

**TRANSNATIONAL SATELLITES IN ASIA  
& THE GLOBALISATION OF TELEVISION**

Volume One

AMOS OWEN THOMAS

BA, MBA (National University of Singapore)

DipCS, MTS (Regent College, Vancouver)



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## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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This is to certify that the work contained in this dissertation is the result of original research. To the best of my knowledge, no material written or published previously by any other person has been used without due reference being made in the dissertation itself. This dissertation contains no material submitted previously as the requirements of a degree or diploma at any other university or institution.



Amos Owen Thomas  
Melbourne, Australia  
March 1998

TRANSNATIONAL SATELLITES IN ASIA:  
& THE GLOBALISATION OF TELEVISION

Abstract

The advent of transnational satellite television in the early 1990s caught Asian governments, broadcasters, advertisers and consumers unawares. Its popularity spurred a vigorous debate among the intelligentsia of Asia which centred on issues of the globalisation of culture in general and of television in particular, and to a lesser extent on the globalisation of business and of advertising. Using a multi-method approach including key-informant interviews, secondary data on audiences, and content analysis of advertising, this comprehensive research describes and analyses the salient aspects of the impact of transnational satellite television on the television and advertising industries in Asia, focussing on Indonesia, India and China. The research found that regulatory environments were not sufficient explanations of significant impact, and that the latter depended on the political ideologies, integration with the world-economy, cultural and language affinities, domestic television and film industries, consumer affluence, entertainment affluence and more. Instead of remaining truly global in their programming strategy transnational satellite broadcasters have gone multi-national or multi-domestic, forming symbiotic relationships, such as strategic alliances and joint-ventures with domestic broadcasters, cable operators, programme producers or multiservice operators. Thus the dissertation argues from the development of transnational satellite television in Asia that globalisation of television involves not a homogenising Westernisation, but a hybridisation which occurs within the macro-context of politico-economic, socio-cultural processes as well as the micro-context of the broadcasting, advertising and other cultural industries within each country.

Amos Owen Thomas  
Melbourne, Australia  
March 1998

## PREFACE

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This research on satellite television grew out of two career-experiences of the author in the Asia-Pacific region. The first was that of adapting global advertising campaigns or creating campaigns for multinational marketers which could be utilised in one or more countries in the Asia region, as copywriter in international advertising agencies based in Singapore.

The other was encountering transnational satellite television from Australia, the US (CNN and Guam), and Indonesia available quasi-illegally via satellite and cable in Papua New Guinea, a developing country in the South Pacific, while resident there as an expatriate academic. Both of these experiences raised for me the issues of the globalisation of media, advertising, economy and culture. Yet when first seeking doctoral enrolment in early 1991 in Australia, transnational satellite television was not yet a reality across much of Asia and my interest in it seemed somewhat esoteric.

Only in subsequent years when StarTV blazed a fiery trail across the region did this research become increasingly feasible, even topical. Over the past five years in which I have researched the impact of transnational satellite television in Asia, travelling to over six countries in the region, some of them more than once, my views on the issue and approach to the research have metamorphosed somewhat. On the theoretical side I became much more aware of the varied of schools of thought on media across multiple academic disciplines, from sociology, political science, literary studies, communications to marketing, far more than I had thought existed or were relevant. On the empirical side I was soon finding that some of my earlier hunches about the impact of transnational satellite television were not quite borne out in many of the Asian countries visited.

One of the challenges of completing this thesis which spanned over five years was keeping abreast of the rapid pace of change in the television industry in Asia. As such this dissertation is both a chronicle and creative end-product of a long journey of discovery, and I trust that its insights are helpful to others who, like me, are fascinated by the globalisation of television and eager to understand what it is shaping up to be worldwide.

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A work of this magnitude and duration owes many a debt to more people than it is possible to list. Those mentioned here from academia, industry, government and elsewhere were particularly supportive of my research in many different ways, and to whom I am deeply grateful. Unfortunately there is insufficient space and time to acknowledge how they helped. *Australia*: Richard Volpato, Prof Robin Jeffrey, Lynda Berends. *Indonesia*: Ina Suparto, Sasar Djearsa Sendjaja, Dr Naswil Idrus, Lotte Mohammad, Milton Oh, Ishadi SK. *Malaysia*: Rosni Jaafar. *Singapore*: Vijay Menon, Anura Goonasekara, Elsie Bong, Lorraine Varghese, Andrew Green. *Greater China*: Andre Nair, Prof Keith Taylor, Robert Wilson, Dr Joseph Man Chan, Tim Foley, Samuel Liu, Katie Fung, Dr Georgette Wang. *India*: Dr Keval Kumar, Mrs Parimal Chaudhari, Radha Iyer, Mrs. Merchant.

There are more yet, particularly all the interviewees and others who provided me with data or helped in various practical ways, without which this thesis would not have been possible. Many of them have to remain anonymous, and may even prefer it so. Still I would like to record my appreciation to them for the time and energy they put into cooperating with me, and hope that if they should ever read this thesis, they might see their contribution to knowledge.

Special thanks are due to Dr Stephen Crook and Dr Tim Scrase, my thesis supervisors earlier at the University of Tasmania who took me on as a higher degree candidate despite my unconventional academic training. Most of all, I am grateful to my final supervisor, Prof John Sinclair of Victoria University, who skillfully guided this thesis to completion despite my periodic despair of seeing the light at the end of the tunnel.

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I owe a special debt of gratitude to my late mother, Mabel Selima Owen Thomas who instilled in me a lifelong love of learning and gave me prayerful moral support through the long years of this research. Sadly she passed away just as this dissertation was being brought to completion and so it is dedicated to her memory. Last and far from least, I wish to express my gratitude to God, who has sustained my life and choreographed the details of this work, for which I feel far from worthy.

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Chapter One  
INTRODUCTION

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The advent of transnational satellite television in the early 1990s caught Asia unawares. It captured the imagination of audiences in many countries under the satellite broadcast footprints who had been long accustomed to unimaginative public broadcasting and controlled commercial broadcasting. The transnational medium fostered a dramatic growth in the sales of satellite dish-antennae and the establishment of cable networks, illegal and quasi-legal. Overtaken by events, governments in the region naturally reacted with a range of regulations and policies to what was perceived as cultural imperialism which would undermine their national political-economic and socio-cultural agenda. Confident in their dominant market shares, domestic broadcasters were often slow to face up to any threat to their audience shares, while advertisers remained sceptical of the benefits of transnational satellite television for their products, at least in its early form as a pan-Asian elite medium.

Nonetheless, transnational satellite television spurred a vigorous debate among the intelligentsia of Asia which centred on issues of the globalisation of culture in general and of television in particular, and to a lesser extent on the globalisation of business and of advertising. In recent decades globalisation has been a key concept across a number of fields of human endeavour but continued debate over its meaning still engenders more media hype than intellectual insight. Certainly from the 1960s through the 1980s the concept gained momentum with the risk of nuclear annihilation, awareness of environmental crises of planetary proportions and the onset of a global economic recession. Then in the 1990s the growth of new communications technologies such as broadcast satellites, mobile telephony and the information superhighway spurred the debate further. These developments coincided fortuitously with the demise of the Cold War and ascendancy of capitalism in the world economy to a position of unchallenged primacy. Thus this dissertation on transnational satellite television in Asia will seek to analyse its development within the wider context of politico-economic and socio-cultural globalisation at the end of the 20th century.

### 1.1 GLOBALISATION VIA THE MEDIA

Global communications have been revolutionised in recent years through geostationary satellites, optical fibre, digital transmission, cable television, mobile telephony, computer networks, on-line libraries and databanks, facsimiles and electronic mail, among many other forms of electronic technology. Although advocates of these new technologies claim unbridled access to information will lead to greater democratisation of societies, critics point out that in reality such technologies perpetuate the status quo of dependency between developing and developed nations, or even inequity within nations between their own capitalist elite and working classes. In any case, corporate and government decisions concerning media

technologies and programming software are being made increasingly in a global context and so it is in this context that transnational satellite television in Asia must be analysed and understood.

### 1.1.1 New communications technologies

The second half of the 20th century has seen phenomenal growth in satellite and cable technologies which allow global media corporations to circumvent national broadcasting and structures, at least partially, and offer their television services commercially to advertisers or consumers. It seems evident that globalisation of the media, particularly television, has been spurred along by greater broadcast deregulation worldwide in recognition of the fact that new media technologies such as satellite television render national media sovereignty a quite unrealistic goal. Unimpeded media communication is being justified as an integral part of freer world trade in services as multinational corporations seek access to all media as a vital means of promoting consumption of the goods they produce. While advertising underpins this growth of the mass media, especially of television in developing countries, the extent to which it does so has seldom been recognised fully. On the one hand business research has preferred to focus on how to maximise effectiveness of advertising while discounting programming as a means of promoting consumerist lifestyles or considering the wider social implications of advertising practices. Media research, on the other hand, has often ignored advertising, preferring instead to focus on the social impact of news and entertainment programming, or issues of industry ownership and government policy/regulation as befits concerns about cultural imperialism. This research will seek to redress that imbalance by analysing the symbiotic relationship of broadcasting and advertising in the growth of transnational satellite television.

### 1.1.2 Multinationals and advertising

Growing politico-economic regionalism, nation-state fragmentation, new broadcast technologies and the deregulation of industry in the 1980s and 1990s have encouraged the growth of international marketing and advertising. Multinational corporations enter markets made accessible by new media and distribution channels and are soon accompanied into these host-country markets by their home-country advertising agencies. The effect of the arrival of these international advertising agencies is generally believed to spell a further shift from print to broadcast media, and within broadcasting from publicly-owned stations to commercial stations. The advent of transnational broadcasting via satellite in a region such as Asia is believed to foreshadow the funnelling of media spending by these global marketers through First World-owned advertising agencies accredited to buy commercial time on such broadcasters. It could be more cost-effective than advertising on various domestic television stations and so be the preferred mode of multinational corporations marketing in the region. If that were so, one critical issue would be how global marketers allocate their advertising spending between national and transnational media reaching the same target market, and another the creative strategies they adopt to communicate with a pan-Asian audience. If that be not so, then the central question would be why global marketers have not availed themselves of this new globalising medium *par excellence*, or at least have been diffident towards transnational satellite television.

### 1.1.3 Media/cultural imperialism

Governments of developing countries tend to fear cultural imperialism via the media such as the perceived erosion of their national and ethnic cultures by television programming from the developed world and their replacement by a global culture of 'Western' origin. The effects are believed to be uniform across Asia, with audiences in the urban centres particularly perceived to be changing their media and consumption habits at the very least, and at worse adopting new 'Westernised' consumerist lifestyles *in toto*. There have been, of course, dissenting views which argue either that societies of the world could never become thoroughly homogenised culturally nor economically dependent. Some would point out that there is in fact a quite opposite trend towards differentiation through the demassification of production, even in the media industry, and reassertion of subcultural and ethnic identity. This raises the issue of what impact the new medium can and does have directly on the broadcasting and advertising industries of the diverse nation-states in Asia, and indirectly on socio-cultural change. To date the evidence cited in support of government intervention in the transnational satellite television industry has been largely anecdotal and speculative in nature. The only other data is proprietary market research commissioned by the broadcasters themselves such as audience ratings which are well guarded commercial secrets and largely uncritical in orientation. Adopting an empirical approach and utilising both qualitative and quantitative data, gathered from primary and secondary sources, this dissertation will seek to provide critical analysis of the impact of transnational satellite television in Asia.

## 1.2 SATELLITE TELEVISION IN ASIA

Television has been an integral part of the economic strategies of most developing countries in Asia, as elsewhere in the world, ever since the 1950s and 1960s. Some of them, like India, China and Indonesia, utilised domestic satellites as a means of reaching far-flung corners of their nation-states with public television broadcasts and their nationalistic agendas. Only in the 1990s have such countries encountered the intrusion of transnational satellite broadcasts of commercial television, over which they have limited control, if they choose to exercise it, over reception by their citizens, and with which they have had to come to terms. Thus any study of transnational satellite television must take into consideration the historical development of domestic television in specific national markets. For the television services in each country, including related cultural industries such as cinema and video, constitute the media environment into which the new medium arrived, and which has mitigated or accentuated its impact.

### 1.2.1 Domestic satellites and national development

Although modernisation theorists did recognise that social change was a complex multi-causal process, there was still a tendency to see economic factors as the determining ones, that is, the view that with adequate preparation an economy would result in self-sustained growth. Development theorists earlier this century, especially those from the modernisation school, had consistently advocated the use of the mass

media, particularly public television as a major tool in promoting socio-economic development. Thus the model adopted in most developing countries and certainly in Asia has been of a single dominant public broadcaster to provide development programming and entertainment programming, both of which promoted national development along with cultural integration. However, in reality, the public broadcaster usually featured largely imported entertainment programming due to the high cost of local production and was dependent on advertising revenue from both domestic and global marketers. Ironically it was this limited availability of television media for advertising amidst rapid economic growth and affluence in parts of Asia which might have provided considerable impetus for transnational satellite television, a phenomenon which warrants investigating. The initial fears expressed by government and industry leaders were that transnational satellite television would decimate their domestic terrestrial counterparts through superior technology and programming. While a few countries in Asia liberalised their domestic television industries in anticipation of the transnational competition, most others were compelled to adapt reactively and rapidly to the radical change which swept the media industry of the region in the early to mid-1990s.

### 1.2.2 Pan-Asian satellites and commercial television

A number of transnational satellite television providers entered the Asian market in fairly rapid succession. The pioneer and market leader, StarTV, commenced by beaming its five channels from AsiaSat1 in 1991 and was soon claiming household penetration figures across the continent which were increasing by the tens of millions each year. However doubts were expressed by the advertising and broadcasting industries about their research's validity, and even more so for their silence on actual viewership and advertising revenue. In mid-1993 a global media conglomerate, News Corporation, bought a controlling interest in StarTV from its founding Asian owner, and two years later purchased the remaining shares. Soon afterwards other global channels like CNNi, ESPN, Discovery, TNT and HBO entered the fray, commencing broadcasting via the Indonesian-owned satellite network long used for domestic broadcasting, before migrating to newer and more powerful satellite platforms. Then specialist business services such as ABN and CNBC Asia began to appear, followed by a number of regional channels in Asian languages led by TVB Superchannel and ZeeTV. With the launching of newer, more powerful satellites in the mid-1990s, a plethora of channels went on air, many of them clones of the pioneers, some of them domestic commercial broadcasters and even domestic public broadcasters which had decided to go regional, others being newcomers from related industries such as film and video production, and even transnational satellite channels being re-transmitted on domestic terrestrial or cable channels. By the late 1990s, when this dissertation featuring StarTV was being completed, there were far more transnational satellite channels operating in Asia than it was possible to keep reasonable track of, let alone investigate single-handedly.

### 1.2.3 Regional advertising and business strategy

The deregulated 1980s and 1990s have seen a much more diversified market for marketing communications media and the unimpeded dominance of international advertising agencies in many national markets. The rise of global media corporations and of transnational television broadcasting in Asia as in

Europe have been predicated on the commercialisation of the medium. Multinational corporations wishing to market their products globally are sought as major sponsors of the growth of transnational television via satellite, with their advertising agencies serving as catalysts. As a global medium, the arrival of commercially-funded, satellite-delivered transnational television in Asia has spawned some speculation that viewership of domestic television will decline and that national advertising budgets might be consolidated into regional if not global budgets. Thereby the role of international advertising agencies would be strengthened, and consumption cultures across countries would be homogenised, among other such scenarios of significant politico-economic, and socio-cultural impact by the new medium. Despite being major players in global media, advertising and marketing are off-neglected fields in international communications research, a situation which this dissertation will attempt to redress as it assesses the role of the advertising industry in the growth of transnational satellite television in Asia.

### 1.3 RATIONALE FOR RESEARCH

In the late 1990s there is still need for systematic research on the politico-economic and socio-cultural context and consequences of transnational television broadcasting via satellite to aid decision-making by public policy-makers, commercial broadcasters, advertisers and consumer movements alike. As this is an immense arena, any research on its impact would have to focus on a few aspects of transnational satellite broadcasting and in specific national markets using a specific set of methodologies. Thus the proposed research aims to understand what impact transnational satellites may have on the television and advertising industries of developing countries in particular. While the research will survey the responses across most of Asia, it will focus on three prominent countries drawn from three subregions, namely South East Asia, South Asia and North East Asia. Using a multi-method approach comprising, for instance, key-informant interviews on structures and strategies, secondary data on audiences and policy, and some content analysis of advertising, it will attempt to provide comprehensive case-studies for comparative analysis of impact.

#### 1.3.1 Global economic developments

In recent years governments of diverse ideological persuasions have been instrumental in promoting the global integration of their national economies in return for economic benefits for their countries and thus their own political longevity. However in the process of joining regional inter-governmental organisations (IGOs) or cooperating with large multinational corporations (MNCs) these very governments, such as those of the Asian countries researched in this dissertation, seem to lose some measure of political control over their societies. Furthermore, governments of developing countries are generally concerned that commercial television broadcasting via transnational satellite could possibly undermine their own social programmes, causing the misallocation of economic resources to consumer goods, and fermenting political unrest by promoting, via both advertising and programming, unattainable materialistic expectations among their populace. Thus quite rightly any discussion of globalisation via television in Asia needs to analyse its roots in

and consequences for political and economic change within particular countries, their participation in the world economic system, and the role of multinational corporations.

### 1.3.2 Global media developments

Adoption of improved communication technologies tends to reduce their national control over information, ideas and culture, as developing countries have found to their chagrin. Nonetheless some developing countries have sought to prohibit or at least limit access to transnational broadcasts, with varying degrees of success. Thus the impact of the new medium has been far from uniform across Asia in part because national governments have responded in differing ways to the perceived globalisation of their cultures and undermining of their domestic television industries. But the limited academic research available thus far on transnational satellite television suggests that its impact on national audiences may not be moderated by regulatory policies alone. This research will examine the various factors that explain the varying impact of transnational satellite in the three countries studied, with the intention of being able to generalise some of the findings to other developing countries in Asia, if not further afield. It will also examine whether the fears of governments regarding erosion of national culture as well as the claims of transnational broadcasters to deliver large cross-border market segments are well-founded or exaggerated.

### 1.3.3 Global marketing developments

The debate in international marketing over whether to globalise or localise strategies which has raged on for a few decades still remains unresolved, despite attempts by some academics to make a case for a middle-road like regionalisation or selective standardisation/adaptation of marketing elements. As far as advertising is concerned, some academics and international business executives would argue that globalisation is imperative given the increasing international competition with the lowering of trade barriers, homogeneity of consumer markets and convergence of media technologies. The relatively few empirical studies on comparative advertising, based largely on content analysis of advertisements or surveys of decision-makers, have failed to provide definitive answers to this debate. This dissertation will seek to describe factors affecting market response to transnational satellite television such as the character of domestic television alternatives, linguistic and cultural barriers, production costs, consumer affluence, and advertising revenues. Thus it will document the growth of domestic commercial television in Asia both before and after the advent of transnational satellite television, as well as investigate the responses of marketers and their advertising agencies to the new media alternative.

## 1.4 OVERVIEW OF THESIS

As noted above, the concept of globalisation remains unclear because both in its academic use of the term across different disciplines and the popular usage of the term in various professional fields it has acquired a plurality of meanings. So the dissertation begins with a literature review which surveys the phenomenon of

globalisation, its antecedents, causes and dynamics, as well as its consequences and potentialities. The review begins with the political-economic and socio-cultural arenas, and then turns to the specific fields of media and advertising which this dissertation examines more specifically. Together with the issues surrounding the impact of satellite and cable television gleaned from the extensive literature on social change, media theory, global communications and advertising management, they will be summarised in Chapter Two of this dissertation.

The research methodology used in this dissertation is clarified in Chapter Three which begins with an overview of the diverse theoretical perspectives in media, before examining the various research paradigms they lead to. Given the multidisciplinary nature of media and communications studies, there are many alternatives in research design available for this study, and these are surveyed next. Then the rationale for the multi-method approach adopted for this exploratory research on the impact of satellite television in Asia is explained in some detail. Finally, the actual sources of data collection and the process of data analysis are spelt out, along with the challenges encountered and caveats about the information conveyed and conclusions drawn.

Actual developments in pan-Asian satellite television will be surveyed in Chapter Four of the dissertation, with a view to identifying and classifying the major players, both channel providers and satellite platforms, and their corporate ownership links, if any. Initial responses by broadcasters, advertisers, audiences and governments in the major sub-regions of South East Asia, South Asia and North East Asia will also be described and classified. The chapter will also provide an innovative six-fold typology ranging from active suppression to liberal access by which to analyse government policies towards transnational satellite television, as well as the shifts that have occurred over the past decade. This typology is then applied to most of the countries in each of the three subregions as a means of mapping out the policy responses of governments.

The subsequent Chapters Five, Six and Seven comprise detailed case-studies of the television broadcasting scene of three countries, before and after the advent of transnational satellite television. Each of the countries, Indonesia, India and China, were selected for its representation of a major market within a sub-region for transnational broadcasters operating in Asia. The case-studies will examine the development of television in each country and the impact of transnational satellite television on the broadcasting industry. A comparative study of the advertising practices in relation to transnational satellite television in these three countries is reported in Chapter Eight. It will investigate the globalisation of advertising in the region, in particular whether transnational satellite television has caused the consolidation of advertising strategy, media buying and creative execution in advertising agencies, whether domestic, regional or international in ownership.

While the case-study chapters contain not just findings but also discussion on the impact of transnational satellite television, Chapter Nine will make explicit comparison of their experience of transnational satellite television through an inductively-derived analytical framework. In seeking to draw lessons applicable to developing countries beyond the region, the implications of the research findings for governments, business and researchers are critically evaluated in the context of political, economic, social and

cultural change in late 20th century Asia. Finally reflections on the anticipated longer-term consequences of globalisation for the developing countries of Asia and beyond are highlighted in Chapter Ten together with the generalised conclusions of this research. By adopting such a systematic approach in analysis of cultural industries this dissertation hopes to fill a void in research on developments during the early to mid 1990s since the advent of transnational satellite television.

As this chapter has argued, the impact of transnational satellite television is of interest to governments, citizens, social researchers, broadcasters and marketers alike, despite their often conflicting agenda. Yet while much has been written about it in the news and industry media, systematic research on the critical issues has been scarce, the methodologies used rather limited and their findings somewhat inconclusive. This more comprehensive research will endeavour to describe and analyse salient aspects of the impact of transnational satellite television on the television and advertising industries in selected Asian countries, which may corroborate or debunk the more popular accounts and limited academic research. Therefore the findings of this doctoral dissertation are offered to governments, multinational corporations, civic organisations, inter-government organisations, academics, research institutions and any other interested parties in the broadcast media. It is hoped that being independent research it will provide these diverse groups with greater knowledge and critical perspective which may facilitate their involvement in, management of, and possibly collaboration in the future development of transnational satellite television in Asia and elsewhere in the Third World.

Chapter Two  
UNDERSTANDING GLOBALISATION

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With the relentless integration of nation-states into a global capitalist economy, the growing perception of global shrinkage through communications technology, and the seeming spread of Western culture via the mass media, the concept of globalisation has gained mileage in the late 20th century. Certainly this awareness of the inter-dependence of nations and societies within a world system is reflected in the widespread use of the term 'globalisation' in business and media circles currently. Yet the concept remains unclear because both the academic use of the term across different disciplines and the popular usage of the term in various professional fields has resulted in a plurality of meanings, albeit related. This review of the literature will seek to survey the understanding of the concept of globalisation, first in the politico-economic and socio-cultural arenas, and then in the specific fields of media/broadcasting and advertising/marketing which this dissertation examines.

## 2.1 GLOBALISATION OF THE ECONOMY AND POLITY

Theories on globalisation tend to trace its development through economic and political change. Depending on their point of view, the systematic growth of globalisation has been dated by theorists either from European adventurism beginning in the middle of this millennium, from industrialisation and colonisation between the 17th and 19th century, from modernisation and development following the so-called World Wars in the first half of this century, more recently from the demise of the Cold War in the late 1980s, or even from the advent of post-industrial and post-modern phenomena in late 20th century. Neglected in most of these accounts of nascent globalisation are the explorations, imperialism and cultural hegemony within Asia by empires in China, India and later Japan over the same historical period, perhaps because globalisation is almost always taken to imply a Westernising process. Whatever its history, the present understanding of globalisation in the academic literature seems to be that it represents an acceleration of the spread of Western-style modernisation, and so it is with this concept that we begin our theoretical review.

### 2.1.1 Modernisation theories

If one accepts the view that globalisation is neither a new process nor even a new concept, then it must be possible to trace its roots in the discussion of modernisation within sociology. Although modernisation theorists recognised that social change was a complex multi-causal process, there was still a tendency to see economic factors as the pre-eminent determining ones. For instance, Rostow (1960) claimed that with adequate preparation an economy would take off into a period of self-sustained growth. The newly independent Third World countries in the post-War era were most interested in this viewpoint but soon came to realise that the influx of capital was not a sufficient factor in and of itself. But the positive social change in

some countries but not others as a result of similar capital investments attitudes Hoselitz (1957) put down to the lack of appropriate institutions, human resource development and proper. The predominant structural-functional theory of the day analysed how functions adapted to maintain a stable structure comprising of mutually dependent sub-systems, or fail to adapt resulting in dysfunctions. Therefore functionalism is interested in the society-stabilising function of the media or how it promotes dominant social values and monitors cultural change. One of the most influential structural-functionalists of this century, Parsons (1973) believed in the inevitability of modernisation resulting in economic growth, universal education and political democratisation worldwide.

While this initial paradigm espoused certain socio-demographic and structural prerequisites for modernisation globally, research in developing countries actually undermined these notions and demonstrated the ahistoricity, paternalism and ethno-centricity of such functionalism and thus modernisation theories. For one thing, capitalism grew out of the peculiar European monarchal/feudal system of the 16-19th centuries, and for another, the path of modernisation in the so-called West subsequently has not been without social and economic crises (Waters, 1995: 158-164). Each national society is composed of multiple sub-systems of social, cultural and economic organisation which differentiate one society from another, and it is such differences that extend or limit the choices that a society has in relation to the process of modernisation (Eisenstadt, 1973). Thus social change at global, societal and institutional level may not guarantee that similar changes will have impact at the community or individual levels (Lauer, 1991). Whether politically, economically, socially or culturally the Third World is simply not comprised of homogeneous developing nation-states as modernisation theorists presuppose, let alone clones of the developed world prior to industrialisation.

Although structural-functionalism has its roots in the developed world, its modernisation theory variant is still held to have some relevance to developing countries facing a dilemma over the conflicting values needed for modernisation versus nationalism. While recognising that earlier modernisation paradigms had been inadequate, economists like Jussawalla (1988) claim that promoting the growth of the information sector via investments in telecommunications would transform developing economies. So even today there are post-structuralists like her who see the new communications technologies and the dominance of multinational corporations (MNCs) in cultural industries as being apolitical and value-free, thus deserving to be evaluated solely in economic terms. Though equivocally this same school which denies any negative consequences of the media, attributes to the new communication technologies all the positive technology-determinist power needed to promote democracy, reduce socio-economic disparity, provide universal education, enhance human work and virtually usher in utopia.

### 2.1.2 Dependency perspectives

Taking a more radical or critical approach, dependency theorists argue that underdevelopment is caused not by socio-cultural factors but by politico-economic ones, namely the exploitation of developing countries by capitalist developed ones. This view originates with Marx who explained historical transformation of societies through the growth of capitalism, which in turn was due to the exploitation of the

working class. Lenin expanded this model to incorporate the relationship between imperial powers and their colonies (O'Connor, 1970). The need to update this Marxist perspective led to the dependency model which asserted that persistent underdevelopment of a society was a symptom of its place within an exploitative world capitalist system. Even though many developing countries may be politically independent from their previous colonisers and seem to have national sovereignty, they are still subject to neo-colonialism, a form of economic and political dependency. Chase-Dunn (1975) demarcated three aspects of this dependency: exploitation of the developing countries, namely through developed country investments, infrastructural distortion of the developing economies, and suppression of autonomous policies by the developed world. As such any effort to achieve economic development such as import substitution is fraught with difficulty, and even aid from the developed world can serve to perpetuate the exploitation.

The only alternatives left open to each developing country were to isolate itself from the capitalist world system, or seek to have the terms of international trade radically revised (Amin, 1982). The former alternative was tested by some countries such as those of the former Second World which sought to set up a socialist-communist world system and found wanting, while the latter solution is currently being pursued via the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and resultant World Trade Organisation (WTO) with greater impetus since the end of the Cold War. But dependency theorists are sceptical of the value of GATT for developing countries, especially those in financial strife and coming increasingly under the control of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) which are themselves driven by US foreign policy. After all, the Third World's lobbying over the 1970s and early 1980s for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) through the United Nations was impeded by the US and other First World countries which preferred GATT as their platform since in it the developing countries were not a collectivity. Thus Raghavan (1991) considers the Uruguay Round of GATT to be an attempt by the developed countries to control world trade and provide opportunities for their multinational corporations to dominate Third World markets. In what he describes as recolonisation Raghavan anticipates developing countries forfeiting their already limited economic sovereignty, in their desire for integration into the capitalist global economy controlled by the industrialised First World.

But French and Richards (1996: 343-358) counterbalance this with the reminder that despite its rhetoric, GATT is difficult to enforce especially in the arena of audio-visual services such as television where even free-marketers recognise a case for some cultural autonomy. Contrary to misinformation at the time, the audio-visual sector like other service industries was not left out of the GATT Uruguay Round and so forms part of the purview of its successor WTO. Of the 13 countries which made commitments to offer access to audio-visual services, most were from Asia, though a number of them like India, Hong Kong and Malaysia offered qualified access. Other countries such as Indonesia, Australia and the European made no such commitment and are under no obligation to liberalise their present practices, because the GATT agreement recognises the autonomy of countries to regulate their media industries as they deem fit (Kakabadse, 1995). But this does not preclude liberalisation of the audio-visual sectors of those recalcitrant countries in successive rounds of negotiations when they could be placed under considerable pressure. So it is not a question of

whether but when countries will yield and make their national cultural policies subservient to world trade imperatives for the liberalisation of their cultural industries.

As critics of structural-functionalism, dependency theorists tend to err in the opposite direction by propounding theories emphasising the forces of conflict and disruption, and often failing to acknowledge the forces for social order and stability. In a determined defence of capitalism against dependency theories, Berger (1991), like many others, seeks to persuade us that the efficient productive power and high standard of living of the masses generated in advanced industrial nations of the First World are being replicated in those Third World nations which are well incorporated into the global capitalist system. He contrasts these developments of Third World countries replicating First World ones through economic integration with his control case of the industrial socialism of the Second World, a questionable choice, and postulates that there is an intrinsic link between socialism and inefficient economic and authoritarian political systems. As in the First World, capitalism promotes a class system which permits social mobility, individual autonomy and democratic processes, though he acknowledges that these are slow processes given traditional culture and society of the Third World. Of particular interest to this research is Berger's emphasis on East Asia's newly industrialising countries which he believes demonstrate that genuine economic growth can occur despite state intervention in the economy and their relative dependency on the global capitalist system.

### 2.1.3 World-systems theory

Through his study of modernisation in Africa, Wallerstein (1979) became convinced that the state was not the valid unit of analysis when the economic system, of which it was a part, spanned the world. Thus he formulated 'world-system' theory, a variation of dependency theories which states that there exists a global economic system through which capitalist developed or core countries, and their multinational corporations exploit developing or periphery countries through low prices for raw material and high prices for finished goods. As part of the system, semi-periphery countries were both dependent on the core countries and exploitative of the periphery ones. In his prognosis, global integration of this system in favour of the inequitable status quo between nation-states would result in resistance, fragmentation and its ultimate collapse, but for the buffer of semi-peripheral states (Wallerstein, 1991). However in postulating that capitalism perpetuates a global economy or what he terms as a 'world-system' comprising nation-states of unequal power and wealth, Wallerstein adopts a uni-causal analysis of globalisation which is somewhat limited.

Criticisms of 'world-systems' theory revolve around its simplistic one-dimension analysis of causality, namely economic exploitation. Bergensen (1990) criticises Wallerstein for the assumption that the world-system is formed by developed and developing nation-states in an unequal relationship. He argues the opposite view, namely that the world-system preceded the existence of these nation-states and was even instrumental in the latter's formation. Some critics have put forward alternative models of geopolitical factors, primarily citing political power rivalry between nation states. Robertson (1992) sees 'world-systems' theory as merely a reaction to the inadequacy of modernisation theory which had used developed nations as the basis of comparison for developing countries, but which failed to demonstrate political and economic relations between the two systematically. Critics from the classical economics school would argue instead for the

theory of comparative advantage which holds that all countries involved are better off through unrestricted trade than if they did not trade at all (Shannon, 1989). Therefore peripheral countries choose to trade with the core because they find it to their advantage to, core countries need not coerce them to do so, and peripheral countries are not necessarily exploited when core countries progress (Chirot and Hall, 1982).

