no te guste ser llevada por la buena
No entiendo cómo tú pretendes ser feliz
Con ese idiota que te trata como a una cualquiera
Sé que algún día te hará falta mi amor
Y no lo digo por despecho aunque parezca
Te equivocaste al elegir entre él y yo
Pero te vas a arrepentir la vida entera*

*Te va a doler, tarde o temprano ya verás lo que te toca
Cuando tu piel ya no le excite y te abandone
O al descubrir con amargura que tiene a otra*

[It's a shame you are the way you are
That you don't like having a good time
I don't understand how you try to be happy
With that idiot who treats you like any other
I know that one day you will miss my love
And I'm not saying it out of spite, though it may seem so
You made a mistake choosing between him and me
But you will regret it for it for the rest of your life
You are going to hurt, sooner or later you will see what will happen
When your skin no longer excites him and he abandons you
Or when you bitterly discover he has someone else]

A recent example, which has not been analysed as part of this research, deserves a mention. It is the song *Unas nalgas*, by Alejandro Fernández, an icon in *ranchero* music in Mexico, in which he warns the woman that infidelity deserves a lesson: that he will give her "some smacks on the bum with a prickly pear" and "some scratches with maguey spines".

Evidence from this research shows that pop music in Spanish is also to blame. Songs such as *Si tú no estás aquí* by Rosana, *Volverte a amar* by Alejandra Guzmán and *No me queda más* by Selena emphasise the stereotype that women only want a man to protect them. Other songs, such as *Camisa negra* and *Ojalá* by Juanes and Marco Antonio Muñoz blame women for being the main threat to their stability:

*No sé el nombre que en verdad tú te mereces
Lo busqué y no existe en el diccionario
Si quisiera describir lo que pareces
Le harían falta letras al abecedario
Ni qué hablar de tus infames actitudes
No merecen ser siquiera pronunciadas
Has perdido la última de tus virtudes
Al hacerme así la vida desgraciada*

[I don't know what name you truly deserve
I looked and it doesn't exist in the dictionary
If they wanted to describe what you're like
There wouldn't be letters in the alphabet
Not to speak of your vile attitudes
They don't deserve to be mentioned
You have lost the last of your virtues
On making life so unhappy for me]

We can therefore confirm that popular music promotes sexist representations in which aggression and insults against women are presented as part of socially acceptable conduct, and in which the jealousy and threats of men against women constitute the central theme of the most frequently broadcast songs on Mexican radio.

6.2 Advertising

Advertising does not distinguish between different time bands to broadcast content that discriminates and is aggressive towards women. One example is the airline Volaris, whose adverts feature a pregnant woman in a dangerous situation, trivialised so that her family takes advantage of their travel offers. It is also common to represent women as silly, frivolous and *shopaholics*. Such is the case with the supermarket *Gigante* ("women are going crazy for Gigante's reductions") and the insurers *Afore* (which say that women exercise to look after their figure, while men go to their doctor to take care of themselves). Like television advertising, radio reproduces the stereotype of women as sexual objects. An example is *Nestlé's* ice cream adverts, in which women are easy and fast.

During the same period, this research recorded broadcasts of institutional advertising to promote the eradication of violence against women and girls, which accounted for no more than 15%. This came mainly from the Telmex Foundation. The ads produced by radio stations *Stereo Joya* and *La Z* deserve a special mention here. These count on housewives as their main target group, calling on them to denounce the violence they are subjected to by their partner, through “self-help” telephone lines.

6.3 Magazine programmes and gossip press

The genre known as the gossip press concentrates on criticising and gossiping about celebrities, including the ‘beautiful people’. Although this type of journalism dates back to the beginning of the last century, through the first publications directed at women, nowadays it constitutes one of the most profitable audiovisual and printed products in the media industry. These programmes relate tragedies that befall celebrities (affairs, divorces, arguments, deaths, and now, in Mexico, the link these people have with organised crime). They emphasise the stereotypes of men as subjects of power and women as objects to be dominated, and examples include information on politicians’ extramarital affairs with actresses. In these relationships, women are stereotypically portrayed as stupid, superficial and frivolous sex objects, who are responsible for men’s unfaithfulness. Examples of these programmes include “OK! W”, hosted by Javier Poza and “La Noche W”.

Morning magazine programmes, aimed at housewives, deserve a special mention. These emphasise the idea that a woman’s place is in the home and that her duty is to serve her family (without any consideration to the fact, of course, that most Latin American women have been working for decades now, and that they have a double or even triple working day). The areas that go to make up these programmes normally include healthcare, children’s nutrition, advice on saving and beauty, amongst others. One example of this type is the radio programme *Televisa*, “Martha Debayle en la W”. However, the most eloquent case is represented by “Mañana con Mariano” on *Stereo Joya*, broadcast from Monday to Sunday, from 6:00 am until 1.00 pm. This programme contains slots in which the speaker relates stories whose protagonists are women suffering from some sort of discrimination (titles include *Arráncame la vida* and *Salto de amor por la vida*). However, these do not delve deeper into the causes or consequences of violence and suggest that women are responsible for any violence levelled at them.

6.4 Newscasts

The social function of news programmes – to inform and raise awareness of social problems in their audience – is not followed in this sense. Even when news programmes (e.g. *Hoy por Hoy*, 98.5 *Noticias*) cover types of violence suffered by women (mainly physical, sexual and femicide), their attention and analysis is superficial and minimal compared to the num-

ber of news stories that comes in throughout a day. During the course of this research, we noted there were news stories about assassinations of women in Mexico City and other parts of the country, and the sensational and shallow treatment they received made it difficult for audiences to think about the causes or consequences of violence. It is important to note that the news does not define violence against women as a public order problem, demanding that the state and government take responsibility for it, but as a matter of domestic order which only applies to women and, only in some cases, to their partners. Women are represented as victims or, more extremely, as responsible for the violence that affects them, and their aggressors are seldom identified. To this we should also add that no news item referred to the existence of the General Act.

One item that received a lot of coverage during our week of analysis was the story of the mayor of Los Angeles’s extra-marital affair with a journalist from the American channel *Telemundo*, who was later suspended from her duties due to an anti-ethical attitude. This new item was yet another example of the stereotypical representation of women as a threat in conducting public space and, more specifically, political activity.

Finally, we should mention that the news programmes on *La W*, owned by the firm *Televisa*, have an evening edition which takes the form of political satire, *El Weso*. This trivialises, through jokes and gossip, the representation of violence against women and one of the female hosts is often the butt of misogynistic jokes by her male co-presenters.

On this point, and before we end this section, I would like to clarify that, generally, women’s human rights are not considered an important topic in the Mexican media’s news programmes. This does not mean that there are no relevant issues that affect half the population of this country, or that transformative actions promoted by women themselves, which show their power as agents of political, social and economic dynamics, do not exist. The problem lies in the perspective adopted by radio news programmes towards women and their citizenship.

7. Conclusions

Given the above, it is important to note a series of preliminary considerations.

By treating it as an isolated, trivial and domestic problem, radio discourse encourages women to be represented as responsible for the violence they suffer. Such is the case with lyrics of popular songs, in which the ambitious and unfaithful nature of women justifies the violence they receive. From this perspective music, as with other cultural industries, can be seen as part of an extended ideological process, in which male domination over women is normal.

Radio advertising follows the same norms as television advertising, as they reproduce the stereotypes that form the

basis of violence against women by portraying them as sexual objects who are frivolous and superficial, and show them occupying traditional roles – as mothers and wives – that reaffirm the gender duties they should assume.

As far as the news is concerned, women's human rights are invisible. When dealing with stories about violence against women, news programmes hardly ever identify the perpetrator and, what's more, seem disinterested in finding out who is responsible. Not much reference is made to the role of the authorities and barely their responsibility in eradicating this problem. Meanwhile, magazine and tabloid programmes emphasise sexist stereotypes that discriminate against women.

Unfortunately, within this context, the treatment of violence against women and children is not done with the aim of discovering what types of violence there are and what causes them, and much less with the aim of eradicating them but rather to reproduce them. The most prevalent types are psychological and sexual violence. Moreover, these are represented as domestic issues, since they take place in the family home.

Since violence against women and girls is not represented as a problem, radio announcers do not raise it as an issue of social awareness but merely as a topic to reproduce. In this way, radio tends to trivialise the problem rather than identify it or, even less so, denounce it.

Similarly, we cannot fail to recognise that, even if the media do not determine what their audiences think, they do have an influence on the agenda of topics discussed by society, and it should be noted that the media is responsible for social apathy and for society not realising that this problem exists.

The aim of this work is to contribute to the eradication of violence against the world's women and children, as a condition for them to access a life free from discrimination, oppression, submission and abuse. In other words, to fully recognise and respect their human rights. In this respect, it is clear that media involvement is undeniable. A debt that media analysts owe to us is to generate strategies that convincingly bring about change in the duty of media institutions to ensure they contribute effectively to the elimination of the violence levied against women and children. And this is the reason why this Observatory exists.

Notes

- 1 This work has been carried out with the support of the PAPIIT Program of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), project IN308808, and has relied on the collaboration of scholarship students Nelly Lara, Gabriela Barrios, Amelia P. and Hilda Cruz. The book that will contain the findings from all the research will be published in 2010 by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and UNAM.
- 2 Women's human rights include the right to physical integrity, a full and healthy sexual and reproductive life, to work and to keep earnings, to possess personal assets, to education, to culture, to political participation, to access power, communication and information and, most importantly, to life and freedom.
- 3 The framework for this violence is the gap in inequality between women and men. In this respect, Emilio Álvarez Icaza, president of the Human Rights Commission of the Federal District, points out that, according to the Global Gender Gap Report of 2007, Mexico is 93rd out of 128. Also, that women in Mexico represent four out of every ten people in the Economically Active Population (PEA in Spanish), but only three per cent have a managerial post; 10.45 per cent of those in the PEA do not receive an income. With respect to political rights, 23 of the 128 seats in the Republican Senate are occupied by women: that means only 18 per cent; while in decision-making they only sit on five of the 57 committees, less than 10 per cent, when they constitute more than half the country's electorate. In the Chamber of Representatives, 117 seats of the 500 are occupied by women, scarcely 23 per cent, and they are on eight of the 44 committees. Mexico is made up of 2,439 town councils and delegations, but only 85 municipal presidencies are run by women – in other words, in this field 3.5 per cent are women (Álvarez Icaza 2008).
- 4 This research was promoted by the Comisión Especial del Femicidio (Special Femicide Commission) in the Republic of Mexico of the LIX Legislature of the Chamber of Representatives (2006), headed by the anthropologist Marcela Lagarde, and brought together the work of 80 researchers around the country, giving us the task of documenting the painful prevalence of violence against women and particularly of femicide in Mexico.
- 5 Of the state executives, women's institutes, the state justice bodies and state authorities and municipalities. Also, of state congresses, of the state and Federal District, of civil organisations and academic institutions and of press reports (Comisión Especial del Femicidio, Chamber of Representatives LIX Legislature, 2006).
- 6 In agreement with Marcela Lagarde, femicide constitutes the group of crimes against humanity that include the murder, kidnapping and disappearances of girls and women within a framework of institutional collapse. This is a rupture in the rule of law that favours impunity. Femicide is a crime of the state (Lagarde 2006).
- 7 On this point, it is important to clarify that, in a patriarchal society, violence by men against women does not happen in isolation but is linked to violence by men against others; a mechanism used by them since childhood to establish hierarchies. Therefore, an analysis of

violence against women, which is because of gender, is not the same as an analysis of violence against men, which is a fight for power.

- 8 The first phase of the research is based on diagnosing, via content analysis, the agenda of television and radio programming, as well as websites, newspapers and magazines. The next phase, which is now underway, aims to determine the influence of such content on the representation of violence against women and girls that is current in Mexican society.
- 9 Wolf (1994) defines 'thematization' as an informative process, crucial in agenda-setting theory. When we thematise a problem, we place it on the agenda for the public's attention, giving it adequate importance, highlighting that it is crucial and significant with regard to the normal course of news.
- 10 Out of a total of 58 stations that broadcast from the Federal District, 33 are on AM and 25 on FM, according to the information published on the website www.musicapordentro.com.
- 11 In Mexico, a total of 1,465 commercial radio stations operate on a national level, 225 are non-commercial, 32 are state radio broadcasting firms and two are federal (Esteinou 2005; Martell 2010).

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Community Radio in South Asia: Technology for Community Benefits

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Abstract

Community Radio naturally adapts as the best oral medium for communication in South Asia. Its vast diversity in terms of languages and cultures and the existence of varied topography makes Community Radio an 'appropriate' technology for community communication and empowerment. The history of radio in most South Asian countries is at least half a century old but what is new is the practice of Community Radio, where dialogues flow rather than information. Community Radio is transcending the one-way characteristics of radio, becoming a two-way 'dialogue-based medium' where many different voices are not only heard but also respected through the access and participation of local communities. Comparatively low cost in terms of production, broadcast and reception, the technology used by Community Radio is an Appropriate Communication Technology (ACT) for information deprived communities in South Asia. This paper charts out the use and benefit of Community Radio as a medium for community benefits.

Key words

Community Radio, South Asia, Appropriate Community Technology (ACT), ICT, Community development.