Perhaps in response to these criticisms, other theorists adopt a more multi-causal perspective. In contrast to Wallerstein's view of a monolithic global capitalism and in lieu of Marxist and non-Marxist periodisations, Lash and Urry (1987) offer a three-stage model of the development of capitalist economies: liberal, organised and disorganised. The present 'disorganisation' of capitalism in the industrialised nations they attribute to globalising processes from above such as multinational corporations and international financial markets, decentralising processes from below such as the decline of mass industries, devolution of government and dispersion of populations, and transformation from within such as the growth of the 'service class', their quaint description of white-collar professionals. Through their analysis of the major western economies of the late twentieth century at varying stages of capitalist development, Lash and Urry demonstrate that collectively they are all well on the road to being globalised postmodern cultures. More relevant to this dissertation is another multi-causal thinker, Rosenau (1990: 170) who attributes globalisation largely to communication technologies. With the onset of the post-industrial age he sees also nation-states being co-players along with multinational corporations (MNCs), non-government organisations (NGOs) and other inter-governmental bodies (IGOs) on the world political stage.

It is commonly held that the prevailing system of international trade in the post-colonial era has tended to favour the 'haves' over the 'have-nots' among its constituent nations and warned that it perpetuated, even exacerbated, the economic disparity between developed and developing worlds. In an empirical test of world-systems theory, Peacock *et al* (1988) demonstrate that over time there has been increasing divergence in economic development and wealth distribution between the core, semi-periphery and periphery countries, and that there was convergence only among core countries. There has been a growing awareness that Third World development did not and could not follow the pattern of development of the First World because of their previous imperialistic development. Failure to achieve economic development compelled developing or peripheral countries to assert their desire for economic independence or inter-dependence in a new international economic order (NIEO), rather than continued dependence on developed or core countries (Amin, 1984). Regardless of their analytic preferences most of these thinkers mentioned above acknowledge that some form of global economic system has persisted over the last few centuries. Thereby they somewhat vindicate Wallerstein who pioneered analysis of social change on a global rather than solely national basis, even if he erred in the direction of ignoring the diversity and dynamism of Third World countries.

#### 2.1.4 Current conceptions

Globalisation has been conceived in contemporary academic literature as a process of linking individuals and organisations which transcends the boundaries of the system of nation-states which comprise the manifest world political-economic system. More specifically, McGrew (1992a: 65-66) contends that it is 'a process through which events, decisions in one part of the world can come to have significant consequences

for individuals and communities in quite distant parts of the globe'. He sketches three paradigms in the analysis of globalisation: realism/neo-realism, liberal-pluralism and neo-Marxism. Realism/neo-realism sees nation-states as still the dominant actors, and sees order as attained by balance of power, largely military, between hegemonic states. Liberal-pluralism acknowledges the rise of multinational corporations, international organisations and other forms of transnational relations or movements, and the decline of nation-states as primary actors. It considers technological and economic inter-dependence to be aiding globalisation, with communications especially responsible for the erosion of national boundaries. Neo-Marxism perceives the capitalist world system as dominant and thus constraining nation-states, multinational corporations and other transnational organisations to act in the interests of the dominant capitalist classes. McGrew argues also that power is based neither on military might nor political interdependence, but on economic integration into the capitalist system of global production and exchange (1992b: 17-22).

Other contemporary thinkers have grappled similarly with the issue of what are the lynch-pins of economic and political globalisation today, though with less clarity and succinctness. Referring to the three major ideologies as economic nationalism, liberalism and Marxism instead, Gilpin (1987: 25-64) traces all controversies of political economy to their differing conceptions of the relationships between state, society and market. For him, globalisation is closely tied to the worldwide growth of capitalism with its accompanying processes of commodification and marketisation. Coming from an international relations perspective, he also identifies the rise and decline of a liberal hegemonic power, namely the US, as the catalyst nonetheless for a somewhat democratic world order and global marketplace which encourages interchange and interdependence (1987: 85-88). Similarly, Giddens (1990: 70-75) conceives of globalisation as influenced by four factors: capitalism, the inter-state system, militarism and industrialism. For him, globalisation is a process arising out of the differentiated interaction of these factors in various parts of the world, and not a steady, homogenising diffusion of Western political-economic structure across the world. Thus Giddens sees globalisation as a natural outgrowth of modernisation when traditional social institutions are 'disembedded' or superseded by global ones (1990: 95). Achieved through better communications, this phenomenon results in a greater sense of world citizenry or of interdependence on a global basis among individuals.

Worldwide changes in technology, education and mass communications have led in turn to consequences in social issues, conflict and political institutions in the capitalist West, liberalising communist world and developing countries alike. One particular consequence pointed out by Inglehart (1990: 5-14) and widely acknowledged by other thinkers is the declining political interest in nationalism and increasing popular support for supra-national entities and ethnic identities. Increasing globalisation seems also to make a mockery of domestic economic policy in the West because the latter generally fails to consider developments in other countries, particularly in the Third World (Hafekamp and Smelser, 1992). This is quite evident in the intransigence of the economies in the developed world to domestic policies in the 1990s designed to create growth and employment. These policies fail because they do not recognise the changed global political and economic environment of which the nation is a part of. But coming from the world of business, Porter (1990) takes the contrary viewpoint that economic globalisation does not undermine the role of the nation in fostering international competitiveness of particular industries and their constituent corporations. Perhaps

supra-national constraints were less prominent in the 1980s and so Porter's research then focuses on the status quo of corporations and national governments.

While agreeing that economic aspects such as the migration of capital, goods, services, data, technology and labour in an increasingly deregulated world are primary in globalisation, Ferguson (1993) highlights some of the mythology surrounding the process. By myths she means not so much falsehoods but functional ideologies, for instance the myth that 'big is better' which justifies corporate expansion on a global scale, or the myth that 'more is better' which rationalises increased consumer choice as a public good. The need to differentiate between the 'hard' power of economic clout of and 'soft' power of cultural co-option by the developed world which developing countries face, especially in their determination to be globally competitive and yet culturally autonomous, is spelt out by Ferguson. Global economic integration may be expedient but not as inevitable, in her view, as it is made out to be by vested interests of countries, regions and corporations which benefit from the inequity of the globalisation process. More recently, Mulhearn (1996) has demonstrated the globalisation of the world economy through such indications as the increasing integration of world markets, the emergence of global economic institutions such as IMF and GATT, and the growth of internationally-oriented businesses in the industrial and financial sectors, as well as a protectionist backlash by regional economic groupings. More subtle is the risk of economic decline at least in the medium-term for many developing countries, with the possible exception of newly industrialising countries (NICs), as a result of these globalising processes.

In a recent adaptation for Asia of his populist analysis of megatrends Naisbitt (1995: 14-32) makes much of the trend from nation-states to networks and, most pertinent for this dissertation, highlights the ethnic Chinese globally as the third largest economy in the world and yet relatively invisible. Another business consultant, Ohmae (1990) points to the rise of what he terms instead the 'interlinked economy' of the triad of the US, Europe and Japan joined by Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore; a rearranged core and semi-periphery though he does not use that analysis. His is a treatise for the minimalist intervention from national governments, new inter-government organisation emphasising interdependence rather than competition, and the gearing up of business to maximise the benefits of operating of in a borderless world as global corporations rather than as multinationals. Writing also for the business community, the academic Thurow (1993) sees the same triad of nations leading the global economy but in dire competition. He predicts the economic victory of a united Europe in the 21st century, yet patriotically offers the US a economic game-plan for global re-ascendancy. Thurow holds out hope for the NICs in Asia through a future Pacific Rim trading bloc but is less optimistic for the rest of the Third World in Latin America and decidedly pessimistic about Africa. In glowing pro-capitalist spirit Drucker (1993: 141-156) sees regional and global inter-governmental organisations as necessary to deal with challenges as pollution, terrorism and arms control in the post-Cold War era. Though they would invariably undermine the nation-state they would not supersede it, and he explains the resurgence of tribalism, violent or passive, as a search for cultural identity in an increasingly globalised post-capitalist society. Whatever the merits or demerits of their popular accounts of the present and future of economic globalisation, such authors are influential among business executives around the world and therefore of corporate strategies.

The understanding of economic and political globalisation has progressed beyond prescriptive modernisation theories and critical dependency perspectives, perhaps towards a more pragmatic approach in understanding the interrelated processes of political, economic, cultural and social change worldwide. A major contribution of world-systems theory is that it compelled social thinkers to move beyond societal level analysis and see global factors which had impact on social change within nation-states. Certainly in recent years governments of diverse ideological persuasions have been instrumental in promoting the global integration of their national economies in return for anticipated or real economic benefits and thus their own political longevity. This results in their participation in regional organisations and inter-governmental bodies, their involvement with multinational corporations, and their use of improved communication technologies. In the process these very governments, such as in the countries researched in this dissertation, seem to lose some measure of control over their information, ideas and culture unwittingly. Hence this review of the academic literature turns next to an examination of the globalisation of culture and society which accompanies the political and economic processes of global integration.

## 2.2 GLOBALISATION OF CULTURE & SOCIETY

Ambivalence about the massive socio-cultural change which follows economic development in developing countries often causes their more nationalistic citizens to blame developed countries for the imposition of foreign cultures. Yet this apparent global homogenisation process need not necessarily be seen as deliberate cultural imperialism by developed countries of developing countries, but simply as a correlate of modernisation which developed countries themselves have experienced and incorporated into their cultures, albeit much earlier. While globalisation leads to some measure of homogenisation of cultures, there is often a concurrent counter-movement towards heterogeneity through the rediscovery and reassertion of the local, as seen in the ethnic renaissance and conflicts which have characterised the world of the late 20th century. Thus this section of the literature review will examine critically the dynamics of the widely perceived and much vaunted globalisation of culture and society.

### 2.2.1 Media and social change

The role of mass media in social change, as functionalists theorised, was to democratise access to and choice in cultural products, and facilitate gradual cultural change without threatening the social system. In fact modernisation was seen as a process by which empathy with the idea of social mobility was fostered through the mass media. Modernisation theorists have long advocated precipitating dissatisfaction with traditional life as a means of stimulating aspirations for the material benefits of modern society. Notably, Lerner (1958) claimed that the mass media was a key accelerator of the take-off into modernisation along with urbanisation, literacy and political participation. On commission by UNESCO, Schramm (1964) had prescribed specific media policies for developing countries as a means of achieving modernisation and its

benefits. He asserted that the mass media aided in widening horizons, focussing attention on development, raising expectations, and changing attitudes and values, among other positive effects. Thus many governments in the developing world introduced television as a means of promoting modernisation, either directly through development programming or indirectly through Westernised entertainment programming.

Influential as structural-functionalism was in media development, research on its hypotheses in the developing world bore equivocal results. Indeed when Rogers (1962) investigated diffusion of innovations, he found that the mass media were important to the earliest stage of awareness of innovations but it was interpersonal communication that was critical to the final stage of their adoption. This dependence on opinion leadership confirmed the two-step flow model of communication pioneered by Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) which is often ignored in negative views about the social impact of new media. Investigating the effect of modern institutions in developing countries, Inkeles and Smith (1974) found that while schools were more influential upon personal modernity, than the factory workplace and mass media though the latter were quite powerful nonetheless. Advertising, in particular, has been seen as benefiting modernisation through encouraging competition, production efficiency, product innovations/variety and lower prices, as well as subsidising the mass media. But this assumes the dominance nationally of a commercial broadcasting system which gives viewers the right of choice, and programming that is produced domestically to reflect values of the social system, as is generally true of the US. Thus development communications as propounded by theorists such as Lerner, McClelland, Pool and Schramm did not take into consideration the context of US hegemony of the world market, media industries, and international relations in the Cold War era (Sussman and Lent, 1991).

Critics charge that a structural-functionalist approach is deficient in explaining social change because it emphasises the elements that keep societies stable (Dahrendorf, 1973). But a risk of using the media to promote social change is that they may also cause rising expectations and intolerable frustration within a society, with the possible dysfunctional outcome of a populist revolution, as alleged in some developing countries. On the other hand, structural-functionalists might argue that such 'Western' media content has value as a form of escapist distraction or sedation for the masses, and is therefore functional in reducing social tension and political dissent in developing countries (Tunstall, 1977: 212). However, it is the introduction of mass media over which governments could exercise no control, such as transnational satellite television, which has heightened fears that the steady development of their countries and their political hold could be undermined. This is because programming which promotes consumerist lifestyles and advertising of products is often available through this medium to their citizens well before other correlates of economic development, and is invariably at odds with national cultural policies.

### 2.2.2 Socio-cultural identities

It is generally accepted that it was the communication of new ideas via print in universal vernacular languages rather than esoteric sacred languages or local dialects which helped form nation-states out of more traditional socio-political entities. Anderson (1983) detailed how the modern nation-state had its origins in the arrival of print which coincided with the growth of capitalism. Through a phenomenon he called 'print-

capitalism', people who participated in a socio-linguistic market for print media such as books and newspapers began to feel connected with all others who did, leading to the formation of nation-states on the basis of common language. Similarly postcolonial nations of the Third World were defined either by an inherited colonial language, or a new, perhaps revived, 'national' language. Citizenship is an artificial construct, in as much as the nation-state is, which detaches people from other more real identities and forms a new pseudo-community of strangers. Cultural authenticity is often based on xenophobia for, as Hobsbawm (1990) indicates, ideas of primordial ethnic identity have dubious roots and nationalistic self-determination seeks to recover irrecoverable history. Thus national culture was quite an unproblematic concept and taken for granted in the 1960s-70s, but it became increasingly questioned and problematised as a socio-cultural construct in the 1980s-90s, the period which this dissertation examines.

Despite the superficial non-homogeneity of nation-states which comprise our world there is a socio-economic elite of both developing and developed countries who have more in common with each other than with the lower classes of their own countries (Levitt, 1983). While not ignoring the existence of the nation-state, Sklair (1991) conceptualises a sociology of the global system as comprising three interlinked levels: economic, political and cultural-ideological, associated respectively with transnational corporations (TNCs), a transnational capitalist class and global consumerism. He dismisses the nation-state as a myth used by capitalism to deflect criticism from its hegemony of the global system. Sklair attributes the global capitalist system with having improved significantly the standard of living of billions through a form of materialist socialism, though he questionably says this was without imposing a political and cultural ideology. In actual fact there has arisen a capitalist class worldwide, often including the elite of developing countries, who identify with the global capitalist system particularly through its culture-ideology of materialism and consumerism. Global marketers and media-owners have certainly been in the forefront of targeting this lucrative cross-border market segment through their advertising and programming, as may be observed with transnational satellite television in Asia.

Some social thinkers seem palpably less interested in analysing the obvious economic and political factors contributing to cultural globalisation such as imperialism and capitalism, than in mapping the cultural consequences on individuals, society, nation-states, even humanity as a whole. Spybey (1996), for one, is concerned particularly with how the globalisation of political, economic and cultural institutions affects participants in every social system in a process he terms 'reflexive modernity'. He thinks that the individuals exposed to information through these globalising processes have greater expectations of lifestyle choices and personal fulfilment, including both consumerism as well as alternative lifestyles and social causes. The ready availability of transnational satellite television enhances such exposure to cultural globalisation. Morley and Robins (1995: 43-69) speak of the difficulty of defining cultural identity in an era of postmodern geography where spaces are defined increasingly by electronic connectedness rather than physical proximity. Pertinent to this thesis is the evidence they point to of young people being the heaviest users of transnational television in Europe. But Ferguson (1993) cautions cultural thinkers and industry practitioners alike to differentiate between 'surface' identities which may reflect global consumerist trends and 'deep' identities which reflect the persistence, even renaissance, of ethnicity, religion, gender and the like. She deems the dominant myth in

cultural industries of global cultural homogenisation to be as simplistic as the concept of national cultural purity.

In past decades the politics of cultural identity has been concerned with marginalised groups such as women, homosexuals and ethnic minorities finding a voice and being able to move centre-stage in the wider culture and society they are a part of (Foucault, 1978: 66-73). This leads to the problem of speaking positions, or whether only those who inhabit the marginalised groups have the right experience to speak from and the only ones worthy to be listened to when speaking on behalf of the groups. Speaking positions is also an issue on a global level, one which Tomlinson (1991) also grapples with, of whether thinkers in the developed world can speak for those in the developing world. While attempting to redress past silencing of minorities, this attitude taken unthinkingly to the extreme could mean that there can be little dialogue over cultural conflicts. This dissertation will attempt to give voice to those in the developing world as well as those the developed world who are equally concerned with issues of cultural globalisation, in order to facilitate engagement, even honest debate between them.

### 2.2.3 Cultural hegemony

The concept of cultural hegemony can be traced to the Marxist perspective of Gramsci (1978) who saw the capitalist class convincing the working class to accept being ruled. But by the same token, a working class-led revolution would have first to free itself from the hegemony of the capitalist class and then to legitimise itself by dominating all institutions of society with its ideology and moral authority. So keen was Gramsci for Marxist ideology to be demonstrated in practice that he emphasised cultural rather than economic factors in his analysis of social change. According to this influential school of thought which grew into critical or cultural theory, 'culture' is to be seen not as something one absorbs unconsciously but as just an arena for the struggle against hegemony and for authenticity. The process of a dominant social group winning the marginal groups' consent without overt coercion, though, has an inherent instability about it because cultural power has always to be negotiated and so is conflict-prone. A similar situation of cultural hegemony existed also between colonists and their overseas subjects, and might be said to exist between neo-colonial developed countries and dependent developing countries today.

Critical theory holds that the mass media induces passivity and addiction in audiences, thus making them amenable to domination by the political and economic elite in society who often controlled the media. In its view, with industrialisation mass culture became a product for a mass market or audience, produced by a cultural industry. The central thesis of this theory propounded by the Frankfurt School in pre-War Germany, was that this commercialised mass culture was the means by which the capitalist system of mass production and consumption sustained itself. In their seminal essay, Adorno and Horkheimer (1972) criticised the cultural industry, for mass-producing cultural products in the service of capitalist economies. As such, they claimed these products were unartistic and generic, pandering to the mass taste, and discouraging of intellectual response and that all forms of popular culture, including the mass media, traced their roots to the rise of the middle-class in Europe. Being rather elitist, they saw the media both as the means to subjugate the masses as well as the undoing of civilisation as they idealised it rather belatedly in the industrial age.

Government leaders and the social-political elite of developing countries today tend to share the Critical Theorists' disdain of mass culture particularly of foreign origin or of a hybrid foreign/local nature, while paradoxically keen to harness the tools of mass media to control the masses through promoting a subservient national culture.

In contrast, Martín-Barbero (1993) theorising on media effects talks not about the cultural hegemony of certain social classes but rather about 'mediations' or, in other words, how the masses use the media and incorporate them in their everyday lives. Operating in the cultural context of Latin America, he dissents from the view of 'Western' homogenisation as the only form of modernity and cites the diversity of cultures globally out of which the masses formulate their own culture. Today's global culture may be said to be an artificial construct 'composed of myriad imaginations, flashed onto our consciousness by the media... a culture of the mass media, above all of television..' (Smith, 1992). Still, ethnic and national cultures seem to remain the strongest filters of the transnational images we receive via television. Writing likewise of contemporary communications in the Third World context, Reeves (1993) agrees that interpretation by audiences might reflect class and sub-cultural affiliations and challenge the 'preferred readings' of the text. However he reminds us that 'the whole, continuous development of the media, and their conventions, institutional arrangements, values of practice, and role in the construction and reproduction of ideology and culture was always constrained by their capitalist nature' (1993: 151). Therefore a critical theory approach to understanding media does well to be counter-balanced with political economy one, and so in its analysis of transnational satellite television this dissertation will adopt the middle path of a 'cultural industries' approach which will be elaborated upon in due course.

#### 2.2.4 Televised culture

The impact of the medium of television on societies which have had a long tradition of print media has intrigued many social thinkers. In McLuhan's (1964) view, oral and instant communication which characterised the new electronic media was re-tribalising human society, emphasising touch and sound over vision. As a leading technological determinist, he would rebut Gerbner's view on the cultivation effects of media with the categorical claim for which he was famed, that 'the medium was the message'. Another dictum of McLuhan was that 'the media was the message', a more colourful expression for his argument that the medium impressed its own message on the audience, subordinating the actual content it was carrying (1964: 268-294). Through television the world had become, in his estimation, an electronic global village where there was extreme awareness and curiosity about other cultures. But it is unclear whether McLuhan was implying that television was globalising culture since, among other things, the process has not been accompanied by greater social harmony and tolerance. Perhaps he meant only that all viewers of television were participants in a televised culture regardless of what they watched or where they were located around the world.

While by no means targeting McLuhan directly, Ellul (1985: 113-153) contends that personal communications for human relationships cannot be achieved through the mass media, thus implying that the world can never become a global village. In Ellul's view, television images are inimical to interpersonal

discourse, intellectual reflection and social action. Taking a different tack, Esslin (1982) expresses the concern that accepting the dictum that the medium is the message leads to neglect of the other messages carried by television. In any case McLuhan had no shortage of critics who accused him of coining clever metaphors, overstating the case, and developing unprovable theories (Steam, 1968). Yet in the intuitive appeal of his ideas to the wider public, policy-makers and media practitioners, even if not to social scientists and media theorists, lay the root of McLuhan's success. To this day purveyors of satellite communications, are fond of citing his 'global village' and 'medium is the message' metaphors in promoting the benefits of their technology while ignoring the more negative connotations he implied by them. Certainly McLuhan made no overt comment about ownership of the media and control of the technology, and could be assumed to have imbibed an uncritical right-wing view towards economic development and social change. Updating the McLuhaneque critique, even if he does not acknowledge this, and doing so in similar cryptic style is Postman (1985) who proposes that the message of the medium of television is entertainment. Regardless of whether its content is news, politics, education, religion or whatever, increasingly television in western culture entertains rather than informs in any depth. He believes that the problem is not what people watch but the fact that they watch, and so the solution must lie in how they watch. No medium is dangerous if the dangers are understood, and so Postman recommends that we educate ourselves on how the television medium works, teach children how to interpret symbols of our culture and learn to talk-back to it, at least figuratively. Thus there appears to be some resignation by Postman to the pervasiveness of television in the developed world, and an attempt to reach some form of accommodation with it without losing one's integrity. Perhaps there are lessons in this approach for developing countries as television, whether domestic or transnational, comes to dominate their contemporary culture.

Another approach to the question of the impact of electronic media on culture and society is that of Meyrowitz (1985). McLuhan had suggested that, as in pre-literate societies, there was no concept of privacy in modern society because television had created a new sense of group identity. Meyrowitz illustrates this effect of television as shifting or removing the walls that separate our living and working spaces: hence some traditional behaviours are inhibited and other private behaviours are made publicly accepted. Physical space and social allegiances grow less important as electronic communication erodes those boundaries. Soon after, Real (1989: 17-30) announces the onset of 'super media', defined as the combination of satellite, fibre optics, microchips, decoders and other such technologies of transmission, which further distorts our sense of time and space, of certainty about information, of identity and of community. In this decade D'Agostino (1995) perceives the further intensification of this phenomenon when via transnational satellite television we are privy to happenings around the world to a greater extent than in our own neighbourhoods where we live isolated. His conjecture is that virtual reality will not displace television, which is being reincarnated via computers and electronic information highways, while video games might become the dominant recreation diversion of what he terms a 'post-television culture'. Whether these ideas are immediately applicable in the diverse cultural contexts of Asia, and how this might be investigated are as yet unclear.

Rejecting both optimistic and pessimistic views of media impact, Baudrillard (1988) expounds the view that the mass media do not simply distort reality but are a new social reality. Television images which

distort time and space, he believes, have caused our culture to consist primarily of simulations. As a post-structuralist/ postmodernist, Baudrillard defines simulation as not only presenting the imaginary as real, but also defines objects and discourses as having neither origin, referent or standard (1988: 209-219). Consumer lifestyles provide people with their identity in society rather than their role in the economic production system and thus people are incorporated into the 'simulacra' they surround themselves with. In a somewhat technological-determinist style reminiscent of McLuhan, Baudrillard proclaims that the media, especially television, overwhelms with information and renders impossible any true feedback from its audience even by polls, and thus are a form of pseudo-communication. The only way that the masses can avoid the influence of the media, according to him, will be to avoid watching it themselves or to be shielded from it by authorities. The former is an unlikely scenario since the masses worldwide seem to find the media an irresistible form of entertainment and information, while the latter is what some governments in Asia have endeavoured to do with transnational satellite television with dubious success.

### 2.2.5 Postmodern society

Postmodernity, like globalisation, is a phenomenon over which there is little consensus of definition in part because it is discussed in art, architecture, history, literature and sociology among other disciplines. Lyotard (1984) characterises postmodernism as a new era marked by scepticism towards meta-narratives or those ideological systems which give bearing, purpose and meaning to life in the past. Thus all aspects of life can have no objective reality or meta-code by which to be judged, only the 'hyperreality' of meanings relative to each other. On the other hand Jameson (1984) portrays postmodern society primarily as a consumer society characterised by pastiche and schizophrenia, eroding distinctions between reality and imagination. In his view postmodernism is in continuity with modernism and simply the cultural logic of late capitalism, a mere shift from imperialistic and market capitalism towards social heterogeneity without a collective project and lacking any norms. Similarly Harvey (1989) considers postmodernism to be characterised by fragmentation and chaos, making it impossible to attempt a comprehensive worldview. He notes a collapsing of time-horizons and a propensity to spectacle in postmodern culture, as demonstrated by trends in popular culture from fashion and architecture to advertising and television. Culture is seen as a random series of freely intersecting texts, the total meaning of which is relative to each participant. Notably for this research dissertation, Harvey attributes a shaping role to television, a medium quintessentially postmodern in its collation of images past and present, from far and near into an endless, uniform stream of spectacle which is piped into homes.

Whether modern and postmodern societies are coterminous or where the demarcation lies if they are separate, is still a matter of controversy and on-going debate. Claiming that both modern and postmodern forms of society co-exist for now and that the processes of postmodernisation are well in train, Crook, Pakulski and Waters (1992) are clear in their minds that a postmodern society will be dichotomous from one in the modern era. They base this view on observations and analysis of such symptoms as the rise of 'postculture' (which blurs the difference between art and the cultural industry), decentralisation, regionalisation, privatisation and down-sizing of the state, class and gender hyper-differentiation, flexible manufacturing,

disalienation of work, and the role of social movements in politics. On the other hand Lyon (1994) seems not entirely certain where postmodernity lies in relation to modernity, but suggests that the former represents a lack of confidence in the purported promises of the latter. He documents a mix of general foreboding and utopian hope which characterises the end of centuries and millennia, and suggests that postmodernity is one such cultural phenomenon operating on a global scale currently. An ardent critic of postmodernism, Callinicos (1989) goes further to demonstrate that definitions of symptoms of postmodernity and modernity by many of their proponents over the decades are quite interchangeable, while King (1995) goes so far as to propose re-labelling of postmodernity by modernity, and modernity by pre-modernity. But Denzin (1991) believes that most postmodern theories fail to take hold simply because they seek to achieve an comprehensive science of society like their precursor modernist theories. Perhaps all these new theories might succeed better if they acknowledge that postmodern society may be grasped only partially, requiring tedious analysis of fragmented texts which are but superficial and unstable.

In the postmodern societies as with globalised cultures, time and space are reordered such that events that are far away and at a different time intrude on the experience of people and seem more significant than their local situation, often through the 'mediation' of the mass media. One of the leading thinkers on globalisation, Giddens (1991: 18-21) understands the concept as the 'interlacing of social events and social relations "at a distance" with local contextualities'. Augmenting this viewpoint is another major theorist on globalisation, Robertson (1992: 8) who believes that it refers to both the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole.. both concrete global interdependence and consciousness of the global whole in the twentieth century'. He claims that societies are converging in economic and technological aspects but diverging especially in social relational aspects, while staying the same in other aspects. Yet another conceptualisation of the relationship of the parts and the whole is Braman's (1996) 'interpenetrated globalisation' by which she claims that there is plainly no local not infected by the global, nor no global not present also in the local. She introduces the notion of tertiary locality, or the increasing participation in hyperreal or virtual communities via the Internet, as a signpost of our postmodern condition. If one is able to interpret Wilson and Dissanayake (1996) adequately, they seem to be championing the same paradoxical experience of becoming more globalised and more localised concurrently, or of pluralisation within a world-system. Yet they seem antagonistic to postmodernism, postcolonialism and multiculturalism as being too accommodating to global capital, and promote instead the notion of a 'transnational imaginary' in tracking the global/local nexus across geopolitical sites.

## 2.2.6 Glocalisation and hybridity

The concept of 'glocalisation', or the localisation of global issues as well as the globalisation of local issues, is first attributed to Robertson (1992). Disbelieving that global-local issues, be they concerning politics, ecology, human rights or the media, should be thought of as a macro-micro dichotomy, he keeps company with a growing number of contemporary thinkers who see the global embedded in the local and vice-versa. Featherstone (1990), for one, questions the conventional idea of a global culture as 'national culture writ large', and stresses instead the need to move away from the bi-polar dichotomies such as homogeneity/

heterogeneity in regard to culture. Therefore he sees globalisation not as cultural imperialism but as symptomatic of the openness of postmodern societies to cultural eclecticism. More recently he has described globalisation as a process of showcasing of discordant world cultures within the home (Featherstone, 1995: 6-13). Presumably this is achieved via the productivity of media industries and business franchises in the postmodern world. Rather than think of globalisation as a late form of modernisation or 'Westernisation', Pieterse (1994) similarly prefers to describe it as postmodern hybridity. Hybrid social structures encompass both supranational and subnational regionalism within an understanding of a 'world society', in his view, while cultural hybridity can take a range of forms from mimicry, syncretism and creolisation to global *mélange* and counter-hegemony. Lent (1995) documents this phenomenon in Asia across the arenas of television, music, theatre, sport, food, movies and a range of popular culture, but singles out television for blame or credit for introducing the Westernisation element. Thus hybridity might indeed be a useful key for understanding the development of television-based cultures in the developing world.

If globalisation does not necessarily imply socio-cultural homogenisation, then the question arises whether the concept of postmodern society prevalent in the First World has as much currency in the countries of the Third World. Knox (1995) delineates the role of world cities such as London, New York and Tokyo as centres of economic and cultural importance in the world-system, even though they are palpably different from each other on any of those dimensions. He also hints that with the growth of the global information economy these cities may be superseded by cities currently further down the hierarchy but more technologically adept. So on the one hand, postmodernism might well be irrelevant in the Third World which could be said to be still largely pre-modern, let alone modern. Yet on the other hand, King (1991) quite rightly asks whether Singapore and Calcutta early this century might have presaged the cultural diversity and social polarisation said to be symptomatic of all postmodern societies. The multicultural characteristics of those cities of the colonial world then have been seen only more recently in cities of the First World as a result of post-colonial migration and the renaissance of subnational ethnicities. Perhaps the world-cities of the early 21st century may be those which are less unencumbered by the infrastructures of long historical development, and which like Singapore, Bangalore and Hong Kong have made concerted effort to become information technopolises through rapid implementation of new communications infrastructures.

The seminal work of Appadurai (1990) has been responsible for delineating the cultural flows which accompany globalisation, namely 'ethnoscapes' of business travellers, expatriates, immigrants, and refugees, 'technoscapes' of machinery, technology and software, 'finanscapes' of capital and securities, 'mediascapes' of images and information via print, television and film, and 'ideoscapes' of democracy, human rights and other Western ideologies. Though globalisation is not simply socio-cultural homogenisation, he thinks it uses various homogenising agents, advertising being a key one, which then incorporate the global into local culture and politics. The phenomenon of cultural globalisation has certainly been accelerated through new electronic communications, including television broadcasting. The electronic distribution of images worldwide or what Appadurai terms 'mediascapes' could well be agents for the spread of 'ideoscapes' or ideologies of Western nation-states, political movements or corporations. Lash and Urry (1994) attempt to analyse such flows within the context of postmodern economies and societies, advising that pessimism over

the future is caused unnecessarily by overly structuralist conceptualisations. They argue that all these 'scapes' are de-territorialised, with 'mediascapes' becoming increasingly global in character, dominant over 'ideoscapes' and undermining notions of citizenship in favour of both global consumer identity and local re-constructed ethnicity (1994: 305-313). Whether transnational satellite television might be a constituent of one such 'mediascape' which taps also into 'ethnoscapes', is something this research will seek to discover in the Asian context.

While the print medium may have contributed to the development of the modern nation-state, the television medium seems to have taken this process much further towards the formation of globalised societies, through by-passing the need for literacy and using visual images to entertain instead. Perhaps via transnational satellites, the social and cultural impact of television may be coming full circle by uniting disparate ethnic communities in different nation-states, whether geographically close or distant, thus creating 'global villages' of quasi-homogeneous cultures. Since such electronic communication media make possible or heighten transnational networks of individuals and groups which then become dependent on them, one issue that needs to be addressed is whether they are a cause or an effect of globalisation. This forms the basis for further discussion, in the next section of the survey of the academic literature, on media globalisation which has already been touched on in this section.

## 2.3 GLOBALISATION OF THE MEDIA AND BROADCASTING

Geostationary satellites, digital transmission, optical fibre, satellite television, mobile telephony, computer networks and electronic mail are among the many forms of technology which have revolutionised global communications in recent decades. Although advocates of these new technologies claim access to information will lead to greater democratisation within societies and equality between nations, critics point out that in reality such technologies perpetuate the status quo of inequity and dependency. For on a global level development and control of such state-of-the-art technologies lie with developed countries and their multinational corporations, and their services distributed selectively to developing countries and regions. Within countries, control and access to communications are often largely in the hands of the local elite with transnational cultural and economic links. Since corporate and government decisions concerning media technologies and software are being made increasingly in a global context, so must transnational satellite television in Asia be analysed and understood, hence this review of the literature on media globalisation.

### 2.3.1 New media technologies

The idea of using geostationary satellites as a means of global communications has been attributed to a broadcast engineer and science-fiction writer, Arthur Clarke who in 1945 spelt out the technical criteria necessary. Satellites in geostationary berths above the equator orbit the earth at the same speed as the earth rotates and thus stay above the same location. Beams broadcast from their transponders can cover up to a

third of the world's surface at a time which constitutes their footprints. This renders distances on earth immaterial since the distance of one city from the satellite is practically the same as it is from another (Frederick, 1993: 91-99). Thus for a signal to travel from Singapore to Jakarta via a satellite such as AsiaSat 1 is the same time and cost as for it to travel from Beijing to Cairo. Applied to television, satellite technology has meant that costs of broadcasting are independent of audience distance, while costs of downlinking and redistribution of signals are low. Uplinking is possible from mobile earth stations anywhere within its footprint or reception zone on the earth's surface for the satellite's signal, as is downlinking via a satellite dish-antennae, thus making control of access difficult.

Though an increasing number of developing countries have launched satellites for domestic telecommunications purposes, they continue to be dependent on developed countries for technology manufacture and maintenance, and are relatively minor players on the global stage. Hamelink (1983) argues that technologies such as satellite television remain concentrated in the hands of developed or core countries and their services are disseminated to developing or periphery countries, to borrow the terminology of 'world-systems' theory. Though he neglects to point out that even within developing countries control over these communications technologies tends to be concentrated in the hands of technocrats in urban centres from which information flows uni-directionally to the rural hinterlands. Furthermore developing countries such as those being researched here in Asia are more often in the footprint of broadcast satellites owned by developed countries and their multinational corporations (MNCs) than vice-versa. Dissenting from the optimistic free-market view of governments and business, Hamelink questions the consequences of deregulation for local autonomy in the broadcasting industries of developing countries.

With the availability of these new media technologies, decisions concerning programming software and target audiences are naturally being made increasingly on a global basis by commercial entities. Still unrepentant of his long-held views on media imperialism, Schiller (1991) highlights the shift of control from the nation to the transnational corporation which is evident in television programming, sports, politics, language and other elements of culture even in countries that maintained a strong national culture. The so-called indigenisation of television, is seen by him as no more than a copy of US television genre, replete with all the values and behaviour norms necessary for persuading consumption of the goods produced by MNCs. Denigrating 'active audience', cultural studies and postmodern viewpoints, Schiller alleges that these MNCs, largely Western media conglomerates, are responsible not just for media imperialism via television because they are able to offer a total cultural package via film, printed publications, theme parks, shopping malls and more. By the same token, transnational satellite television would be just one element of wider cultural imperialism, and be set to dominate the media and cultural landscape of Asian countries. But Reeves (1993: 152-167) proposes that advertisers are quite indifferent towards the privatisation of the media if they can achieve the same ends through a monopolistic government broadcaster as they could through multiple commercial ones, especially when there is a limited consumer market as is the case in many developing countries.

### 2.3.2 Broadcast commercialisation

Alleging that media content and thus social consciousness globally were being controlled indirectly by the majority of transnational corporations through advertising, Nordenstreng and Schiller (1979) promote the concept of national sovereignty over media. Nonetheless they acknowledged that the developing world then could not be divided into capitalist versus socialist spheres of influence, and that the elite across all nations may already be part of a global economic and informational system. Mattelart (1983) also contends that transnational firms dominate national culture and in evidence he cites the Nordenstreng and Varis (1974) research on dominant programme flows especially from the US, plus further information on news and programming distribution networks and transnational advertising agencies. A decade later UNESCO-sponsored research on the international television programme flows in 50 countries by Varis (1988) found that the global average of imported programmes was still approximately one-third of total programme time. However the latter study reported that there was wider variation between nations as to their imports and that much of the imported programming was predominantly from nations in the same politico-economic or geo-linguistic regions rather than from the US.

Nonetheless Schiller (1989: 115-117) himself remains convinced that the reality in television broadcasting is one of increased domination of culture by largely US corporate interests. He sees the US withdrawal from support of UNESCO in the 1980s on the pretext of defending press freedom, as a conspiracy to undermine the prime regulatory body of its cultural industries. Furthermore, the US exercised its deregulatory crusade through the World Bank/IMF stipulations requiring the privatisation of broadcasting before loans were granted to developing countries. Since public broadcasting proves expensive for developing countries and is often not able to gain the popular support, commercial broadcasters who are able to attract advertising revenue will be tend to be encouraged instead. Once these privatised cultural industries established by government policy are dependent on corporate sponsorship, analysis of any single programme's effects on audiences, he thinks, is futile since cultural, economic even political imperialism by the capitalist West is self-evident. Thus Schiller (1989: 115-117) argues that the current trend towards deregulation in broadcasting results from lobbying by First World MNCs faced with the increased competitiveness of a global marketplace made possible by the new communications technologies. Yet the experience of satellite television in Western Europe, as Collins (1991) reveals, has been that despite exploiting weak national government regulation undermined further by the European Union directives and being backed by major media conglomerates, the channels have not been very successful. He argues that it ultimately depends rather on their ability to attract subscribers which in turn is dependent on cost-benefit analysis by consumers of satellite channel offerings versus terrestrial television and video. This means that satellite broadcasters have often had to outbid terrestrial broadcasters and other satellite broadcasters for rights to programming or vertically integrate to lower costs.

Although there may be economic pressures from changes in government policy which favour consumer sovereignty over public regulation and funding, Tracey (1988: 18) is persuaded that the public service broadcasting in most countries remains well funded. Citing an unpublished analysis which attributes the popularity of locally-produced drama over American soap-operas, he feels that domestic public

broadcasters should not be underestimated by those fearing media imperialism. But Tracey also observes that VCRs are being used especially by ethnic minorities as a socio-cultural alternative to free-to-air broadcasting controlled by governments which is often geared to development programming. For a more realistic portrayal of international television programme flows, Sepstrup (1990) insists on a two-stage analysis, the first referring to the trans-nationalisation of supply and consumption of television within a country, and the second referring to cultural and economic effects of that transnationalisation. Operationalising this in a follow-up study for UNESCO on television programme flows in the developing world, Sepstrup and Goonasekera (1994) found transnationalisation of consumption by audiences to be much smaller than supply of imported programming by broadcasters, though they note in passing that some locally-produced programming consumed bore the strong influence of US or British production styles.

The prevalence of foreign programming may have to do with the country's differing histories with television. Researching rural communities in Brazil, Kottak (1991) discerns stages in the impact of the medium: a first stage of novelty and mesmerisation by the medium, a second of selective acceptance and reworking of the message, a third of community saturation and lack of differentiation among viewers, and a fourth of a national television culture. Research in the Dominican Republic points to programme genre being a significant factor in determining country of origin of the more popular programmes, for example, local news and variety shows from the republic itself, telenovelas from the Latin American region, feature films, action series, foreign news, children's and scientific programmes from US and Europe (Straubhaar and Viscasillas, 1991). Programmes of local and other Latin American origin enjoy considerable popularity among locals there, particularly among the lower-middle to lower classes and has displaced US imports over the years. In revealing the domination of local television broadcasters Televisa in Mexico and Globo in Brazil, and their successful forays into Hispanic markets in the rest of Latin America, Europe and even North America via programme production and satellite television, Sinclair (1992) makes the case that the cultural imperialism thesis is in need of re-definition.

Even in the 1980s, Collins *et al* (1988) suggest that neither the US nor UK had a monopoly of programming exports when Japan and Mexico have carved out successful niches globally, and ridicule alarm over imported values ones as conservative. Some Third World programming, notably soap operas have gone on to enjoy almost universal appeal. The Japanese creation *Oshin*, for instance, has been broadcast in over 30 countries ranging from Belgium to Indonesia, often all 297 episodes worth, because it had achieved iconic status, not to mention precipitated social change (Svenkerud *et al*, 1995). On the other hand, ardent cultural imperialism theorists like Mattelart *et al* (1984: 52-60) are sceptical of this so-called Third World media development, arguing that it is confined to a minority of unique nations, still represents technological dependence, promotes consumption by extensive advertising and recreates colonial structures of communication. This view may find some basis, though, in the African context where the heavy use of imported television fiction programming is attributed to financial constraints of local production, television penetration being largely confined to the urban areas, the difficulty of catering to the diversity of languages of rural and illiterate populations, and the lack of broadcasting planning and policy (Ndumbu, 1991).

Arguing that US programming is rapidly constituting a smaller percentage of a growing international television market, Cunningham and Jacka (1996) chart the export success of Australian-made television programmes not just to the English-speaking markets of UK, Ireland, the USA and Canada, but also to elsewhere in Europe and East Asia, if for different reasons in each. Likewise the contributors to Sinclair, Jacka and Cunningham (1996) document the growth not only of alternative English programming exporters in Canada and Australia, but also of new television production centres for the Hispanic, Arab, Chinese and Indian markets which are regional, diasporic and geo-linguistic. Together these writers argue that changes like the growth of satellite television, convergence of electronic technologies, regulatory changes that accompanied shifts in political ideologies towards media privatisation, lowered costs and decentralisation of production, the rise of global media conglomerates, and the integration of national economies into the capitalist world system have contributed to the establishment of a far more complex international television market than was in place when the earlier studies of US programming dominance were made.

### 2.3.3 International regulation

The call for a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) stemmed from a new realisation of the role of the media in the social, cultural, political and economic spheres of developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. These former colonies were disenchanted with the media imperialism they were being subjected to mainly from the US. The desire of countries such as Indonesia, India and China being researched here to harness their cultural industries in the pursuit socio-economic development and to redress imbalances in the worldwide flows of news and television programming was expressed in a number of international forums such as the Non-Aligned Movement, International Telecommunications Union (ITU), UN and UNESCO in the 1970s. Seeing it as a threat to its own economic interests, the US waged a counter campaign to discredit the proponents of NWICO by alleging that they were against freedom of the press and were for repressive control of the media by the state, which blinkered to its own controls (Roach, 1987). On the instructions of its 1976 general conference of member countries UNESCO established an International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems chaired by Sean McBride after whom the commission and its report is popularly named. The Commission enlarged on its brief and addressed a whole gamut of global communications issues including government controls on media, information flows, freedom and responsibility of the press, protection of journalists, commercialisation of the mass media, media ownership, the revolution in communications technology, and cultural policies (Kleinwachter, 1993).

The MacBride Commission report (1980) began with a review of the current state of communications but said little about satellite and cable systems. At that time Intelsat and Intersputnik were the only transnational satellites and other systems were either domestic, marine/aeronautical and military, while cable television was then strictly a North American and West European phenomenon. Instead the Commission commented on language diversity, literacy, traditional media, mass media technology, cooperative news dissemination and the growth of entertainment and leisure, before dealing with more controversial issues such as dominance of communications by transnational corporations, state subsidies and

monopolies in the media, regional disparities in consumption of communication products. Finally under the rubric of 'problems and issues of common concern' the MacBride report (1980: 137-194) attacked imbalances in news and programming flows and distortion of their content, caused both through censorship by governments and the commercial imperatives of media conglomerates, problems which have intensified with the advent of transnational television via commercial satellites. Among the Commission's recommendations relevant to this research was one that developing countries develop their own broadcast systems, including training and production facilities, adding that national production of broadcast materials was crucial to reducing dependency on external sources. Outdated as it might seem now, the report called for the ITU to study the utilisation of satellites in international communications, to coordinate the equitable sharing of the geostationary orbit and to offer discounted rates on the use of satellite systems by developing countries (1980: 255-261).

Even prior to the publication of the MacBride Commission report, UNESCO adopted the Mass Media Declaration in 1978 which stressed the responsibility of mass media to promote peace, international understanding and human rights. The same year the UN General Assembly adopted a similar resolution and the next year it established the UN Committee on Information to promote the NWICO concept. In 1980 the UNESCO conference adopted the MacBride Report and established the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), both actions being ratified by the UN that same year. This led to the US and UK withdrawal of membership and therefore financial support from UNESCO in late 1984 alleging plans to restrict press freedoms and human rights (MacBride and Roach, 1993). Despite further roundtables, conferences, and resolutions, the NWICO ideal was never achieved, in large part because programmes for its development suffered from UNESCO financial constraints (Kleinwachter, 1993). Over a decade later UNESCO convened another commission in 1993, this time on Culture and Development, which in its report called for recognition of diversity and encouragement of competition in national broadcasting through public, commercial and community sources. On the level of international broadcasting it recommends the imposition of a form of cultural tax on satellite radio and television services for using the 'global commons' of airwaves and outer space, the revenue from which could be utilised to alternative international and regional public broadcasts (Pérez de Cuéllar, 1995). Whether these commendable ideas are simply platitudes or will be acted upon by the international community is yet to be seen.

#### 2.3.4 Media imperialism

At the centre of the NWICO debate at UNESCO in the 1980s was the issue of media imperialism, itself a part of the larger issue of cultural imperialism in a post-colonial or neo-colonial world. Cultural imperialism is said to occur when the cultures of developed or core countries are dominant in developing or peripheral countries, and this is said to be symptomatic of politico-economic dependency or a similar exploitative relationship. The developed world's ignorance of other countries' cultures and history, and interest in its own political and economic agenda has tragic consequences for the developing world, as Said (1994) argues. He traces the history of imperialism in 'Western' culture from 19th century colonial literature right down to the mass media of today. Said sees cultural imperialism illustrated by European colonisation of Asia

and Africa in the past, or more recently by US actions during the Gulf War. As evidence of such cultural imperialism in the media Golding (1977: 294-300) had observed that models of broadcast systems in many independent Third World nations were usually similar to that of their former colonists. If most television programmes were imported from developed countries it was both because of the higher cost of local production and the entertainment tastes of the local elite. So he concluded that there can be no value-free technology either when the training provided in television production replicates what was done in the First World without regard to the objectives to which the media might be used in the Third World. Whatever is produced locally is a often clone of foreign programmes again because of their low-cost formats and yet gives a veneer of pseudo-indigenisation to satisfy regulatory requirements.

The free-market capitalist argument, on the other hand, holds that freedom of information flows across borders is enshrined in the UN declaration and that development journalism is a euphemism for the control of the press by governments under the pretext of mobilising economic growth (Kelly, 1976: 264). Others of the market school would go further and question the assumption that financial and economic control of the media is tantamount to its political control (Vasquez, 1983: 265-280). By contrast the Marxist/socialist thinkers would argue that the principle of national sovereignty gives governments a legitimate right to decide the cultural policies and to harness the media in promoting national development. For instance, Hamelink (1983) makes an impassioned plea for cultural autonomy and dissociation from the developed world, citing the positive experiences of a number of developing, often socialist countries in resisting cultural synchronisation with the 'West' in the 1950-70s. He calls on developing nations to develop alternative information policies, and offers suggestions of how both native as well as foreign communications resources could be adapted to support their social and economic development.

‡ Most formulations of cultural imperialism are largely based on economic perspectives but on the issue of the media, socialist control may be no less acceptable than capitalist domination to Third World countries. To avoid ideological polemics, Lee (1980) attempts to re-define the more specific media imperialism as the composite of programme flows, ownership, transfers of broadcast systems, and promotion of capitalist worldviews/ lifestyles. He thinks the term cultural imperialism is preferred by those with a Marxist bent to imply wholesale domination of which the media is a mere symptom. Believing that developing countries cannot shut out technological change without widening the gap with developed countries, Lee suggests a compromise solution of regional cooperation, creative use of the media, and the synthesis of modern and traditional media as possible antidotes to media imperialism. Similarly Ayish (1992) contends that developing nations may have to rethink their authoritarian orientation if they wish to be integrated into the information-based global economy. He proposes that they think of international communication primarily as information vital to politico-economic planning, rather than as cultural imperialism via the mass media. Both thinkers seem to accept the reality of media imperialism as a correlate of development, and suggest ways of contextualising, even exploiting it.

Other theorists seek to mitigate allegations of foreign media impact by emphasising their role in mediating cultural experience rather than determining it. As with a number of others, Tomlinson (1991: 34-67) sees media at the core of the cultural imperialism debate; comprising as it does the cluster of

programming, advertising and news whose economics of production and dissemination is dominated by multinational corporations of the capitalist world market. But cultural imperialism is more than media imperialism, he argues strongly, since the media are not the totality of cultural experience but are merely the 'mediation' of capitalist modernity which is a form of global capitalist imperialism (1991: 27, 61). Therefore cultural imperialism is a far more complex and possibly vague a phenomenon than can be measured by research on media alone, and is better characterised as an ongoing discourse largely in the academia of the West. Furthermore Tomlinson questions whether Third World citizens themselves might not think some sort of cultural imperialism well worth the social development which accompanies it, such as clean water and good roads. Quite rightly he concludes that cultural imperialism ought to be studied in terms of the wider socio-economic changes in developing countries in which the media play a crucial role by mediating the complexity of the new culture of development to its citizens.

Whereas in Eastern Europe prior to the 1980s the notion of cultural/media imperialism was used only by officialdom to condemn foreign broadcasts and rock music intruding from the West, Downing (1996: 223-225) reproaches academic exponents of the concept for having little light to shed on subsequent developments, namely extensive investments by the capitalist West in the radio and television industry of the East. As Negrine and Papathanassopoulos (1990: 45-55) contend, commercial transnational broadcasters may be relatively untouched by all this debate on media imperialism because 'the real nature of internationalisation lies not simply in political and diplomatic efforts.. but in those processes which pull nations and broadcasting organisation into the world marketplace of communications and information'. They also cite the argument that cultural sovereignty and political sovereignty are not necessarily congruent and ought to be uncoupled. Only then can television be seen in the context of the extensive trade in all manner of cultural commodities between nations and of the impossibility of defining national culture in modern societies, say they. If this be true, perhaps there needs to be greater inter-dependence between governments and corporations in the media industry and in other forms of cultural production for the export arena in order to cynically exploit the economic opportunities afforded by globalisation.

### 2.3.5 Global communication theories

Hopes of resolving the global media debate rest on further research and theorisation. To avoid the needless controversy caused by inappropriate levels of analysis in media research, Fredericks (1993: 188) classifies theories of global communication as being either micro, mid-range or macro theories, a typology which will be adopted in this discussion. Micro-level theories deal with the human mind, its motivations, needs, thoughts, fears and desires. Learning concepts garnered from psychology such as selective perception, frustration-aggression, cognitive dissonance, stereotyping and gaming have their usefulness in explaining the ways in which audiences utilise the widely available media and all the global information it provides access to (1993: 189-193). Selective perception, for instance, may explain why audiences make quite biased and inaccurate inferences about people in other countries. Gumpert and Cathcart (1984) elaborate a inter-cultural interaction model of communications which highlights the fact that many individuals and groups have only indirect contact with individuals and groups in other countries through media reporters who may introduce

stereotypes and biases. The global media, largely American, have been at least partly responsible for perpetuating such cultural or national stereotypes.

Mid-range theories deal with social groups, classes, communities, political movements and institutions in relation to global communications. In adapting the classical Shannon-Weaver model to global communication, Cioffi-Revilla and Merritt (1981-82) add four more actors (observer, organisation, broadcaster and audience) and emphasise the role of gatekeepers and the prevalence of noise at all levels. Frustration-aggression is often cited by governments in the developing world as their underlying concern for seeking to control western programming and advertising which would lead to dissatisfaction with their economic state and thus to political instability. There has been some speculation that television images of the West European capitalist societies may have fuelled the popular revolutions which caused the demise of communism in Eastern Europe. But Lull (1995: 166-168) argues that the effects of media are not one-way from institutions controlled by the dominant political-economic-cultural elite, because messages are often resisted or at least negotiated by audiences, even if unconsciously. Geolinguistic regions form a major focus of recent research on global television collated by Sinclair, Jacka and Cunningham (1996) which illustrates for the power of explanation of mid-range theories of global communication. Since these major on the television ecology in each country, comprising institutions in the broadcast industry and their decision makers, such mid-range theories match the objectives of the present research.

Macro-level theories of global communication such as systems theories, theories of political economy and geopolitical theories deal with such entities as nations, ethnic cultures, regional economic alliances and the capitalist world system. Systems theories emphasise the vital importance of the constant flow of information to the maintenance of relations between countries, without which diplomatic, economic or military confrontation might result (Frederick, 1993: 202-207). Idealist systems theories believe that the media could be a forum for public opinion which would lead to peace, while realist systems theories believe that the media and public opinion are to be harnessed to serve the ideology of the state. Herman and Chomsky (1988) sketch a propaganda model of how the political and economic power structure in the US influences the way its mass media selects and frames news of the rest of the world. It is a phenomenon which has been demonstrated amply by the transnational satellite television broadcaster CNNi to its global audience in recent years. Geopolitical theories of the media consider the political implications of geography and how communications technology might overcome some barriers. Coming from an international relations perspective, Mowlana (1986) seeks to provide a model for systematic understanding of the international flow of information, one which integrated both socio-cultural and economic-technological dimensions. Deducing that much communications research concentrates on source and content of messages, he urges more emphasis on distribution and its control, and their political implications all the way from an individual and institutional level to nation-state and global level. In earlier decades some developing countries invested in satellites for public television and telephony as one means of uniting their large territories and integrating the quite diverse cultures within. Today virtually all governments in Asia are concerned about the political implications of the flows of commercial transnational television in the region, the distribution of which they have little control.

From this brief review it is evident that globalisation of the media, particularly television, has been spurred by greater broadcast deregulation worldwide and the fact that new media technologies such as satellite and cable television render national media sovereignty quite an unrealistic goal. The consequent rise of global media corporations and the broadcast of media events globally, often 'live', have been predicated on the commercialisation of the television medium. Multinational corporations wishing to market their products globally are thus major sponsors of transnational television via satellite, and their advertising agencies the catalysts. Despite being significant in the growth of global media, advertising and marketing are often neglected fields for international communications research, though they have been researched pragmatically by business academics and practitioners. In the next and final section of this literature review, we shall examine the growth of international marketing and especially of global advertising prior as well as subsequent to the development of transnational satellite television.

## 2.4 GLOBALISATION OF MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

The mass media, often transnational in character, as well as telecommunications and universal education all help create consumer awareness and lifestyle expectations, thus stimulating demand for a wide variety of goods and services even in the more remote and less developed parts of the world. New production technologies in what is now called the post-industrial age make it possible to source, produce and distribute in diverse and multiple locations globally. The decline of communism and its alternative world-system has been accompanied by greater liberalisation of economies in the capitalist developed and post-colonial developing worlds. These factors and more have contributed to the globalisation of markets which is accepted uncritically as the environment in which business now operates. This section will review literature emphasising one significant aspect of international marketing, that most related to the media, namely the globalisation of advertising.

### 2.4.1 International marketing strategies

Since proof of globalisation is often couched in terms of the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services, Mowlana (1996: 197-198) contends that the multinational corporation has been a major catalyst in the process, even though it did not act alone or was even opposed by nation-states. Organisationally, the term 'multinational corporation (MNC)' commonly refers to any firm whose business is conducted across several nation-states, though the United Nations and others prefer to use the terminology of 'transnational corporation (TNC)' to describe the same entity. The activities of such corporations could range from trade in goods and services to portfolio investments and direct ownership/management. Functionally, a multinational or multi-domestic strategy is one in which a company adopts a independent business strategy for each national market in which it operates. A transnational strategy, on the other hand, is defined as a decentralised one in which all national operations are coordinated to serve many other markets in which the

company operates. These two strategies are to be differentiated from a global strategy, defined as one where the core resources and responsibilities are highly centralised in the corporate headquarters which coordinate a standardised marketing strategy for a unified global market (Hill, 1994). But many MNCs also camouflage their so-called global marketing strategies with a local tinge, in a strategy called 'glocalisation' which matches their post-Fordist 'dispersed' organisational structures and production processes of today. It would thus be more accurate to refer to the organisations which adopt these strategies as multi-domestic/multinational, transnational and global corporations respectively.

In a landmark but uncritical business article, Levitt (1983) announced the superseding of multinational marketing by global marketing. He attributes to communication technology a converging of consumer demands, enabling marketers to deliver quality at a competitive price through globalised production and distribution, as demonstrated by the Japanese. Even where there is good reason to segment, Levitt suggests that similar segments can be found across national markets. He dismisses alternative scenarios such as of flexible production of semi-customised products and services as incapable of being price-competitive, offering no systematic research, only anecdotal evidence. Support for Levitt's globalisation thesis may be found, claim Hill and James (1991), in the fact that products and promotions are generally considered more transferable by the executives of subsidiaries of multinational corporations researched in developing country markets than is realised by their headquarters. But Onkvisit and Shaw (1987) express the dissenting view that the world may not be homogenising culturally, citing evidence of a quite opposite trend. Likewise Wind (1986) criticises Levitt systematically for, among other things, lack of empirical evidence of homogenisation of consumer wants, the irrelevance of production economies given current technology, and failing to recognise that synergy of multi-country operations does not depend on standardisation. The alternative model Wind proposes has multinational corporations making strategic choices in each key decision area such as positioning, product, promotion and distribution, as well on the question of whether to standardise, localise, or 'cluster' which means standardising for groups of countries.

Reviewing research on standardisation in international marketing from the 1960s through to the 1980s, Jain (1989) rightly concludes that the issue does not present a dichotomous choice between total standardisation and total customisation, but rests on a number of factors such as similar target market, market share, nature of the product, the environment and organisational factors. Thus there might be numerous permutations of strategies that could be adopted in the process of international marketing to lessen risk of failure. In a critique of the process of standardisation, Ritzer (1996: 143-147) warns it has spread far beyond fast-foods to education, healthcare, and the workplace in the US and is a key factor in international business expansion. The reasons for what he terms the 'McDonaldization of society' are the economic benefits to producer and consumer, a deliberate campaign to identify itself with positive social experiences and local culture, and its fit with changes in lifestyles and other consumer products. Thus the on-going discourse on the globalisation of marketing tends to revisit periodically a long-standing debate about its strategic aspects, including the standardisation versus customisation of advertising which remains relevant to the developments in transnational media in Asia.

## 2.4.2 MNC marketers and ad agency networks

The history of the advertising industry's expansion worldwide in the 1950s to 1970s may be characterised as a series of moves and counter-moves by international advertising agencies and national governments. MNCs which enter markets made accessible by new media and deregulated distribution channels are soon followed into those markets by their home-country advertising agencies. In earlier decades, governments in many European and Third World countries had sought to limit US ownership of their domestic broadcasters and advertising agencies or restrict their use of foreign-made promotional materials in the name of nationalism and cultural policy (Tunstall, 1977). But with increasing economic integration among countries on a regional basis and new electronic communications media since the 1980s, governments have found it difficult to regulate their broadcasting and advertising industries. On the other hand, US advertising agencies found that they had strategic advantages in going global early, in terms of size, access to capital, client loyalty, skills and knowledge, and creating barriers to entry, especially since European and Japanese MNCs had earlier not invited their domestic agencies to follow them abroad (West, 1996). The rationale for global expansion of US-owned agencies is obvious with hindsight seeing that their international advertising billings have grown six times faster than their domestic billings over the period 1960 to 1989 (Kim, 1995).

While the occasional mergers of earlier decades were primarily of small to medium sized advertising agencies, the frequent mega-mergers and take-overs in the late 1980s were of large international advertising agencies among themselves such as BBDO, DDB and Needham to form Omnicom, J Walter Thompson and Ogilvy & Mather under WPP, and so on. It took the agency Saatchi & Saatchi to pioneer the expansion into non-communications businesses. Loosely termed 'marketing services' these latter businesses included public relations, graphic design, packaging, and so on, which had their proponents claiming to be integrated marketing communications agencies. What was striking of that era was the willingness of the financial community, especially the conservative British Stock Exchange, to back these highly speculative expansions into marketing super-consultancies (Mattelart, 1991: 8-18). Certainly these aggressive agencies raised the profile of advertising as a business and its prestige as a profession, in the West and presumably worldwide. Much was made of the impending advent of global brands and markets by some advertising agencies in their push to form mega-agencies or to diversify into related industries both to service their existing MNC clients better and to bid for new business worldwide. Initial concerns of global marketers about conflicts of interests in handling competitive advertising accounts were overcome in many cases during the consolidation period of the 1990s by maintaining the separate identities of agencies within the merged ownership structure.

By the 1990s global media had also come to be dominated by a few multinational corporations, when similar developments took place in other cultural industries such as Sony's acquisition of CBS Records and Columbia Pictures, and the merger of Time-Warner with Turner Broadcasting. As Schiller (1989) warned earlier, the critical issue in international communications seems to be the increasingly commercial ownership of the broadcast, information and cultural sectors of all countries and their consequent dependence on multinational advertisers. In the context of the US, McAllister (1996: 47-51) underscores the media

agenda-setting propensity of advertisers in their push for programming which delivers large audiences, with desirable demographics and made pliant to the commercial message. Yet Mattelart (1991: 37) remains confident, if somewhat prematurely, that although US advertising agencies are present and even dominant worldwide, they are no longer hegemonic because their ideology and practices have become institutionalised in the profession and contextualised in the countries in which they operate.

As a result of the mergers and takeovers, the top ten advertising agencies in the world by gross income in 1993 were US, European and Japanese, though in Asia the number of non-regional agencies in 1991 were only 2.5, this fractional figure explained by Young & Rubicam's part-ownership with Dentsu in DYR (Kim, 1995). The largest marketers/advertisers in most Asian countries seem a roughly equal mix of multinational corporations and major domestic ones, though it is not always possible to identify the business and ownership links between them (Asian A & M, 1994: 18-19). With growing deregulation in many markets in Asia there is now a predominance of international agencies or their affiliates over local ones among the top 10 agencies in a number of the countries researched in this dissertation: India, Indonesia, Hong Kong among others (Tharpe, 1997). Since US-owned agencies or their part-owned affiliates dominate the advertising industry in major markets for transnational satellite television, whether they pursue a global agenda or one that is culturally contextualised is worth exploring in the present research.

#### 2.4.3 Global versus local creativity

International marketers tend to create a distinctive image around their global brands through advertising, the key creative concept for which may originate anywhere in their markets. It is said however that multinational corporations and their advertising agencies prefer to centralise the concept development but decentralise the creative execution to the various markets which are in a better position to adapt the concept to the local environment (de Mooij and Keegan, 1991). For on the one hand there are certain corporate prerequisites of launching a global campaign such as having a standardised brand-name and packaging, similarity of the product life-cycle stage and competitive situation transnationally, similar consumer attitudes towards and usage of the product, and so on. On the other, there are varying government regulations on advertising to children, of certain products such as cigarettes and liquor, on verifiability of claims, portrayal of human bodies, and so on to be considered in devising or adapting a global creative concept. Shao and Hill (1994) find that while legal regulation of the advertisement of socially-sensitive products were remarkably similar worldwide, tradition social conventions play a more significant role in constraining their advertising in developing countries. Thus there could be numerous impediments to or at least factors to consider in devising a thoroughly global advertising campaign.

The standardisation of advertising internationally has been advocated since the early 1960s and somewhat successfully demonstrated at least in the European context at that time. As a result of later comparative studies, particularly in the 1970s, a more moderate approach was adopted in which specific socio-cultural factors were identified as critical to the standardisation versus localisation decision (Green, Cunningham and Cunningham, 1978). This middle road states simply that global advertising is suitable only for certain product categories, among similar market segments across most countries, and under specific

conditions. For instance, Domzal and Kernan (1993) observe that personally-relevant products like food and clothing seem suitable candidates for globalised advertising, especially among the economic-elite worldwide and the post-War/post-modern generation in developed countries. But as Bourgerly and Guimaraes (1993) point out, the critical need is for marketers to distinguish between creative concepts which cross cultures, and the products which do. Research by Kanso (1992) concurs that even though some human needs and wants may be universal, advertising still has to be culturally localised to be effective.

For a tool to diagnose such cultural gaps which may need to be bridged in global marketing communications, Kale (1991) proposes Hofstede's four dimensions of culture, namely individualism-collectivism, uncertainty-avoidance, power-distance and perception of time. Using these as well as economic and media availability/usage indicators, Sriram and Gopalakrishna (1991) outline an approach for identifying groups of countries for which standardised advertising campaigns may be used. They come up with six clusters in their analysis of 40 countries, but some of the constituent countries of each cluster do not seem to make *prima facie* sense, as for instance, Belgium, Columbia, Italy, Turkey and Taiwan being in the same cluster. Though Zandpour *et al* (1994) identifies these same four Hofstede dimensions as affecting the style and content of television advertising, the research team also found that product types, level of advertising expenditure, presence of US advertising agencies, government regulations, and availability of trained advertising personnel, among other factors, were equally significant influences in the eight countries surveyed. Therefore cultural factors are not sufficient explanations, even if significant ones, for adopting different creative approaches in advertising for each market.