Resum

La radio comunitària sembla el mitjà de comunicació oral que s'adapta d'una manera més natural a l'Àsia del Sud. La seva vasta diversitat lingüística i cultural, i una gran topografia diversa, fan de la ràdio comunitària un mitjà "adequat" perquè la comunitat es comuniqui i es reafirmi. Fa més de cinquanta anys que la ràdio funciona a la majoria de països de l'Àsia del Sud, però la ràdio comunitària suposa una pràctica innovadora en la qual el pes del diàleg preval sobre la informació. La ràdio comunitària està canviant la naturalesa unidireccional de la ràdio per convertir-la en un "mitjà dialogal" bidireccional on la pluralitat de veus no només s'escolta, sinó que es respecta, deixant que les comunitats locals hi accedeixin i hi participin. La ràdio comunitària té uns costos de producció, d'emissió i de recepció comparativament molt baixos, i la tecnologia que utilitza per arribar a les comunitats més aïllades informativament de l'Àsia del Sud es coneix amb el nom de "tecnologia adequada de la comunicació" (appropriate communication technology). Aquest article analitza els usos i els beneficis de la ràdio comunitària com a mitjà per aconseguir beneficis per a tota la comunitat.

Paraules clau

Ràdio comunitària, Àsia del Sud, tecnologia comunitària adequada (TCA), tecnologies de la informació i de la comunicació, desenvolupament comunitari.

Introduction

According to community media activist Alfonso Gumucio Dagron, development communication is "people taking into their hands the communication processes" making their "voices heard", establishing "horizontal dialogues" with decision-makers on matters affecting their lives to "ultimately achieve social changes" for their own benefits (Dagron 2009, 453-465).

Although planned and executed with good intentions, most development actions (for the marginalized and the poor) fail or meet with untimely collapse owing to a lack of acknowl-

edgment of local cultures and the participation of local communities. He points out that, very often, most of the "powerful groups of institutions" are only interested in including "knowledge and savvy" components for the 'target communities' in their heavily funded projects. From his experience of over 30 years in the community development field, he succinctly narrates communities' own voices: "they – planners, funding agencies, aid organizations – will not allow us to do it, they will stop the funding, [and] they do not like to hear what we really think about their projects and programmes" (Dagron 2009, 453-465).

Similarly, if the communication process does not start with

questioning the internal democracy in a community, it will contribute to more inequalities rather than overcoming them. Free media provide a place for challenges, where free opinions are played out without any fear of coercion or control, represented as a true public sphere.

Jürgen Habermas (1964: 73) says “citizens behave as a public body when they confer in an unrestricted fashion – that is, with the guarantee of the freedom of assembly and association and freedom to express and publish their opinions – about matters of general interest”. His concept of the public sphere envisions ‘citizen media’ or the media fully owned, controlled and operated by citizens for the free flow of ideas and opinions on the matters in their lives, by themselves, in a fully unrestricted environment free from either state or other influential power players in communities or societies.

An analyst of communication rights, Jean d’Arcy, within two decades of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, prescribed a review of the ‘right to information’ (Article 19) as “the right of man to communicate” (quoted in Beltrán 1979: 7). This clearly shows which is the dominant model of communication and media and also indicates that the generalized concept of communication predominated over a more limited view of information.

An all-encompassing communicating (or communication) element as a process was absent from the linear model of information from Harold Laswell’s channel-effects theory to David Berlo’s S-M-C-R model. The mass media’s potential as a ‘communicator’ channel or a platform for ‘communication’ was smartly sidelined for the purpose of developing it as a persuasive tool to the benefit of Western corporate interests. Latin American scholars strongly criticized such a hegemonic role of mass communication and argued for the liberating potential of the mass media (Beltrán 1979).

Writing in 1979 for UNESCO, a veteran Bolivian critical communication researcher, Luis Ramiro Beltrán Salomón, said “the developing countries had realized long before 1970 that their economic and political life was dominated by the developed countries to such a degree that development was impeded. What is new is the full realization that such a situation of dependence also exists in the cultural sphere” (Beltrán 1979: 1). His famous writing on “horizontal communication” was, at that time, an alternative not only to the dominant paradigm of the linear model of media effects but also a valid proposal to claim against the media hegemony of developed countries.

A counter communication media, channelled to re-establish its “egalitarian” potential as a community media, is “implicated in an emerging global struggle for communicative democracy” (Howley 2005: 259). The recent debates on media and democracy have gone beyond the universal notion of the freedom of expression and towards specific attributes such as media reform, media justice, inclusive “mediascapes” (Appadurai 1996: 38) and the creation of alternative grassroots communication networks. Saima Saeed lists five key players in the process of “media democracy”, these being the

nation-state, the market, multilateral forums, local and global civil society movements (Saeed 2009, 466-478). We add one more to her list, namely ‘Appropriate Community Technology’ (ACT).

This paper is based on the broader scenario of the Community Radio movement in Nepal and India to argue for Appropriate Community Technology for community benefits. First, we will summarize, define and explain the practices of Community Radio, comparing and contrasting its use and benefits, and then define the concept of Appropriate Community Technology. The paper narrates in great detail how Community Radio serves the purpose of ACT in South Asia. We will compare experiences in the Community Radio sectors in Nepal and India vis-à-vis the ‘appropriateness’ of the technology. The paper ends with a conclusion drawn from the experiences of Nepal and India in arguing for Community Radio as ACT for larger community benefits.

A case for Community Radio

Community Radio is a well-acknowledged tool that supports participation and representation for the underserved and other similar communities to have their ‘voice’ represented through the medium of radio. Most Community Radio approaches use a FM radio broadcast technology to attain their goals. Radio is often quoted as a “poor man’s medium” because of its cheap technology implementation both at the broadcasting as well as at the receiving end. Community Radio is a medium that well serves the communication needs of communities and groups that are not represented by the mainstream media for various reasons.

Kevin Howley (2005: 40) defines Community Radio as “at once a response to the encroachment of the global upon the local as well as an assertion of local cultural identities and socio-political autonomy in light of these global forces”. We can deduce that technology is the element that allows us to extrapolate the benefits of Community Radio.

Mainstream radio uses a technology that requires technical know-how and understanding to be used as a broadcast medium. Community Radio is no exception but what makes it different is that it is more than just simple radio technology. The characteristically different ownerships and organization processes separate Community Radio from other forms of radio broadcasting (either public or private) and make Community Radio a tool for community participation and empowerment.

Community Radio is recognized by AMARC (World Association of Community Broadcasters) as a unique contribution to media pluralism and an ideal means of fostering freedom of expression, development of culture and identity, and active participation in local life.

Community Radio broadcasters from 20 countries of the AMARC Asia and Pacific region met in the Indian city of Bangalore in February 2010 to assess their past activities and

to formulate future strategies. The second Asia Pacific regional conference issued the Bangalore Declaration, calling for supporting initiatives to aid access to digital and other technological opportunities to enable community broadcasting on an ever-widening scale. The AMARC conference also highlighted the need to create spaces on the airwaves for diverse and marginalized voices, irrespective of caste, creed, race, colour, gender, sexuality, faith, and abilities or other differences (AMARC Asia Pacific).

Radio's community benefits have been well documented in its history. Radio was used by "exploiting the medium's ability to collapse time and space in order to enhance social interaction within and between communities" (Howley 2005: 239). This is radio's true democratic potential. On the other hand, some earlier critics such as those from the Frankfurt School argued that radio organizes its listeners not as citizens but as consumers and divides them into further fragments to sell them to the advertisers. Albeit never undermining its potential to be a liberator, provided its organization is weaned out from the clutches of profit-making corporations and hegemonic neo-capitalists.

Community Radio originates from the desire to encompass the communication needs of the most disadvantaged and minority communities, and is also one of the best tools for poverty alleviation. P. Sharma (2002) observes that Community Radio addresses "the issues of communities producing their own radio programmes, of regulation, of the negligible costs involved and of the importance they have for the community concerned", "used effectively, radio could make a real difference in the lives of poor, illiterate populations who can neither read a newspaper nor afford to purchase a television receiver". It is this empowerment of the community within the power relationship between the media and its audience that defines Community Radio.

Bruce Girard (2007: 3) lists five points to define Community Radio. They are community-based (location, ownership and control), independent (not relational but on influence and transparency), not-for-profit (but for sustenance), for the community (social, economic and cultural benefits of the community), and participatory (at all levels of programming, operation and finance).

Community Radio stations, especially in rural areas, provide an important social infrastructure. In Nepal, Community Radio has helped in conflict transformation and peace building by promoting human rights and a culture of peace through messages, awareness programmes and 'social narration'. In some cases it has even sustained injuries to help resolve conflict or at least reduce its intensity and by helping communities to cope with conflict by showing working alternatives to the conflict's victims.

Drawing from Michael Shipler (2006: 10), Community Radio can personalize an ideology or myth by giving them names and voices and making one side (in the conflict) more humane than the other (but conversely 'hate speech' could

aggravate the conflict), in order to mitigate the negative effect of conflict.

The whole idea of Community Radio rests on the demystification of radio, which means demystifying the technology of organizing, producing and broadcasting radio. Demystifying technology could turn the Community Radio stations into community technology centres. Communities should be able to use and access technologies available with radio.

Some critics of the integration of new ICT with radio have taken technology as granted and unavoidable. One such critic, Eronini R. Megwa, asserts that new ICT is "inevitable", "indispensable" and has an "inescapable" impact on society (Megwa 2007, 49-66). Explaining the empowering aspect of technology, critics tend to accept the technological aspect as a given and seldom have they thought of the possibility of alternatives in technological choice and uses.

There is a need to define media beyond "technological message channels" and towards a consolidated analysis of media as a "complex socio-technical" entity (emphasis original). John Downing sometimes considers small and community media as "social movement media" (Downing 2008, 40-50) or recently as "nano-media" (Pajnik and Downing 2008, 7-16). Such a socio-technical aspect of Community Radio is worthy of analysis due to its community benefits.

Appropriate Community Technology (ACT)

The role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in community development has been well documented by many scholars. Lisa Servon (2002: 1) acknowledges that "the community technology movement which employs Information Technology (IT) to empower historically disadvantaged individuals and communities demonstrates the potential of IT to serve as a tool of social change." When communication technology adopts the IT component it is generally known as ICT. For clarity we will use ICT to define the technology that uses both new and old information technology for communication. In its simplest form, new ICT is the internet and the old is radio broadcasting.

Taking ICT's potential empowering role for the benefits and advantages of otherwise disadvantaged communities has been the subject for many research studies, both in developed as well as in the developing world for quite some time (Servon 2002). Recent attempts have been to combine the old form of ICT with the new one to address the communication needs of the community in many peri-urban and rural communities in Asia, Africa and South America. UNESCO has established 40 Community Multimedia Centres (CMCs) in 15 developing countries in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean (UNESCO 2006).

The CMC concept combines old ICT with a new one. It has been established in those places where some type of community communication infrastructure already exists. CMC supplements Community Radio with a telecentre and a telecentre

with Community Radio. A telecentre is a public place where people can access computers, the internet, and other digital technologies that enable them to gather information, create, learn and communicate with others while they develop essential digital skills.

Community Radio, either combined with or without the new ICT, has been an effective tool for community communication through participation. As outlined at the beginning of the paper, ICT intervention failing to adapt to local cultures and allowing community participation has merely been technology in the communities per se but not 'community technology'.

Here we will draw on comparisons by Roberto Verzola (2004) on the benefits of Community Radio over the internet supported by communication initiatives to define the difference and suitability of Community Radio as Appropriate Community Technology (ACT) or, in our understanding, an 'empowering tool for disadvantaged communities'.

Verzola (2004) has taken a series of comparative indicators to differentiate the effectiveness, popularity and benefits of Community Radio over the internet. Although he is not interested in covering the combined technology of radio and the internet, we will explicate such a combination. Based on Community Radio stations in the Philippines, he bases his considerations on: "user onetime entry cost; recurring user costs; network server onetime entry costs; recurring network server costs; equipment life; impact on jobs; local culture; production of equipment; source of information; potential reach; best use; interactivity; advertising; information goods marketing; sensory demands; health issues; accessibility; gate keepers; default paradigms; new technologies; government attitude; development agencies attitude; NGO attitude; benefits to rich countries; and proposed alternative approaches" (Verzola 2004: 169). As he compares appropriateness between Community Radio (Appropriate Technology - AT) versus the internet (IT), we extrapolate AT to ATC (Appropriate Communication Technology), comparing some of the relevant comparable indicators drawing on South Asia.

Community Radio: ACT in South Asia

South Asia, which consists of the nations of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, is ethnically diverse, with more than 2,000 ethnic entities with populations ranging from hundreds of millions to small tribal groups. Many invading and native societies have produced composite cultures with many common traditions and beliefs in the region. But the traditions of different ethnic groups in South Asia have diverged throughout earlier times, sometimes giving rise to strong local traditions such as the distinct Nepali culture crossing across Nepal and India, the Bengali culture between India and Bangladesh, and the South Indian Tamil culture cross-bordering India and Sri Lanka.

The peoples of South Asia speak at least twenty major languages and if one includes the more important dialects, the count rises to over two hundred (Bose and Jalal, 2004: 4). South Asia today is strategically a vital part of the world which has significant implications for the international order at the beginning of the new millennium.

The three major countries in South Asia, namely India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, were an integral part of British India before its independence in 1947 owing to a general common culture including the commonly understood Hindi language. The remaining nations of Afghanistan, Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka are not alien to both 'commonly found culture' and the language.

South Asia, which accounts for 10 percent of the Asian continent, in contrast shares 40 percent of the continent's total population. The main differences between the countries of South Asia are in terms of geography and population, and that too only in comparison with India. India occupies 64 percent of the land mass and 74 percent of the population of South Asia.

In spite of India being the biggest and oldest democracy in South Asia, the credit for democratizing airwaves for the benefit of its people goes to one of the region's smallest countries and its newest democratic republic, Nepal.

As South Asia is diverse in terms of languages and cultures and the existence of predominately pre-literate cultures and more dialects than languages, Community Radio naturally adapts as the best oral medium for communication. Another advantage is that local, small-scale assembly of equipment is entire possible in Community Radio. The medium of radio and its technology is quite adaptive among the South Asian population. The history of radio in most South Asian countries is at least half a century old.