Typically research on cross-cultural advertising in US academia (Mueller, 1987; Ramaprasad and Hasegawa, 1992; Cheng and Sweitzer, 1996) amass quantitative data to test predictable hypotheses about advertising creativity in diametrically opposite cultures, but offer little critical commentary on the consequences for cultural globalisation by advertising. Among the few exceptions is an earlier study by Belk and Pollay (1985) which found over the last the period 1953-1983 that Japanese print advertisements used status appeals more frequently, instrumentally materialistic themes were emphasised more in US advertisements, and that luxury/appeals rose in both. As they reason, the rapid economic growth in Japan has led to a stress in advertising on status and materialism even if adapted as group rather than individualistic phenomena. Less quantitative and more critical in his analysis of Japanese and US advertising, Kline (1988) discusses the Japanese genius of incorporating foreign cultures, historically of China and Korea and later of Germany and the US, while perpetuating local traditions with some redefinition. It appears then that the implications for globalisation in developing and developed countries then is not homogenisation to a 'Western' industrialised norm, but of advertising and marketing being catalysts of cultural hybridisation in the process of societal modernisation or postmodernisation.

#### 2.4.4 Media buying worldwide

As a general rule when the international part of an account is held with one agency, the domestic account tends to move to that agency eventually. Generally this results in increasing consolidation of media-buying by agencies for their international clients, by the use of a lead agency either in a major market or close

to headquarters. However 'world brands' are sometimes handled by different multinational agencies in different countries or regions due to account conflicts or strategic diversification, and in fact are even manufactured by different companies through licensing, franchising, joint-venture and distribution arrangements (Sinclair, 1987: 117-9). In any case the arrival of international advertising agencies in a national market to serve their multinational marketer clients is said to have historically caused a shift in advertising expenditure from print to broadcast media, and from publicly-owned broadcast media to commercial ownership (Tunstall, 1977). But there has been a dearth of media research on the impact of advertising, in contrast to programming, particularly in the developing world which has seen the expansion of US-owned advertising agencies to serve their marketing clients in new global markets, a situation which Janus (1981) deplures.

The introduction of satellite television in Europe prompted speculation over whether it would revolutionise the media, foster globalised marketing, further cultural homogenisation, and affect advertising as was speculated in Asia later. Researching the impact of satellite television in Europe on advertising agencies, Howard and Ryan (1988-89) found most agency and client executives believing that non-European corporations would be the major beneficiaries and that local agencies would lose some of their business to pan-European or global advertising agencies. Advertising agency executives tend to believe that it would become the leading advertising medium while their marketing clients disagree. But both groups agree that it would affect agency-client relationships as local agencies lose clients to global agencies, as pan-European campaigns increase despite the cultural heterogeneity of the region, and as marketing activities grew increasingly globalised and centralised. The respondents also believe that there would be greater emphasis on visual communication and on pan-European themes. While they perceive a number of barriers to international advertising such as language, culture, and regulations, the advertising and marketing executives expect satellite television to lead eventually to the control of strategy, media planning, budgeting and creativity by their corporate headquarters. Though, as de Mooij and Keegan (1991) caution, such consolidation of advertising on a regional basis will depend largely on the extent of organisational centralisation instituted by the marketers. On the other hand, Tracey (1988) reasons that the restructuring of television audiences in Europe brought about by the new media systems such as cable and satellite television will spur growth in advertising revenue, if governments, suppliers and unions do not get in the way which must be the dream of most capitalists.

Reviewing research on cable viewership in the US over the 1980s Garay (1988: 71-78) discerns a trend over several years of rejection of the pay-TV product and attributes it to disillusionment with cable programming's promise of diversity, changes in viewing patterns and the growth of VCR use over that same period. Glazer and Batra (1989) attribute the slow growth of cable television in the US to its failure to recognise its unique quality of narrowcasting. Cable was mimicking the programming of broadcast television in order to compete with it, rather than with specialty print media and direct mail. Instead of seeking to attain large audiences in order to attract advertisers, Glazer and Batra advocate that cable television promote the ability of the medium to tailor advertising to editorial content, and even eliminate the boundary between them, by producing highly targeted and localised programming. While previous research on the impact of

cable television on broadcast television has been inconclusive, Glascock (1993) finds that in the US that the new medium actually increased advertising spending overall over the 1980s rather than eroding the share of advertising of other media. Observing that advertising has to underwrite the multichannel environment, Baldwin *et al* (1996: 231-257) believe it will take three main forms: of product-awareness advertising similar to that of 30-second commercials, of information-offer advertising embedded in the programming or commercial which can be stored by the viewer to future use, and direct-selling advertising similar to that of television shopping channels though more interactive. While cable and satellite channels may offer improved targeting by specialist consumer interests and geographic location, they also tend to have perennially small ratings. This requires advertisers to purchase spots across many channels which is administratively expensive for agencies even though the total media costs are no higher than on terrestrial television. Despite having benefits for the consumer, Baldwin *et al* conscientiously also point out the problems with the new multi-channel environment which range from the creation of a hyper-commercial environment where it is difficult to differentiate between programming and advertising, to the ethical issues of privacy over consumption transactions made electronically.

Whether the experience of cable, satellite and pay-TV media in Asia does follow that historically of the US and Europe is something this dissertation could throw light upon. Exactly how marketers allocate spending between domestic and transnational media reaching the same target market, tends to depend on whether budgets are made up of local plans or are a top-down allocation based on such considerations as use of international versus local ad agencies, standardisation versus localised campaigns, media alternatives and costs, and media research availability and quality (Mueller, 1996: 164-193). International advertising agencies have long developed in-house methods for comparing cost of delivering one media programme to different countries, though this is a situation complicated by media spill-overs across borders (de Mooij and Keegan, 1991). But it is difficult to compare advertising data across countries due to discounting in some countries, the use of sample versus census data, the inclusion or non-inclusion of production costs, inclusion or non-inclusion of non-media communications like sales promotion and direct mail, information held back due to commercial sensitivity, different classifications of products, and different ways of quantifying products sold (Mattelart, 1991: 61-62). Nonetheless in the light of European research, the advent in Asia of transnational broadcasting via satellite might reasonably be expected to result in the consolidation of spending by global marketers into international agencies accredited to buy time on such broadcasters on a regional basis.

#### 2.4.5 Marketing and postmodernity

After the media, the practice of marketing could be said to be another major influence in the development of postmodernity. In terms reminiscent of Williamson's (1978) critique of British advertising, Hebdige (1989) expounds on the 'power of the new transnational media systems.. to move people not just to buy products of the culture industries but to buy into networks that offer forms of community and alliance which can transcend the confines of class, race, gender, regional and national culture' (1989: 90-91). He also decries the emphasis on market research in postmodern economies and how it has popularised so-called

social classifications such as yuppies, empty-nesters, dinkies, Generation X and so on. These 'aspirational clusters' are based not on traditional social class/sexual polarities of sociological analysis, but on transnational and transcultural 'psychographics' for the convenience of global marketers. Furthermore, Firat and Venkatesh (1993) observe that advertising characteristically resignifies words and signs, decontextualises products from their physical function, and juxtaposes conflicting images thus contributing to the hypereality, spectacle and fragmentation in postmodern society. Marketing could be responsible for commodifying even subcultures, news, education and politics, thus superseding their usual function as social processes. Tharpe and Scott (1990) underline the need to research the full cultural meaning of products and ideas introduced into any society and the infinite social consequences thereof, not just their utility and price. Likewise, the contributors to Costa and Bargosy (1995) explore the multiple relationships between marketing and cultural identity, in a globalised world where the resurgence of ethnic groups often across national borders is aided by business practices and vice-versa.

Such innovative approaches to culture naturally call for quite different research methodologies such as content analysis and participant observation not traditionally used in marketing. As to their role in culture change, Ellis (1990: 39-40) considers television commercials to be the epitome of the medium's propensity to provide a stream of segments independent of each other in meaning. Further, in Cunningham's (1992: 71-101) view, advertising is a long-neglected arena for cultural analysis because of its commercial nature, when in reality advertising is as much a product of a country's cultural identity as a contributor to it. The limited critical studies of advertising seem to have a left-wing bias that assumes audience passivity to marketer strategies, while there is much investment in uncritical market research of short-term advertising effects for corporate interests. Goldman (1992: 37-60) explains the role of advertising in the production of commodity signs as the process by which its viewers provide the labour to interpret the advertisements and thus create surplus value. Thus he considers concern with whether advertisements are deceptive and subliminal is misplaced when their true impact is the cultural hegemony of commodity relations in capitalist economies. Similarly, Jhally (1987) illustrates the addictive-compulsive nature of television watching which colonises peoples' free-time and argues that lower income groups watch more since they have less cultural alternatives. Using Marxist analysis he theorises that since audiences are sold by television to advertisers, audiences may be said to work for the medium in return for free entertainment. Jhally is intrigued also by the relationship between the use-value and the exchange-value of commodities or, in other words, how advertising is not just about how products are used but how they are produced in a capitalist society, tapping into our cultural unconscious for their meanings.

Scrutinising MTV as a related postmodern phenomenon, Kaplan (1987: 143-153) concludes that it is a continuous advertising medium promoting consumption on a variety of levels from the sponsors' products and the programme itself to an entire youth subculture. By adopting an almost schizophrenic stance towards the world, MTV lets itself be coopted by the commercial establishment even while it adopts a critical position towards the dominant culture. Baudrillard (1988) would argue that this illustrates how the media are paradoxically both instruments of power for mystifying the masses as well as the means used by the masses for the denial of reality. However Habermas (1989) would counter this post-structuralist relativism with the

view that reciprocal meanings arise from the dialogue between speaker and hearer, medium and viewer/listener, and out of that may come new consensus and social norms. As such both programming as well as advertising on transnational satellite television whether they be on MTV, CNNi or StarTV must surely involve some collation of cultural fragments from around the world in order to communicate with and appeal to their quite heterogeneous consumer markets across Asia. Therefore product commercials as well as programme trailers and title sequences for programmes, which have the same brief sound-and-sight character as commercials, may be valuable sources of data on television-prompted culture

#### 2.4.6 Advertising and the Third World

While there is a relationship between advertising and development, whether it is a cause or an effect is still in doubt. Callahan (1985) sets out a number of models on the likely relationships between advertising activity and economic development, and attempts to measure them. He finds that advertising is correlated to GNP but not to other variables of economic development such as energy, savings, and imports, and so concludes that advertising changes the composition of consumption but not the level of consumption. In his research on the impact of advertising in developing countries, James (1983: 28-41) found that advertising affected product demand not only by changing tastes but by providing information on brand choices. The economic effects of advertising are therefore difficult to assess because it depends in each case on what is communicated, how it is evaluated by consumers and whether it is acted upon. Although the desirability of instigating changes of taste and creation of wants in developing is worthy of debate, James concedes that welfare economics is ambiguous in resolving the issue. Summing up years of research linking marketing and development in the Third World, Joy and Ross (1989) dismiss the more traditional modernisation and institutional approaches and favour the radical world-systems theory approach though they are critical of Wallerstein's assumption of passivity of developing countries. So for the planning of any marketing strategies they recommend intensive ethnographies as the means to obtain 'thick descriptions' of the cultural and political contexts of each developing country, in particular the roles of development agencies, governments, local elites and so on.

According to Kaynak and Ghauri (1986), advertising appears to go through a number of stages in a developing country, beginning with the elite stage where there is low levels of development, through the popular stage when thanks to literacy there can be informational appeals to mass audience, and finally to the specialised stage with more persuasive appeals to segmented markets similar to that of developed countries. They attribute differences in advertising practices even between two developed countries to their respective regulatory environments, but the differences between the developed countries and developing ones depend on the relative influence of Western concepts. Advertising content in developing countries tends to mimic that of developed countries because local practitioners tend to have been trained there or by trainers from there. In similar vein, Sinclair (1987) demonstrates that multinational marketers through their advertising agencies are responsible for 'taste transfer' or the adoption of mass-produced substitutes in place of traditional products, particularly foods, in developing countries. Since the incidence of advertising has increased with wider developments in manufacturing, marketing and media in capitalist societies, he believes that it cannot be

attacked in isolation. Kaynak (1989) claims that research confirms that consumers in developing countries are more readily affected by promotional messages than those in developed countries. He also contends that as a country develops economically its potential market size increases but with greater exposure to advertising, receptiveness by audiences declines sharply.

A frequent allegation made is that media content and thus social consciousness in developing countries is controlled indirectly by the majority of transnational corporations through advertising. Smythe (1981: 66-90) has analysed the clear dependence of the invention of various mass media in the First World on advertising, and alleges that this is at the core of the problem there as in the Third World. Jhally (1987) argues instead that no simple relationship exists between people, things and messages in advertising, but that it depends on the psychological, physical and social context. Despite acknowledging its complexity, he champions the view that advertising is structured to reach particular audience segments more effectively than others, by media owners and advertising agencies on behalf of their primary clients, the marketers. Pollay (1986) documents the extensive criticism of advertising's cultural impact in the academic literature of various disciplines and chides business academics for ignoring these in their research concentration of how to make marketing and advertising more effective. He dismisses the defence of advertising as merely reflecting the symbols, values and of a culture in order to be able to communicate with its people. Pollay portrays advertising as a 'distorted mirror' which is highly selective of the values it promotes for commercial ends, neglecting and often undermining values of greater social importance. Drawing a parallel with socialist art, Schudson (1984: 219-222) similarly stresses that advertising does not invent social values so much as it usurps and exploits prevailing ones in the service of products in the capitalist marketplace. Designating advertising as the art form of capitalism, Williams (1980: 184) argues it influences cultural life even if it does not succeed in influencing product purchase, and vice-versa. Thus the cultural and economic effects of advertising might be quite separate.

While there is a necessary trade-off between economic development and cultural stability, Pollay (1986) submits that thoughtful regulation has not dampened advertising and commercial growth in many developing countries, whose citizens will over time become more discerning of advertising tactics. His survey of advertising regulation worldwide implies that concern about the erosion of traditional values and culture has resulted in quite uniform controls among countries of quite different levels of economic development, colonial experience and ideological persuasion, even if they are not equally enforced. By contrast, Wernick (1991: 181-197) expresses concern over the pervasive commercialisation of all contemporary culture and makes a plea for the return to substantial public sponsorship of the media. Boddewyn (1988) is much more pro-business and positive about the rise of deregulation and transnational media, while advising caution in the interim in the use of global advertising campaigns. Although Firat and Venkatesh (1991) cite transnational corporations as societal change agents *par excellence*, given their resources and expertise, they surmise unconvincingly that the socio-cultural impact of marketing especially advertising, and the postmodernisation of societies are simply co-dependent processes.

Utilising a dependency model, Anderson (1984) carried out an early critical study of the advertising industry within the Asian region and concluded that the international advertising agencies wielded power over

the cultural values of selected nations in a neo-colonial form of domination. It provided specific case-studies of three postcolonial nations: Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore and the then fledgling market of the Peoples' Republic of China. While a recent publication edited by Frith (1996) surveys the state of domestic advertising of eleven nations in East and South Asia, the contributors do not address the impact of transnational satellite television on advertising. However Frith does argue in her own introduction that the advertising scene in Asia has moved beyond dependency to the convergence of professional practice and consumer lifestyles aided by the new media technologies. On the other hand, Jun and Kim (1995) rehearse all the academic arguments for the standardisation of advertising and proclaim the growing number of direct broadcast satellites in Asia as an exciting opportunity for international marketers, but do not provide any evidence of the medium's use or disuse. Therefore the last comprehensive, critical yet empirical study on transnational advertising across Asia was done by Anderson almost two decades ago. The late 1970s was an era of greater nationalism and well prior to the growth of transnational satellite television, and some of the issues raised in that research are worthy of further investigation in a more globalised and postmodern Asia of the 1990s.

This chapter has surveyed critical thought on the process of globalisation over the latter part of this century, particularly the last decade in which it has become highly topical. The predominant themes gleaned from the literature seem to centre on the imperative for nationalistic modernisation in development and control of domestic television broadcasting, the role of multinational corporations and their sponsoring developed-country governments in providing broadcasting hardware and software including advertising, the concerns over cultural imperialism among governments in developing countries and shifts in national cultural policy in the context of global economic integration, the influence of cultural homogenisation and hybridisation in the strategies of television broadcasters and advertisers, and more. In the following chapter on research methodology, the various approaches to studying the manifold impact of transnational satellite television are explored, and the research questions are clarified. Then in the chapters that follow this dissertation analyses the television broadcasting scene of three countries in the region, namely Indonesia, India and China, before comparing their advertising practices in the radically changed socio-cultural, political-economic and technological environment of the 1990s.

## Chapter Three

### RESEARCHING MEDIA

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This chapter on the research methodology used in this dissertation begins with an overview of the diverse theoretical perspectives in media, before examining the various research paradigms to which they lead. Given the multidisciplinary nature of media and communications studies, there are many alternatives in research design available for this study, and these are surveyed first. The rationale for the multi-method approach adopted for researching the impact of satellite television in Asia is then explained. Finally, the actual sources of data collection and process of data analysis data are clarified, along with challenges encountered and caveats about the information conveyed and conclusions drawn. This chapter provides a foundation for understanding the subsequent case-studies on the impact of transnational satellite television in three countries under its satellite footprint in addition to the comparative study of the advertising industry responses, which form the crux of this dissertation.

#### 3.1 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

In spite of considerable research over decades, a common lament about the field of mass communication or mass media has been its lack of a grand theory or of clearly defined disciplinary borders. There is an on-going striving for hegemony over the emergent field of media and communications in teaching departments and research fora from the more established disciplines such as sociology, literature, journalism, film/television studies, political science and marketing. Even the various interdisciplinary schools of thought within the field of media reflect these disciplinary biases. For instance, while the political economy school in media theory examines the control of the media by the financial and thus political elite of a society, the cultural studies school is concerned with how popular culture is created and integrates sub-groups in society. This current research project will draw largely on a media/cultural industries approach, a middle path which will be explained, since this seems most pertinent to analysis of developments in transnational satellite television in Asia. However, the related theoretical perspectives of political economy, social effects, cultural studies and active audiences will also be taken cognisance of and discussed as and when deemed relevant.

##### 3.1.1 Social effects

Just as there are concerns in Asia over the introduction of transnational satellite television, similar concerns in the US over the then new media of cinema and radio saw research funded in the

1930s to assess possible social effects. While the prevailing ideas in communication theory were still of individuals vulnerable to the all-powerful mass media, Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) propounded a more sophisticated theory of limited effects. Their mediated or 'two-step flow' model of communication highlighted the selective exposure of audiences to media and the influential role of 'opinion leaders'. It demonstrated that the effect of media messages was greater when it was relayed inter-personally than when communicated directly by the medium. Nonetheless the mediated-flow research tradition was subjected to criticism from the European critical theory school (Adorno, 1969; Gitlin, 1978) that it was 'administrative research', sponsored by and supportive of the cultural industry and tending towards short-term effects. More recently Katz (1987) has responded to these criticisms by stating that the findings of mediated-flow research actually debunk assumptions about all-powerful media effects. But this misses the point since the primary thesis of the critical theorists was that such effects could not be comprehensively measured at the level of individual consumption, not that social effects could never be described by quantitative research.

Long associated with Gerbner (1970) and his studies on television violence, cultivation theory describes the way the media fosters certain values and attitudes in its audiences in particular and society in general over time. Through conducting surveys of audience media habits, attitudes and behaviour, he found that heavy viewers of television were more susceptible to cultivating a fear of violence. One way that Gerbner *et al* (1980) explained this cultivation was through a process they called 'mainstreaming' by which heavy viewing of television created a convergence of attitudes amongst its disparate viewers into the societal mainstream as defined by television. When replication of Gerbner's US research on cultivation effects of heavy-viewing versus light-viewing of television violence did not lead to similar findings in the UK, Wober and Gunter (1988) accounted for this by citing the difficulties of cross-cultural comparisons in research, even between developed countries. Although cultivation theory has been criticised for demonstrating a weak relationship, measuring only time watched not motivation for watching, failing to control for other factors, directionality of cause and effect, and so on, the conventional wisdom has remained that a heavy diet of violent programming must have some effect on its viewers (Griffin, 1991: 307-309). Certainly this conviction is often cited by governments in Asia wishing to regulate transnational satellite television because of its high content of foreign, mainly US, programming though their officials often seem blinkered towards programming of similar content and origin available on their domestic television stations, both commercial and public.

These early media theorists have tended to emphasise how the new electronic media have superseded older media, and created new social effects. But they could be criticised rightly for ignoring the fact that the new media have co-existed with the old and furthermore created new contexts for the latter's use. In contrast, Severin and Tankard (1992: 12) believe that new communications technologies spell a shift from the study of media effects on audiences towards how the media interact with each other and how audiences use the various media. Besides, late this century the media are becoming increasingly 'de-massified' through new communications

technologies, narrowcasting and audience segmentation, and there is greater recognition that even with mass audiences, meanings generated differ greatly among its constituent individuals and subcultures. In the case of VCR ownership, Straubhaar (1990) argues that its diffusion was related to economic growth of a country, and that in developing countries this diffusion revealed cleavages of social class and ethnicity along the lines of their economic and cultural integration with the world capitalist economy. If television can no longer be assumed to be monolithic and uniform with the introduction of VCRs, satellite, cable, pay-TV and the like, then there are implications for the applicability of 'social effects' media theories in developing and developed countries alike. Yet this viewpoint still has currency in public opinion, in the popular media, and among many government policy-makers, as evidenced in their reactions to the advent of transnational satellite television in Asia.

### 3.1.2 Active audiences

Criticism of mediated-flow theory spurred research on the social dimensions of the media and led to two further, if somewhat divergent, directions in mass communication research namely uses-and-gratifications research (Blumler and Katz, 1974) and diffusion research (Rogers, 1962). Since mediated-flow theory emphasised how individuals could be empowered against the media there was a research paradigm shift from what effects the media had, to what active use individuals put the media to and what gratifications they gain from it. On the basis of in-depth interviews and survey questionnaires, its researchers have sought therefore to define broad categories of uses audiences have for various media. For instance, McQuail *et al* (1972) identified the major uses or needs met by the media as diversion or escape from routine and problems, personal relationships or companionship, personal identity or reference with reality, and surveillance or information-gathering. However, the uses-and-gratifications theory may be criticised for imprecision because a viewer's needs could be met by a variety of television content, while a single programme could meet the multiple needs of any individual viewer or group of viewers. Even early proponents have admitted that uses-and-gratifications research relied too much on self-reports, defined social needs ambiguously, ignored textual constraints and neglected dysfunctional satisfactions (Kubey and Csikszentmihalyi, 1990: 28-31). It is also a psychological rather than sociological explanation of media use, focussing on individual instead of social behaviours.

Defending the uses-and-gratifications theory of media, McQuail (1987: 233-237) points out that it emphasises the non-passive role of audiences and seeks to measure why they watch and what benefits are sought. So he believes that uses-and-gratification theory simply needs reformulation to emphasise factors identified as critical by research such as the audience's social background, prior use of media, expected satisfactions and evaluations for consequent use. This research was not able to adopt a uses-and-gratifications approach because of the breadth of its scope across three countries, and the limited access possible to foreign researchers without the approval of

national governments because of the politically sensitive nature of the research. Since these factors could prove helpful in understanding the uses to which audiences in Asia put transnational satellite television, questions on what gratifications were sought from it and whether they were found in the various countries under the footprint were put to the key informants interviewed. Answers to these questions were sought also through secondary data, including social and market research done in-country by local organisations.

Another perspective on audience research is provided by media system dependency theory as described by Ball-Rokeach (1982). This stresses the inter-dependence of mass media and society, particularly its political and economic systems, and argues therefore the effects of media may not be studied in isolation from the society in which it functions. For example, the dependence of the audience on the media for information increases with the degree of social change experienced and the availability of alternative information channels. In the case of transnational television, of course, this poses the issue of quite different impact in various societies of the same medium, such as those observable under the footprint of StarTV. Since the media effects on individuals were three-fold: cognitive, affective and behavioural, any research on effects must specify which of these was to be measured (1982: 232-255). Once again, this was not attempted in this research due to constraints of time and access to the audience, except marginally in that decision-makers occupying various key roles in the cultural industries of each country were interviewed for their perceptions of changes effected since the start of transnational satellite television.

### 3.1.3 Cultural studies

A relatively recent school of thought, cultural studies has been described as the critical study of contemporary culture characterised by an engagement with such issues as social inequality or cultural imperialism, thus differentiated from the objective-scientific and macro perspective that sociology adopts (Duning, 1993). Critical scholars of the Frankfurt School such as Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse had alleged that quantitative research methods failed to explicate the more insidious effects of the media, but did not offer an empirical alternative. The Birmingham School in the UK, from which much of cultural studies traces its roots, melded theory and empirical research in the analysis of contemporary media, culture and society. One of its leading lights, Hall (1986) theorised that various manifestations of each culture need to be understood in terms of the wider social, economic and political structure. He also demonstrated that encoding and decoding of cultural texts are quite distinct and complex processes, and the relationship of the viewers to the dominant ideology encoded would result in either dominant, oppositional or negotiated decodings by them. Thus the textual or semiotic analysis commonly used in cultural studies measures more than the content of messages because it provides insights into their significance in terms of its wider political and cultural context (Hall, 1990). But any such analysis runs the considerable risk of the researcher reading into the text his or her own biases without sufficient external controls on the range of valid interpretations. As such, cultural studies methodologies are highly interpretative and

their theories still have elements of the quite deterministic mass-culture presuppositions which characterised the early critical theories of the Frankfurt School which they would wish to distance themselves from.

Another major objection raised to this approach is that it fails to give due credence to the capacity of individuals and groups to generate their own, varied meanings from the text. Fiske (1987: 62-67) objects to the assumption often made that effects of the text are those of the ideologically preferred encoding, especially when the decoding process has not been empirically ascertained. Neither is the oppositional reading to the ideologically encoded one necessarily the only other one decoded by the audience of the text as some cultural studies exponents take it to be, because it fits their theoretical framework which over-emphasises social class as a factor. Besides, television is multi-layered in content and meaning, and so its effects may be studied best through a range of methods apart from textual analysis. In a landmark audience study, Morley (1980) demonstrated that receiving socio-economic subcultures redefine media messages in terms of their own values, regardless of how hard the producers try to limit their ambiguity. While such early cultural studies research looked at the relationship between with media interpretation and class structures within national society, later cultural studies exponents extended it to gender (Ang, 1985) and ethnic groups (Lull, 1990) globally. Rather than alleging cultural change caused by media content, cultural studies emphasises the reproduction of societal relations which can be critically demonstrated through textual analysis. Thus cultural studies furthers this tradition of the critical theory school of recognising culture as a site of struggle between dominant and subordinate groups in society, but is more confident of resistance by the latter.

Audience-centred research represents a shift from a strict effects-of-message approach to the interpretative activity of the audiences as individuals and the constraints they face as members of an interpretative community. Thus it is concerned with the construction of meaning as audiences engage with a media text, and the strategies they use to decode it. Quite aptly Lewis (1991) describes as an 'ideological octopus' the elusive and complex relationship between viewer and the television medium. Potentially any text can lead to a number of interpretations and it is argued that the chosen interpretation is one that reinforces opinions, values, attitudes, and motivations of the audience rather than one that effects any major change. As Liebes and Katz (1990) demonstrate, cultural groups bring to an imported television programme, such as 'Dallas', their own life experiences and expectations of the genre. This results in a reading of the text which actually resists homogenisation by the imported culture and allows the viewers the pleasure in making sense of it from their own perspectives. There can be little doubt that a similar experience explains the popularity of satellite and cable programming in Asia, and would be a fruitful avenue of audience research and textual analysis in future.

### 3.1.4 Political economy

The political economy tradition in media research adopts a Marxist analysis of how economic control of the cultural industry determines its cultural message production, although the relationship is in reality much more complex and controversial than theorists make it out to be. In any case, the cultural industry is seen as an integral part of the political and economic systems, with close links of ownership and influence to both, and therefore its message content is an ideological reflection of those national or global systems even without political coercion (Golding and Murdock, 1991). Economic forces are said to conspire to further the interests of media and other industries, to the detriment of social forces which may lack financial and political clout. Thus, as Boyd-Barrett (1995) points out, the political economy approach to media theory makes claims about the functioning of media as an industry in society which are empirically verifiable or at least supportable by critical observation and analysis. This reveals its origin as another reaction to the emphasis of the social effects approach in early media research which was concerned only with simplistic measurement of stimuli-response at an individual or small group level.

The roots of the relationship of media and the political structure may be traced to the 17th and 18th century when belief in freedom of speech and rational public discussion in opposition to feudal and absolute political power led to the emergence of the bourgeois public sphere. But as Habermas (1989) points out, from the mid-19th century onwards public discourse has been gradually manipulated and effectively muzzled by political bureaucrats and commercial media interests, even though ostensibly there is freedom of the press in society. Extending this thesis to the 20th century, Herman and Chomsky (1988) take the radical view that there is a propaganda system in capitalist societies because the so-called free press serves the interests of the political and economic elite through, among other things, ownership concentration, advertising revenue and sourcing of information. Though primarily an institutional critique, these authors used secondary data, content analysis and textual analysis to bolster their case that news in the developed world is selectively filtered in the process of production. On the other hand, Altheide (1984: 476-490) finds that the journalists' views do not necessarily coincide with that of the politico-economic elite and claims that news might shape society rather than the other way around, as with the Vietnam War and Watergate Crisis.

Any media corporation has also to balance the demands of its stakeholders: owners, advertisers/marketers, software and hardware suppliers, audiences, employees (especially journalists and programme creators), governments, as well as other socio-cultural and political-economic institutions of the countries in which it operates. This raises also the issue of which of these social entities a media corporation such as a transnational television broadcaster serves primarily and what its mission was economically and socially. As media businesses enter the mainstream of a capitalist economy, the greater the likelihood, Murdock (1982) claims, that their content would increasingly reflect, even support capitalist values or at least not seek to undermine them. All of these factors

affect the locus of control over the media and their content in any nation-state, and are even more complex in the case of global and regional media corporations such as those which dominate the commercial satellite television business in Asia. Empirical research seems neither to confirm or deny the media hegemony thesis at least in relation to news reportage. Berwanger (1987) is of the extreme opinion that television undermines the status quo by inevitably revealing more than political leaders would prefer. He reminds us that while research on the social effects of television has made little progress since the 1930s, political and commercial expediency has meant media policy decisions continued to be made on the basis on popularly-held views concerning the power of the modern mass media, although this could be very much misplaced.

Both Marxist and capitalist economists seem to concur that late capitalism is characterised by global capital accumulation, surplus capital in search of new investments, and growth in the services sector, all of which have implications for the global media industry. With some validity, Garnham (1990: 43-44) has criticised research focus on the content of the media to the detriment of understanding the role of mass media in the political economy and resisting the capitalist logic of cultural production. Nonetheless, content and control may be quite inseparable as two sides of the same coin. For commercial television has become the prime medium within the cultural industry, and is characterised by its dependence on advertising income, which in turn virtually dictates its programming offerings and target markets in order to attract the right advertiser clients away from their current media. More than programming, the media produces audiences as marketable commodities as primed consumers for advertisers' products, as Smythe (1977) demonstrated. Thus a new media entrant such as transnational satellite television is not interested in the geographical reach *per se* of their footprints, but in attracting audiences with sufficient buying power and inculcated with the right consumer behaviour attitudes through its programming in order to interest advertisers. If the media is believed to have considerable impact on society, then where the source of its power resides and how it is managed is a valid arena of analysis, no less a part of systematic research on the impact of the introduction of a new medium such as transnational satellite television.

### 3.1.5 Media/cultural industries

Contrary to the expectations of their early proponents, social effects, political economy and cultural studies approaches appear to be converging through an increasing emphasis on producers, regulators and consumers as mutually active participants in the social process of the media, both nationally and globally. Contemporary cultural studies theorists would argue that cultural production, while controlled and manipulated by societal elite, is not deterministic but even invites oppositional readings. Similarly, later social effects approaches temper ideas of powerful media effects with recognition that the media serves to reinforce existing attitudes and behaviours through personal decodings of their message, even when the range of meanings possible are limited. The political economy approach has also been increasing cognisant of the active role of individuals and

groups within the power structures in the media institution, industry, government and wider society. The criticisms of each school of thought might well be answered by another, because they analyse different facets of the same media phenomenon and are able to compensate for excesses or loopholes of the other.

In his call for renewal of the political economy paradigm, Mosco (1996) surveys the extensive contributions of its exponents historically and internationally, and reminds us of its affinity between with cultural studies against positivism. Though cognisant of the challenges of new arenas such as links between production and reception, structural changes in communications industries, and relationships between private and public media, he takes a rather conservative stance that there is still a place for analysis of communications within the wider social, economic and political totality. But in the light of the unprecedented globalisation of television via satellite and cable, Comor (1994) makes a case for the micro-level analysis of political economy of communications complementing the macro-level concerns of international political economy in what he terms a 'global political economy of communication' approach. Drawing on a number of authors on international political economy, he argues that neither a realist perspective which majors on inter-state relations in a stable world order nor a liberal perspective which majors on the global market of multinational corporations is adequate for analysing the interdependent state-corporate world system. A 'political economy of communication' approach which investigates the power relationships between audiences, producers and distributors all the way from the local level of analysis to the global, is something which Comor advocates as invaluable for understanding the complex processes of globalisation, though he is rather vague on the details of how this might be operationalised for research.

Signalling the need to redefine cultural imperialism concerns, McAnany and Wilkinson (1992) have advocated more emphasis in media research on the economics of cultural production in particular national, inter-national or inter-corporate contexts. Taking up that theme, Sinclair (1994) argues that in our post-Marxist, postmodern age the search for a meta-theory of mass communication might be misplaced. Instead media analysts would find it more fruitful to theorise at mid-range levels such as the structure of the media industry or to adopt a 'media/cultural industries' approach. As a framework for analysis of the media industry and its constituent corporations such as the present research intends, Wilson (1988) suggests six relevant aspects: ownership, production, technology, distribution, consumption and the role of the state. Since the structure of the global media industry is especially complex, Dimmick and Coit (1982) stipulate nine levels at which the media could be analysed including supra-national, society, industry, supra-organisational, intra-organisational and individual. A number of these are particularly relevant for analysis in the case of transnational television via satellite in Asia, and have been included in the present research which will utilise a media or cultural industries approach.

In analysing the growth of a global medium, the media/cultural industries approach would seem to avoid the polemics of the earlier mentioned schools, especially of political economy and cultural studies, by taking into consideration the full complexity of its national contexts. Yet in keeping with its political economy and cultural studies roots, such a media/cultural industries approach analyses the programming appeal to audiences, the role of marketers and advertising, government policies and regulation, and the like in particular countries and regions as this research intends. This convergent approach leads naturally to the issue of which of the diverse research methodologies might then be considered paradigmatic for analysing the impact of transnational satellite television on the broadcasting and advertising industries in Asia. The next section of this chapter will survey and evaluate the methodologies which might be incorporated into a multi-method design for the present research.

## 3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGMS

Any media may be researched quite effectively by different methodologies, each of which reflects particular theoretical biases and pragmatic concerns. The effects research, systems analysis, message analysis and reception studies favoured by academics of various disciplines are all facets of understanding the impact of the media, as are the ratings measurements, homes penetration percentages and viewership profiles favoured by the broadcasting and advertising industries. Given their relative strengths and weaknesses in relation to research questions, and under the constraints of access, time and resources, the research for this dissertation on transnational satellite television needs to make judicious use of multiple methodologies. This section surveys the research paradigms available and how they have been utilised in selected media studies, in the course of evaluating their suitability to the research at hand.

### 3.2.1 Quantitative versus qualitative approaches

Quantitative approaches are the more traditional and longstanding in media research, as in much of the social sciences. Commonly associated with the positivist paradigm, quantitative research is identified with the social effects school of media theory. Its various names imply an orientation towards measurement by numbers and analysis by statistics, in order to test hypotheses, generalise to a theory and make predictions about probable futures. Assuming that reality is value-free and independent of social actors, positivistic research believes that concepts and variables may be measured objectively by a researcher who by deductive logic will be able to test hypothesised cause-and-effect relationships. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is almost a reaction to positivism in media research. Derived from social and cultural anthropology, this approach sees reality as constructed by social actors of which the researcher is one, and therefore the research is conducted in a participative, even collaborative manner with the informants with whom the

researcher empathises or may even identify. Qualitative research acknowledges that reality is value-laden and the researcher declares his or her bias in the process of arriving inductively at concepts and variables from analysis of data from the informants (Creswell, 1994: 4-7). Although objective facts are not a key factor in this paradigm which is concerned with interpretation, qualitative researchers endeavour to cross-check or triangulate their sources of information, using quantitative data, methods and analysis on occasion to achieve a measure of validity and accuracy.

The choice of which paradigm to adopt in research is dictated partly by the researcher's assent to the assumptions of the paradigm, his or her skills and experience, and tolerance for ambiguity. While the critical, qualitative school in media research has been criticised for its limited and esoteric research, the positivist, quantitative school has been likewise for its overconfidence in physical science-mimicking empirical methodologies (Sepstrup, 1981: 133-158). Perhaps more important a factor is the nature of the problem being researched. Qualitative research seems particularly suitable for investigating a problem such as the impact of transnational satellite television in Asia where the variables are relatively unknown, the theoretical literature limited, and therefore requiring exploratory research. Among the methods utilised in qualitative research are in-depth interviews, focus groups, case-studies and ethnographies, and they tend to be utilised where theory is weak, variables unknown, the context relevant and the research is exploratory. Quantitative methods such as surveys and experiments tend to be adopted instead where theory exists, variables and scope are specifiable, data is quantifiable, and the research called for builds directly on previously published studies (Creswell, 1994: 8-9).

Both approaches are utilised extensively in media research and although quantitative research remains the dominant paradigm, Jensen (1991) discerns a growing trend towards qualitative research in analysing media in our postmodern society. This he attributes to the increasing recognition within the scientific community of the limitations of quantitative methods in the social sciences, and the search for new methods to analyse the fragmentation and complexity of the postmodern age. In their exposition on 'grounded theory', Strauss and Corbin (1990: 250) contend that the criteria for judging research as scientific 'require redefinition to fit the realities of qualitative research, and the complexities of social phenomena'. Innovatively, if somewhat controversially, Alasuutari (1995: 130) advances the view that qualitative and quantitative analyses may actually be part of a continuum, one serving to provide clues for investigation by the other, rather than being mutually exclusive. In any case the major qualitative and quantitative methods used in media research will be described briefly below while being evaluated for their suitability for the design of the current research.

### 3.2.2 Surveys and secondary data

Survey is probably the most common method of quantitative social research and, along with experiments, is closely identified with the social effects school of media theory. Wimmer and Dominick (1991) delineate its two forms: descriptive surveys which document the current situation,

and analytical surveys which attempt to explain the causes of the situation through testing hypotheses about specific variables. The popularity of surveys and their seeming identification in the general public's mind as the *sine qua non* of social research, is in large part due to its ability to deliver vast quantities of data at relatively low cost, and be analysed quantitatively quite rapidly. Often survey data are obtainable from other sources such as governments and industry organisations, and can serve as secondary data in support of primary data collected for the purpose of the research at hand, as is the case with the current research in Asia on transnational satellite television. Dale *et al* (1988: 45-60) commend the use of secondary analysis on government data, for instance, as a means of achieving cross-national research though they recognise there are cost limitations and ethical considerations which might prevent a researcher from doing more than merely suggest ways which the data might be used.

Survey and secondary data have been utilised in research similar to that being undertaken currently on transnational satellite television. Based on research involving three remote communities in Canada with differing experiences of television made available only via satellite, Williams (1986: 396-426) concluded that the impact of television was significant regardless of the number of channels and type of programming. But one is left sceptical about the survey findings which cover a wide range of negative effects of television: on other leisure activities, on children's cognitive and affective development, and adult problem-solving, self-perception and attitudes to social reality. It is worth bearing in mind that survey data are not without limitations such as the risks of systematic bias of responses, growing resistance to surveys by the public, and the inability of manipulating variables to prove causality. In the case of the countries researched for this dissertation, there would have been the additional problems of cross-cultural translation of the instruments, logistical costs of representative sampling and their governments' restrictions on survey administration.

Reminding researchers that all secondary data are not equally valid or reliable, Stewart (1984) advises a healthy scepticism towards data provided by others. He advocates careful evaluation of secondary data sources for why, how and when they were collected and, then if decided suitable, weighting them according to recency and credibility. Using secondary data in a valiant attempt to operationalise the cultural imperialism thesis, Meyer (1988: 63-94) has measured advertising expenditure, student 'brain-drain' to the West and luxury imports in a country as indicators of its westernisation or consumerisation. He finds imports of Western media to have very weak correlation with Westernisation of the society and thus not provide evidence of cultural hegemony. Instead press freedom and economic development were more important in explaining Westernisation in developing countries. It may be, as Meyer admits, that cultural imperialism is not specific enough a concept for empirical verification, though it may also be that the data he had to work with was of questionable or at least unknown quality. While the present research will utilise some information from survey reports obtained from academic, government and market sources as

secondary data, it will do so judiciously, cognisant of their varying quality and completeness in analysing the impact of transnational satellite television in Asia.

### 3.2.3 Interviews and focus groups

Interviews represent another common research paradigm and may take a range of forms from structured or in-depth, face-to-face or via telephone, one-on-one or on a group basis. Most interviews in the present research were in-depth, face-to-face and one-on-one which allowed for the establishment of rapport with the interviewees and therefore a conducive atmosphere to discuss even sensitive issues. As Creswell (1994) has predicted, it also granted the researcher access to historical data that the interviewees were privy to, and allowed considerable control of the direction of the inquiry by the researcher asking the appropriate questions at the right juncture. The disadvantages of interviews include the fact that not all respondents are articulate or knowledgeable, the information provided may not be objective but filtered through the perceptions of the respondents and the researcher's interest in the problem may skew responses. These drawbacks were taken into account in the present research in that the respondents sought were those whom other practitioners in the field had recommended as knowledgeable and articulate on the issue, that the research was concerned with both the objective facts and the perceptions of key decision-makers in the media industries, and that the researcher had credentials as a fellow Asian and former executive of the advertising industry.

Interviews done with groups are usually described as focus groups and have the advantage of members of the group stimulating each other to share their knowledge, experiences and perceptions. Thus it is closer to the actual experience of media usage which tends to include discussion of television, for instance, immediately at the actual site of viewing or another social setting later. For instance, using focus groups in a number of countries to watch and discuss episodes of 'Dallas', Katz and Liebes (1986) found that television programmes lend themselves to quite varied interpretations cross-culturally, even different processes of interpretation, which may not have been forthcoming in surveys or even interviews. Therefore contrary to the conclusions reached via examining secondary data they demonstrated that cultural hegemony may not be a sufficient explanation of the high ratings worldwide of some First-World television programmes. In a few cases, interviews for the present research resembled focus groups to the extent that the primary interviewee invited colleagues or subordinates to sit in and offer their comments and insights collectively.

The qualitative approach to interviewing adopted for the present exploratory research on transnational satellite television is in contrast to survey-type structured interviews which use sequenced questions to elicit closed-ended responses. The in-depth interview used is a helpful alternative when the actual process or events cannot be directly observed, as in this case of the everyday decision-making of key-players in related cultural industries. Lindlof (1995: 165-9) lists a number of characteristics of qualitative interviewing such as understanding the social actor's

perspective and in their own language and setting, verifying, validating and commenting on data obtained from other sources, testing of hypothesis, and attaining efficiency in data collection in contexts of limited time. While there are a number of types of qualitative interviews, the type used in the present research most closely resembles informant interviews. This is where interviewees are selected as being more valuable than others because of their roles within organisations and the unique insights they are able to provide from their insider vantage points, in this case within the cultural industries of the Asian countries. Although normally informants are consulted a number of times by the researchers on the same issues over time, this was possible only with about a quarter of these respondents in countries which were visited more than once.

#### 3.2.4 Observation and ethnography

Participant observation can range from complete participation in which the research disguises his or her true role through participant-as-observer where the researcher's intent is known to all, and observer-as-participant where the observations such as interviews are of limited intrusion and duration in a number of settings, to the complete observer who exercises detachment in free-access situations. It requires both innate ability and some training to be an effective observer, able to identify with the community yet cope with social marginality, having broad knowledge to know what to look for and be able to assess its importance, attuned to using all senses and not just sight to observe the cultural context, and preferably of similar ethnicity, gender and social status to those being researched or at least the gatekeepers to them (Lindlof, 1995: 135-140). Such skills are critical in ethnography and have been used in media research in the study of viewing communities and production organisations. In the present research, some measure of participation-observation was exercised in travelling to the different countries in Asia and spending two to three weeks in each, visiting advertising agencies, media firms, research organisations and government departments for interviews, and watching systematically the domestic and transnational television channels available there especially during prime-time.

A strong advocate of ethnographies of viewing behaviour, especially family viewing, is Lull (1990) who sees it as a preferable alternative to audience surveys in the measurement of the communication process because the surrounding context is crucial for understanding the meanings derived from media texts. Kubey and Csikszentmihalyi (1990) also argued that as with other cultural behaviours, television watching was a complex phenomenon best studied in the context of everyday life. Thus their research looked at why, when, where, with whom and in conjunction with what, was television viewed, how various programming genre helped or hindered daily living, and what the long-term consequences of heavy viewing were. Morley and Silverstone (1991) point out that after years of quantitative research on audiences, there is increasing recognition of the likelihood that it does not measure viewing but some other variable like the television set being on. The findings of such research do not reflect the fact that programme choice is not often individual but either a group consensus decision or an imposed one, nor that viewing decisions are made in the context of access

to other alternatives. Similarly, Ang (1991) criticises television ratings for their one-dimensional reduction of the complexity of audiences' engagement with television. She is also critical of academic research which from a similar institutional standpoint categorises audiences in terms of their socio-demographic, television usage, gratifications and effects variables, without even considering the diversity of viewing situations from an audience standpoint. But Ang admits that ethnographic studies of audience contexts do not lend themselves to addressing the prescriptive solutions sought by institutionally-driven research, though it could be invaluable in providing rich feedback on how audiences negotiate with television in their everyday lives.

Many ethnographic methods are fraught with difficulties, most notably the social and ethical intrusiveness and subjectivity of the observer. So, Kellehear (1993: 3-8) recommends instead unobtrusive methods such as audio-visual records and simple observations including via camera and video. But while they make data collection also accessible, inexpensive and safe, these methods have certain disadvantages such as distortion, de-contextualisation and selectivity. Still, Biltereyst (1995) considers audience reception and interpretation to be a fruitful yet neglected field of qualitative research into the cross-cultural impact of transnational television. Because it acts as a counterpoint to such approaches as political economy analysis, say of US media dominance, and a complement to such approaches as cultivation analysis and textual criticism, the effectiveness of such audience research to international communications may outweigh its methodological imprecision and theoretical relativity. However, even Biltereyst concedes that analysis of the consumption of specific programmes at a micro-level or individual level is inadequate commentary on long-term effects on a macro-level or societal level.

<sup>4</sup> Surveying the various approaches to understanding the role of mass media in development, Boyd-Barrett (1982) concludes that there is a 'great need for an emphasis on micro-analysis of media impacts at small group and individual levels to engage with and illuminate the present emphasis on macro-analysis of media and multinational structures'. For instance, Moores (1993) looks not at the macro-issues of satellite television broadcasting such as policy, audiences, and ownership but at the micro-issues of how it is consumed in home settings, is embedded in and articulated with family and social life in the UK. He analyses how satellite television is often the source of conflict within the home between traditional and modern values between generations and gender, and is used as a means of transcending the imagined community and cultural identity of nation to the region or the world. But Crook (1989) argues that since ethnographic methods focus on observing the immediate context they do not include vitally important social and consumption behaviour outside the site of media reception, and so they may be just as deficient as survey methods which take respondents' accounts as objective and accurate. Research on transnational satellite television should ideally include observation at other social sites such as the workplace, school, shops and clubs at which audiences process their television viewing through discourse. But that would be an open-ended, time-consuming and resource-intensive research activity, and in any case viewing behaviour is not particularly relevant to the research project at hand.

### 3.2.5 Content and textual analysis

Theorists tend to describe two major streams in media content research: the process school and the semiotic school, to use Fiske's (1990) nomenclature. The former, drawing on sociology and psychology, is concerned with the straightforward encoding- decoding of messages transmitted, and uses content analysis as its prime methodology. The latter, drawing on linguistics and literary criticism, is concerned rather with how messages interact with people to produce cultural meanings and thus uses textual analysis as its prime methodology. The corresponding divergence of these approaches in communications research and the vehemence of their proponents' opposition to each other Turner (1993: 207-209) attributes to the differing disciplinary origins: behavioural sciences in the US versus humanities in Europe. The American compromise of 'uses-and-gratifications' theory failed to satisfy the Europeans who pressed on with cultural studies, to the detrimental failure of both to learn from each others' research methodologies.

Depending on the assumptions made and problem definition, content analysis of the same medium may yield quite different results. Naturally enough the researcher must acknowledge his familiarity with the context of the data and thus state in advance the assumptions he makes in drawing inferences from the data to some specified social phenomenon. According to Krippendorff (1980: 26-28) the categories used in content analysis must be justified in terms of the sociological context being investigated. But the selection of units for analysis tend also to be dictated by their ability to be sampled, codified and contextualised in relation to the hypotheses generated, which in some ways may seem to pre-determine the findings. Without dismissing content analysis altogether, it is possible to query its assumption that the meaning of the event is uniform across audiences and coincides with that of the researcher who could be biased. But content analysis has the advantages of being unobtrusive, quantitative, and able to cope with copious, unstructured, and especially historical material such as collected in this research, as well as being sensitive to the cultural context which in the case of the countries of Asia is quite intricate and complex.

While textual analysis recognises to some extent that the audience is not passive in reception of the text, it seems to impose the personal and cultural bias of the analyst as the accepted interpretation. For instance, Mattelart and Dorfmann's (1979) use of Marxist-oriented textual analysis as a means of penetrating the real meaning of cultural texts has been criticised for being subjective and divergent in meaning. It proffers the meaning preferred by the critic as the 'privileged meaning' leaving behind the question of which of the text's many readers has achieved the 'truest meaning', if there be such a thing. In addition, Tomlinson (1991: 50-58) reproaches textual analysts for failing to note the artificiality of structured group situations in research and also questions the universalistic conclusions made in cross-cultural media research. Thus he attests to the impossibility of testing cultural imperialism by present media research methodologies because they attempt to make public the effects of the media on the private thoughts, attitudes and beliefs of the audience. Although no media research adequately investigates cultural consumption because of the intrusive

nature of most methodologies, textual analysis may help in understanding the process. But since textual analysis is rather cumbersome for the purposes of the present research, perhaps minimal content analysis could be made of television commercials across a transnational channel.

### 3.2.6 Case-study and comparative research

A research method usually identified as qualitative but combining quantitative aspects, the case-study draws on multiple data sources to examine systematically a phenomenon or an organisation. This is so as to understand it comprehensively within its natural context, especially when the boundary between the entity and its context is unclear (Yin, 1989). The case study method is ideal for exploratory research where much varied data are collected on-site from interviews, secondary research reports, news-clippings, corporate brochures, taped commercials and participant-observation. Such a situation accurately describes the development of transnational satellite television in Asia at least in its early years where the theoretical relationships between the political-economic context, domestic media industry, advertising market and socio-cultural context are not quite understood. Merriam (1988) lists four characteristics of qualitative case-studies. Firstly, they are particularistic in that they focus on specific events and situations, making them ideal for the study of real-life problems. Secondly, in the anthropological sense of 'thick description' they combine complete portrayals with interpretations of meanings in their context. Thirdly, case-studies are also heuristic in that they aid the discovery of new understandings or at least confirm what is suspected. Finally, they are inductive, allowing for previously unknown variables and relationships to emerge from the data through inductive reasoning without prior specification, resulting in what is termed as grounded theory.

Although it is generally accepted that the media have some effect on cultures, how and why they do are still relatively unknown. Reviewing research on media effects across cultures, Korzenny and Schiff (1992) note that there are a number of variable clusters ranging from antecedent contexts, levels of analysis, types of change, and types of effects that can and have been studied. They therefore believe that each problem needs unique and creative methods of eliciting understanding and there can be no possible single methodology of media effects, cross-cultural or otherwise. More recently, Dogan and Pelassy (1990) address the internationalisation of such analytical categories as social classes and cultural plurality, especially the issue of operationalising them in research across developed and developing countries. Their solutions are to make methodologies and conceptualisations contingent on the sites chosen for comparative inquiry, for instance whether they be similar or contrasting countries. The problem may be minimised in this research because all sites are in Asia and the countries are at similar stages of economic development. Furthermore, it involves case-studies of identical industries across the three countries, rather than a survey conducted in the wider consuming population. The present research adopts a similar case-study methodology to that of the Katz and Weddell (1978) study of Third World broadcasting which used guided yet unstructured interviews of key persons in each country in addition to contacts provided by initial

interviewees, including broadcasters and officials. They also found that what was described on paper by countries often appeared a comprehensive broadcasting system but even a brief check on the actual situation often proved the contrary. This illustrates the importance of field interviews and observation in addition to secondary data collection particularly by a foreign researcher having a distant home-base.

Among the dubious criticisms of the case-study method are the apparent lack of scientific (read 'quantitative') rigour and the related issue of generalisability of the findings from one context to another. McQuail (1992: 311-313) considers the present-day context of varied and unpredictable media experiences to be an opportune time to discriminate in favour of case studies and cross-national comparisons because they are the only methods to deal with complexities of structure, context and audiences combined and to provide insights on media globalisation from other national arrangements. Comparability is an issue with multiple case-studies especially as in the present research which by design seeks to investigate the impact of a new medium across countries. The intent of this doctoral research was not to provide statistical probabilities of certain phenomena in all contexts in order to control them but to understand relationships in depth, which might allow for more quantitative investigation in future. Furthermore, this research comprises not just a single case-study but a multiple case-study by design for the purpose of comparative analysis. In arriving inductively at fresh perspectives on the growth, whether limited or considerable, of transnational satellite television in certain parts of Asia, the findings of this research could be quite reliably generalised with appropriate caveats to other parts of Asia and the Third World.

Much as it might be relevant to the research on the impact of transnational satellite in Asia, no authentically indigenous methodology in media research has been developed so far. After evaluating the content analysis, semiotic and post-structuralist traditions in 'Western' media studies, Dissanayake (1985) rejects them all in preference for phenomenology as a method of analysis most appropriate for Third World media research especially given Asian traditions of intellectual inquiry. Unfortunately he is vague on why 'Western' methods are not very helpful to Third World research, or on how such research on the holistic experience by audiences might be operationalised for the research at hand. Instead the present study's design adapts from mainstream communications research paradigms discussed above, an approach contextualised for the Asian satellite scene. The research design endeavours to offset the disadvantages of one methodology with the advantages of another to arrive at comprehensive historical case-studies. The actual design of this multi-method, comparative and largely qualitative study, its rationale and its caveats are described in the next section.

### 3.3 STUDY DESIGN

This section describes the design of the study, or the proposed plan for achieving its overarching research goal which is a comprehensive understanding of the impact of transnational satellite television on domestic broadcasting and advertising industries in Asia. In order to do so it will examine both the politico-economic and socio-cultural environment of the region, with a particular focus on the three countries to be researched. It aims also to observe the processes of change and identify the specific factors that mitigate or enhance the impact of the new medium as measured by viewership and advertising expenditure. The research seeks to determine if there is a consensus of opinion on the impact of the medium from the vantage point of different key players in each of the major markets targeted by transnational satellite television. In the pursuit of this goal, a number of data collection techniques are employed, and the reasons for their selection are explained here along with their limitations.

#### 3.3.1 Technical definitions

It is worth noting that the research described in this dissertation is concerned primarily with programming and advertising on transnational satellite television or the software of the medium, and not the communications technology or hardware. Nonetheless there is much technical language in the field of satellite and communications, and so this section will seek to provide some basic definitions to aid understanding of this dissertation. Other definitions are provided in the course of the analysis in subsequent chapters, and there is also a glossary in the appendices to refer to should a technical term surface without adequate explanation in the surrounding text.

*Transnational versus domestic:* Transnational television is defined in this paper as any broadcast service by television stations aimed deliberately at attracting an audience across national borders within a region or broadcast footprint. It is usually transmitted via satellite and sometimes re-transmitted by local cable, and by this definition it does not include terrestrial signals which spill over borders unintended. Generally the transnational broadcaster is not subject to regulatory controls in all the countries where its broadcast signals may be picked up, though there may be controls on reception in those countries. It is invariably regulated by the country from which the broadcast signals are uplinked to the satellite, though the extent of control tends to vary considerably from country to country. Transnational broadcast channels are usually owned by private commercial interests, such multinational corporations, though they may also be owned by governments, often through state-owned or dominant political party-owned businesses. Domestic television refers to any broadcast by channels owned either by governments or local corporations subject to government regulation, usually transmitted terrestrially, though sometimes via satellite in order to reach remote parts of the country. Unlike transnational television, it is aimed at audiences within the country, even though there is often spill-over of the broadcast signal into border regions of neighbouring countries.

*Satellite versus terrestrial:* A distinction necessary to be made in this dissertation is that between terrestrial and satellite broadcasting. Terrestrial television is transmitted by microwave from broadcast antennae mounted on high geographical terrain or made-made structures to a local area within its line of sight, that is, between the antenna and the horizon. Satellite transmission is able to overcome the physical limitations of terrestrial microwave transmission because every satellite in geo-synchronous orbit has line-of-sight access up to a fixed third of the world's surface that constitutes its footprint. Thus a communications satellite can receive and/or transmit signals from and to an unlimited number of earth stations anywhere within the satellite footprint, with the costs being irrespective of distance. With the advent of direct-broadcast satellites (DBS), it is now possible for such satellites to broadcast direct-to-home (DTH), without needing retransmission terrestrially via microwave or cable; only a satellite dish antenna of small aperture is required for each home.

While geo-synchronous satellites can and are used for telephony, meteorology, navigation, land surveying and a host of other uses, commercial television broadcasting whether for domestic or transnational consumption are their major use today. It is a fallacy to equate transnational television with satellite transmission, and domestic television with terrestrial transmission because each broadcast medium can use either form of transmission technology. In other words, domestic television channels may use satellite transmission exclusively or in conjunction with terrestrial transmission, as those in Indonesia, India and China have chosen to do in order to reach their citizens over a wider geographical area. On the other hand, transnational television channels may use terrestrial re-transmission in order to reach audiences in other countries across borders whose governments may not permit direct access to satellite signals. It is then intentionality of transborder reach across a region or continent which is the defining characteristic of transnational satellite television which this dissertation investigates.

*Cable and pay-TV:* Although cable television may be an alternative and thus competitor to satellite television, they are often interdependent. Cable television can be delivered by various distribution systems such as co-axial cable, fibre-optic cable, satellite master antennae television systems and multichannel multipoint delivery systems. The major advantage of cable television is the high channel capacity of co-axial cable and especially of fibre optic cables. Fibre optic cables have also the capacity of delivering telephone, computer as well as video transmissions. A major disadvantage of cable is that it is a highly capital-intensive technology and one that is not suitable for highly dispersed populated regions, unlike satellite television which is more cost-effective in that circumstance. Wireless cable, or multichannel multipoint delivery system (MMDS) as it is commonly known, is an alternative to traditional cable which is expensive in urbanised areas that require underground installation of cables. Using microwave signals it transmits from a tower or tall building to a limited local area, and it can be adversely affected by terrain, tall buildings and the weather. Cable television is often used to relay programming downlinked by an earth station or large satellite television receive-only (TVRO) dish. However it might be undermined by direct

broadcast satellites (DBS) which are high-powered satellites capable of delivering signals to TVRO dishes the size of a pizza pan. Both cable and satellite television can be encoded to grant access only to those who pay for the service, and in those cases is known also as pay-TV or subscription television.

*Asia and its subregions:* For the purposes of this dissertation, Asia is described as encompassing the countries traditionally grouped under South East Asia, North East Asia, and South Asia, from which the three country case-studies are drawn. Excluded are the countries of Central Asia which were previously part of the former USSR, and as such conventionally if erroneously grouped with Europe. More recently this subregion has come under the political, economic and cultural influence of Iran and Turkey, and the latter country seems to be winning the battle for the hearts and minds of its people, via satellite television no less. Turkey which forms the western-most border of Asia has in recent years sought incorporation into the European Union. Another exclusion is West Asia, traditionally referred to as the Middle East and often associated with a culturally similar Arabic region which extends across North Africa. Similarly excluded are Australasia and Oceania, and as such satellites and television services from Australia, for instance, will be classified as foreign to the Asian continent. When used in this dissertation the terms 'region' therefore generally refer to Asia as defined above, while the terms 'subregion' refers to countries traditionally grouped by geographic proximity or cultural similarity such as South East Asia, South Asia or North East Asia. Subnational regions or entities within countries are usually referred to either geographically such as Southern India, by the state or province such as Guangzhou, or by their ethno-linguistic identity such as Javanese. Diasporic ethnic communities which exist across are usually defined in this dissertation as in most statistics by their original nationality such as Non-Resident Indians, Overseas Chinese or migrant Indonesians.

The countries researched for this dissertation, Indonesia, India and China are classified as developing countries, though increasingly considered under the sub-category of newly industrialising countries (NICs) because of their rapid economic growth. Definitions of development, and therefore of developing or Third World versus developed, First World or Western countries have been implicit in the literature review of globalisation of the polity and economy in Chapter Two. Further definitions of terminology used in this research are to be found in the glossary in Appendix D. While cognisant of the innumerable permutations of television channels and media technology in these developing countries within Asia, the focus of this dissertation will be on transnational broadcasting via satellite. StarTV and the other transnational television channels investigated in this research are transmitted primarily via satellite, though increasingly they are being made available in conjunction with domestic broadcasters in Asia and beyond either via microwave transmission or cable networks. But it is the transborder reach of these channels across the Asia region which concerns this dissertation.

*International and global:* Though terms such as international, multinational, transnational and global are not strictly synonymous they are often used interchangeably of strategies and

organisations in the literature referred to, and by respondents interviewed for this research. This dissertation will endeavour to use the terms in the way they are most commonly used. The terms 'international' is used for the general all-inclusive business concept and of advertising agencies which operate around the world. The term 'multinational' is used of corporations which operate in a number of countries and which usually utilising somewhat modified business strategies in each. The term 'global' is used of corporations which straddle the whole world using strategies which are virtually uniform worldwide, as is largely the case of media conglomerates. Finally the term 'transnational' is used, in lieu of the term 'transborder', of broadcasting which crosses borders, though the former term is sometimes used in academic literature also of corporations and strategies which are a variation of global ones. The preferred meanings of these terms will become clearer with their extensive and consistent utilisation within this dissertation.

### 3.3.2 Conceptual framework

Unlike quantitative data analysis, the qualitative approach makes less explicit use of theories and models. Rather than using research to test and verify theories, Creswell (1994) observes that in qualitative studies a theory may develop through the data collection and analysis process. Still, few qualitative studies begin without a tentative conceptual framework or some orientating ideas, and the present research is no exception. Although the hypothetical-deductive method may not be strictly applicable to a multi-factor explorative study, some research questions on the relationships between various factors were generated on the basis of the literature review. These questions served to guide this research on the impact of transnational satellite television in Asia, particularly the choice of methodology, and are summarised as follows:

*Research Question 1:* Which governments in Asia have perceived transnational satellite television as a threat, and why? How have they sought to control its access, and how successful have these efforts been? [Issues of economic and political globalisation]. These questions analyse the policy and regulatory context of the new medium in each country and the answers will be identified through interview responses as well as policy documents, legislation and other secondary sources.

*Research Question 2:* What are the links between global capital, media corporations and political elite, if any, in transnational satellite television in Asia? More specifically, what are the ownership structures and business alliances between satellite owners, transnational broadcasters, domestic broadcasters, cable networks, advertisers, programme production houses and other cultural industries? [Issues of economic and political globalisation]. These facts will be ascertained from both primary and secondary data.

*Research Question 3:* Has transnational satellite television attracted sizeable audiences of particular cultural or socio-economic backgrounds in certain countries, and why? Why has it not had appeal to other segments in these and other countries? [Issues of cultural and social globalisation]. This assesses the extent of globalisation of television audiences in the selected Asian countries; it will be measured by analysis of industry data such as household penetration, television ratings and audience profiles.

*Research Question 4:* Has cultural change in each of the countries researched been influenced significantly by transnational satellite television, and if so, how? Or if not, what other factors might explain the changes perceived in some segments of these societies? [Issues of cultural and social globalisation]. These factors in cultural change will be identified through interview responses, press clippings, academic research and government reports.

*Research Question 5:* How have transnational satellite broadcasters differentiated themselves from domestic broadcasters and each other by their programming strategies? Have advertiser and audience response or non-response to their offerings in Asia affected transnational broadcaster programming strategies subsequently? [Issues of media and broadcast globalisation]. This is concerned with the globalisation or localisation of the medium; it will be assessed by content analysis of programme schedules and taped prime-time programmes, or inferred from interview responses and inter-media commentary.

*Research Question 6:* How have domestic television broadcasters responded to the entry of this new competitor of transnational satellite television? Which of their strategies have been more effective than others? These questions look at the competitive environment of television broadcasting, and the situation will be analysed from interview responses, inter-media commentary and secondary data [Issues of media and broadcast globalisation].

*Research Question 7:* Has transnational satellite television caused the consolidation of advertising strategy, media buying and creative execution through international advertising agencies, as expected? If this has not happened, what are the reasons? [Issues of marketing and advertising globalisation]. This is concerned with the standardisation of advertising; it should be answered by interviews of decision-makers in the broadcasting and advertising industries, or otherwise verified by content analysis.