Now we will outline some comparable indicators in South Asia extrapolated from Verzola (2004: 169) to define Community Radio as Appropriate Community Technology (ACT) over Information Communication Technology (ICT).

There is virtually zero user one-time entry cost for Community Radio as even the most destitute communities in South Asia could afford a simple FM radio set that costs less than US\$ 1. Looking at the mobile phone penetration among rural communities, the recurring cost also falls to zero, otherwise it would be the cost of two double-A size batteries every few months. On the establishment side, FM radio still has advantages over setting up internet-based telecentres due to high infrastructural cost (electricity, network server, subscription fees etc.). There is no recurring network cost except the occasional turnover of technical people and no connectivity cost. As FM technology is a relatively "mature and standard", a community benefits more from its sturdiness in terms of maintenance of both broadcast equipment and the receiver sets. All of these much lower costs for the user rightly justify Community Radio as a "poor man's medium".

Community Radio is best suited to the dissemination of local

information, for building local public opinion, and strengthening local community. In remote areas, where it is the only contact for isolated families with the outside world, a Community Radio that can receive phone calls from the outside has also been used to announce urgent messages to individuals/families. Say, for example, from a migrant labourer overseas to his/her friends and relatives back home. This has been practised in rural communities with the lowest telecommunication density.

In spite of radio being a one-way medium, due to its adaptability and existence in the local information ecology, Community Radio has high interactivity through the involvement and participation of local communities. Programmes in the languages of many marginalized and out of mainstream communities in Community Radio are good examples in Nepal.

It is interesting to note that, because it has no visual input, radio can actually encourage the use of one's imagination, thus directly contributing to the empowerment of disadvantaged communities by allowing them to reflect on their situation by 'making their voices heard'.

The countries in South Asia have ensured, either through court rulings or by sustained lobbying and campaign movements, that 'the radio spectrum is a public space'. Nevertheless, an inherent public right to use the 'airwaves' has been restricted by governments through exclusionary licensing requirements, based on arguments such as "the radio spectrum is limited, so its use must be regulated" and "national security requires the strict regulation of radio transmitters lest they be used for antigovernment activity". Consequently, the right to access Community Radio becomes a paradox of radio as a medium to develop the community. Interestingly, the radio's other gatekeepers are the communities themselves, so the issue of gatekeeping is minimal from the operation side. A technology called spread spectrum allows many stations to share a segment of the radio spectrum with minimal interference. This technology is the answer to the so-called scarcity of the radio spectrum.

The default paradigm of the Community Radio is local orientation, oral tradition, community-centeredness, local culture, and 'intermediate technology advocacy'. So it could serve as the Appropriate Community Technology for community development and empowerment.

Adopting new technology at first hand invites some uncertainty regarding our quality of life. The famous 'Diffusion of Innovation' theory also incorporates this point, when it segmented technology use into "five" different categories of technology "adopters" (Rogers 2005: 247). The development of new technology affects every aspect of our natural life and makes it a community practice. Naturally, such an authoritative element would be expected to be a part of debates and discussions within the community of its influence. But this is not found to happen; rather it seems mystifying and our suffering in adaptation goes unheard. It is the culture of tech-

nology that the users and participants of the technology do not find themselves participating in forming opinions about its uses or misuses. We would be told of its misuse by the innovators at a stage where the repercussions have already cost us our lives. Uses and benefits of technologies are translated into its economic transactions.

Such a lack of broad participation in conversations about technology seriously impoverishes the ways technologies are brought into our everyday lives. One of the alternatives to this practice is to discover how more people can be more fully engaged in important discussions and decisions about technology for their use. One such platform is its demystification within the community.

According to Bonnie Nardi and Vicki O'Day (1999), different batches of social and political thinkers, including those of Lewis Mumford, Jacques Ellul, Neil Postman, Langdon Winner, and Ivan Illich, have tried to understand "the interrelationships among technology and history, technology and social institutions, and technology and politics". They point out that nothing about tool use is fundamentally new to us as a species, but that our ability to absorb new tools and the different ways of doing and being that emerge with technological change are challenged by "the avalanche of innovation" we are experiencing. They point out that, ever since the publication in 1954 of Jacques Ellul's masterpiece *The Technological Society*, social critics have sounded alarms about the stress to the human mind and soul of having to adapt constantly to new technology (Nardi; O'Day 1999: 26-27).

The same may be true when the new technology of communication is introduced in rural communities. Community Radio as a new technology might replace, supplement or contradict with the traditional technology of communication in a particular community. This will invite some unintended effects caused by new technologies. Some of these unintended effects will be fortuitous and some less so. It is both misleading and patronizing to suggest otherwise to people who will live with the consequences of change. If we expect such unintended consequences and rather examine and cope with them, the intended consequences of implementing the new technology might not suffer.

As in the case of Community Radio, we would discuss two scenarios from Nepal and India regarding the setting up of Community Radio. Although these two South Asian countries have commonalities in culture, language and even socio-political realities, the case of Community Radio is different. Nepal is the first country in South Asia to begin experimenting with community-owned independent radio from 1996 and has more than a decade of history of Community Radio with a significant number of Community Radio stations covering almost all its 75 districts. In India Community Radio came rather indirectly and community-owned radio broadcasts are quite a recent phenomenon, but India's first campus Community Radio was established in Anna University in Chennai as Anna CR in 2004.

Nepal: A pioneer Community Radio country in South Asia

In Nepal, the airwaves opened up gradually after the introduction of parliamentary democracy in 1990. The new constitution promulgated in 1990, in the changed political environment, explicitly guaranteed the fundamental rights of the people, including freedom of expression. As in the other countries with systems of democratic governance, the Nepali Constitution (1990) accepted the right to information as a guiding principle of state policy. It also guaranteed freedom of print and publication, which are believed to be necessary for human development. Although these constitutional rights did not explicitly mention the right to broadcast, this was inherent in the line of media and press freedom as set forth in the Constitution.

The formulation of the National Communication Policy and enactment of the National Broadcasting Act in 1993, in the spirit of the Constitution, paved a favourable way for the possible involvement of the private sector in establishing free and independent radio in Nepal. Moreover, the Supreme Court of Nepal interpreted that unrestricted and guaranteed Rights to Information were essential for a democratic system.

The overall political environment after the People's Movement in 2006 (which ultimately established Nepal as a republic, removing 230 years of monarchy) was favourable to the growth of independent Nepali broadcast media and so was the popular and cheap FM technology for radio broadcast. Radio became readily available to prospective private as well as community operators in Nepal. Progress has been slow over the period of ten years from 1996-2006 and somewhat difficult, for Community Radio as well as for democracy. But wherever it was established, it has become clear that community broadcasting can play a specific and crucial role in encouraging public participation, strengthening cultural and linguistic diversity and giving voice to the poor and otherwise marginalized groups.

With the establishment of Radio Sagarmatha in 1996 as the first Community Radio in South Asia, Nepal marked the transfer of control over broadcasting from the government to the people. But radio was based in the national capital Kathmandu, where people had access to many other media for education, information and entertainment. At the same time, independent radio was not available for the communication needs of the larger part of the Nepali population living outside the capital city, Kathmandu. After continuous struggles to expand access to the rural and peri-urban communities, independent radio stations were gradually established outside the capital. Within one year of commencement of the broadcast of Radio Sagarmatha, Radio Lumbini in the southern Terai district of Rupendehi and Radio Madanpokhara in western mid-hill district of Palpa were set up, away from the country's centre. According to the Nepal Ministry of Information and Communication, by the end of 2009 more than 150 Community Radio stations got broadcasting licences and 135 of them are broadcasting, making Community Radio available

to almost all its 75 districts. Interestingly, Nepal accounts for a mere 3 percent of South Asia in terms of land and 2 percent of its total population. Nonetheless, it has huge numbers of private radio stations serving a variety of communities, cultures and geography within its area of operation. The total number of private radio stations (both community and commercial) currently stands at 325.

The instances of radio in the community opened up many avenues for its members, mainly young ones. As radio was with them, they also went with radio. Many young people got themselves trained in the technological aspects of radio production, editing, and broadcasting. Some were trained under the 'capacity development' programmes of a variety of national and international aid agencies, but many got themselves signed up with a 'few months package' training, either in nearby cities or in the capital. And others, though in very small numbers, got 'on the job training'. This clearly shows the 'appropriateness' of the technology used by the media of their community.

In a country afflicted by long-running and violent conflict and a dwindling economy, all the trainees were unemployed young workers. These youths were accepted on these training courses in anticipation that they would get those jobs readily available in the Community Radio stations. This was quite clear as the numbers of new Community Radio stations rapidly grew over a matter of a couple of years in Nepal. Young hopes were boosted by the end of the more than a decade long armed conflict on the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (in 2007) between the government and the militant Maoist party. But the use, availability and anticipated benefits of the 'appropriate technology' have created an undue pressure on Community Radio stations. The situation in Nepal invited a 'latent hostility' between young hopefuls and the radio stations in their community.

The other unintended consequence of 'appropriateness' is the very high turnover among radio technical staff. In many personal interviews with authors, many Community Radio managers, mainly from the rural areas of Nepal, complained of the difficulty in retaining their technical staff in all the fields of production, editing and studio control. They felt incapacitated by the high technical staff turnover. This was a major problem for the in-house categories of trainees. After getting trained and getting to grips with the technology, young hopefuls get lured to the town/city based jobs on audio production, or to 'attractively paid' jobs at rival commercial radio stations. The station managers felt cheated in their 'good intention' of training up such 'volunteers' and were grossly unhappy to find their radio stations becoming 'a training centre' rather than 'a community service centre'.

India: the paradox of the largest democracy

India being the world's largest democracy (in terms of population) and having a sustained democratic governance of over

six decades, it has had its struggles to establish community-owned radio stations (Pavarala and Malik 2007). Only in 2008 a 'real Community Radio' started its operation in South Asia's giant democracy.

The state-owned All India Radio gave up its monopoly in 2001, with a decision to issue licences to private parties to start radio stations. This follows the Indian Supreme Court's ruling of 1995 declaring the airwaves as public property, to be used for promoting public good and ventilating a plurality of views. It noted that Indian broadcasting was being governed by archaic laws.

Despite a clear mandate to serve as the community ('public') utility, Indian radio broadcasting shifted from being a government monopoly to highly-commercialized broadcasting. In July 2001, India's first privately-owned broadcasting station went on air in Bangalore. In fact, it is owned by Rupert Murdoch's Star network. The irony was that the government had opened up airwaves even for foreigners but it had been hesitant to allow community radio that involves people's participation.

On an experimental basis, India's first community radio was launched at Orvakallu in Kurnool district of the state of Andhra Pradesh in October 2002, as part of the communications programme of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Women members of the Mandal Ikya Sangham spent Rs. 25,000, (about \$500) more to set up the radio station, named Mana Radio. The radio station was located in a small room in this village. The Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) provided technical support and gave training to the women in running the station. It broadcast 45 minutes of programming every Monday from 6 to 6.45 pm. Radio signals were being broadcast at FM 90.0 MHz. But later the government closed down this radio station saying that running such a station is illegal.

After a lot of delaying tactics, the government passed a Community Radio policy in 2002, which came under immense criticism from grassroots radio activists in the country. A public petition to the Prime Minister 'Urging the Inclusion of the Right of the Communities within the Community Radio Policy' noted that the 2002 policy was 'discriminatory towards communities'. The policy holds that only well-established educational institutions or organizations can apply for a Community Radio licence. So, what has been given in the name of Community Radio is in reality campus radio (Saieed 2009).

This new trend of campus Community Radio has been tried out with licences for Community Radio issued to premier education institutions since 2004 as a poor substitute for giving licences to communities themselves. Of course, non-governmental organizations too have started getting license since 2008. The new community radio policy announced in November 2006 allows civil society organizations, NGOs and other non-profits to apply for community radio licences making 'citizen radio' a reality. The policy will not only open up

community radio to NGOs, self-help groups and other community-based organizations, but it will also allow them to become self-supporting through advertising revenue.

Some grassroots organizations (NGOs) in India had initiated radio projects to support their work on community development. Vinod Pavarala and Kanchan K. Malik (2007: 109) list four such initiatives in great detail. The three of them namely Alternative for India Development (AID) project in Daltonganj (Jharkhand), Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (KMVS) project in Bhuj (Gujarat) and Deccan Development Society (DDS) project in Pastapur (Andhra Pradesh) use leased out time from the regional broadcast of state-owned All India Radio to broadcast produced by local communities. The fourth one, the VOICES project in Budhikote (Karnataka), notably uses cable as a medium for broadcast. But all of them are forerunners of NGO community radio in India.

In 2001, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) proposed 40 radio stations named Gyan Vani in its study centres located in various colleges across the country planned for extension and training. Now Gyan Vani is a network of 44 FM community radio stations operating as educational community radio. The original idea of starting Gyan Vani as Community Radio was that, in principle, 40% of the content should have community programming. But vaguely defined "communities" in such radio are largely student communities. These stations are mainly for educational radio, though they also cater for community needs. With a programming breakdown of 60 percent education and a 40 percent community-based content, Gyan Vani is India's precursor to community-campus radio. But being controlled by educational institutions, such initiatives can usher in community participation only to a limited extent.

Conclusions

As Langdon Winner (quoted in Nardi and O'Day 1999: 41) suggests, the real issue about control is that of unintended consequences, or what he calls "technological drift". We cannot possibly expect to predict or steer all of the results of innovation. In non-technological areas that are not so saturated with visions of progress, we probably understand this better and would not expect to stay in complete control. The rhetoric about technological change tends to ignore the possibility of either unknown or negative side effects. This rhetoric inhibits our ability to examine our circumstances with a reflective eye.