*Research question 8:* What are the products and brands advertised on, target markets of and creative styles used in commercials on transnational satellite television? How different are these from advertising on domestic television in the three countries? [Issues of marketing and advertising globalisation]. This seeks to discover whether transnational advertising differs qualitatively from domestic advertising in terms of advertising strategy, and could be assessed through secondary data, interview responses and content or textual analysis.

As is consistent with the dominant inductive paradigm that qualitative research adopts, models are somewhat disdained as potentially constraining factors, particularly early in the process. Although there was some looseness of design at the pilot study stage, given the time and financial constraints for the fieldwork in three countries and the need for comparability across them, a working model based on the research questions above was adopted prior to the actual fieldwork. Miles and Huberman (1994) recommend making thoughtful trade-offs between tight, pre-structured and loose, inductive research designs, depending on the nature of the problem being investigated, constraints of time, comparability of cases, the issue of data overload, and so on. This research on transnational satellite television leans towards being structured, in being confined to impact of the new medium on domestic broadcasting and advertising industry in specific national markets in Asia.

All the same it is intended that this research arrive at an inductively-derived analytical framework for understanding the corresponding process of globalisation.

### 3.3.3 Multi-method approach

The choice of a qualitative approach was determined largely by the fact that this research on transnational satellite television was exploratory, the variables unknown and theory lacking (Creswell, 1994: 21). This research adopted a quasi-ethnographic methodology since it involved visiting the country, interviewing knowledgeable persons, observing locally available television, collecting documents and audio-visual samples and so on. According to Kellehear (1993: 21), the ethnographic-inductive research design is 'less a method than an approach to analysing and portraying a social system.. from the "insider's" point of view'. Thus in such research designs the literature review is usually not followed by a theoretical framework but ethnographic description as the researcher endeavours to enter with empathy the social world being researched. This research attempts to test the degree to which there an on-site consensus of informed opinion on the impact of transnational satellite television in each country studied, rather than imposing an 'outsider' perspective.

As an exploratory study this research needed to be multi-method, without being over-ambitious, allowing the strengths and weaknesses of each method to compensate for those of others. As Brewer and Hunter (1989) advise, some combination of ethnographic fieldwork, audience surveys, experimental studies and non-reactive research gives greater credibility and validity to the results through triangulated comparisons. Since the objective of this research was to obtain a multi-faceted perspective on the impact of transnational satellite television on domestic advertising and broadcasting industries, a number of data sources and collection techniques were employed. Qualitative case studies are typically heuristic, helping to construct theories inductively in a pioneering area of application where theory is lacking rather than testing established theories deductively (Merriam, 1988: 57-59). The end-result of this research is three case-studies on the impact of transnational satellite in Asia which incorporate primary data from interviews and content analysis, secondary data from government and industry, as well as media research done by others in the countries.

The research design described in this section makes judicious use of methodologies endorsed by various theoretical schools in media research in arriving at an integrated multi-method approach suitable for investigating the development of transnational satellite television in Asia. Such research plans need to be tempered by the realities of fieldwork especially carried out in developing countries overseas that have had implications for subsequent processes of analysis, all of which took about five years. Thus the section that follows chronicles the actual experience of data collection in the field and data analysis back at the home-base in Australia, along with explanations of the challenges encountered and the rationale for the solutions chosen.

### 3.4 DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

This research focuses on the advent of transnational satellite television and developments in its first five years. While some data was collected before and after the fieldwork, the research was primarily a 'snap-shot' of the situation in 1994-95, with updates from secondary data sources since. Given the multi-method approach adopted to facilitate a comprehensive coverage of the research topic, the multi-site and comparative nature of the research, as well as the time constraints faced by the researcher's full-time employment, the process of data collection, preparation and analysis was spread over a period of three years between 1993 and 1996. The findings were written up largely during 1997, and no further data was collected that year on continuing developments in the Asian broadcasting industry, with a few exceptions particularly where they may have related to earlier years.

#### 3.4.1 Sites and schedule

The fieldwork was conducted between early 1994 and late 1995, which was three to four years after the inauguration of StarTV as the pioneering broadcaster of transnational satellite television and unchallenged market leader, allowing sufficient time to evaluate its impact prior to the arrival of other major satellite broadcasters. The countries researched represent, to some extent, major socio-cultural and politico-economic regions under the footprint of StarTV, namely South East Asia, North East Asia and South Asia. Indonesia was selected as it had a history of using satellite television domestically, it had restricted advertising previously, and had also maintained an open-sky policy to foreign broadcasts. Hong Kong was selected because it was the headquarters of StarTV, the point from which the broadcasts are up-linked, and where regional advertising decisions are made for much of East Asia. Along with Taiwan it was used to as a base to gather data on Greater China since it would have been difficult, if not almost impossible, to conduct this research in the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) for cultural and political reasons. Finally, India was selected as a country in which satellite television was officially restricted and yet widely watched, and of all the South Asian countries it was the most accessible politically as well as culturally to the researcher. More importantly, Indonesia, India and greater China were selected because they were the three key markets targeted by most transnational television broadcasters operating in Asia.

#### 3.4.2 Decision-maker interviews

As appropriate and almost indispensable in exploratory research, interviews were conducted with key personnel involved in the cultural industries of three countries in Asia under the footprint of StarTV, namely Indonesia (from South East Asia), India (from South Asia) and Greater China (from North East Asia). A preliminary trip was made in late 1992 to Singapore to investigate

developments in transnational television in the region, which led to a visit to Hong Kong in order to establish contact with StarTV. Then a pilot study was done in Indonesia where the interviews were conducted mostly in Jakarta, during January 1994 and these were followed up again in July 1994. For Greater China, most interviews were conducted in Hong Kong in August 1994, and during a subsequent visit to the colony as well to Taipei in December 1995. For India, interviews were conducted in both Bombay and Delhi during September 1994.

Table 3A: Distribution of expert interviewees

	<i>Indonesia</i>	<i>India</i>	<i>China</i>	<i>Totals</i>
<u>Advertising:</u>				
Account	4	5	2	11
Media	4	5	7	16
Creative	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>
	9	11	9	29
<u>Broadcasters:</u>				
Domestic	8	6	7	21
Transnational	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>
	11	8	11	30
<u>Researchers:</u>				
Market	4	6	5	15
Academic	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>14</u>
	9	10	10	29
<u>Regulators:</u>				
Officials	3	3	4	10
Community leaders	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>
	4	5	5	14
<i>Totals:</i>	33	34	35	102

A sample of executives stratified by advertising agencies, broadcast media, research organisations and regulatory bodies was necessary in each country because this would provide adequate representation by these homogeneous subsets to enhance accuracy of perception of the variables under investigation (Babbie, 1992: 215-218). Potential interviewees in each of these subsets were identified through professional contacts as well as through bibliographic sources, and in most cases were approached in advance regarding participation. Within each strata or organisational subset, the sampling was purposive as each interviewee was selected on the judgement that he or she would be a key informant, able to provide specialist or professional insight into the impact of transnational television via satellite on the national market in general, and its

media industries in particular (Kinnear and Taylor, 1991: 398). Most of the advertising industry representatives were drawn from among chief executives or media managers of international agencies or large domestic agencies with international affiliations and as such keenly aware of the issues involved. For the broadcasting industry, interviews were obtained with executives of leading domestic and transnational television broadcasters in each country and they tended to be either public relations, research or operations managers. The researchers were sought in professional market research organisations and universities, while the policy-makers/regulators approached were either government officials or members of broadcasting advisory bodies. The breakdown of 102 interviewees is provided in Table 3A.

As the research was exploratory, the interviews were semi-structured in form. Issues raised by the researcher were based on the research questions listed earlier, beginning with those most relevant to the expertise of the interviewee. Indicative examples of the questions put to the interviewees are provided in Appendix C. The interviews were also an iterative process in that responses of previous interviewees were raised anonymously with subsequent interviewees for their comment. The interviewees were then at liberty to elaborate on their perception of the situation, and further issues were raised until all relevant questions were adequately covered. In this manner, both flexibility and consistency across the interviews of decision-makers from different organisations and with diverse roles in related industries could be attained (Patton, 1990). Not all categories of interviewees were asked for comment on all issues, neither did they volunteer views outside of their areas of expertise. But there was considerable contribution from multiple interviewees on each issue which allowed each opinion to become a facet in the general consensus arrived at.

The interviews were not audiotaped as it was believed that it would significantly affect the responses as some of the issues discussed were either politically or commercially sensitive or both, in most of the countries researched. With the permission of the interviewees, brief notes were taken of their comments using a secretarial notepad, explaining that it was to assist in recalling their opinions and reassuring that they would not be identified individually but that their views would be aggregated qualitatively. Since the respondents were forthcoming with candid views, it is unlikely that they were simply espousing politically-correct or socially-acceptable ones, and this was ascertained by cross-checking responses of persons in similar professional capacities. The interviews were a combination of objective information-giving and subjective opinion, perception and speculation, and the line between these was not always clear. Even where there had to be some speculation, given the dearth of hard data, these opinions or estimates were the basis on which these executives, officials and researchers carried out their professional responsibilities, and were thus of no less import (Kinnear and Taylor, 1991: 399).

The interview notes, the primary data for this research, had to be paraphrased in order to make sense because they had to be highly abbreviated when written during the interview. Such paraphrasing was done usually on the same day or while still on the field while the memory was still fresh. In doing so the researcher used the interviewees' own words as far as possible or endeavoured

to be accurate to their opinions, even if translation was necessitated by the lack of facility with English of some. Still, verbatim responses were deemed redundant since no psychological or semiological analysis of them was intended. The interviews were primarily for information-gathering but allowed for opinions and predictions to be expressed. Though some radical opinions are reported in the dissertation to represent the range of views, any factual information that was quite obviously inaccurate has been left out. The risk that the researcher's own perception would nonetheless bias the process of re-paraphrasing and transcription was acknowledged, but it was deemed minimal given the short time-lag between interview and transcription, and his familiarity with the industries and cultures as a former media professional and resident in Asia. The availability of multiple interviews and some secondary data acted as further checks-and-balances on any interpretative bias on the part of the researcher.

Soon after returning to Australia, the interview transcripts were word-processed on to computer ASCII files and then prepared for introduction as on-line raw data into the project database. For qualitative research, Miles and Huberman (1994) point out that computer software currently available may be used not just for data analysis but for editing fieldnotes, coding, data linking, theory building and a host of other functions. The interview data was analysed utilising the NUD•IST software package which allows the development of a framework for qualitative analysis incorporating these main functions (Richards and Richards, 1993). Through a set of exploration and analytical tools, NUD•IST facilitates searching the texts of such on-line documents for word patterns, and the retrieval of those text units. Central to the functioning of this software tool is the creation of an indexing system for the text units, based on previous research, on the research questions and working model as well as on issues and concepts that emerge as the data analysis proceeds. Coding and indexing of the interview data was done by the researcher as well as a second coder in order to assess inter-coder reliability. The second coder was a postgraduate research student in the social sciences with considerable training and experience in the use of NUD•IST, who had been given a thorough briefing of the research topic and fieldwork constraints. The differences in coding were minimal and were resolved through discussion to the mutual satisfaction of both, either by consensus, compromise or by a casting vote of the person deemed having greater expertise in that particular area of difficulty.

The interviewee sources are not identified in this dissertation except by an alpha-numeric code for reasons of confidentiality. Their country of origin is identified by the initials 'Ids' for Indonesia, 'Ind' for India and 'Chn' for China, and their professional status by the initial digits of '01' for advertising agency staff, '02' for broadcasters, '03' for researchers and '04' for policy-makers. More specific data on their organisational affiliations and job designations are provided in Appendix B, in a way that does not allow identification of the respondents. Where an opinion was expressed repeatedly, only one or two interviewees were accredited with it, usually the ones who expressed it best. There could be a problem of seeming to extrapolate opinion from one interviewee to the entire industry, but generally this was done only when the interviewees were believed strongly to be

reflecting the operative 'conventional wisdom' in the industry rather than simply being a lone, dissenting voice. Consensus on how to analyse and present semi-structured interview data so as to reveal its richness while being succinct and without undue interpreter influence has yet to be achieved in the discipline (Fontana and Frey, 1994).

### 3.4.3 Government/industry data

In order to increase the validity and generalisability of the interview data, a wide range of secondary data was collected. The interviewees were asked for secondary sources of data that they may have access to, such as audience research, demographic data, annual reports, corporate brochures, clippings files. Additional documents were collected from a variety of sources within the country. Extensive bibliographic searches in the region were conducted at the Asian Media, Information and Communication Centre (AMIC), Chinese University of Hong Kong, and Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) libraries. This effort uncovered books and reports published in each country, sometimes in native languages, which were often not known outside the country, and relevant sections were photocopied at libraries or the books purchased through local bookshops and publishers. To some extent this procedure of utilising as many sources of information and publication overcomes the problem of bias towards literature and data more easily accessible to the researchers at their home-base which Cooper (1984) cautions against.

Within the constraints of their accessibility to this researcher and their availability within the time-frame of the fieldwork, secondary data collection for each country included the following:

- the number of terrestrial, cable and satellite television stations accessible, ownership, history of market entries/exits, broadcast hours, programming/advertising policies, etc.
- structure of the advertising industry, advertising expenditure on the various media, major advertisers, advertising rates, programme schedules, etc.
- government policies on licensing satellite dishes, cable operators and commercial television stations, and on terrestrial programming and advertising content.
- number of television sets, satellite dish antennae, cable subscribers in the country, audience profiles for terrestrial, cable and satellite channels, etc.
- audience profiles, viewership patterns, ratings for television programmes, etc. if accessible being commercial proprietary information.

These secondary data were collected both through published or archival sources as well as through in-house resources advertising and broadcasting executives, research organisations and government officials. Some research on transnational television has been done at Asian universities or research institutes, usually in the form of consultancy reports for the government in conjunction with overseas aid agencies and wherever possible access to these documents was sought. Surveys

of audiences done by public service organisations often use national government staff accompanied by local officials which could lead to response bias, but often there is no other way to conduct field research in many countries in Asia, given their political climate. Wherever possible research conducted by nationals of the countries investigated were evaluated for partial incorporation in this dissertation, thus overcoming any criticism of foreigner bias even though this researcher is from the Asian region. In any case, it was not feasible logistically for this researcher to mount extensive research in countries such as Indonesia, India and China.

Some research on transnational satellite television has also been done by commercial sources but this tends to be proprietary information and only limited parts of which were revealed to this researcher. Due to commercial sensitivities they were not always made available or those released were reasonably out-of-date though occasionally, as in the case of India, some such data was published in a national newspaper. Some data was obtained only after the researcher was able to assure respondents that the process of academic research meant publication of the dissertation some years in the future, thus rendering the proprietary data provided quite valueless commercially. By stating in writing ahead of the interview that the research was for doctoral research purposes and not for any funded consultancy, this researcher found most respondents cooperative in providing secondary data, referrals, and other forms of practical assistance. Audience ratings reports were sought through the negotiated cooperation of media owners and/or media research organisations as a measure of the viewership for each medium and of advertiser interest. Whenever a television broadcaster was not prepared to make ratings data available to researchers and advertising agencies alike, an inference that could be drawn quite reasonably was that the data was not favourable towards their own channels.

Wherever possible, news-clippings, trade magazine articles, corporate brochures and the like were used to supplement or cross-check information gained via the interviews. It must be recognised that some of the published data collected might be no more or less accurate than the interviews since they may be using the same sources of information. These included public relations brochures, annual reports, press releases, marketing documents (including the research they selectively publicise), and articles in trade publications based on industry 'intelligence' (which sometimes may be little more than organisational leaks, industry rumour, and cocktail-reception hearsay). In a few cases the sources used by journalists or authors of articles/reports were identifiable as some of those interviewed for this research. This information provided valuable secondary data of a quantitative nature which complemented the qualitative approach of the interviews outlined earlier.

Since these articles and reports were utilised as secondary data for this research, they were not incorporated into the bibliography but referenced separately as secondary data in an Appendix A, as were the details of the primary data sources such as interviewees and audio-visual materials in Appendix B. To assist in locating their full references, both secondary data sources as well as primary data such as the interviews, are referred in the text of this thesis, exclusively in the case-

study chapters, using square brackets to indicate that their references are to be found in the appropriate appendices rather than in the bibliography. In a few cases where journal articles and book chapters are alluded to also in the literature review, methodology and chapters or vice-versa, there are references in both locations. By weaving data from inter-media, secondary sources and interviews to build comprehensive case-studies of the three countries, a serious attempt was made to reflect on-site perceptions in Asia of the advent and impact of transnational satellite television.

#### 3.4.4 Programming and commercials:

In addition to the secondary data collected, local and transnational television programmes were observed to provide a 'within-context' perspective. Over evenings, weekends, and as much of the day as possible during the weeks of fieldwork the researcher averaged six hours per day systematically watching all television channels available in-country via free-to-air, cable or satellite, selecting one channel per day. A sample of their programming, mostly on prime-time, was taped off-air for future reference and to aid in the contextualisation of interview comments and the analysis of secondary data. All of these channels were not available in Australia at the time of the fieldwork, though a few English language channels such as ABN, BBC, Discovery Channel and ESPN have become available since 1996 through pay-TV providers. The videotapes allowed for comparison of programming on domestic and transnational satellite television channels, and across the transnationals, and may be utilised for more extensive content analysis of programme flows, genres and country-of-origin in future (Appendix B). Another form of primary data collection involved television commercials on the transnational station StarTV. Based on previous research cited in the literature review, the variables measured through content analysis were only the product categories and brands advertised and their countries-of-origin.

Having explained the theoretical orientation and rationale for the methodology as well as the process of data collection and analysis, the following chapters will report the findings of this research. The first of these, Chapter Four, is a survey of the transnational satellite television broadcasters operating in Asia. Drawing on secondary sources it majors on StarTV, the pioneer broadcaster and focus of this dissertation. The three chapters following it are analytical case-studies of the three domestic television markets of Indonesia, India and greater China, based primarily on the interview data and secondary data. The last of them, Chapter Eight, is a comparative study of advertising in the Asia region since the introduction of transnational satellite television which incorporates content and textual analysis along with other forms of data collected. Together these five subsequent chapters form the crux of this dissertation, with the comparative discussion of the overall findings and their implications taking place in the concluding two chapters.

## Chapter Four

### SATELLITE TELEVISION IN ASIA

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The growth in satellite platforms and transnational television industry in Asia in the 1990s is said to be the most rapid worldwide and the development of StarTV, on which this thesis focuses, needs to be analysed in the context of the numerous other players in this fledgling industry. While domestic satellite television was an integral part of the economic strategies of some developing countries in Asia since the 1950s and 60s, only in recent years have these and other countries in the region encountered the entry of transnational satellite broadcasts of commercial television, over which the governments have little control. But to date there has been no comprehensive compilation of information on the various players in the market, let alone thorough analysis of their origins and functions. Utilising secondary data drawn from diverse industry sources over the first half of the 1990s, this chapter will chronicle the entry into the Asian regional market of transnational television broadcasters on a number of different satellite platforms. This regional survey will serve to chart the regional satellite television environment as a prelude to analysis of impact in specific countries.

#### 4.1 SATELLITE PLATFORMS

Ever since AsiaSat1 helped StarTV pioneer transnational television broadcasting in Asia several more satellites have entered the region with ambitions to tap into this fastest growing market. But there have long been publicly owned national and inter-government satellites in operation in Asia, well before AsiaSat1, largely for telecommunications and domestic broadcasting in aid of economic development. There have been numerous satellites operating in the region before and since which provide solely telephony, data communications, navigation, geographic survey, meteorology and other such services. Given the purpose of the research, this section will survey only those satellite platforms utilised by television channels which cover Asia, and seek to classify them in terms of their ownership and coverage.

##### 4.1.1 Regional-commercial satellites

There is an increasing number of broadcast satellites over Asia, most of them owned and utilised by commercial interests from within the region, in other words domestic and regional corporations. However the technology for the manufacture of these satellites and for the launching of them, with the possible exceptions of China and India, remains in the hands of multinational corporations or governments of the developed world. In Asia the pioneer commercial satellite owner

was AsiaSat which helped establish the transnational television market and set the trend for the regional and global, public and commercial satellites to follow in the region.

Table 4A: Major regional-commercial satellites and their television channels

<i>Satellite</i>	<i>AsiaSat1</i>	<i>AsiaSat2</i>	<i>Apstar1</i>	<i>Thaicom1&amp;2</i>	<i>Measat 1</i>
<i>Launched</i>	April 1990	Nov 1995	July 1994	Dec 93/Oct 94	Jan 1996
<i>Transponders</i>	24 C-band	24 C-band 9 Ku-band	24 C-band 9 Ku-band	10 C-band ea. 2 Ku-band ea.	12 C-band 5 Ku-band
<i>Footprint</i>	NE, SE, S & W Asia	Australasia & all Asia	SE & NE Asia	NE Asia & IndoChina	SE Asia S. China
<i>TV Channels</i>	StarPlus Prime Sports Channel V BBC World Star Chinese Star Movies ZeeTV Zee Movies EL TV MyanmarTV PakistanTV MongoliaTV Guizhou Yunman Phoenix Worldnet Doordarshan	StarPlus Prime Sports Channel V BBC World Star Chinese Star Movies ZeeTV Deutsche Welle Star Pay-TV CCTV-4 CNBC APT/WIN HNTV-1 TVShopN Viva Cinema NBC Super	Time Warner ESPN Asia MTV Asia CNN Int'l TVBI/TVBS HBO Asia Discovery Disney TNT/Cartoon CETV (4 chs.) MTV Mandarin CSTV (3 chs.) Rainbow PHTV (3 chs.) Taiwan SatTV Haishan Shenshan	Thai govt (Chs. 3,5, 7, 9 & 11) CNNi/AusTVI IBC Entertm IBC Sports IBC Variety HBO Asia CambodianTV Laos TV IBC Laos Vietnam TV Thai SkyTV	RTM (Mly) RIA (Mly) Wah LT (Mly) Vaanavil (Mly) ABN CNBC HBO Asia ESPN MGM Gold MTV Asia Disney Discovery Hallmark Entm TNT/Cartoon CNN Int'l StarTV (5 chs.)

Sources: Nielsen SRG [1995]; Cable & Satellite Asia [1996j]; Asiaweek [1994b]; Cooperman [1995]; Television Asia [1996f]; Asiaweek [1996].

*AsiaSat*: The AsiaSat1 satellite on which StarTV began its operations was previously the Hughes Aircraft Westar VI which failed to achieve its geostationary orbit after launch in 1984. Retrieved by the US Challenger space shuttle, it was refurbished and then sold by the insurance company for a mere US\$130 million to a consortium of Hong Kong's Hutchinson Telecommunications, the UK's Cable & Wireless, and the PRC government's investment arm, China International Trust and Investment Corporation (CITIC) for use as a commercial broadcast satellite in the Asia region. AsiaSat1 was launched successfully in April 1990 on one of China's Long March III rockets and positioned at an equatorial orbit slightly east of Singapore, in a slot assigned by the ITU to China [Asia Magazine, 1990]. Hutchinson Telecommunications took control of a dozen transponders on it for the purpose of running a pan-Asian television service, StarTV. Most of the remaining

transponders were leased by Bangladesh, Myanmar, Mongolia, Nepal, and Pakistan, countries which could not have afforded a satellite of their own, as well as Peoples Republic of China (PRC). One major shareholder, CITIC, was instrumental in signing up its Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications as well as number of domestic channels [Asia-Pacific Broadcasting,1992]. About 60 percent of the transponder capacity of AsiaSat1 was utilised for television, mostly transnational, the trend towards commercial television rather than telephony on Asian satellites following closely that of Europe and North America.

The rapid transponder take-up rate for AsiaSat1 gave its owners confidence to begin planning as early as 1992 for AsiaSat2. Despite using identical Long March rockets which had exploded in recent years launching two other satellites, the technologically more advanced AsiaSat2 was launched successfully in November 1995 [Television Asia,1996a]. With a larger footprint than AsiaSat1, it covers much of Central Asia and Russia in the north, stretching to Australia in the south, Japan in the east, and East Africa and Turkey in the west. It has 24 C-band transponders and nine Ku-band transponders, the latter focussed on China, Korea, South East Asia and Indo-China. StarTV has signed a US\$200 million contract for exclusive access to 20 transponders across both AsiaSats1 & 2 over 12 years [APTC&S,1995: 137], thereby demonstrating its commitment to a long-term presence in the Asian television market. Despite concerns in the industry about a glut of transponder capacity, AsiaSat contracted the Russian rocket Proton (rather than the accident-prone Long March) for the scheduled launch in late 1997 of AsiaSat3 from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. Built by Hughes, the satellite would provide digital television and business networks across Asia, including the Indian subcontinent, the Middle East and Australia [Asia-Pacific Satellite,1996].

*Apstar:* A close rival of AsiaSat is another PRC-funded company called APT Satellite Co., a consortium mainly owned by three PRC government agencies: the Ministry of Posts and Telecoms, China Aerospace Industry Corporation and a military science commission [Walsh,1994] as well as minority Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macao investors. ApStar planned for its satellites to carry a mix of transnational and domestic (largely Hong Kong, Taiwanese and Chinese) channels. The US-based satellite television channels such as CNNi, Discovery, ESPN, HBO and TNT (the proverbial 'Gang of Five') as well as other major transnational broadcasters migrated from other satellite platforms to its Apstar1 satellite in 1994. The regional broadcasters Television Broadcasters International (TVBI), China Entertainment Television (CETV) and several Chinese domestic channels also lease transponders on this first Apstar satellite [APTC&S,1995: 133]. Even before Apstar1 was launched a group of seven international broadcasters, including some of the 'Gang of Five' plus Viacom Inc., Paramount Communications Inc. and Hong Kong's TVB signed an agreement to lease a further 16 transponders on their second satellite ApStar2 [AWSJ, 1993a]. When ApStar2 exploded on launching in January 1995, all this competition to StarTV was postponed briefly till the replacement satellite Apstar 2R was launched in early 1997. Though its 16 Ku-band transponders are focussed on Greater China, its 28 C-band transponders have a footprint covering most of Europe and Africa, and all of Asia including the Middle East and Australia [APT Satellite, 1996].

*ThaiCom:* The three ThaiCom satellites launched between 1993 and 1996 are owned by the giant Shinawatra Group of Thailand. Though Thaicom1&2 provide coverage Thailand and the Asia Pacific and are utilised predominantly by domestic television of the IndoChinese sub-region, they were said to be considering accepting foreign channels. However Thaicom3 will have 24 C-band transponders spanning Asia, Europe, Australia and Africa, and 14 Ku-band transponders which will have spot-beams aimed at Thailand and India [Boeke, 1997].

*Measat:* An early user of Intelsat and Palapa satellites, Malaysia had its own Measat1 satellite built by Hughes and launched by Ariane in December 1995. Owned not by the Malaysian government but a private corporation it licensed, Binariang, Measat1 has footprints centred on South East Asia [Via Satellite, 1995b]. In addition to telecommunications services it carries a 40-channel pay-TV service on which both transnational and domestic channels are available. A second satellite Measat2 launched in November 1996 has a larger footprint stretching from Australia to South Asia.

#### 4.1.2 Global-multinational satellites

Satellite systems have historically been the province of inter-governmental organisations such as Intelsat and Intersputnik, sponsored by the capitalist West and the communist Eastern Bloc respectively. Although they were public interest organisations catering to all nation-states, they represented efforts at political and economic hegemony by the two sides of the Cold War in this surrogate arena of space. These organisations sought to place satellite technology in the service of national development in developing countries in the 1960s and 1970s, an age when the commercialisation of that technology was relatively unknown. Both have since had to face up to the challenges of the market to their duopoly and are now just two competitors among many in the new global market for commercial satellite systems.

*Intelsat:* This consortium of 133 nation-states has 22 powerful satellites globally. Twelve of them have large footprints in the Indian Ocean and Asia-Pacific region, and carry such channels as Nippon TV, Deutsche Welle TV, ESPN, RFO Tahiti, Channel 7 Thailand, PTS Taiwan, Canal France, Turner, all the Australian networks and TVNZ. Faced with commercial competition, Intelsat has begun replacing its aging satellites with Intelsat 7-series and Intelsat 8-series satellites, positioned over the Pacific Ocean. In a break from tradition Intelsat also chose to purchase 50 percent of ChinaSat 5, owned and operated by China, while the Chinese have purchased 45.0-49.9 percent of Intelsat 805 covering the Asian landmass and due to be launched in 1997 [Via Satellite, 1994b].

*PanAmSat:* A commercial rival to IntelSat owned by US and Mexican interests, PanAmSat has two satellites in the region giving it a global network. Its Pas-2 and Pas-4 beam channels into Asia such as ABN, Disney, NHK International (Japan), CCTV (China), Sony, ABS-CBN, TNT, and Doordarshan International (India). The newer Pas-4 satellite has trans-Indian Ocean coverage, and carries further channels on its specific African and European beams. PanAmSat benefited from the shock failure of the Apstar2 launch when a number of the latter's clients opted to migrate to Pas-4, which has also attracted Indian channels including Doordarshan [APTC&S, 1995e: 141].

Table 4B: Major global-multinational satellites and their television channels

<i>Satellite</i>	Intel 511	Intel 704	Pas-2	Pas-4	Rimsat 1&2
<i>Launched</i>	1985	1994	1994	1995	1993/1994
<i>Transponders</i>	26 C-band 6 Ku-band	26 C-band 10 Ku-band	16 C-band 16 Ku-band	16 C-band 24 Ku-band	7 C-band 1 Ku-band
<i>Footprint</i>	Australasia SE & NE Asia	SE, NE, S & W Asia	Oceania, China Australasia	Indian Ocean Europe, Africa Asia, Australasia	S Asia & IndoChina
<i>TV Channels</i>	TVNZ USIA ESPN Int'l Deutsche Welle Ch.10 [Aus] Ch. 7 [Aus] Ch. 9 [Aus] ABC [Aus] NHK [Jap] RFO Tahiti Tokyo B'cstSys World Net Ch. 7 [Thai] Pacific Skylink	Canal France USIA Srishti [Ind] Orbit [3 ch.] Turner ASE TV Eenadu [India] World Net NHK [Jap]	ABS-CBN [Phl] Country Music ESPN Asia Discovery CTN [HK] ANBC TNT/Cartoon MTV Asia NHK [Jap] KDD [Jap] NBC OCTV TCS [Sgp] ABN	BBC World CNN Int'l ESPN Disney Doordarshan SABC [S Africa] TNT/Cartoon MTV Asia Jain TV [Ind] M-Net [S Afr] Sony Entmt OCTV HomeTV ABN Liberty/TCI	TaiwanTV SunTV [Ind] UdayaTV [Ind] Asianet [Ind] Raj TV [Ind] Music Asia Vi Jay TV EMTV [PNG]

Sources: Nielsen SRG [1995]; Cable Satellite Asia [1996b]; Asiaweek [1994]; Cooperman [1995]; Televisionasia [1996]; Asiaweek [1996].

*Others:* Another international satellite consortium to rival Intelsat since 1971, the Intersputnik consortium comprised the former USSR and its allies in Europe and Asia. Operated by the Russian Ministry of Postal Services and Telecommunications, it has a range of ten Gorizont, Ekran and Raguda satellites covering the Asia region. A sign of the post-Cold War times, the US-owned Rimsat organisation operates two Russian-built satellites: an aging Gorizont (used by one of the Indian commercial television channels) and a newer Rimsat1 carrying seven transponders and covering a vast area from above the Pacific Ocean, stretching from Alaska in the east, Russia in the north, India in the west and Antarctica in the south. More television-bearing satellites owned by these and other firms are said to be coming on stream in Asia during the late 1990s including the much-rumoured and long-awaited Pac-Star covering the Pacific islands, Hawaii, Japan, even the US West Coast.

Table 4C: Major domestic-public satellites and their television channels

<i>Satellites</i>	Palapa B2P	Palapa C1	Insat 2B/2C	Chinasat 5	Arabsat 1C/1D
<i>Launched</i>	1987	1996	1993 & 1995	1990	1992 & 1993
<i>Transponders</i>	24 C-band	30 C-band 4 Ku-band	12-18 C-band 2 S-band	18 C-band 6 Ku-band	14 C-band 1 S-band
<i>Footprint</i>	SE Asia	SE Asia & Australasia	S & C Asia	China	Middle East, Europe, Africa
<i>TV Channels</i>	CNN Int'l	CNN Int'l	CNN Int'l	CCTV-1	MEBC
	HBO Asia	HBO Asia	DD 4	CCTV-2	Canal France
	ESPN Asia	ESPN Int'l	DD 10	CCTV-3	CNNi
	ABN	ABN		CCTV-6	Kuwait Sat.Ch.
	RCTI (Ids)	RCTI (Ids)		CCTV-7	Dubai Sat.Ch.
	SCTV (Ids)	SCTV (Ids)		ZhejiangTV	Abu D. Sat.Ch.
	TPI (Ids)	TPI (Ids)		XizangTV	Oman TV
	Anteve (Ids)	Anteve (Ids)		SichuanTV	S.Arabian TV1
	Indosiar (Ids)	Indosiar (Ids)		ShandongTV	S.Arabian TV2
	RTM1 (Mly)	RTM1 (Mly)		XinjiangTV	Morocco TV-1
	TV3 (Mly)	TV3 (Mly)			Mauritania TV
	AusTVI	AusTVI			Jordan JRTV
	Chnl 9 (Aus)	Chnl 9 (Aus)			Egypt Spc.Ch.
	Canal France	Canal France			
	TCSI (Sgp)	TCSI (Sgp)			
	RTB (Bru)	RTB (Bru)			
	TVBI (Hkg)	MTV Asia			
	ABS-CBN (Phl)	Discovery			
	GMA (Phl)	StarTV			
	Peoples' (Phl)	Peoples 1 & 2 Mega (Mly)			

Sources: Nielsen SRG [1995]; Cable Satellite Asia [1996b]; Asiaweek [1994]; Cooperman [1995]; Television Asia [1996]; Kuperus [1994].

#### 4.1.3 Domestic-public satellites

Under this section we classify government-owned satellite operators which aimed originally at their domestic markets, although progressively they have provided platforms for neighbouring countries' public and commercial broadcasts as well as transnational broadcasts. Furthermore, governments in Asia have been privatising their satellite operators which have in turn entered into strategic alliances with multinational corporations. Alternative these governments have been relegating

national involvement in the satellite industry to joint-ventures of domestic and foreign firms, the former often having connections directly or indirectly to the centres of political power in the country. Thus the line between domestic and transnational, public and commercial satellite is becoming increasingly difficult to draw as this section will illustrate.

*Insat*: After experimenting with borrowed satellite transponders India began launching its own satellites in 1982-3. Presently India has two satellites Insat1D and Insat2A which carry Doordarshan (DD), the domestic public-television network. After years of little progress Insat has received new impetus from the sudden expansion of Doordarshan into a multiple regional-language service in response to competition from transnational satellite television [APTC&S, 1995: 137]. It launched three Insat2 series satellites between 1995 and 1997 to more than replace earlier satellites [Cooperman, 1995], and the Indian government is appearing open to leasing spare transponders to commercial television, both domestic and transnational. Insat 2C, launched in December 1995 by Ariane rather than domestically, has 24 transponders and a C-band footprint covering Northeast Africa, Central and Western Europe, South Asia and South East Asia. Vying for its use are transnational channels Discovery, Disney and TNT/Cartoon Network and domestic channels such as JainTV and BiTV, in addition to DD-CNNi and other national, metropolitan and regional channels of DD [Television Asia, 1996a].

*Palapa*: This Indonesian-owned satellite network originally intended and long used for domestic broadcasting has become a *de facto* transnational satellite platform. On its B2R satellite which carries the Indonesian national broadcaster TVRI, it has also carried the domestic television services of Malaysia, the Philippines and Papua New Guinea. On its later satellite B2P it carried Indonesian commercial channels as well as transnational channels such as CNNi, ESPN, Discovery, HBO, ABN, Channel 9 (Australia), Hong Kong's TVBI and MTV Asia. The high-power commercial Palapa C1 and C2 replaced Palapa B2P in 1996-97. Satelindo, the private operator of Indonesia's third-generation satellites, has opted for wider coverage and higher capacity for its Palapa C3 in order to meet broadcaster demand [Via Satellite, 1994b].

*ChinaSats*: The China Telecommunications and Broadcast Satellite Corporation (CTBSC), a commercial arm of the PRC Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, has four satellites in place: ChinaSats1, 2, 3 & 5. The first three were built and launched by the Chinese between 1988 and 1990, and used primarily for voice, data and television transmission by its domestic television services [Cooperman, 1995]. Chinasat5 was China's first foreign-built satellite but it is actually the former Spacenet1 launched in 1984 and transferred to CTBSC ownership in late 1992. It is used by a number of national and provincial television stations such as CCTV-1, 2, 3, 6 & 7, Zhejiang TV, Xizang TV and Sichuan TV for domestic broadcasting [Cable & Satellite Asia, 1996b]. ChinaStar1, the replacement for Chinasat5, was built by Lockheed for launch in late 1997, and it would have a footprint covering most of Asia. Although China has resorted to purchasing satellites from Western sources, it seems to insist on launches on one of its own Long March rockets, perhaps to support that industry or simply out of national pride.

*Others:* A relative latecomer to the national satellite stakes, Korea launched two satellites within six months of each other believed to be primarily for the domestic market [Via Satellite, 1996]. Towards West Asia the Arab Satellite Communications Organisation, a consortium founded by the Arab League in 1976, operated Arabsat 1C and ID utilised for both telephony and broadcasting by West Asian states as well as transnational television such as CNNi, Canal France International (CFI), Middle-East Broadcasting Center (MBC), Orbit Communications and Future Vision [Via Satellite, 1995a]. Another satellite player at that western end of the Asian continent was Amos1 launched by Israel Aircraft Industries Ltd [Via Satellite, 1994a], though with smaller footprints over Europe and the Middle East. Its inclusion here is in the interests of impartiality in the Middle East political situation, and for this author to disclaim any influence of it being his rare name-sake in his motivation to research satellite television in Asia. The growing number of satellite platforms in West and Central Asia, and Oceania often sharing footprints with North Africa, Europe and Australasia, are beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Table 4D: Launches of satellite platforms in Asia, early to mid-1990s

1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
				Gals-2	Insat 2D
				Stationar-12	Rimsat Exp2
				Stationar-20	Rimsat Exp3
				Insat 2C	Measat-1
				AsiaSat2	Measat 2
				Rimsat Exp1	Apstar-1A
				Nstar-a	Apstar-2R
				NStar-b	Intelsat 709
			Gals-1	DFH-3A2	Intelsat 801
		Stationar-3	Express-2	Intelsat 703	Intelsat 802
		Gorizont-41	Gorizont-42	Intelsat 704	Intelsat 803
		Insat 2B	Rimsat 2	Insat2C	Thaicom-3
Stationar-13	Insat 2A	Intelsat 703	Apstar1	Pas-4	Palapa C1
Intelsat 511	Palapa B4	Rimsat 1	China/DFH	JCSat-3	Palapa C2
PalapaB2R	Optus B1	Chinasat 3	PanAmSat	Koreasat-1	Indostar-1
AsiaSat1	Stationar-21	Palapa Pcfk	Thaicom	Koreasat-2	Mabuhay

Sources: Cooperman [1995]; Television Asia [1996]; Euroconsult [1995]

The skies above Asia are certainly becoming congested with satellites, illustrated by incidents of jockeying for orbital slots. As of late 1996 there were 34 satellites serving Asia with an additional 21 satellites providing trans-Pacific and trans-Indian Ocean coverage. The outlook for the pan-Asian

satellite television broadcasters was not altogether positive since the growth of domestic commercial TV channels in Asia had spawned stiff competition among all broadcasters and caused an acute demand for quality programming. After this massive expansion, a glut of channels and consequently a shake-out of satellite platforms would normally be anticipated. For the moment this seems not the case because many transnational channels are utilising more than one satellite platform each in their determination to tailor their offerings to different subregional markets. There seems to be no correlation between ownership of channels and their preference to be located on satellite platforms owned similarly, the only criterion seemingly being the markets reached by the latter's footprints. It is in this context of rapidly shifting markets and increasing competition that we need to look at the brief history of StarTV which follows.

## 4.2 STARTV

Transnational television in Asia was introduced not by some Western multinational corporation but by the family-owned concerns of an Asian businessman. The idea of refurbishing a retrieved errant telecommunications satellite and utilising it instead to broadcast television came from the family of Hong Kong millionaire Li Ka-Shing. The satellite's purchase and launch in 1991 had the collaboration of the People's Republic of China (PRC) government while the broadcast service stayed in the hands of the Li family and their largely family-owned Hutchinson Whampoa conglomerate. But its much-publicised sale to Rupert Murdoch's interests in 1993-94 and subsequent programming decisions led to some confrontation with the PRC government. This section traces the history of StarTV and its evolution from a pan-Asian broadcaster owned by an Asian conglomerate to a targeted sub-regional, almost domestic one owned by a Western multinational media corporation.

### 4.2.1 Phase One: Pan-Asian/Cosmopolitan (c.1991-1993)

*Ownership and control:* The satellite broadcaster StarTV, with a capitalisation of US\$300 million, was initially a wholly-owned subsidiary of HutchVision, a 50:50 joint-venture of Hutchinson Whampoa. The latter was also a shareholder in AsiaSat1 and a private company controlled by the family of Hong Kong billionaire Li Ka-Shing. The television service, said to be the brainchild of his son and StarTV deputy chairman Richard Li, commenced business in December 1990 immediately after the Hong Kong government granted it a broadcasting license. Between August and December 1991 StarTV launched all its five channels on a pan-Asian basis on two footprints from AsiaSat1. Its broadcasts utilised NTSC-M on its northern beam which covers North East and Central Asia including Japan and China, and utilised Pal-B on its southern beam which covers South East, South and West Asia including Indonesia and India [Expression, 1992-93].

Table 4E: StarTV channels and their development, 1992-96

<i>Channel</i>	<i>Satl.</i>	<i>1992</i>	<i>1993</i>	<i>1994</i>	<i>1995</i>	<i>1996</i>
StarPlus	<i>ASat-1</i>	PanAsian	PanAsian	PanAsian	Southern	Southern
Prime Sports	<i>ASat-1</i>	PanAsian	PanAsian	Sub-regional	Sub-regional	Alliance with ESPN
BBC	<i>ASat-1</i>	PanAsian	PanAsian	Southern	Southern	(Ceased)
Star Mandarin	<i>ASat-1</i>	PanAsian	PanAsian	PanAsian	(Ceased)	-
MTV Asia	<i>ASat-1</i>	PanAsian	PanAsian	(Ceased)	-	-
Channel V	<i>ASat-1</i>	-	-	Sub-regional	Multidom (Taiwan, Phil, India)	Multidom
Star Movies	<i>ASat-1</i>	-	-	Northern	Northern	Northern
	<i>ASat-1</i>	-	-	-	Southern	Southern
Phoenix Chin.	<i>ASat-2</i>	-	-	-	Multi-dom (PRC, Sgp, Mly)	Multidom
StarPlus Taiwn	<i>ASat-1</i>	-	-	-	Domestic	Domestic
ESPN Asia	<i>ApStr1</i>	-	-	-	Multidom (NEAsia, SEAsia, S.Pfc)	Multidom
ESPN India	<i>Pas-4</i>	-	-	-	Domestic (India)	Domestic (India)
StarSports Intl	<i>Pas-4</i>	-	-	-	S Asia	S Asia
StarSports Intl	<i>Pas-2</i>	-	-	-	SE Asia	SE Asia
Star Composite	<i>PlpB2P-</i>	-	-	-	Domestic (Indonesia)	Domestic (Indonesia)
StarPlus Japan	<i>JCSat</i>	-	-	-	-	Domestic
StarPlus Int'l	<i>Measat</i>	-	-	-	-	Domestic (Malaysia)
StarSports Intl	<i>Measat</i>	-	-	-	-	Domestic (Malaysia)
StarSports Intl	<i>JCSat</i>	-	-	-	-	Japan
StarMovieSEA	<i>Measat</i>	-	-	-	-	Domestic (Malaysia)
StarMovieAsia	<i>Measat</i>	-	-	-	-	Domestic (Malaysia)
<i>Number of Channels:</i>		<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>18</i>

Sources: Based on StarTV [1993, 1994, 1995 & 1996] *Media Packs* and other sources.

Legend:

PanAsian = same programming on both AsiaSat1 footprints across Asia

Sub-regional = programming differentiated between northern and southern AsiaSat1 footprints

Northern = available only on northern AsiaSat1 footprint, targeting largely China, Taiwan and Philippines

Southern = available only on southern AsiaSat1 footprint targeting largely India and other South & West Asian countries

Multidom = available on either footprint but targeted at two or more domestic/national markets by programming and/or encryption

Domestic = available usually on a national or multinational satellite other than AsiaSats 1 or 2 and targeted at one national market by programming and/or encryption

*Channels and programming:* StarTV began in 1991 with a package of five channels identical on both northern and southern beams: StarPlus (entertainment), Star Mandarin (entertainment), Prime Sports, BBC World Service (news) and MTV Asia (music). Star Plus, the English-language family-entertainment channel, broadcast 24 hours a day, reaching its target audiences across its footprint through the different prime-times (Table 4E). The programming fare included dramas like *Flying Doctors*, comedies like *M\*A\*S\*H*, soap-operas such as *Santa Barbara*, talk shows like *Oprah*, documentaries, cartoons like *The Simpsons* and awards shows like *The Oscars*. The counterpart of StarPlus was the Star Chinese channel which offered the only non-English programming on transnational satellite television when it was launched in October 1991. Sometimes referred to as Star Mandarin, it offered a broad range of entertainment and information programming in Mandarin including drama, sit-coms, variety shows, game shows, talk shows, financial news, documentaries, music and cartoons [StarTV, 1992b]. Its programming was sourced initially from Taiwan, though audience preferences saw expansion of its sourcing to Hong Kong especially. Although it was pan-Asian in reach, the target audiences of Star Chinese were those of Taiwan, China and to a lesser extent Hong Kong and diasporic Chinese elsewhere in East Asia.

The BBC World Service Television, a comprehensive international news channel, had its Asian and in fact worldwide launch in November 1991, and was the only channel in which StarTV itself was not also the programme provider. Its programming drew on the resources of the BBC, one of the larger news-gathering operations worldwide comprising 250 correspondents in 50 bureaus and enjoying a long-standing reputation for breadth, credibility and impartiality which CNNi had not achieved. Its leading news programmes were 'BBC Newsday' as well as 'The World Today' where the reports received in-depth analysis. Presented every half-hour in prime-time and every hour otherwise, its news bulletins bring up-to-the-minute news coverage.

As Asia's first all-sports channel, Prime Sports broadcast 24 hours per day and initially provided 1,500 hours 'live' coverage of major international and regional sporting events including 344 hours of 'live' cricket matches in 1993 [StarTV, 1994c]. In its short-lived stint on StarTV, the 24-hour music channel MTV Asia was established as a joint-venture with its parent company Viacom International. The music videos were interspersed seamlessly and at a rapid pace with interviews, news, sports, commercials and 'rockumentaries' in a characteristically postmodern collage targeted at the 12-25 age group. Most of the content was US in origin, a situation put down to the lack of music videos of comparable quality and style from the countries MTV Asia was being broadcast to as of the early 1990s. Asian content was said to have grown from 5 percent when MTV Asia was first broadcast

on StarTV to as much as 50 percent though this was qualified as being only 'at certain times of the day' [Balfour, 1993].

*Penetration and viewership:* StarTV aimed initially to reach the English-speaking, cosmopolitan, high-earning elite among the potential 2.5 billion viewers in the 38 countries ranging from Israel to Japan under its footprints. This region comprising two-thirds of the world's population, was characterised by rapidly developing economies and thus growing advertising budgets and as yet underdeveloped domestic television media. A survey commissioned by StarTV less than a year after inauguration reported that at least 3.8 million of Asia's households were receiving its programming, 1.2 million of those households being accounted for in India and Taiwan [Expression, 1992-93], a situation which will be explained later in this thesis. Another survey in February 1993 reported 11.2 million households capable of receiving StarTV, the highest incidence being 4.8 million households in China, 3.3 million in India and 1.9 million in Taiwan [Asian A&M, 1993]. It must be borne clearly in mind that these penetration figures represent simply households which have access to satellite and cable television. While they have the potential to view StarTV there figures in no way give any indication whether these households were actually watching it among all the stations and channels they have access to, much less how many viewers there were in each, for how long each watched and with what degree of attention.

#### 4.2.2 Phase Two: Sub-regional/Diasporic (c.1993-95)

*Ownership and control:* In July 1993 News Corporation, better known as the flagship of Rupert Murdoch's global media empire, bought a controlling 63.6 percent interest from Hongkong's Li Ka-Shing and his Hutchinson Whampoa group, for US\$525 million in cash and News Corp shares. The purchase complemented News Corporation's other television businesses: the BSkyB satellite television service in Europe, Fox Broadcasting in the US, and a joint-venture with Televisa in Mexico, the world's largest Spanish-language broadcaster [Straits Times, 1993b]. In 1995 News Corporation purchased the remaining 36 percent share in StarTV with the full expectation that it would lose about US\$100 million per year for a few years thereafter. Valuing StarTV was difficult since it had been in operation for only two years, and while officially US\$110 million was said to have been invested in it, some estimates have been double that [Ong, 1993]. Nonetheless Murdoch recognised the profit potential of the impending boom of the television audience in Asia. According to rough estimates then, advertising revenues on StarTV were estimated reach US\$1 billion by the middle of 1994 [Nadkarni, 1994].

There was some consternation in political circles around the region about the purchase by Murdoch of StarTV, most notably by Malaysia's prime minister Mahathir Mohammed. The Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) later responded to a speech by Murdoch about satellite television leading to the downfall of totalitarian governments by banning the personal ownership of satellite dishes. Questions were raised about the financial wisdom both of Murdoch buying StarTV and of Li Ka-Shing selling it. Given the loss-making status of StarTV there has been speculation that Murdoch had other

more sinister imperialist motives of a cultural nature [Yeap, 1993]. It was also speculated that Li Ka-Shing sold StarTV because its programming content was antagonising government officials and thus jeopardising his business relations with some of the governments in Asia, particularly the PRC. Ironically the StarTV deal would not have materialised if an earlier bid by Murdoch to buy into Hong Kong's TVB had not been mired by the local government's disapproval [SCMP, 1993a]. Murdoch had planned to purchase a 22 percent share of TVB, prior to its launch of a satellite channel on ApStar1 as part of a loose consortium with ESPN, CNN, HBO and Australia Television which would have been a threat to StarTV [FEER, 1993a].

*Channels and programming:* Attainment of majority ownership by News Corporation was followed by a major management restructure including the mass resignation of the chief executive and 30 other executives [Asia-Pacific Broadcasting, 1993]. The new chief executive gave the first indications of a change of strategy from a pan-Asian one to multi-domestic or sub-regional one [South China Morning Post, 1993b]. Once the key new staff were in place, StarTV began differentiating its channel offerings on the two footprints, the northern one covering China, Taiwan and the Philippines primarily, and the southern one mainly covering Indonesia, India and the Middle-East.

The replacement of the BBC World Service on the northern beam with a Mandarin movie subscription channel, while retaining it on the southern beam, marked the start of regionalising StarTV programming. The BBC World Service had run afoul of the Chinese authorities and was believed to have been withdrawn from the northern beam in April 1994 so as not to cause further offence and threaten one of StarTV's major potential markets. It was left on the southern beam where the other major StarTV market of India had a long tradition of listening to the BBC news on radio. By late 1994 the BBC World Service Television programme schedule had 25-minute news bulletins every hour on the hour. Effort was directed to make the news relevant to Asia, and particularly to local and expatriate business executives operating in the region. A sampling of other programming in late 1994 included *The Money Programme*, *World Business Report*, *Indian Business Report*, *Panorama* (current affairs documentaries), as well as travel, computer awareness and nature programmes [BBC, 1994a/b].

Star Movies, which replaced BBC World on the northern transponder, initially featured Cantonese movies on a subscription basis to 1.7 million households in Taiwan on 160 cable networks, as well as the Philippines and China to a limited extent. Since then available on both transponders, it has featured 24-hour movies from around the world, ranging from comedy, action/adventure and romance, to family, western, classics, and king-fu/sword-play. These movies have been in turn adapted and targeted at different subregional audiences of StarTV. For instance, English-language movies were sub-titled in Hindi for the Indian market, Arabic for the Gulf states, in Mandarin for China and Taiwan, and in Thai for Thailand. Star Chinese, previously a general entertainment channel, aimed now to target Chinese executives and businesspersons more specifically with a financial programme, children and teenagers with cartoons and info-tainment, women with Japanese dramas, and families in general. Most of its programming is sourced initially in Hong Kong and Taiwan, though gradually more widely if still regionally from China, Japan and Korea [StarTV, 1995b].

Table 4F: Countries capable of receiving StarTV, with validated household penetration, 1992-97

<i>Countries</i>	<i>1992 June</i>	<i>1993 February</i>	<i>1994 January</i>	<i>1995 August</i>	<i>1996 December</i>
<u>SE Asia</u>					
Philippines	70,474	137,141	187,431	248,315	400,000
Indonesia	14,335	36,211	49,807	-	50,000
Thailand	9,000	32,393	142,805	393,000	393,000
Malaysia					30,000
Brunei					30,000
Myanmar					15,000
Vietnam					15,000
<u>NE Asia</u>					
China PRC	1,200,000	4,800,000	30,362,966	30,531,101	36,200,000
Taiwan ROC	1,191,419	1,980,140	2,376,433	3,418,280	4,300,000
Hong Kong	150,000	304,809	330,827	418,305	430,000
Korea, S.	18,945	18,945	183,838	269,982	1,700,000
Japan	13,400				400,000
Macau	5,000				40,000
<u>South Asia</u>					
India	1,282,500	3,300,500	7,278,000	10,158,000	14,000,000
Pakistan	30,195	61,239	77,038	174,000	1,500,000
Bangladesh				204,000	205,000
<u>West Asia</u>					
Israel	272,000	410,000	621,000	784,000	800,000
U.A.E.	10,000	72,809	116,589	288,790	289,000
Saudi Arabia				387,579	388,000
Kuwait	4,000	12,780	31,210	75,544	76,000
Bahrain	3,000				
Lebanon					12,000
Oman					100,000
Qatar					25,000
<i>Total</i>	<i>3,029,868</i>	<i>11,166,967</i>	<i>42,126,884</i>	<i>47,350,896</i>	<i>61,443,000</i>
<i>Increase %</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>268%</i>	<i>277%</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>30%</i>

Sources: Compiled from StarTV [1992-1997] *Homes penetration reports*.

Channel V replaced MTV Asia when StarTV's relationship with Viacom collapsed over a dispute on revenue sharing as well as over the programming direction in early 1994. Since StarTV had a contractual relationship with the key personnel at MTV Asia it was able to launch quickly its own Channel V in May 1994 which featured a regionalisation strategy. This included splitting the channel with the northern beam catering to the China, Taiwan and Philippine pop music markets, and the southern one catering to the Indian and other South Asian ones, utilising VJs based in the sub-regions who are able to present music the audience preferred, in a style and language they identified with. By 1994 Channel V broadcast ten hours of Mandarin programming on the northern beam and another ten

hours of Indian language programmes on the southern beam each day, with some shows like *Gone Taiwan* and *BPL Oye!* shot on location with local VJs. In the remaining 14 hours Channel V continued to provide regional and international programming including *Asian Top 20 Countdown* and *Billboard's US Top 20 Countdown*, using a core team of VJs from throughout Asia who were based in Hong Kong. With its incorporation of both domestic and regional artistes into their otherwise western-oriented programming Channel V became the first and one of the more successful examples of cultural globalisation by a transnational broadcaster in Asia.

Prime Sports began to split programming broadcast on the two AsiaSat1 beams, featuring more table-tennis, baseball and basketball for the predominantly Chinese and Japanese audiences of the northern footprint and more cricket and badminton for the South Asian and Indonesian audiences of the southern footprint [Asia-Pacific Broadcasting, 1992]. In keeping with the regionalisation of its programming StarTV purchased the 'live' broadcasting rights of the first division of the Chinese National Football league for 10 years, and three World Grand Prix badminton events from Indonesia, Thailand and China. As a further step it later provided dual soundtracks on its northern programming, namely in English for expatriates and educated elite, and in Mandarin to cater for the viewing majority of China, Taiwan and the rest of East Asia. While programmes on Star Plus, the English-language entertainment channel, were still sourced mostly from the United States, they were now sought also from Europe, Australia and Asia. Furthermore day-time programming targeted women with fashion, cuisine, parenting, health and exercise programmes as well as talk-shows and soap operas, while children were targeted before and after school with adventure series and cartoons [StarTV, 1995b].

*Penetration and viewership:* By November 1993, just two years after commencing broadcasts, StarTV was claiming a quantum leap to a potential audience of 42 million homes, as estimated by its commissioned market research. Of this 30.2 million homes were in China, 7.2 million in India and 2.4 million in Taiwan, which constituted its primary markets. The next three markets trailed considerably behind: Israel at 621,000, Saudi Arabia at 369,000 and Hong Kong at 331,000 [StarTV, 1994d]. Since the figures were often derived from cable or satellite television access estimates, the concern of advertisers was over not knowing the actual viewership of the channels and particular programmes. Yet even though the varying research methodologies used and conclusions drawn from penetration figures were questioned both within the industry and beyond, the research indicated clearly that StarTV was reaping some benefits of a two-year headstart as the pioneer over other entrants into the field of transnational television broadcasting via satellite in Asia (Table 4F). Despite the apparent popularity of its largely Western programming among certain segments in each country, there were sizeable audiences in the footprint unresponsive to StarTV. Murdoch personally professed not to believe in global television programming and advertising, but asserted that the satellite medium had to have something specifically of cultural interest to each country's audiences [Nadkarni, 1994]. In recognition of transborder ethnic segments, StarTV under News Corporations announced a strategy of broadcasting in sub-regional languages as well [Brenchley, 1994]. Its partial acquisition of

Zee TV, a transnational channel in Hindi directed at South Asia and West Asia, and inauguration of a Chinese movie pay-TV channel were early steps in that direction.

#### 4.2.3 Phase Three: Quasi-Domestic/Ethnic (c.1995-97)

With the launch of AsiaSat2 in 1995, StarTV had access to even more geographical markets in Southeast Asia, West Asia, even Central Asia and Africa (Table 4G). Although it continued broadcasting in analogue from AsiaSat1, StarTV utilised digital technology on AsiaSat2 which allowed it to increase dramatically the number of channels it could broadcast per transponder. Thus StarTV was in a position in 1996 to adopt specific strategies of each subregional, national or ethnic market under its footprint, and to tailor its programming accordingly. In Indonesia, for instance, StarTV entered into a strategic alliance with the sole pay-TV licensee IndoVision to provide a channels which cater to that market and a consolidated marketing, distribution and technical operation. For China, StarTV formed a joint-venture called Phoenix Chinese Channel with two Hong Kong partner firms to provide multiple channels with programming attractive to mainland China audiences and acceptable by the PRC government [Bailes and Hollister, 1996: 134]. So determined was its change of strategy that StarTV went to the extent of sacrificing its own Star Mandarin channel.

Table 4G: Other countries claimed to be capable of receiving StarTV, 1997

<i>Regions</i>	<i>Oceania</i>	<i>East Asia</i>	<i>South Asia</i>	<i>W. Asia/Africa</i>	<i>C. Asia/Europe</i>
<u>Countries:</u>	Australia	Laos	Bhutan	Cyprus	Afghanistan
	Guam	Mongolia	Maldives	Egypt	Armenia
	Micronesia	Korea, N.	Nepal	Eritrea	Azerbaijan
	New Caledonia	Singapore	Sri Lanka	Ethiopia	Georgia
	New Zealand	Cambodia		Iran	Kyrgystan
	PNG			Iraq	Kazakhstan
	Solomon Is.			Jordan	Moldovia
				Somalia	Russia
				Sudan	Tajikistan
				Syria	Turkey
				Yemen	Ukraine

Source: StarTV [1997] *Media pack*.

Determined to demonstrate its willingness not to impose programming alien to India, StarTV funded a research report into what its public wants and claimed that future programming will take into consideration the research findings [Khar, 1994]. Since selling decoders to unscramble signals meant considerable capital outlay and labour-intensive support operations, StarTV proposed merging its free-to-air and pay-TV services. Thus it developed concurrent plans for a cheaper analog pay channel in India in recognition of what that market could bear in the interim. Murdoch explored investments with leading Indian film and software producers and began building studios there to bring about an almost 50 percent increase in its Indian programming. Recognising that education and information on

domestic television were touted by developing countries as the means of maintaining traditional values, StarTV made a concerted effort to be culturally inoffensive to the host countries in its footprint. Planned university and arts channels were aimed at gaining more acceptance for StarTV, as a purveyor of 'high' Western culture rather than pop culture [Pathania, 1996]. In 1996 StarTV did the previously unthinkable and entered into an alliance with its main competitor ESPN Asia for shared programming on Prime Sports. In 1997, StarTV upset its affiliate ZeeTV by switching to Hindi-language programming on Star Plus' prime-time, breaking an unwritten understanding not to encroach on each others' markets. It re-launched Star Plus as Star World and Prime Sports was subsequently renamed Star Sports. It lost its news service when BBC World Service decided to go it alone in 1995, after the indignity of being removed summarily off the StarTV northern beam over a year earlier.

Perhaps it is early yet to analyse what form the current strategy of StarTV has taken, and assess whether it has worked and why. It needs to be borne in mind that the field research for the case-studies on Indonesia, India and greater China in the chapters which follow were conducted between early 1994 and late 1995 during the regional/diasporic era, midway through StarTV's transition from a pan-Asian/cosmopolitan to a quasi-domestic/ethnic broadcaster. All the same, the apparent success of StarTV in growing the television market in the Asia region, even as a pan-Asian broadcaster, spurred a number of foreign multinational television providers to enter the market, some of them bringing forward long-range plans to expand into the region. It also stimulated domestic commercial and public broadcasters to enter the satellite television business, both to combat the effect of the foreign multinationals as well as to carve out their own share of this growing market. These rival channels to StarTV in the competitive transnational satellite television business in Asia, some of which were to become strategic allies, will be surveyed in the next section of this chapter.

#### 4.3 OTHER TRANSNATIONAL TELEVISION

While StarTV was a pioneer in transnational satellite television in Asia, in the years that followed a number of other transnational broadcasters joined this new industry, some from within the region and others operating internationally. On the other hand there were national broadcasters in the region which had utilised satellites for domestic transmission both prior to and after the advent of StarTV. Although they were largely available by virtue of signal of spill-over, some of these commercial and public broadcasters have since sought transnational audiences intentionally. This section will survey the growing number of transnational satellite broadcasters available in Asia and to classify the varied entertainment, news, ethnic and public television channels they carried in the first half of the 1990s (Table 4H).

Table 4H: Major transnational satellite television broadcasters in Asia in mid-1990s

<i>Ownership</i>	<i>News/Info</i>	<i>Entertm/Movies</i>	<i>General</i>
<i>Global</i>	CNNi	ESPN	
<i>Commercial</i>	NBC/CNBC	MTV/Viacom	
	Discovery	HBO	
		TNT/Cartoon	
		MGM	
		Sony	
<i>Regional</i>	ABN	StarTV	TVBS
<i>Commercial</i>	CTN	CETV	ZeeTV
		KTV	MBC
		ART	Orbit
<i>National</i>	BBC World		CCTV-4
<i>Public</i>	Deutsche Welle		DDI
	Canal France Int'l		TCSI
			NHK
			AustraliaTV

#### 4.3.1 News/information channels

Although CNNi may be credited with opening the Asia market for transnational satellite television, interest in US-oriented international news, waned soon after the Gulf War. It was followed by various other news services such as BBC and CNBC and it became evident to them all that the one which best demonstrated regional relevance would win the audience loyalty stakes. All the global news channels operating in Asia including CNNi have sought to internationalise their news sourcing, moving away from their country-of-origin ethnocentrism and regionalising the news for their Asian market. Otherwise audiences would have reverted to using their increasingly sophisticated domestic-terrestrial broadcasters as their primary news source. Increasingly, too, regional broadcasters such as Asian Business News (ABN) and Chinese Television News (CTN) have entered the market to compete with the global channels in providing international news with Asian priorities and sensitivities.

*CNNi*: Claiming to be the only truly global network with transmissions available in 210 countries and territories worldwide via twelve satellites, CNNi had distribution agreements in 143 countries and reached 75 million households, not counting offices and hotel rooms as of 1994. The network's flagship programme, *CNN World Report* was a compilation of unedited news reports from over 130 news organisations across 110 countries in all continents and the contributions were in exchange for rights to use other material in the programme freely. Although CNNi produced much of its international news in London and Hong Kong and claimed that most of its international news was not seen in the US [CNNi, 1994], it was still perceived as having an American worldview. CNNi pursued steady growth in Asia in the early to mid-1990s, through a strategy of regionalisation and strategic alliances with other transnational broadcasters. In February 1992 CNNi opened a New Delhi bureau, the next month began broadcasting 'Business Asia' daily in the Asia-Pacific. From June 1993

CNNi was available to hotels and an estimated 50,000 households in Taiwan via cable subscription and excerpted for use on Doordarshan, India's national network. Late the same year CNNi joined the consortium to lease nine transponders on Apstar1, and in April 1994 it joined four other channels to be broadcast by Indovision using Indonesia's first direct-broadcast-satellite IndoStar [CNNi, 1994]. By early 1995 CNNi was available on cable systems in Hong Kong, the Philippines, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia [APTC&S, 1995: 103-104]. Recognising the critical drawback of regionalised programming, CNNi opened its own Asian production facilities in Hong Kong in April 1995, began broadcasting *World News Asia* produced in both Hong Kong and Atlanta, and launched *Inside Asia* a current affairs programme.