In contradiction to the aspirations of some (technically trained youths) in the community, Nepal's Community Radio stations are not in a position to give employment. Even though in a very latent state (as reflected in interviews with community station managers and radio board members), a confrontation with potential community volunteers might cost Community Radio the price of both 'identity' and 'existence'. A fundamental principle of Community Radio is to mobilize

(potential) volunteers from the community. Volunteers represent the communities inside the radio station and it is a quite crucial mechanism for enabling meaningful community participation in programming, operating and financing that is the essence of Community Radio. Sans volunteers, a legitimate question of 'Who does radio represent in the community?' stands tall and difficult. This was a completely unintended consequence of initiating Community Radio in Nepal and was propelled more by a technological aspect of Community Radio.

Similarly, the appropriateness of the technology in attracting youths in providing jobs for Community Radio has been a paradox. On the one hand, Community Radio stations raise a hue and cry about retaining trained technical staff and, on the other hand, there are several 'technically trained' young people awaiting an 'induction call' for 'paid jobs' rather than volunteer service. It is a matter of principle rather than practice that Community Radio stations wait for a 'volunteer solution' to this problem. In many situations this stagnancy has brought such an infliction that some rural Community Radio stations have used their 'network partners' to save them from misery, which sometimes mean a compromising contract, even with commercial station.

In India, as the technology for Community Radio lies within an education institution, the immediate broadcast community (other than the student community) finds it problematic to use it for larger community benefits. Equally important, there is a danger that the world's largest democracy, with cunning bureaucracy, will limit the expansion of community radio by exerting 'technology' control and falsifying the notion of community.

Without these little deviations in practice, which could be overcome through proper planning and execution, by and large Community Radio is a technology for community benefits. Its positive impact on fulfilling the communication needs of the marginalized and other communities at a disadvantage cannot be overstated.

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How EU media policy balances between the needs of citizen-viewers and firms' interests

Harrison and Woods approach the European Union's role in regulating broadcasting from a disciplinary background spanning legal and journalism studies. They claim that much discussion of this subject has been conducted in a rather abstract manner. Instead, their aim is to consider the practical implications of EU rules from the perspective of the viewer. They provide a detailed and up to date (as of 31st July 2006) examination of the complexities of EU law and their book is indeed far from being a dry and abstract legal textbook. Rather, they provide a lively and thoughtful critique of EU broadcasting law and policy. Their central argument is that EU broadcasting policy is premised upon an over-sanguine faith in markets, with viewers considered as consumers rather than as citizens. Rather than the viewing experience being at the centre of its policymaking, regulation and legislation, the EU has adopted an approach that has favoured the increasing commodification of broadcast content. From Harrison and Woods' perspective, the 'problems within the regulatory framework arise from a failure by policymakers to focus directly on the diversity of the viewing experience itself; to favour the active consumer and play down or ignore the particular difficulties experienced by both the active and passive citizen viewer' (p. 13-14). The EU's bias is to be explained by a combination of external factors, notably technological change and the general commercialisation of the broadcasting sector, and the internal problem of conflicting policies and competences within the Union itself. The EU's marked economic bias, to the neglect of the social and cultural policy aims of broadcasting, echoes a theme made by some political scientists who have written on the subject (Kleinstauber 1990; Wheeler 2004; Harcourt 2005 and 2007; Littoz-Monnet 2007).

The book is presented in two parts. Part I provides an overview of the development of EU broadcasting policy over the last thirty years. The Introduction identifies the main themes and introduces the author's central argument. The second

chapter examines theories about the value and function of the broadcast media and points to the importance of public service broadcasting for the public interest and public sphere. Chapter three looks at regulatory responses to the changing broadcasting environment, examining in detail the aforementioned external factors which help account for a deregulatory policy bias, namely technological change and the general trend towards the commercialisation of broadcasting. Chapter four considers the internal factor, namely the conflicting policies and competences within the EU itself. Chapter five provides an overview and analysis of the resulting EU broadcasting policies. Part I thus provides a clearly structured analytical backdrop for Part II, which explores in greater depth a number of specific policy issues. Chapter six looks at the EU's regulatory framework for infrastructure, the 'Communications Package', concentrating on the relationship between infrastructure regulation and content provision and highlighting concerns about sub-optimal viewer access to content. Chapter seven examines the issue of media ownership and the merger decisions relating to broadcasting of the European Commission and European Court of Justice, pointing to the inadequacy of the EU approach to increasing media concentration, which threatens media pluralism and diversity of content. Chapters eight to twelve consider the Television Without Frontiers (TWF) directive, exploring first its features of negative integration, namely the removal of national legal and regulatory barriers to the single European television market. In chapter eight, Harrison and Woods argue that the EU's adoption of the principle of regulation by the member state within which a broadcaster is established, the 'country of origin' principle, has allowed 'forum shopping' by broadcasting companies which encourages a deregulatory 'race to the bottom' to occur in terms of broadcasting regulatory standards in the Member States, as broadcasters have sought out the lightest regulatory regimes consistent with TWF's minimal positive regulatory requirements. Chapter nine looks at the EU regulatory regime's advertising provisions, identifying a number of weaknesses. Chapter ten examines negative content regulation, again high-

lighting some shortfalls. In chapter eleven the authors then assess the significance of the modest elements of positive integration provided for by the TWF directive, notably its provision for controversial European programme quotas. Chapter twelve looks at the privatisation of sport and the EU's listed events provision. The authors question the effectiveness of such limited measures of positive regulation in the wider context of trade liberalisation and commercialisation that TWF has helped create. Chapter thirteen is devoted to exploring the topical hot issue of the potentially negative impact of EU state aid rules on the Member States' ability to continue generously to support public service broadcasting. The final chapter pulls together the authors' conclusions and, together with a short appendix, also considers the review of the TWF directive, which was on-going at the time of writing and has since led to the Audiovisual Media Services Directive, adapting the rules to 'non-linear', 'on-demand' services.

The book makes a very valuable contribution to scholarship. It approaches the subject through a clear and practical analytical framework, focusing on the needs of citizen-viewers. It provides a wealth of up-to-date empirical detail and critical insight. It deserves a wide readership among academics and students in legal studies, political science, communications studies and European studies. It should also certainly be read by policymakers and lawyers involved with broadcasting law and regulation.

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(Theorie und Praxis öffentlicher Kommunikation. Band 1).
210 p. ISBN 978-3-531-16421-2

BY CHRISTINA HOLTZ-BACHA

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The mediation of politics – a reprise

With this book, the German and internationally renowned communication researcher Hans Mathias Kepplinger presents a collection of his articles on 'Politikvermittlung'. This term stands for the mediation of politics and is also used to analyze the relationship between the political system and the media system and those who are acting in these systems. Except one, all the articles have been published before in a range of places. They cover more than 25 years of research into political communication, ranging from Kepplinger's inaugural lecture at the University of Mainz in 1983 to the most recent publications from 2008 and an original chapter that was written for this book.

Kepplinger became a professor at the University of Mainz in 1982, where he had been an assistant of Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann during the 1970s. He studied political science, communications and history – a combination that also explains his interest in political communication, which has been one of his main research topics since the beginning of his academic career.

The predominant perspective Kepplinger takes for political communication lies in the field of media effects. One of the classic research questions that asks how television affects voting decisions is represented in this book by a chapter which is a shortened version of a book published by the author in cooperation with Hans-Bernd Brosius and Stefan Dahlem after the German parliamentary elections in 1990. This study demonstrates the clear influence of television, and particularly its visual presentations, on the perception of the candidates' competence and their character. Although based on content analysis, the conclusions of a study carried out on the occasion of the parliamentary elections in 1998, support the earlier findings. The research shows that candidates profit from successfully orchestrated stagings of their campaign appearances: positive reactions by their audiences that are shown on TV are often accompanied by positive comments by journalists and will therefore enhance the positive impression on the part of the audience.

For a long time, however, Kepplinger has also called attention to the reciprocal effects of communication processes, namely the effect that media reporting has on its protagonists. In the case of political communication, reciprocal effects are caused by politicians being made the subject of media reporting, on the one hand, and by the politicians' specific media use on the other. The reporting of the media can therefore have consequences: 1) on how politicians perceive themselves and their performance, 2) on the opinions politicians form about public affairs, 3) on the assumptions politicians have about the effectiveness of the media, and 4) on how the effects are directly experienced, such as being happy or angry about positive or negative media comments. One chapter of the book develops a systematic approach to the different kinds of reciprocal effects, while others present findings from several surveys of members of parliament who were asked about their experiences with journalists and the media.

The most recent contributions refer to the concept of mediatization, which has made impressive progress in Germany over the last few years. Here, Kepplinger discusses the difference between media effects research and studies based on the mediatization concept. He concludes that the emergence of mediatization research indicates a paradigm shift in the analysis of political communication. Particularly by focusing on organizations such as parliaments, parties or companies instead of individuals, on indirect rather than direct effects and also by considering the purposive rationality of human behaviour and thus going beyond causal explanations, research guided by the mediatization concept links the empirical approach with the theory of political systems. In another chapter, which was written for this book, Kepplinger also applies the mediatization concept and its implications for the rationality of the political system and the media. While both systems follow different rationalities, politicians may increasingly yield to the media's rationality and how they measure success, their temporal horizons, strategies, tactics and willingness to take risks. Depending on whether and to what extent politicians do adopt the success criteria of the media, Kepplinger envisages sub-

tantial functional losses on the part of the political system. He fears that political actors will neglect their task of generating long-term solutions for structural problems in the interest of short-term success.

There is no doubt that this is a fine compilation of papers by one of Germany's foremost political communication scholars. However, the book presents a collection of previously published and (in part severely) abridged articles that the interested researcher has read before and in full. There is no subtitle that reveals the nature of the book as an anthology, and even though the blurb promises chapters that have been written for this publication, the book includes just one original piece. So, altogether, the book is a bit of a disappointing package and, unfortunately, the author does nothing to tie the pieces together, for instance in an extended introduction or with a summarizing chapter at the end. After an academic career that spans several decades and almost 30 years of political communication research, one would expect the author to feel challenged not only to reissue his already published articles but rather to add an overarching synthesis of his work.

Finally, the reader would have been better served if the articles had been provided with alphabetically arranged bibliographies and not only lists of endnotes where entries, if repeated, are abbreviated and the reader has to go back and search for the first full entry.

BERNÁRDEZ, A.; GARCÍA, I.; GONZÁLEZ, S. *Violencia de género en el cine español. Análisis de los años 1998 a 2002 y guía didáctica*.
1st ed. Madrid: Editorial Complutense, 2008. 261 p. ISBN 978-84-7491-923-1

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The relationship between the cinema and gender violence from the causes

Asunción Bernárdez is a full-time lecturer at the Department of Journalism III of the Universidad Complutense de Madrid and director of the project "Gender violence in Spanish cinema (1998-2002)", financed by the Department of Women's Affairs of the Community of Madrid, while Irene García and Soraya González were researchers for this project.

This is a significant book, not only for its theoretical interest but also because it tackles two themes of great relevance to society, namely gender violence and media literacy. The importance of violence against women has been recognised in Spanish law, as well as at other levels, in the Organic Act 1/2004, of 28 December, on measures for the complete protection against gender violence, which urges the media to further the protection of equality between men and women. It has also been recognised in specific policies by the central government, such as the *Strategic Plan for equal opportunities 2008-2011*, which states the need to investigate the imaginary concerning women that is created by the media and to study the content that might reinforce sexist roles and stereotypes and ultimately violence. On the other hand, in December 2008 the European Parliament adopted a resolution on media literacy in a digital world, asking for media literacy to be included as the ninth key competence in the European reference framework for lifelong learning and emphasising that it must form part of the formal education to which all children should have access and which should form part and parcel of the curriculum at every stage of schooling. This work therefore has two large related parts: one more theoretical, with three chapters on violence in general and gender violence in particular, also including an analysis of a sample of films, and another more practical in nature, where we find both a didactic guide proposed by the authors and also files on these films. The authors wish to "carry out a practical application of the theoretical categories in the representation of violence in the cinema" (p. 12) and believe that its analysis can help us to reflect on "how cine-

ma helps to disseminate, create or question the social inequality of the sexes" (p. 12) and thereby encourage a change in attitude and mindset that helps to transform this inequality.

For Bernárdez, García and González, violence is something implicit in narrative structures. To study how this violence takes shape in the cinema, the first chapter talks about violence and society. After introducing some debates concerning the definition of violence, the authors explain that violence is social, it is not constitutive of social organisations and, unlike power, it has an instrumental aspect. They also comment (in a more provocative tone) that, today, women suffer from a kind of invisibility because their representation shows an excess of violence but not the existing subordination. That's why they criticise the media's sensationalist treatment of cases of gender violence and call for the need to present and to think of this within the context of gender relations. Based on these initial reflections, the researchers review feminist studies of cinema and their critique of this representation to tackle the complexity of the phenomenon of violence. This is where they bring together a series of categories subsequently used in an analysis focused on semiotics, psychoanalysis and a feminist critique of cinema: the distinction between narrative, story and diegesis, the consideration of point of view and the clash between desire and law as a fundamental factor of narrative and identification. They conclude, as a preamble to the second chapter, that cinema can provide both progressive and reactionary representations and therefore agree with De Lauretis in denying that "the narrative pleasure of the cinema [is] the exclusive property of the dominant codes and it [can] do no other but serve oppression" (p. 78-79).

The second chapter, entitled "Analysis and interpretations of gender violence", is the central chapter, presenting the analysis carried out, and permits both the practical application of the categories defined through the theory as well as the production of what will afterwards be the files and the part with the didactic guide activities. It studies the representation of different types of violence (personal, institutional and structural) and symbolic violence is emphasised, as well as the role of

women in narration, the stereotypes attributed to men and women, relations between women, between men and between genders, and identities. It's an analysis that aims to quantify violence and present it in all its complexity, taking into account not only stereotypes and the representation of men and women but also questions of gender relations. It is therefore a significant contribution to an area where, habitually, most research restricts itself to determining and describing the acts of violence and the image of men and women, without entering into how the interactions and relations between them are constructed. As a result of this analysis, which takes a total of 18 films as its case studies, the authors present numerous ideas. I will highlight four here due to their innovative value: (1) cinema uses narrative strategies - such as an event presented as anecdotal or, also, making the aggressor become the victim of his own pathology - to strip importance from the violence suffered by women; (2) gender violence is not explicitly represented and, when it appears, it is usually justified by negative characteristics of the victim or because the victim does not see it as aggression; (3) relationships between women don't have much weight in the sample analysed and are particularly marked by rivalry and jealousy, and (4) the relations between genders do not show sexism or friendship (only romantic relationships) and, in the whole sample of films, only one case was found of an equal romantic relationship between a woman and a man.

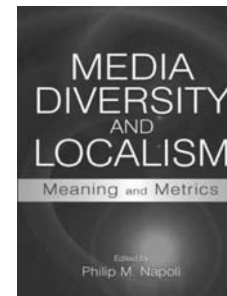
These two chapters go to make up more than half the book and are concluded with a third chapter (of only six pages), which introduces the fourth (the didactic guide). After an initial reflection on the importance of media education, a brief guide is presented designed for secondary education that aims to help to prevent gender violence. A few dynamics are presented (only eight) and, unlike other materials for working on communication education, a large part of the activities proposed are designed for group work, focusing on the definition of violence, and are carried out without audiovisual material, more in line with materials that are not specifically for communication education and that can be found in other areas. However, there are guidelines for teachers, the objectives are defined, work files are provided and an assessment is proposed. The last 62 pages are devoted to the film files. These pages go to make up the fifth and last chapter, which is more like an appendix, or a proposal integrated within the rest of the work. This means that this practical part is a little unbalanced, in spite of the many different elements presented in the first chapters in order to work on the subject.

Although this, the authors provide important contributions to tackle a theme - gender violence - that is contemporary (and urgent) but not extensively studied to date. And they do so by referring to the causes (thereby overcoming a narrow view of violence that focuses on its manifestations), analysing the films through gender relations and without limiting themselves to the representations between men and women and applying the theoretical concepts, not only in the form of analytical categories but also as an educational tool.

NAPOLI, P. M. (ed.) *Media Diversity and Localism: Meaning and Metrics*.
Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2007. ISBN: 0-8058-5548-3

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A challenge of complexity: how to regulate media diversity without simplistic reduction

At a normative level, media diversity has long been perceived as a valuable concept in media policy studies and practice, both in terms of its importance for the democratic process as well as for the harmonious formation of cultural identity in increasingly differentiated societies. At the same time, the complexity and generality of media diversity has resulted in a wide range of interpretations and has generated a fertile ground for discursive tension and negotiations about the usage of the concept itself in media policy. Philip Napoli and his colleagues have captured the imagination of many scholars and policymakers in this collective volume, outlining an alternative way of analysing media diversity through empirical assessment and well-focused metrics. The analytical programme proposed derives from US media policy and judicial practice, exposing empirical evidence as a necessity that should support any vital and effective policies targeted at preserving diversity.

Napoli's academic background spans media economics and policy analysis. As an author of two books (Napoli 2003; Napoli 2001) and numerous publications devoted to communications policy, the regulation of electronic media and audience economics, Napoli has inspired European scholars to reflect upon policy analysis from the perspective of empirical-grounded research.

Diversity and localism: a problem of distinction

One of the biggest challenges exposed in this collective volume seems to be a dilemma, namely whether sound empirical assessment can be accomplished without simplistic reduction, ultimately undermining the role of media diversity. A perspective seen through 'the metrics lens', as proposed by Napoli and his colleagues, concentrates on questions of media structure/ownership, their relationship to media content and the principle of localism in its broad sense. Are diversity and localism two different sides of the same coin, as suggested in the title, or is one of them (localism) rather a dimension of the

other broader, more generalized concept (diversity), which serves to cover a rich and multi-dimensional field of external and internal media structures? Although, for analytical and theoretical purposes, the latter option seems more logical, the volume follows two separate routes, paying attention to two different principles – diversity and localism, inspired to a great extent by US legal and policy practice.

Diverse ownership and content: an imagined link?

An explanation of structural dimensions (media ownership) in the first part of the book mirrors the logic of the US approach to the regulation of media diversity largely conditioned by the First Amendment and thus also focuses on the 'diversity of voices' rather than 'content'. Joel Waldfogel (*Should We Regulate Media Ownership?* p. 3-8) provides a critical account of linking antitrust regulation (based on the Herfindahl-Hirschmann Index, HHI) with media ownership regulation. In a similar vein, Robert Horwitz (*On Media Concentration and the Diversity Question*, p. 9-56) argues that changing patterns in technology and media use complicate the traditional geographic and product market distinctions pivotal to antitrust analysis. Waldfogel's and Horwitz's chapters also pose fundamental questions testing the media diversity rationale itself: what aspects of public interest are affected by the media? Is there any evidence that ownership affects these? Can ownership rules, concentration limits and minority licensing preferences actually bring about the desired changes in media content? A short analysis of the evidence used in legal practice shows that the alleged connection between diverse ownership and diverse content has been generally weak (Horwitz, p. 40).

Employment and news

In addition to external diversity or structural dimensions, the volume also tests other important aspects of diversity relatively neglected in US policy practice and implementation. Peter DiCola (*Employment and Wage Effects of Radio Consolidation*, p. 57-78) focuses on the relationship between employment, market consolidation and localism. He demonstrates

that more consolidated markets result in job reductions and therefore also in the decreasing impact of local residents on decisions about available content (DiCola, p. 62). Peter Alexander and Brendan Cunningham (*Public and Private Decision Making: The Value of Diversity in News*, p. 79-96) deem content, and in particular the news, to be the most important indicator of diversity. They assume that consumer utility is determined by the quality, consistency and variety of output provided by broadcast news media. The empirical evidence they assemble suggests that more concentrated media markets exhibit more homogeneity in the information conveyed to consumers.

Conceptual and methodological reflections

Different methodological and conceptual windows serve another group of authors to deconstruct and reconstruct the concept of diversity vis-à-vis new policy demands. Stefaan G. Verhulst (*Mediation, Mediators, and New Intermediaries: Implications for the Design of New Communications Policies*, p. 113-137) paints a new conceptual approach based on 'mediation'. He argues that 'mediation' should be used as an analytical tool to better understand how to adapt our current communications policy toolbox and principles to new circumstances, and how regulations, for example those applied to broadcasters, can be 'translated' to the internet. Sandra Braman (*The Limits of Diversity*, p. 139-150) reflects on the limits of diversity. One of the most salient questions would be whether there is meaningful content diversity if people receive information but cannot make a sense of it. In other words: is diversity of information meaningful if it cannot be connected with democratic deliberation, political behaviour or decision-making? Steven S. Wildman (*Indexing Diversity*, p. 151-176) provides a critical account of a Diversity Index (DI) introduced by the FCC (Federal Communication Commission) to assess the effect of ownership structure on the performance of local media markets. Wildman argues that, after the Third Circuit Court of Appeal's decision, the Index has been plagued by problems of both internal consistency and external validity, mainly because its theoretical component has been neglected. Stephen D. McDowell and Jenghoon Lee (*Tracking 'Localism' in Television Broadcasting: Utilizing and Structuring Public Information*, p. 177-191) focus on an idea of localism in television broadcasting. They promote methodologies that include a number of dimensions, extending localism beyond programming and content. Mark Cooper's (*When Law and Social Science Go Hand in Glove: Usage and Importance of Local and National News Sources – Critical Questions and Answers for Media Market Analysis*, p. 193-224) essential contribution discusses methodological and theoretical issues that provide a critical account of the usage of the Diversity Index in US policy implementation. Cooper in particular examines a crucial element of the DI, the primary source of information in the case of local and national news. Cooper follows the FCC's general approach to geographic market definition and presents originally generat-

ed data on national and local news sources. The results confirm that the FCC's Diversity Index underestimates the importance of newspapers and overestimates the importance of radio and the internet (Cooper, p. 214). In conclusion, Cooper stresses that social science analysis has great potential to provide valuable data for well-directed diversity policy.

Minorities, media and diversity

Relations between minorities, media and diversity have long been recognized in US media diversity policy. Although policy implementation revolved mainly around questions of minority ownership, authors in this part of the volume discuss content and media portrayal as well. Leonard Baynes (*White Out: The Absence and Stereotyping of People of Color by the Broadcast Networks in Prime Time Entertainment Programming*, p. 227-267) emphasizes the importance of policies that support the fair coverage of minorities. He proposes an 'ordinary viewer test' to detect discrimination by absence or discrimination by stereotyping. Christine Bachen et al. (*Serving the Public Interest: Broadcast News, Public Affairs Programming, and the Case for Minority Ownership*, p. 269-306) analyse minority ownership from the perspective of US government policy. The chapter provides an overview of policy history, starting from the FCC's Kerner Report (1967), following the FCC's efforts to map the media representation of minority views and minority-aware policies to promote minority ownership. Authors conclude that minority-owned media generally pay greater attention to ethnic and minority audiences' needs and interests (Bachen et al. p. 293).

Audience behaviour and new technologies

Finally, the last part of the book sheds new light on media diversity from the perspective of users and new media services. James Webster (*Diversity of Exposure*, p. 309-325) builds on the concept of the three component parts of diversity proposed by Napoli: source, content and exposure. Webster argues that, although there was quite an extensive focus on first two types of diversity in research and policy-making, the latter has been largely neglected. Webster analyses three potential units for an exposure analysis: viewer-centric measures, content-centric measures and channel-centric measures. Matthew Hindman (*A Mile Wide and Inch Deep: Measuring Media Diversity Online and Offline*, p. 327-347) compares a series of nationwide data sets on audience concentration within various forms of media. He demonstrates that across all different metrics, internet content produces higher levels of audience concentration than those in traditional media (Hindman, p. 329). Eszter Hargitai (*Content Diversity Online: Myth or Reality?* p. 349-362) analyses people's online information-seeking behaviour, collecting the data through observations and interviews. The empirical data prove that the mere presence of content diversity online does not guarantee its ease of access. Therefore, it's important to make the distinction between available and accessible content (Hargitai, p. 361). Ellen P.

Goodman (*Proactive Media Policy in an Age of Content Abundance*, p. 363-382) distinguishes between reactive and proactive policy goals, the latter understood as increasing content exposure. She offers a critique of the Diversity Index, arguing that the availability of diverse viewpoints, for example on cable channels, is of limited value if citizens are not actually exposed to these viewpoints (Goodman, p. 369). Goodman supports heavier reliance on subsidies as opposed to regulation, and not just for public broadcasting but also for non-commercial content delivered on all digital platforms.

Philip M. Napoli's collective volume signals the need for a multilateral approach: the appropriate meaning of both diversity and localism, as well as their application in communications policymaking, require a far-reaching dialogue across various disciplines. The broad array of perspectives brought together in the book unites in one conclusion: the principles of diversity and localism should be pertinent.

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IMBERT, G. *El transformismo televisivo. Postelevisión e imaginarios sociales*. Cátedra, 2008. ISBN 9788437624990

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Lost in the desert of what is hyperreal

As the author himself warns us, the book he is presenting is the natural continuation of a previous work: *El zoo visual. De la televisión espectacular a la televisión especular*. In this work, Gérard Imbert starts from the assumption that television is a machine for producing spectacle, established in production from a reality that is *sui generis*, i.e. “that takes pleasure in speculating and in the hyperreal and that proceeds by means of the liquefaction (or even liquidation) of identities” (Imbert 2008: 226).

Now, *El transformismo televisivo. Postelevisión e imaginarios sociales* (2008), his latest work produced in book form, gives a new perspective of his analysis of the medium, establishing that television plays with this reality, transforms it, manipulates it, duplicates and even deforms it. The freaks show now becomes a stage where all kinds of grotesque figures file past, individuals metamorphosed by the excitement caused by the set design of the TV stage and camera lenses. From this perception comes the repeated use made by the author throughout the work of the semantic field of theatrical transformism (cabaret, performance, clowns, drag queens etc.) to refer to and analyse the recent mutations of television.

Let us look at a little history. Paleo-television, a concept coined by Umberto Eco and appearing in other authors such as Dominique Wolton and Jean-Louis Missika, refers to a time when the generalist model of television predominated, tutored by the state in an age of monopoly. If, with the transition to a commercial, private model, paleo-television was no longer a “window onto the world” but became a “projection space”, a mirror of the subject, with post-television, through deformation, parody and reflexivity, television looks at itself in a deformed mirror that projects a grotesque and disfigured image. In other words: spectacle, simulation and duplication as the three stages in this process of transforming reality. And it is this “duplication” that brings together a whole series of omnipresent proposals in recent programming, such as programmes that parody news programmes, humorous imitations, imitating celebrities and gossip news.

In this new book, Gerard Imbert, lecturer at the Universidad Carlos III in Madrid, agrees with the concept of post-television and describes it as “more fun-focused television that plays with roles and breaks with the pact of verisimilitude that has dominated the whole modern story” (p. 34, in Spanish) “[...] an inflation of narrative and expressive forms that affects both tele-reality and the entertainment programmes that invade the screens in night-time slots, fulfilling a function that is clearly carnival in nature” (p. 44) “[...] a discourse that takes pleasure in playing with reality, that ignores the boundaries between genres and categories, dilutes the very notion of reality and stable identities, plays with the porosity and status of telling the truth, the basis of the credibility of messages and the foundation of a reasonable relation with the reality represented, bringing us close to fiction without us actually being in the genres of fiction” (p. 55).

The theoretical foundation and methodology of the work *El transformismo televisivo* is “deliberately multidisciplinary”, as classified by the author himself. Consequently, its pages contain contributions from the semiology of Roland Barthes, from the semiotics of A. J. Greimas and his school applied to the field of mass communication, with a socio-anthropological dimension (J. Baudrillard, M. Maffesoli and J. Ibáñez, among others), and with the remarkable presence of the communication perspective (U. Eco, F. Colombo, O. Calabrese, P. Virilio, J. González Requena and J. Martín Barbero, among a long list of authors).

For G. Imbert, the starting point is that the world’s great stories are in crisis and that television believes increasingly in what is miniscule, in what is everyday, in what is residual. This is therefore a narrative issue, the manifestation of new narrative forms, of new ways of seeing and of relating with knowledge.

The book is organised into two blocks. In the first, entitled “Playing with reality”, the author dissects television as a space for transforming and deforming reality, with the emergence of the situation that what is grotesque, what is a freak is appealing, contrary to what we might expect.

The second part, under the title “Playing with identity” and, consequently, the crisis of reality, the author tackles, across the

board, those aspects with a strong symbolic content that are relevant to the medium of TV. One is the construction of identity and the games established around it, such as loaned identities encouraged by television, which we can find in reality shows focusing on people living together, such as *Survivors* and *The Farm*; as well as in other proposals such as *Extreme makeover* or *The weakest link*. The symbolic content is also perceived in how the body becomes the great reference point of television discourse: specifically in symbolic violence, death being the great absence in television representation while, at the same time, hypervisible death exists.

In summary, this new text by G. Imbert, and as he has done for years now, contributes new arguments to open up (or rather, re-open) the debate concerning television's role in the contemporary world and how its content is constructed and projected. This proposal is quite stimulating, considering the audiovisual crossroads we currently find ourselves at, although, as a whole, perhaps it can be accused of repeating certain expressions and key ideas of the work, possibly due to the fact that some of the chapters were published previously as part of collective books or as articles, such as chapters VI and IX. Nonetheless, these repetitions take on new specific dimensions in the structure and development of this work.

The book also highlights the fact that the author is an attentive viewer of the discursive flow of television, of the palimpsest of TV programming in Spain, France and the United States. We should also add the broad theoretical spectrum used to tackle its analysis, ranging from the semio-narrative dimension of the discourses to the socio-anthropological dimension, without losing sight of the communication perspective regarding the effects and social functions of messages.

Summing up, *El transformismo televisivo. Posttelevisión e imaginarios sociales* seems to be an appropriate proposal for analysing certain television programmes, as it includes the multiplicity of audiovisual languages and of the types of TV discourse and produces a methodology to be applied to the different formats of TV programming as a whole, within a narrative and symbolic focus of the core, namely the spectacular component of audiovisual messages, within the context of the theories of spectacle and aesthetics. It is also a useful instrument for attempting to find one's way in the desert of what is hyper-real, as described by the author. As G. Imbert reminds us, aesthetic, ethical, moral and symbolic values have been lost in this forging ahead. Moreover, post-television is ranked above the qualified mediator, "the subject of knowing", as well as the very concept of *mediation*, as the book stresses more than once (p. 23-25 and 90). Perhaps, we might add, now is the time to demand this, to demand this again and regain it. And moreover to train viewers to competently deal with this kind of discourse. Since, in our opinion, as far as programmers and media managers are concerned we can expect few considerations that go beyond the counting of results, if we look at the economic and business logic underpinning a large part of the television stories analysed.

References

IMBERT, G. *El zoo visual. De la televisión espectacular a la televisión especular*. Barcelona: Gedisa, 2003.

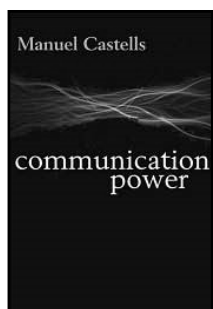
Eco, U. *La estrategia de la ilusión*. Barcelona: Lumen, 1986.

Books review

CASTELLS, M. *Communication Power*.

New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, 571 pages.

ISBN: 978-0-19-956704-1



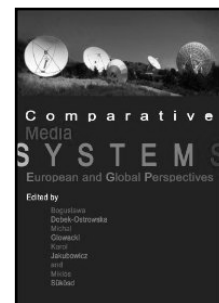
The latest book by Manuel Castells, and continuing the author's previous volumes, presents an analysis of the network society, the social structure that characterises society of the 21st century and that is constructed around digital communication networks. This is a critical, scientifically solid book of great use to anyone interested in understanding the role of political power in the network society.

It is also easy to read and accompanied by up-to-date examples and empirical data from many research studies (mostly from the Anglo-Saxon academic world), presented in five chapters. The first three chapters tackle the definition of the concepts "power in the network society", "communication in the digital age" and "networks of mind and power". In the first chapter, Castells avoids technological determinism and presents a summary of the main elements of the network society: exercising power and counter-power, society and global networks. The second chapter describes the transformation of audiences from receivers to producers of messages and proposes the concept of mass self-communication, through which the new forms of network communication promote new opportunities for social change. The third chapter connects the network society with framing theory to analyse the relationship between emotion, cognition and politics. From this point, chapter 4 explains why, in the network society, current politics is media politics, focused basically on the politics of scandal and relates this kind of politics with the crisis of legitimacy and lack of trust seen at a global level, challenging the meaning of democracy. Lastly, chapter 5, referring to the last North American elections, tackles the new types of power and explores how different social movements act in our society by reprogramming communication networks.

DOBEK-OSTROWSKA, B.; GLOWACKI, M.; KAROL JAKUBOWICZ; MIKLÓS SÜKÖSD, M. (ed.) *Comparative Media Systems: European and Global Perspectives*.

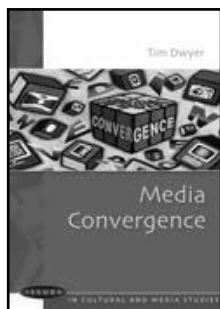
Budapest – New York: Central European University Press, 2010, 304 pages.

ISBN: 978-963-9776-54-8



This new volume has appeared in the wake of the now established *Comparing Media Systems* by Daniel C. Hallin and Paolo Mancini. This is a compilation, with a prologue by Mancini and Hallin themselves, extends their perspective by adding nuances to their model and particularly by introducing countries to the East. The introduction by Karol Jakubowicz already moves in this direction and the first chapter by Hans J. Kleinsteuber lays the foundations for a comparison between the media systems of Western and Eastern Europe. The book also offers a view of the Turkish media system within the perspective of the three models (corporate democratic, liberal and polarised pluralist), with some characteristics of the three but with a marked tendency towards the "Mediterranean" model. We also find a significant number of researchers from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, such as Carles Llorens and Isabel Fernández, writing a chapter comparing the reform of the public radio and television systems in the United Kingdom and Spain during the period 2004-2007; as well as a contribution by Laura Bergés with a specific study of the "convulsed" transformations of the Spanish television production model. We can also find a description of the Ukrainian public radio and television service by Olexiy Khabyuk. The last few chapters focus particularly on the ups and downs of journalism which, in Eastern Europe, is also going through uncertain times. In this respect, the book provides a text by Wolfgang Donsbach on the effects of globalisation in the professional structures of journalism, which is also studied with a relatively different perspective by the Lithuanian and Estonia researchers Aukšė Balcytienė and Halliki Harro-Loit, respectively. Lucyna Szot also reviews the labour problems of journalists in Poland and Maren Röger talks of the tabloid discourse of Axel Springer, *Fakt*, in this country. It is worth mentioning the collective chapter, led by Hartmut Wessler, where we find a series of conjectures on the influence of the structure of media systems on how discourse is constructed.

DWYER, T. *Media Convergence*.
Buckinghamshire: Mc-Graw-Hill–Open University Press,
2010, 208 pages. ISBN: 9780335228737



Tim Dwyer is a professor at Sydney University and a specialist in communication policy, and in this book he investigates the issue of present-day digital technology convergence. The book does its bit to this debate and also attempts to tackle digital convergence as a new common space where various political-economic ideologies converge to impose a series of models

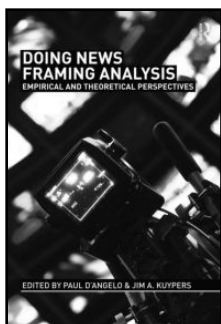
for interpreting reality on top of other ones (chapter 1). Particularly, *the assumption is made that the term [convergence] often obscures important shifts in work practices, editorial processes and publishing strategies*. In this respect, many different cases are reviewed, sometimes with particular attention to the effects of this process on the distance between the internet and television. This more structuralist view is also complemented by a warning regarding the emergence of new practices by users that transform the media, so that the industry often finds itself lagging behind and has to adapt to new uses. Consequently, in chapter 2 the author analyses the acquisition of MySpace by the conglomerate News Corporation, as an example of what is happening. Of particular note is chapter 3 (*Media Ownership and the Nation-State*), reviewing the legal framework of Canada, New Zealand, Australia, United States and United Kingdom, Dwyer's speciality. The book also tackles the academic debate regarding this area, revisiting the concept of *mediatization* and, in summary, reviewing the different aspects of media convergence: technological, industrial, legal, commercial, etc., and their effect on how liberal democracies function. Without obviating a certain ideological positioning in this respect, the last chapter proposes that more social democratic models of communication policy should be re-acquired, in line with the measures that have been adopted everywhere after the financial disorders resulting from the last economic crisis. This kind of policy, argues Dwyer, would also encourage citizen control of the media sphere, avoiding private monopolies and ensuring content diversity.

GRABER, D. *Mass Media and American Politics*.
Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2010, 384 pages.
ISBN: 978-1604264609



This is the latest update of a reference book on political communication. In this edition, Graber reinvents, as she says herself in the preface, the original volume to include the new Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) that are changing the news scenario in the world, reflecting the political and technological changes that have occurred since the publication of the previous edition in 2005. The first few chapters provide a description of the North American media system, a description of the function of the media and their effects, and issues such as the regulation and impact of new media on the new media landscape. There is also a description of the legal, political and economic framework in which the North American media operate and their journalistic routines. Then, in chapter 5, there is a list of the changes occurring in news in times of crisis or when information is provided on extraordinary facts. It is as from chapter 6 that the book tackles the relationship between the media and politics, be it the ethical problems involved in the political activism of journalists or how the media influence citizens' attitudes and behaviour. The next chapters focus on election coverage, paying particular attention to the technological changes that have made the internet a political tool that empowers citizens. As an example, there is a description of the campaigns by Obama (called "the campaign to come") and McCain ("the prototypical campaign of the past"). The book then deals with the role of the media in the judicial system and at a local and state level, and the impact of news on North American foreign policy, of particular interest being the section on the coverage of armed conflicts. The volume concludes with an interesting discussion on the new challenges and political trends in the web 2.0 era (distribution of news produced by citizens, political consequences of *netizens*, the future of the public media, the impact of new technologies, the multiplication of platforms and regulatory policies for the new media space).

D'ANGELO, P; KUYPERS, J. A. (ed.). *Doing News Framing Analysis: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2010, 392 pages. ISBN: 978-0-415-99236-7



Since the appearance of the book by Reese, Gandy and Grant entitled *Framing Public Life* (2003), we have needed a volume that tackles framing theory seriously when applied to communication studies. This volume, edited by d'Angelo and Kuypers, is quite a useful methodological conceptual guide for future research based on framing theory. The book has thirteen

articles divided into three sections. In the first section, dedicated to the construction of framing, of note are the articles by Reese on the frames used in the so-called "war on terror", the article by Nisbet on the frames used in news related to climate change and poverty, the articles by van Gorp and by B.T. Scheufele and D.A. Scheufele that tackle the methodology and reconstruction of frames, quite an important issue, and the innovative analysis by Cooper of the relationship between framing and the blogosphere. The second part of the book presents different perspectives of the effects of framing. For example, Brewer and Gross describe the effects of framing on public opinion, listing the different methodologies used to carry out the analysis (laboratory experiments, experimental surveys, fieldwork, content analysis, in-depth interviews, focus groups), and Coleman explores the effects of framing and agenda setting on visual images (*visual framing*). The last part of this volume contains different articles brought together under the title 'Theoretical integration in news framing analysis'. We should particularly mention the article by Lawrence, presenting research into political news framing, while Hardin and Whiteside analyse framing from a feminist perspective. The volume ends with a chapter written by Robert Entman, analysing the power of the media through framing theory. In short, this is a reference book for all those who wish to learn about framing theory in communication studies.

HANSEN, A. *Environment, Media and Communication*. New York: Routledge, 2010, 256 pages. ISBN: 978-0-415-42576-6

Environment, Media and Communication is a book that forms part of a phenomenon covering many different disciplines apart from communication: the appearance of issues related to climate change on the public agenda. Hansen, a lecturer at the University of Leicester, presents quite a theoretical book but one full of examples and cases to illustrate his



theses, as well as exercises for readers to familiarise themselves with them. The book takes a thorough look at the construction of discourses on the environment by the media and how these discourses affect people's social perceptions concerning the different environmental challenges facing humanity today. The different exercises proposed are accompanied by capsules as digressions that deal with specific issues, such as the significance of hypertext on the internet as a source of information, an evaluation of public relations in how news is constructed, and the image of nature in advertising, among other subjects. Hansen uses concepts from frame analysis, frame packaging and, in general, a markedly constructivist perspective is taken when analysing the media background that interacts with the ecological crisis. We therefore find harsh criticism both of the "environment business" and also the banal or, on the other hand, sometimes sensationalist treatment of ecological themes in all the media, with particular attention on news content. For this reason, this book also focuses on the interests created and on the political and economic agents involved in any environmental problem of a local nature, as well as its importance at a global level. Specific communication and awareness raising campaigns for the environment are also analysed, taking into account the scenario made up by the public sphere in the media, as a territory that ecological groups are trying to take over in order to make their demands heard.

Others books of interest

COSTA, LL. *La comunicació local*. UOC – Vull Saber, 2009, 92 pages. ISBN: 978-8497888219

GONZÁLEZ CONDE, M. J. *La radio: el sonido de la supervivencia*. Universitas, 2009, 330 pages. ISBN: 978-8479912642

McPHAIL, T. (ed.). *Development Communication: Reframing the Role of the Media*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, 256 pages. ISBN: 978-1405187947

JAMIESON, K. H.; CAPPELLA, J. N. *Echo Chamber: Rush Limbaugh and the Conservative Media Establishment*. Oxford University Press, 2010, 320 pages. ISBN: 978-0195398601

HARTMANN, T. (ed.). *Media Choice: A Theoretical and Empirical Overview*. Routledge, 2009, 305 pages. ISBN: 978-0-415-96458-6

Journals review

Catalan Journal of Communication and Cultural Studies

Intellect Journals - Universitat Rovira i Virgili

Number 1, volume 1, second semester 2009

ISSN: 1757-1898 (paper) 1757-1901 (electronic)



The *Catalan Journal of Communication and Cultural Studies* was introduced in the second semester of 2009, promoted by the Universitat Rovira i Virgili in Tarragona and with a clear international aim as it is entirely in English, as well as involving a diverse range of authors. This is a scientific journal that uses double blind reviews in order to publish

high quality academic research within the area of communication sciences and cultural studies, with particular attention to case studies from Catalan-speaking regions and other countries with similar situations. The first edition therefore offers a miscellaneous array of articles, ranging from the theory of communication to studies on media messages, digital literacy, public relations, the history of cinematography and communication policies. Of note is the introductory article by Philip Schlesinger, comparing Catalonia and Scotland as countries where the public sphere of communication co-exists with a series of complexities due to them being nations without a state. Moreover, in this first issue Leonarda García and Susana Martínez present a study of the identity of the field of communication research; Iolanda Tortajada and Cilia Willem study the under-representation of the Gypsy people in the media; Marta Montagut analyses the changes in the teaching of audiovisual communication since the introduction of the European Higher Education Area; and Jordi Xifra talks about the function of public relations and diplomacy in governing nations without a state, following the case of Catalonia. In the "point of view" section, Gifreu states that there is still a strategic need to achieve a complete Catalan communication area; Binimelis, Cerdán and Fernández take a historical look at TVE Catalunya; Peter Lynch reflects on the Scottish Broadcasting Commission of 2008; and Andreu Casero analyses the role of the Communication and Culture Barometer in the Catalan communication area. As final section, an article is offered by Joan Minguet on the pioneering figure of Segundo de Chomón.

Comunicación y Sociedad

Universidad de Navarra

Volumr XXII, no. 2

ISSN: 0214-0039

The journal *Comunicación y Sociedad* from the Communication Faculty of the Universidad de Navarra is one of the oldest and best positioned publications in the area of communication sciences in Spain. December 2009's issue starts with an article by David Roca on the methodologies used in research into advertising creativity during the period 1965-2007, and



Manuel Palencia-Lefler presents one on the function of music, also in advertising communication. Ainara Larrondo talks about the stylistic innovations in the subgenre of reporting within online journalism, especially based on hypertext; Antonio Linde provides theoretical considerations on ethics, education and communication, and Maria del Mar Grandío publishes a specific audience study on TV entertainment, where one type of consumption stands out that is very much based on immediate gratification. Scolari, Navarro, Pardo, García and Soriano, from the GRID research group of the Universitat de Vic, introduce a research, carried out with the support of the CAC's research aid programme, on the new forms of communication and social interaction based on mobile technology in Catalonia. Cristina Sánchez talks of the innovation in how consumer information is managed in advertising agencies, and Roberto Gelado presents a study on the press's dependence on news agencies in Spain. Paloma Díaz, Carlos Múñiz and Dolores Cáceres compare Spain and Mexico in terms of the consumption of fashion magazines and their effect on women's perception of their own bodies; and, along the same lines of press and genre, Ménendez reflects theoretically on the concept of the female press, very much forgotten by academia according to the researcher. In this edition of the Navarra journal we can also find a dozen reviews of different new publications.

English version available online:

<http://www.unav.es/fcom/comunicacionysociedad/en/indices.php#VolXXII2>

Cuadernos de Información

Faculty of Communication, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

No. 25, July-December 2009. ISSN: 0717 – 8697



In its last issue of 2009, the journal *Cuadernos de Información*, produced by the Faculty of Communication of Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, we can find a collection of articles that analyse the possibilities, challenges, repercussions and effects of

the changes brought about by new information and communication technologies (ICTs). The different articles that go to make up this number present research carried out in different parts of the world and tackling highly diverse themes. For example, Van Weezel and Benavides explore the practices and preferences of young Latin Americans with mobile telephones. Pellegrini recounts the experience of a regional news bulletin produced using new information and communication technologies, showing changes in the selection, gathering and production of journalism. Continuing with regional news, Puente and Grassau carry out a critical diagnosis of the news, demanding an increase in the journalistic quality of news in order to overcome the centralism of the national press. Another article, written by Leiva, analyses the strategies of *The Wall Street Journal* and *Financial Times* to charge for access to their online news (strategies called *freemium* and *utility*). Montemayor and Zugasti describe the role played by journalists' blogs in situations of censorship, analysing the actions of journalist-bloggers in the Philippines during the scandal known as *Glorigate*. An interesting article by Portales uses, as a case study, the Chilean presidential elections of 2009 to show the personalisation of political discourse, personalisation encouraged by interaction between voters' perception of the candidates' personalities, the characteristics candidates wish to emphasise and how the media highlight these attributes. The article by Xifra and Collell offers an evaluation of the interactions of Catalan journalists with the public relations of Catalan institutions. Lastly, Crusafon analyses the audiovisual policy of MERCOSUR, pointing to the European influence in defining and developing its audiovisual policy.

Version available online:

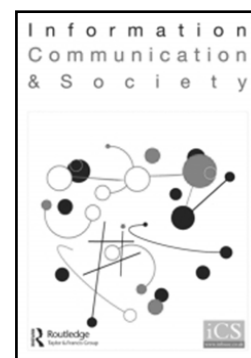
http://fcom.altavoz.net/prontus_fcom/site/artic/20091216/pags/20091216152156.html

Information, Communication & Society

Routledge – Taylor and Francis Group

ISSN: 1468-4462 (paper) 1369-118X (electronic)

The second issue of 2010 of the journal *Information, Communication & Society* is devoted to studying social movements in the information society. The introduction, by Barry Wellman, from the University of Toronto, talks of “contentious internet” using the concept of the political scientist Charles Tilly, in other words, an internet that has become a new terrain, also, for the battles of social movements. In this respect, the articles in the journal illustrate some aspects of this situation. The first and second article, by Victoria Carty and Marc Eaton respectively, offer two complementary perspectives for the case of the platform *MoveOn.org*. This platform is defined as a way for citizens to find their voice in a system dominated by large fortunes and large media. On the one hand, they highlight some of the virtues of this citizen political movement in encouraging political involvement and, on the other, it puts on the back boiler the fact that, in spite of its democratic spirit, some of its most active members may be trying to lead people in a certain direction. Next, Fisher and Boekkooi present the debate on whether political mobilisation on the internet really prevents the effect of isolation that also occurs in many internet users. It would seem that, although political involvement increases in some cases, it is also the case that what increases is strictly in the individual sense and does not always lead to a real collective relationship. This is followed by an article by Jennifer Earl, who reflects theoretically on the possibilities of diffusion provided by the internet and, also theoretical in nature, we find an article by Felicia Wu Song that employs the perspective of the fields of Bourdieu to theoretically focus the concept of Web 2.0. Apart from the book reviews, there is also a study by Courtenay Honeycutt and Daniel Cunliffe on the use of Welsh on the social network *Facebook*.



Journal of Communication (JoC)

International Communication Association (ICA)
Vol. 59, no. 4, December 2009
ISSN: 0021-9916



The last edition of 2009 of one of the essential publications for all communication specialists, the *Journal of Communication*, contains six contributions on various issues, of particular note being two articles tackling framing theory in their research. The first of these, by Liebler, Schwartz and Harper, analyses the debate in the US media concerning same sex mar-

riages, examining the role of political power and cultural context in forming different frames, relevant because frames in favour of same sex marriages appear more often than frames for traditional marriages, although the latter is what ultimately establishes the parameters of the debate. The article by Igartua and Cheng also focuses on framing theory, presenting a study on the socio-cognitive effects of different framings of news in the press on immigration in Spain (economic contribution vs. growth in criminality). The authors suggest that the framing of growth in criminality stimulates more negative cognitive responses to immigration, increases the sensation of immigration as a problem and leads to a negative attitude towards immigration. On the other hand, Kelly Garret, using statistical data compiled in the North American presidential elections of 2004, shows that people have a preference for political information that reinforces their own opinions but without systematically sacrificing contact with other opposing opinions. Also of note is the article by Williams, Consalvo, Caplan and Yee, analysing data from a survey on the behaviour of online gamblers for one year, describing their gender roles and conducts. The article by Knobloch-Westerwick, David, Eastin, Tamborini and Greenwood tackles the theory of suspense to explain why TV viewers are attracted by recorded broadcasts of sports events. And, lastly, Timothy D. Stephen compares and evaluates doctorate programmes.

International Journal of E-Politics (IJEP)

Information Resources Management Association
Vol. 1, no. 1, January-March 2010
ISSN: 1947 - 9131

Given the emergence of so-called e-politics, the *International Journal of E-Politics* has appeared that, establishing e-politics as an interdisciplinary research area, puts itself forward as a place for publications focusing on technical and empirical research into the different manifestations of e-politics in different contexts and ambiances. This new journal covers various aspects, from



communication studies to studies on political science, philosophy, law and ethics, among others. Its first issue contains six articles. On the one hand we have an article by Lorenzo Mosca on the political use of the internet by social movements (specifically, his research is based on the Italian Global Justice Movement), analysing how the internet is used to produce a specific political mobilisation. The second article in the journal, written by Jens Hoff, uses an opinion survey carried out during the Danish parliamentary elections of 2007 to investigate whether the political use of the internet affects users politically. Anastasia Kavada, for her part, uses content analysis and interviews with social activists to examine (also basing her research on the Global Justice Movement) the role of email lists and physical meetings in producing "unity in diversity", in other words, how online and face-to-face communication produce different dynamics in terms of individuality and collectiveness. Yana Breindl then tackles the techniques developed by networks for digital activism, focusing on "no software patents" campaigns to describe the power struggles taking place in the European Parliament. The article by Andrea Calderaro goes beyond the environment of the internet and explores the role of emailing lists in creating new political spaces, analysing the use of emailing lists by social movements. Lastly, this issue ends with an article by Stefania Milan that explains, through asynchronous online interviewing, the birth and developments of Indymedia in the United Kingdom.

Version available online:

<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/123210151/issue>

Websites review

Crimimedia – Grup de Recerca Premsa i Dret Penal (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona)

<<http://crimimedia.uab.cat/>>

Although this initiative has only just started, Crimimedia has the merit of being set up by uniting the areas of journalism, politics and penal and public law, becoming a means of closely following how the media cover information that might be relevant in terms of favouring or legitimising the lines of action of criminal policy, policy that is currently quite heavily conditioned by the media. The different cases analysed are truly interesting, tackling diverse issues such as the dissemination of images of people arrested, the debate in the media concerning life sentences and the reform of the law on criminal liability for minors.

Portal de la Comunicació (InCom, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona)

<<http://www.portalcomunicacion.com/esp/home.asp>>

Created in 2000, the Portal de la Comunicació offers information and documentation on the different aspects of communication (the media, information society, information and communication technologies (ICTs) and their repercussions and influences on social organisation). Its portal provides extensive resources on communication: a detailed bibliography, up-to-date information on congresses and symposiums around the world, as well as information and in many cases introductory reviews of new publications. It also has an open space where monographs are periodically published on a specific theme, interviews, talks and different texts. In the autumn of 2009 it started its version in Portuguese, in collaboration with OberCom, in addition to the existing versions in Spanish and Catalan.

Internet Interdisciplinary Institute (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya)

<<http://in3.uoc.edu>>

The IN3 is a research institute of the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya created in 2000 under the direction of sociologist Manuel Castells. As a research institute, it specialises in the network society and knowledge economy and offers a doctorate in Information and Knowledge Society with an interdisciplinary focus and an international ambition. Its website contains details of its organisation and research staff, as well as announcements of courses, scholarships and congresses, and exhaustive reports on all its productive activity (articles, books, working papers, doctoral theses, reports, etc.)

Groupe de Recherche sur les Enjeux de l'Information et de la Communication (Université Stendhal)

<http://w3.u-grenoble3.fr/les_enjeux/>

The GRESEC, which belongs to Université Stendhal in Grenoble (France), specialises in research into information and communication. Its research is based on four main lines: industrialisation of information and culture, changes in the public area, new information and communication technologies (ICTs), knowledge, interfaces and systems for processing the French language. Via its website you can access numerous articles ordered by subject (international communication, public communication / political communication, industrialisation of culture and information, theories and models of communication, journalistic practices), as well as links to different resources in French on communication.

Institut des Sciences de la Communication (CNRS)

<<http://www.iscc.cnrs.fr/>>

The Institut des Sciences de la Communication of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) in France was created in 2006 and is led by Dominique Wolton. One of its main missions is to become the leader in interdisciplinary research for the CNRS, working on five broad areas of research: 1) language and communication, 2) political communication, public space and society, 3) globalisation and cultural diversity, 4) scientific and technical information, and 5) science, technology and business. Its website offers information on the projects underway, as well as calendars of international gatherings, residence programmes for foreign researchers, etc.

OberCom. Investigação e Saber em Comunicação

<<http://www.obercom.pt>>

The OberCom observatory is a centre of research and information to promote the area of communication. Among its partners we find public and private bodies such as the telecommunications regulatory authority, Portuguese state radio and television and some business organisations for information professionals. Its website has many different documents and reports on the structure of the Portuguese communication sector, making OberCom one of the most reliable sources in terms of information describing the area. Also of note is its online journal (OBS*), international in nature, which has the special feature of accepting articles in Catalan, among other languages.

Centre for Digital Citizenship (University of Leeds)

<<http://ics.leeds.ac.uk/sub1.cfm?pbcrumb=CdC>>

The Centre for Digital Citizenship (CDC) promotes research on everything related to citizenship in a digitally networked society. Its website, located within the website of the Institute of Communication Studies of the University of Leeds, provides access to a collection of works on the new forms of digital citizenship, information on the research projects (including doctoral projects) in which the Centre is taking a part on the new forms of digital participation, biographical information on the members collaborating with the CDC and online publications, as well as information on congresses and conferences on digital citizenship.

Oxford Internet Institute (Oxford University)

<<http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/>>

Since 2001, the Oxford Internet Institute of Oxford University in the United Kingdom has carried out one of the most important research programmes in the area of new technologies and the internet. Its website provides details on its research-based activities but also on teaching, documentation and networking. Its research projects cover social, economic, political, legal, industrial and ethical aspects of the internet in general. It also provides videos on the activities carried out by the Institute, a calendar of events related to its area of study and access to a specialised mailing list.

Centre for Freedom of the Media (University of Sheffield)

<<http://www.cfom.org.uk/index.html>>

The Centre for Freedom of the Media (CFOM) is an interdisciplinary research centre located within the department of Journalism Studies at the University of Sheffield. The Centre analyses the media's degree of independence and denounces when this is cut back or undermined. Its website provides access to extensive information on free speech and the impact on this by anti-terrorism laws, journalistic practices of the European Union, news in Africa, and the public media and their social function. It also has links on media independence and a calendar of future congresses related to this issue.

Institut für Medien, Kommunikation, Information (Universität Bremen)

<<http://www.imki.uni-bremen.de>>

The aim of this research institute located at Universität Bremen is to analyse the processes associated with the media and their effects within the context of cultural diversity and social, organisational and technological change. With a clear interdisciplinary aim, the proposal is to integrate researchers from the areas of media and communication studies, cultural studies and information management. Its website provides both the teaching services offered by the institute itself as well as a series of research projects being carried out. The IMKI also takes an active part in the annual celebration of the International Conference on Cinema, held in Bremen since 1995.

Center for Communication & Civic Engagement (University of Washington)

<<http://ccce.com.washington.edu/>>

The aim of the Center for Communication & Civic Engagement (CCCE), which belongs to the University of Washington (United States), is to analyse communication processes and the technologies used by the media to facilitate greater citizen involvement in politics and social life. Given the emergence of new forms of citizenship, politics and public engagement, the CCCE carries out different projects which can be accessed via its website. Among others, we can find information on political engagement, civic learning and commitment, elections and the relations between the digital media and politics. Updated information can also be accessed and there are also links to different organisations and blogs of interest.

Nieman Foundation for Journalism (Harvard University)

<<http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/NiemanFoundation.aspx>>

The Nieman Foundation, established in 1938 at Harvard University (US), examines the main changes occurring within journalism, analysing the rights and responsibilities of firms that own the media. Its website provides access to its quarterly publication, *Nieman Reports*, dedicated to the critical analysis of journalism. Other resources can also be accessed, such as the *Narrative Journalism Project* that provides materials for educators and students, the *Nieman Watchdog Journalism Project* that, since 2004, has offered recommendations to the press on how to act independently and originally, and the *Nieman Journalism Lab* that identifies good practices in journalism.

Norman Lear Center (USC – Annenberg)

<<http://www.learcenter.org/html/about/?cm=about>>

The Norman Lear research centre analyses the social, political, economic and cultural impact of entertainment in the world. Installed within the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, it principally serves as a bridge between academic research and the entertainment industry. Its website provides access to different projects by the centre, such as *Celebrity, Politics and Public Life* (an analysis of political life within popular culture) and *Entertainment Goes Global* (implications of the globalisation of entertainment). It also has a calendar of seminars, links to different online publications and information on USC Annenberg courses related to entertainment for the different disciplines (medicine, architecture, law, politics, etc.).

Political Communication Lab (Stanford University)<<http://pcl.stanford.edu/>>

Directed by the professor of Communication, Shanto Iyengar, the Political Communication Lab (PCL) develops and administers experimental studies of public opinion and political behaviour through the use of both online and traditional methods. Its website has many different resources, in the format of books or articles, on changes in political communication. Also of interest are the videos of different talks on the issue and the important archive of North American political campaigns that the Lab makes available to the public. Finally, the website also provides information on political communication courses given by Stanford University, where the Lab is located.

International Press Institute (IPI)<<http://www.freemedia.at>>

The International Press Institute is celebrating its sixtieth anniversary in 2010. One of its main activities is aimed at ensuring the injustices are denounced that are suffered by journalists while exercising their profession in various conflicts in the world. Its website mainly offers the different reports produced on the state of free speech and the conditions of journalism in specific countries and regions, with particular attention to zones such as Africa and the Middle East. There is also an archive of its activities, the awards given by the IPI, links to its annual events, blogs by the organisation, etc.

Center for Research on Children, Adolescents and the Media (University of Amsterdam)<<http://www.ccam-ascor.nl/index.php>>

Belonging to the University of Amsterdam and run by the prestigious Patti M. Valkenburg, this Dutch research centre strives to have an academic focus that is also oriented at the public in general. The centre's main mission is to study the role of the media in the life of children and adolescents. The five specific lines of research range from online communication and the use of the internet by children and young people in their social relations to addiction to video games, including children's cognitive relations towards the media in general and the presence of explicit sexual material on the internet and the risks this entails for children.

Center for Media Literacy (CML)<<http://www.medialit.org/>>

The Center for Media Literacy (CML) is an educational organisation that is dedicated to promoting and supporting media literacy education as a framework for accessing, analysing, evaluating, creating and participating in media content. The CML focuses mainly on the young to help them develop critical thinking and media production skills need to live fully in the 21st century media culture. Its website provides access to different documents (some translated into Spanish), resources for teaching media literacy and a collection of good practices in this area.

Center for Communication Research (City University of Hong Kong)<<http://com.cityu.edu.hk/ccr/>>

The CCoR is very well connected internationally and is therefore an important point of connection with the situation of Chinese communication research. The centre divides its scientific work into three large areas: (1) the effects of globalisation on the Chinese media, (2) the structural characteristics of the internet and an analysis of its flows (blogs, social networks, hyperlink), and (3) the socio-cognitive effects of computer-based communication. The website includes information on its scientific work, as well as a news section with the activities carried out by the centre, the profile of all the research staff and a calendar of events.

NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute (Bunken)<<http://www.nhk.or.jp/bunken/index-e.html>>

The NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute or Bunken is a Japanese institution created in 1946 dedicated to investigating the situation of broadcasting in all its dimensions. Its website has a back catalogue of its monthly newsletter where not only audience surveys are analysed, one of its strong points, but also studies and reflections on many different subjects related to culture and mass communication in Japan and other places. It also has reports, annual bulletins and specific monographs that analyse some areas more in depth. Some of these are only available in Japanese but many are also in English.

National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (NISCAIR)<<http://www.niscair.res.in/home.asp>>

Created in 2002 from the "merger" between two Indian research centres: the National Institute of Science Communication (NISCOM) and the Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre (INDOC), the main aim of this centre is to centralise information resources and disseminate scientific knowledge in the areas of health and environmental sciences, among others. Its website has different informative programmes on scientific subjects aimed at the public at large, but also has an academic resource centre. It also helps to promote the right to information based on the dissemination of existing legislation on this area and other related resources.

Manuscript submissions guidelines

Presentation of the articles

The article must be presented in electronic support (PC and Word format preferred). Every page must be 30 lines approx. and **body size 12**. The maximum length is about **6.000 words**, notes and references not included. The cover sheet has to be provided only giving the title, the name of the author(s) and position, postal and e-mail addresses. The article has to include an **abstract of 90-100 words and five keywords**.

Articles will be accepted in Catalan, Spanish and English, the languages of diffusion of the journal.

Copyright clearance

Every author whose article has passed the blind review and has been accepted for publication must send to CAC a signed letter accepting the text publication by CAC in its journals and website (www.cac.cat) and confirming that the article is original, unpublished and is not assessed in other publications, being the author responsible of any reclaim due to the nonfulfilment of this warranty.

Articles should be addressed at:

Quaderns del CAC

Sancho d'Àvila, 25-129

08018 Barcelona

E-mail: quadernsdeldcac@gencat.cat

References and notes

The list of references and end notes has to be placed at the end of every article. References in the text must appear into brackets with the name of the author, the year of edition and the pages. For example: (Buckingham 2007, 35-43).

Exemples:

• Books

DE MORAGAS, M.; PRADO, E. *La televisió pública a l'era digital*. 1st ed. Barcelona: Pòrtic, 2000. (Centre d'Investigació de la Comunicació; 4) ISBN 84-7306-617-0

El régimen jurídico del audiovisual. Madrid - Barcelona: Marcial Pons - Institut d'Estudis Autònoms, Generalitat de Catalunya, 2000.

• Articles in journals

HOFFNER, C. [et al.] "The Third-Person Effect in Perceptions of the Influence of Television Violence". In: *Journal of Communication*. Cary [United Kingdom]: Oxford University Press, June 2001, vol. 51, no 2, p. 283-299.

ISSN 0021-9916

• Contributions to books

CAMAUËR L. "Women's Movements, Public Spheres and the Media: A Research Strategy for Studying Women's Movements". In: SREVERNY, A; VAN ZOONEN, L., eds. *Gender Politics and Communication*. 1st ed. Cresskill [New Jersey, USA]: Hampton Press, 2000, p. 161-182.

ISBN 1-57273-241-5

• Online documents

CONSELL DE L'AUDIOVISUAL DE CATALUNYA. *Informe sobre l'observança del pluralisme a la televisió i a la ràdio*. Febrer de 2007. [En línia]. Barcelona: CAC, 2007.

<http://www.cac.cat/pfw_files/cma/actuacions/Continguts/Informe_mensual_Febrer_2007.pdf> [Consulted 22nd March 2007]

Tables and figures

Tables and figures have to be provided with **short, descriptive titles** and also be numbered in Arabic numbers. All footnotes to tables and their source(s) should be placed under the tables. They must be inserted not as an image but in an **editable format** (e.g. in Excel) and in **greyscale**.

Book reviews guidelines

1. The aim of the section 'Critical books review' is to review the most important new publications in the world of communication and particularly in the field of broadcasting.

2. Reviews must be original and previously unpublished.

3. Reviews must be adequate for readers to get a general idea of the content of the book under review, as well as providing a personal assessment of its interest. The review must therefore contain a description and analysis of the book, as well as some conclusions indicating its value and importance to readers.

4. The recommended length for reviews is around 1,000 words, not exceeding 1,300 words in any case.

5. Reviewed books must be contemporary, i.e. they must have been published during the last two full calendar years, although an earlier book may be included if duly justified.

6. The review must be given a title that summarises its content, with the bibliographical details and the author of the review below, including his or her position and the institution to which he or she belongs.

7. The model used for citing the bibliography must follow the criteria given by TERMCAT, which may be consulted at:
<<http://www.termcat.cat/productes/documents/citaciobiblio.pdf>>

Exemple:

DE MORAGAS, M.; PRADO, E. *La televisió pública a l'era digital*. 1a ed. Barcelona: Pòrtic, 2000. (Col·lecció Centre d'Investigació de la Comunicació; 4). 350 p. ISBN 84-7306-617-0

8. The author should be introduced briefly by commenting on his or her background or most recent work.

9. The most important part of the review is the summary and analysis of the content. Here it is necessary to explain the field in which the book is placed, the perspective adopted by the author, the goals the author sets him or herself and the fundamental thesis of the book and how it is developed.

10. The critical evaluation should be generally positive but negative comments can also be included, in both cases suitable arguments being required. Readers must be informed regarding the value, interest and usefulness of the book under review. If relevant, other details can also be included, such as the use of sources, documentation, the bibliography used by the author, the book's formal presentation, etc.

11. Any possible references to text from the book under review must be written in inverted commas, with the page number afterwards, in brackets.

Exemple: "Xxxx xxx xxxx xxxx" (p. 45).

12. Bibliographical references to third parties cited in the text of the book under review must use the following model: (Surname year, p. for page number)

Exemple: (Hunt 1997, p. 251).

13. Bibliographical references from other works quoted in the review must be contained in full at the end, using the same format as the initial bibliographical reference but excluding the ISBN.

14. The review must be sent digitally, in Word or Word RTF, to the following email address: critica.cac@gencat.cat

15. The book review editor will evaluate every submitted review, in order to approve its publication or ask for some modification for his definitive publication

16. Reviews may be written in Catalan, Spanish, English or French. However, they will be published on paper in Catalan and, in PDF format, in English and Spanish on the CAC website.

17. After a review has been accepted, the author must authorise the CAC to publish his or her review in any of its written publications and on its website, by means of a signed letter sent by post.

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