*BBC World*: Launched in Asia in 1991 as part of the inaugural StarTV stable, it was dropped summarily in 1994 from the northern beam of AsiaSat1 thus nominally halving its distribution. In early 1996 the channel parted company with StarTV and re-launched itself on PanAmSat satellites in the region: digitally-compressed off Pas-2 to reach South East and North East Asia, and via analogue off Pas-4 for South and West Asia. The BBC also has extensive distribution deals with Wharf Cable in Hong Kong, Singapore Cable Vision, Thaicom's ThaiSky MMDS, Japan's PerfecTV digital DTH service, the Philippines' Sky Cable, and Malaysia's Astro, not to mention other deals in India, Sri Lanka and the Middle East [Cable & Satellite Asia, 1996b: 20].

*ABN*: Although owned largely by Western media interests, the Asian Business News (ABN) is a distinctly regional channel dealing exclusively with news. Its three major partners with a 29.5 percent share each are Dow Jones, TV New Zealand, Telecommunication Incorporation of the US. Regional participation involved one partner with a 10 percent share: Singapore Media Ventures, and another with a 1.5 percent share: Business News Network of Hong Kong. ABN programming was sourced from Dow Jones' 22 bureaux worldwide, and staff of its publications which included the Far East Economic Review and the Asian Wall Street Journal [Asian Business News, 1994]. By 1995 ABN reached 13 million homes in South-East Asia directly, not counting a sizeable audience on some terrestrial television networks and all cable networks in Taiwan and the Philippines which downlinked its programming for retransmission. A niche channel in comparison to other transnational services it commenced as an 18-hour per day service in English aimed at businesspersons based or travelling in Asia, with subtitling in Chinese and Malay/Indonesian. Its flag-ship programme was *Business Radar* which included a half-hour segment called *The Asian Wall Street Journal On Air*. ABN subsequently migrated to PanAmSat's Pas-2 before moving on to the more powerful Pas-4 in late 1995 in its bid to expand its market [APT-C, 1995: 15]. By 1995 it gained half a million more subscribers through being carried by the International Channel Network in the US for an hour and a half each day in both English and Mandarin [Television Asia, 1995a].

*CNBC Asia*: A subsidiary of NBC of the US, this channel began broadcasting as ANBC in November 1994 on Wharf Cable in Hong Kong and expanded into an Asia-wide satellite 24-hour business news channel CNBC Asia and general entertainment channel NBC Asia by January 1996. CNBC Asia was transmitted on both Palapa B2P and PanAmSat2 and offered ten hours of Asian

programming, five hours of European programming and nine hours of US programming [APTC&S, 1995: 97]. By 1996 it reached 1.3 million households in the Asia-Pacific region inclusive of Australia and New Zealand for its 24-hour programming. Though seemingly a smaller player than ABN, it claimed to reach 38.5 million households for its daytime programming through its availability on cable/pay-TV services in Asia and Australasia [Television Asia, 1996c]. In late 1996 NBC launched its India-specific digital channels on AsiaSat2 and joined the Indovision digital DTH stable in Indonesia, both of which are controlled by StarTV. Thus CNBC and NBC channels had four channels each: the original one in English, one for India, and two Mandarin channels for Taiwan and for China respectively, demonstrating acute sensitivity to cultural differences, and these channels are carried on Pas-2, Palapa C2 and AsiaSat2 [Cable & Satellite Asia, 1996b: 19].

*CTN*: Owned largely by Hong Kong interests, the Chinese Television Network (CTN) has positioned itself as the Chinese equivalent of CNN by providing all-Mandarin news and business reports as well as sports, lifestyle and documentary programming. Broadcasting out of its base in Hong Kong and utilising PanAmSat2, CTN is targeted primarily at the Taiwan market where it reaches 80 percent of the over 4 million households. Despite heavy investments in a digital satellite facility and a 25 percent stake being sold to a Taiwanese programme distributor, doubts have been expressed over whether CTN could maintain the high cost of news-gathering worldwide. However, a contract to have its programmes aired on all trains travelling between Hong Kong and Quanzhou has given CTN confidence in achieving its ultimate business goal of cracking the China market [International Cable, 1995]. Although potentially likely to gain a sizeable following as a unique transnational Mandarin news service providing an alternative to public broadcast sources, CTN runs the risk of antagonising conservative governments in PRC, Taiwan, Hong Kong and even Singapore.

*Discovery-Asia*: A latecomer to the region, the Discovery Channel was launched in January 1994 on both Palapa B2P and Apstar 1. Begun in the US in 1985 and having 75 million subscribers worldwide, it is an educational and documentary network which produces environmental and wildlife programmes [Indovision, 1994]. At year-end 1995, it was already available in 3.1 million households across Asia, 2 million of them in Taiwan where Discovery Asia incorporated Mandarin subtitles to increase its market share. It was also on the Indovision package in Indonesia, on Wharf Cable in Hong Kong, as well as cable systems in the Philippines, Thailand, Japan and Korea [APTC&S, 1995: 27]. Its projection of 35 million homes throughout Asia by the year 2000 might be considered reasonable given the near-universal appeal of its programming relative to news and general entertainment. To cater to cultural sensitivities in the Asian region Discovery Asia utilised a Singapore base, the Asia Broadcast Centre, to source and re-edit programming together with a few other US satellite networks of like-mind [Via Satellite, 1995c]. Denying that fears over media freedom post-1997 were a factor, Discovery Asia relocated its marketing and administrative offices from Hong Kong as well to Singapore the following year [AMCB, 1996a].

Table 4I: Localisation by transnational broadcasters in Asia

<i>Broadcaster</i>	<i>Language variations</i>
StarTV	Mandarin, Hindi, Arabic, Japanese Non-English language films are subtitled in English
Discovery	Thai, Mandarin, Cantonese, Tamil, Korean, Japanese
HBO Asia	English, Chinese, Indonesian, Thai
ESPN	English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Thai, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese
CNNi	English, Mandarin, Japanese
TNT/Cartoon	English, Mandarin, Thai
ABN	English, Mandarin, Thai
CNBC Asia	English, Mandarin
MTV Asia	English, Mandarin, Hindi, Tagalog

#### 4.3.2 Global entertainment channels

The market for transnational satellite television which StarTV demonstrated to exist in Asia triggered the entry of a number of well-known global satellite and cable broadcasters which specialised in providing entertainment programming. Beginning by rebroadcasting the staple fare on their domestic US and European channels, like the news channels they have gradually learnt to adapt their programming to the interests of the Asian consumer and no doubt to accommodate the sensibilities of their governments (Table 4I). As we shall see these broadcasters have done so in order to maintain their foothold among competitors both transnational and domestic in a potentially lucrative region.

*HBO Asia:* Home Box Office (HBO) was inaugurated in Asia as a channel on Singapore CableVision in June 1992 when its encrypted signal was uplinked from Singapore to Palapa B2P for transmission 24 hours per day to South East Asia, and to Apstar1 likewise for North East Asia. Its shareholders are US-based movie businesses such as Time-Warner Entertainment, Paramount Pictures, Sony Pictures Entertainment comprising Columbia and Tristar, and MCA/Universal, to whose past, current and future movies HBO has exclusive pay-TV rights. Although HBO programming of more than 70 movies and other programmes per month (ranging from action, comedy, horror, thrillers, westerns, and classics to pop concerts and family specials) is neither local nor regional, it has subtitled these English-language programmes in Chinese, Thai and Indonesian to cater to Asia markets. As at 1995 HBO had 600,000 subscribers and was available on Hong Kong's Wharf Cable, Indonesia's Indovision, as well as cable networks in Taiwan, Thailand, Singapore, New Zealand, Malaysia and the Philippines [APTC&S, 1995: 31]. India has been another prime target market given its sizeable English-speaking middle class, but HBO's satellite platforms to date do not cover the region [AMCB, 1994].

*ESPN:* In 1992 the US-based channel, Entertainment and Sports Program Network was launched in Asia in direct competition with Prime Sports on StarTV, and its headquarters for the region was set up in Hong Kong. Its signal was relayed from the US using the Intelsat 180 satellite, downlinked to Hong Kong where it is converted from NTSC to PAL and then uplinked to Palapa B2P, Apstar1, Pas-2 and Pas-4 [ESPN, 1994]. Its programming included NBA basketball, English premier league soccer, Indian test match cricket, PGA Golf, Davies Cup Tennis, Asian All-Stars table-tennis, volleyball, and badminton. Learning from its experience in Latin America, ESPN was customising its programming in Asia, and translating it into a number of major languages including Mandarin, Cantonese, Hindi and Indonesian in Asia. By mid-1995 it was available to 11.5 million Asian viewers and the number was expected to rise to 15.0 million a year later across some 15 Asia-Pacific countries. ESPN was a channel within the IndoVision pay-TV line-up in Indonesia, on Hong Kong's Wharf Cable, and on cable/pay-TV services in Thailand, Australia and on New Zealand. Perhaps the secret of its growth has been its arrangements to supply programming duly dubbed to several major cable networks in key cities of China and India, as well as to domestic terrestrial stations throughout Asia [APTC&S, 1995: 29], not to mention a strategic alliance with Prime Sports of StarTV.

*TNT & Cartoon Network:* The Asian launch of this composite channel took place in October 1994 and the channel, owned by Turner Broadcasting, was broadcast from Palapa B2P, Pas-2 and Apstar1. The Cartoon Network portion broadcasts for 14 hours per day, drawing on a library of Hanna-Barbera, Warner Brothers and MGM cartoon programmes of which up to 50 percent were dubbed into Mandarin and Thai by mid-1995. Each night the TNT portion transmitted classic movies from MGM and Warner Brothers which were subtitled into Mandarin and Thai. By mid-1995, TNT & Cartoon Network was available to 1.3 million homes in Taiwan, the Philippines, Thailand, Papua New Guinea, Brunei and Indonesia, with Malaysia and Australia soon to follow. Even though its programming draws on library sources, TNT & Cartoon Network built a post-production and transmission in Hong Kong, an investment of US\$10 million in the Asian market [APTC&S, 1995: 43].

*MTV Asia:* This service returned in mid-1995, about a year after its falling out with StarTV, this time transmitted on Apstar1, Palapa B2P and Pas-4. Beginning with a 24-hour Mandarin channel, MTV Mandarin available in 20 countries, it launched a second English/Hindi channel, MTV Asia targeted at India and the Philippines but available in some 30 countries. MTV Asia also signed agreements to be distributed by domestic broadcasters as well, namely India's Doordarshan on its DD2 Metro channel for three hours per day to over 13 million urban households, and Indonesia's Anteve which carries 50 hours per week to four million households. MTV Mandarin on the other hand seems to have concentrated on retransmission by cable networks in Taiwan for 24-hours a day to 50 percent of all cable households, by cable operators in Korea to a million households for three hours per day, on the Japan's Music Channel and on New Zealand's Sky pay-TV service [APTC&S, 1995: 33]. Perhaps in seeking to emulate the success of its nemesis, Channel V, MTV programming in Asia includes regional as well as international music videos.

### 4.3.3 Regional commercial channels

Commercial interests within the Asia region were quick to see that this new medium of transnational satellite television afforded a way to circumvent draconian laws forbidding commercial broadcasts nationally or to broadcast in subnational minority languages. Apart from stimulating domestic broadcasters through competition, regional commercial channels were also able to reach similar ethnic groups across national borders, expatriates in other subregions, as well as diasporic communities across Asia. Reaching these ethnic markets, uncatered-for till then, meant tapping new regional markets for television programming as well as advertising, and new business opportunities for nationally-based film and video producers.

*Zee TV*: Since its launch towards the end of 1992 on the southern beam of an AsiaSat1 transponder leased from Star TV for US\$6.8 million a year, ZeeTV was a major catalyst for change in Indian television. It circumvented India's law banning commercial channels by uplinking from Hong Kong to AsiaSat1, the same satellite platform as StarTV. Although News Corporation acquired 49.9 percent of its holding company based in Hong Kong, Asia Today, in December 1993, the remaining 50.1 percent of its equity was still held by the founding consortium of non-resident Indians (NRIs). Capitalising on the rapid growth of unlicensed cable networks in India, ZeeTV penetration expanded from 3.8 million homes in February 1993 to over 13 million by mid-1995, though this was still a fraction of Doordarshan's reach [Dziadul, 1994]. Through its subsidiary cable network Siticable, ZeeTV hopes to add a further 5 million households by the year 2000. About 45 percent of its programming is commissioned in India and another 40 percent produced in-house by Zee Telefilms. Talk shows occupied 45 percent of programming time, followed by regional language programmes at 19 percent, film/movies at 13 percent and game shows at 10 percent. Since acquiring a mutual shareholder in News Corporation, ZeeTV and StarTV have been bound by an agreement to cooperate on marketing, subscription management, new channel launches and programme production. In conjunction with StarTV, the general entertainment channel EL-TV was inaugurated in late 1994, the pay-TV Hindi movie channel Zee Cinema was established in 1995, and sub-regional language channels and further expansion into South Asia and West Asia were being considered [APTC&S, 1995: 111-112].

*TVBS*: In September 1993 Hong Kong's Television Broadcasters Ltd. (TVB) launched its first satellite service, Superchannel or TVBS, which was directed at the Taiwan cable market utilising the Palapa B2P satellite. The programming for Taiwan consisted of traditional drama, movies, local news, current affairs, music, light entertainment and sports, all dubbed or subtitled in Mandarin, 60 percent of them sourced externally and 40 percent produced in-house. The three TVBS channels were distributed in Taiwan by ERA International which also distributed ABN, ESPN and HBO, and it achieved a penetration of 3 million households or 60 percent of all TV households by end-1994 [TVB, 1994a]. In 1995 TVBS was available on SkyCable in the Philippines, Singapore CableVision and Universal CableTV (UTV) in Thailand [TVBI, 1995b]. In mid-1995, TVBI acquired a 52 percent interest in The Chinese Channel which broadcast Chinese-language programmes to ethnic Chinese in Europe via

satellite and cable and had exclusive broadcasting rights to TVB programmes in Europe [TVBI, 1995a]. Given its eventual aim to tap the potential of the China television market, and to make this market accessible to HK advertisers, produced a 40-hour light entertainment package specifically for syndication to 22 cable networks in China [Green, 1994]. TVB has also reached agreements with domestic Chinese stations in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong and Fujian to provide them with programming from its Chinese programming library, regarded the world's largest. In order to rival StarTV, TVB was seeking to create an alliance of media companies to beam television programmes throughout Asia, but media executives in Asia preferred to market their television programming on their own [Goll, 1994].

*CETV*: China Entertainment Television was founded in December 1994 to provide Mandarin-language family entertainment channel catering to the Chinese mainland and thus to rival StarTV and TVB. Its chief executive and chairman, Robert Chua a Singaporean who had made a name for himself in producing variety shows in Hong Kong in the 1970s, reputedly owns 30 percent while partners from China and Indonesia were said to own another 60 percent, while up to a further 10 percent was believed available to a potential partner, possibly one from the west able to supply programming [Green, 1994]. It believed that its programming formula of 'no sex, no violence, no news' would avoid controversy with the government of China and other conservative Asian nations. Its round-the-clock programming of fashion, games, health, cooking as well as educational shows are about a third produced locally, a third imported internationally (including from Discovery Channel) and a third rebroadcasts of the Hong Kong public broadcaster RTHK. In March 1995 when it was launched on Apstar as a 24-hour channel CETV had a penetration of 8 million households in China and by year-end carried into 28 million households via 100 cable networks. Its programmes were selectively re-transmitted terrestrially by China TV Company which served 37 subregional channels catering to 200 million households. CETV was available on 50 Taiwanese cable networks, on Singapore Cablevision, and on Sky Cable in the Philippines as well [APTC&S, 1995: 21].

#### 4.3.4 National public channels

A number of channels beamed from Asian satellites were national and government-owned channels utilising the satellite to reach remote pockets of its own territory cost-effectively. Sharing the AsiaSat1 satellite with StarTV is China Central Television (CCTV) whose first three domestic channels were beamed at China's own cities while its fourth channel is directed at Macao, Hong Kong and Taiwan, territories over which it lays claim. On AsiaSat's northern beam was Mongolian TV, while the southern beam also carries Myanmar TV and Pakistan TV as well, though these are primarily for domestic broadcast. Though Palapa was designed to be a domestic satellite for Indonesia and it carries the public broadcaster TVRI and the domestic commercial stations, it became a *de facto* regional satellite for the Asia-Pacific because using it since the late 1980s have been channels from Malaysia, Australia, Vietnam, France, USA, Papua New Guinea and Hong Kong [Setiawan, 1994].

*TCSI:* Increasingly Asian governments are developing international television channels to promote their culture and ideology on a regional basis, or more strictly to put forward their point of view on domestic and international political issues and market their business interests in a mix of public relations and diplomacy. In October 1995 Singapore launched an all-Mandarin commercial satellite channel, Xinshi (abbreviation signifying 'Singapore Television') catering primarily to the Taiwanese market. More commonly known as Television Corporation of Singapore International (TCSI), this regional arm of the country's domestic public broadcaster draws on the 7,000-hour TCS library of Chinese drama, news and other programming and was considering co-productions with Taiwan partners. The Singapore authorities admit to another motivation for broadcasting via satellite, namely showcasing its locally-produced programmes in order to market them to China's TV stations by providing the latter with complimentary decoders [International Cable, 1995].

*ATVI:* Australia's regional television service known as Australia Television International (ATVI) was launched in February 1993 by the public broadcaster Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) and transmitted via the Indonesian satellite Palapa B2P. Due to sensitivity to issues of cultural diversity in the region, and the perceived influence of foreign television on domestic affairs in Asian countries, editorial and programming guidelines were established 'to ensure that the prospect of causing inadvertent offence is minimised' [White, 1994]. Despite being free-to-air, made available to any cable or domestic network to rebroadcast parts or the whole freely, and even approved by national governments in the region for retransmission domestically, ATVI has had few takers. It negotiated rebroadcast agreements with 300 hotels throughout Asia and with cable networks in Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam and Sri Lanka [Australia Television, 1996a], but still failed to achieve any significant viewership, apart perhaps from Australian expatriates in the region. Even though its minimalist budget had already placed considerable constraints on its programming, the Australian government was unwilling to underwrite ATVI indefinitely and put it on sale. Despite publishing high figures of penetration potential such as 11 million households in the Asia-Pacific region [Australia Television, 1996b], it failed to persuade advertisers. Its continued service as a quasi-public broadcaster has been in doubt since its purchase by Australia's Seven Network.

By no means can the survey of transnational television broadcasters in the section above be exhaustive because there are new entrants into the region virtually every quarter. In some estimates, the total number of transnational channels in Asia are expected to exceed 100 well before the turn of the century. This rapid growth of the transnational satellite television industry since 1991 did take national governments in Asia by surprise and cause alarm initially. But with varying degrees of swiftness, most of them adopted a range of media policies and regulations to govern the perceived intrusion, mitigate the effects on their citizens and provide alternatives. The next section examines the political and regulatory environment in Asia as a whole which the various transnational satellite television broadcasters have faced in their initial years of operation in the region.

## 4.4 REGIONAL RESPONSE

Concern among developing countries over cultural imperialism by the growing number of transnational broadcast satellites has caused their governments to respond with policies and regulations, either proactively or reactively. In analysing the situation in North East Asia in the early 1990s, Chan (1994a) offers four ideal types of national responses to the advent of satellite television in Asia: virtual suppression, suppressive openness, illegal openness and regulated openness. Inspired by his typology, this thesis will adopt a six-point continuum of government policies (Table 4J), deemed more pertinent to the transnational satellite scene in Asia in the mid-1990s. But unlike the earlier typology, it will also demonstrate shifts in policies of national governments in the region over time.

Table 4J: Typology of government policies towards transnational satellite television

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
Active suppression	Severe restrictions on ownership of satellite dish-antennae or cable access which are rigorously enforced
Latent suppression	Policies against the ownership of satellite dish-antennae or cable access which are either not enforced or irregularly enforced
Complacent inaction	Lack of laws concerning access to satellite and cable television due to government disinterest or negligence
Prudent inaction	Interim legal void concerning access to satellite and cable television as the government analyses developments and considers its options
Controlled access	Access to some satellite and cable channels allowed subject to government regulation or industry self-regulation of content
Liberal access	Access to all satellite and cable channels without any regulation or with explicit legal rights

The extreme stage in this continuum is represented as 'active suppression' of transnational satellite viewing, rather than Chan's more ambiguous term 'virtual suppression'. Since his term 'suppressive openness' seems almost a contradiction in terms, 'latent suppression' is used to better define the concept of unenforced prohibitions in this dissertation. This author believes the term 'complacent inaction' better encapsulates the broad category of situations where, by default of the government's lack of policy, there is a legal void concerning transnational satellite and cable television. On the other hand 'prudent inaction' refers to the case where the government deliberately opts not to act in the interim, pending perhaps analysis of developments. Furthermore, this author feels there is a need to differentiate between 'controlled access' in which a government which then proceeds to limit viewers' access to certain transnational channels, and those which allow its citizens 'liberal access' or to watch as they please once they have registered or paid a license fee. This typology will be duly applied to the

broadcast policies of selected countries within Asia generally and their responses to transnational satellite television specifically.

#### 4.4.1 South East Asia

All nations of this subregion lie under the footprint of pioneering transnational satellites in Asia, most notably AsiaSat and Palapa. Seven of them are members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Singapore, and despite more recent setbacks, Malaysia and Thailand, are among the newly industrialising countries of Asia, which may be equated with semi-periphery countries in the dependency perspective or world-systems theory. Various proclaimed as 'economic miracles', 'tiger economies' or 'mini-dragons' by modernisation theorists, they are placed in the same league as Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea, countries rapidly rising out of the ranks of the developing world to challenge the developed, till economic woes in the late 1990s raised doubts. Indonesia and Philippines are probably at earlier stages of similarly rapid economic growth, while Brunei has long been enormously prosperous being oil-rich. Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar (Burma) are among the newest member-nations and are being assisted in its economic liberalisation by the others, while Cambodia has ambitions to join ASEAN. Yet despite most countries in the geographical region belonging to one regional politico-economic association, each country has adopted a different response to the onset of transnational satellite television.

Table 4K: Government policies in SE Asia towards transnational satellite television

	<i>Active Suppression</i>	<i>Latent Suppression</i>	<i>Complacent Inaction</i>	<i>Prudent Inaction</i>	<i>Controlled Access</i>	<i>Liberal Access</i>
Malaysia	1992-96 (west)	1992-96 (east)			1996-	
Singapore	1992-94				1994-	
Thailand				1992-94		1995-
Philippines			1990-93			1994-
Vietnam		1996-		1992-95		
Indonesia						1990-

*Malaysia:* In the early 1990s Malaysia licensed TVROs for hotels enabling their guests to watch CNN and two StarTV channels. Then the government granted its first license to Satellite Network Systems (SNS), a consortium of the public broadcaster RTM and the commercial controlled by the ruling-coalition, to provide up to eight pay-TV channels by 1995 [Via Satellite, 1995b]. MegaTV was established in late 1995, initially for the Klang Valley, and provided transnational channels such as CNNi, Cartoon Network, Discovery, ESPN and HBO. While Malaysia banned the use of dish-antennae for the reception of satellite broadcasts in its state of Sarawak on the island of Borneo, some 2,000 illegally-installed antennae were reported to exist [Noordin, 1992]. Thus a

situation of 'active suppression' towards satellite television existed in West Malaysia while 'latent suppression' existed in East Malaysia. Since Malaysia launched its own domestic communication satellite named Measat-1, it has permitted a 22-channel DTH satellite pay-TV service called Astro [Hughes and Masters, 1996]. While it offered a range of transnational and in-house channels, the former were first downlinked and subjected to government censorship at the Astro facilities, and then uplinked for rebroadcast to subscriber homes. So Malaysia could be said to have made a careful move towards 'controlled access' to transnational satellite television through its own pay-TV services.

*Singapore:* Satellite dishes require special permission in Singapore and this was granted only to certain government departments, educational institutions, the financial market and world-class hotels. The early response of the Singapore government to transnational satellite television, despite grass-roots demand for the service from its affluent English and Chinese literate populace, was described as one of 'virtual suppression' [Chan, 1994a]. Ironically, Singapore began utilising a satellite in 1994 to broadcast an 18-hour all-Mandarin satellite channel utilising PanAmSat2 as a means of raising the country's regional and international profile. Later, in recognition of market demand, three channels of satellite-downlinked programming, namely HBO, CNN and Mandarin Entertainment, were made available by subscription from Singapore Cable Vision, a subsidiary of SBC [Hukill, 1993]. By early 1995, the government-owned Singapore Telecom was experimenting with a video-on-demand service to the country's 3.2 million residents [World Broadcast News, 1995]. Thus the local situation has become one of 'controlled access' to a growing number of transnational satellite channels via the government-approved cable network. However in its bid to become the regional broadcasting hub, Singapore has attracted over eight transnational broadcasters to set up their Asian operations in the country.

*Thailand.* This nation was the pioneer within ASEAN in introducing pay-TV and cable-TV in 1990, following a recommendation of the regulatory body to deregulate the industry. By the early 1990s there were two providers of pay-TV: International Broadcasting Corporation (IBC), owned by the Shinawatra group, and Thai Sky TV. All programmes on the four IBC channels were imported, mostly from the US, and either dubbed or subtitled in Thai to cater to the vast majority of the population which was not English-literate [Hamid, 1991]. Thai Sky TV offered three channels, all dubbed in Thai and subtitled in English, and sourced programming from ITN, BBC, NBC and NHK for its news channel, and MTV, Virgin, MGM and Paramount among others for its entertainment channel [Siriuyusak, 1993]. Given the lifting of the ban on satellite dishes, Thailand is a country with 'liberal access' to satellite television, though the language barrier has meant that the appeal of transnational programming was confined to its educated and affluent minority, and expatriates.

*Vietnam:* Having embarked on a programme of economic liberalisation, Vietnam is receiving considerable commercial impetus from Thailand. In 1993, a Thai firm supplied 30 satellite dishes to offices, hotels and embassies in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City [Asian Communications, 1993: 23-26]. A year later Vietnam TV (VTV) was the first foreign broadcaster to use Thaicom2, a satellite which expects to attract French broadcasters to the former colonies [World Broadcast News, 1994d]. However, being under communist party control much of its broadcast relayed information on

government decisions and events, spawning a video rental industry as an alternative for entertainment [Shoesmith, 1994]. Later VTV also operated a limited redistribution service for CNNi and StarTV, but this and other access to satellite television was prohibited in 1996 [AMCB, 1997b]. True to its ideological commitment to communism the Vietnamese government's policy towards transnational satellite broadcasts seems to have reverted to 'latent suppression' after some years of seeming 'prudent inaction', before economic growth made access by consumers a reality.

*Philippines:* Three Manila TV stations have historically utilised Palapa satellites for nationwide broadcast of their programmes, but many of the 400 original TVRO dishes were believed to be picking up other signals from Palapa, IntelSat, AsiaSat and Japan's DBS satellites, some of them for unauthorised re-transmission via cable, terrestrial TV and videotape [Stuart, 1993]. The arrival of transnational satellite television such as CNNi, StarTV and ESPN in the 1990s was a major impetus to the phenomenal growth of the cable industry which had existed as a regulated monopoly in the 1970s and 80s. Of the 11 million TV households in Philippines, 250,000 were connected by 300 cable operators, most of them small family businesses though they had forged alliances with key multi-system operators and invested an estimated US\$60 million in the industry by 1995 [Broadcast Asia, 1994d]. By end-1995 the cable operator Sky Cable was offering over 55 transnational channels including StarTV, ABN, AusTV, MTV, TVBS, CTN, as well as French, Russian and local programming [Kwang, 1995]. More recently plans have been announced for Philippines' own broadcast satellite, to be owned by its long-distance telephone company. Although there have been laws since 1987 governing ownership of cable networks, content and satellite dish antennae licensing, in reality the Philippines' policy towards transnational satellite television may best be described as one of 'complacent inaction' turned 'liberal access'.

*Indonesia:* The current policy of deregulation represents a significant move by the government away from its past fear of commercialism and political subversion via the media, and a new recognition of the sophistication of its populace. In comparison with other South East Asian nations, Indonesia adopted a seemingly enlightened attitude to commercial television, including transnational satellite broadcasting. Using the typology adopted in this thesis, it may be said to have a response of 'liberal access', since the technology for receiving satellite broadcast signals had been in place for decades for domestic television purposes. Although a license was required to own a satellite dish even for domestic reception there were estimated to be five times as many illegal ones and each was widely shared. As the most liberal country in this subregion towards transnational satellite television, the case of Indonesia will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.

#### 4.4.2 South Asia

All countries of this subregion with the exception of Nepal are characterised by once having the same colonial power and in fact Pakistan and Bangladesh were carved of what was administered by the British as the Indian Empire. Although the countries have been independent for over 40 years, a major legacy has been the dominance of English as the language of the educated political and economic

elite, even the official language of government and business. The five nations described form the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) with a few small nations such as Bhutan and the Maldives about which little is known about their broadcasting policies. Within the region India, by its very geographical size, has been dominant economically, culturally, politically, even militarily, and therefore treated with some suspicion given regional history. In terms of the media this may be illustrated by the fact that India's public television service, Doordarshan, has long been considered a *de facto* transnational broadcaster by the neighbouring states.

Table 4L: Government policies in S Asia towards transnational satellite television

	<i>Active Suppression</i>	<i>Latent Suppression</i>	<i>Complacent Inaction</i>	<i>Prudent Inaction</i>	<i>Controlled Access</i>	<i>Liberal Access</i>
Pakistan					1992-	
Bangladesh					1992-	
Sri Lanka		1992-94				1994-
Nepal			1988-90	1990-93		1994-
India			1991-95		1995-	1998?

*Pakistan:* In 1991 a semi-private channel, Shalimar Television Network (STN) began operations re-broadcasting CNNi around the clock, first in Islamabad, then to Karachi and Lahore. In November 1992 with Japanese funding the government launched a second public channel, PTV2, and leased an AsiaSat transponder to transmit its educational programming to satellite dishes in 26 centres around the country. Though the only South Asian country with a transponder on AsiaSat1, Pakistan used it for educational television broadcasts domestically, for telephony, for news gathering, radio transmission, and not for Pan-Asian broadcasts [World Broadcast News, 1993f: 63]. In Pakistan satellite dishes for the reception of transnational television were allowed on the payment of a fee to the government and there were an estimated 2,500 such antennae in Karachi alone by late 1992 [Zuberi, 1993]. Thus the policy of the government of Pakistan towards transnational satellite television may be categorised as one of 'controlled access'. Since then the satellite channel has become a deliberately transnational service named Pakistan International Television (PITV) even if claiming to be only targeting Pakistanis working the Gulf states [King, 1996], which may portend further liberalisation of policy.

*Bangladesh:* The sole domestic channel in Bangladesh, BTV, which transmitted for seven hours each evening also re-broadcast programmes from the transnationals, BBC and CNNi. Subsequently there were demands for alternative television channels and the government feared that these would be funded by opposition political parties. So it approved the renewal of the CNNi contract with BTV and permitted satellite dish antennae for the reception of transnational television [Anwar, 1993]. In 1996, the government decided to launch a second channel which would broadcast both terrestrially and via satellite, and offer slots for sale to private broadcasters [AMCB, 1996g]. Thus the

policy in Bangladesh, like that of Pakistan of which it was once a part, may be described as a consistent one of 'controlled access' even if it is for reasons of political and economic expedience.

*Sri Lanka:* This country has the distinction of being the permanent residence of Arthur C. Clarke who originated the idea of geostationary satellites and through whose satellite dishes CNNi reports on the Gulf War were relayed to the national TV network. Since then enterprising individuals have constructed satellite dish-antennae out of chicken wire and formed cable networks [Weekackody, 1993]. The popular private station, Extra Terrestrial Vision (ETV), re-transmitted sports, hourly news, educational programmes and documentaries of StarTV 24-hours per day to the capital and surrounding areas [World Broadcast News, 1993-94: 30]. By 1996 some 16 entities including foreign joint-ventures, local firms and non-government organisations had applied for licences to set up radio and television stations under a newly established broadcasting authority [Television Asia, 1996b: 4]. Thus a policy of 'latent suppression' has unobtrusively given way to one of 'liberal access' in Sri Lanka in recent years.

*Nepal:* Even prior to having its own television station in 1985, Nepalese had access to India's Doordarshan programming through first a booster antennae and then via satellite dishes, and so by 1990 there were 8,000 sets in the country for both television and video-watching [DECORE, 1991]. This satellite television reception received a boost from CNNi's coverage of the Gulf War and subsequent launch of StarTV. In Nepal satellite dishes for the reception of transnational television were legal though they needed to be licensed regardless of whether they were installed prior to the National Communication Policy of 1992 [World Broadcast News, 1993f: 62]. By end-1992 there were five major dish antennae manufacturers in Kathmandu, the total number installed was estimated as exceeding 1,000 and there were 13 satellite channels accessible through household cable-sharing [Panday, 1993]. In 1994 the government of Nepal licensed a cable network in the Kathmandu valley and a satellite television service [ABU News, 1994]. In 1996 this second service was authorised to broadcast in Nepali when previously it was only allowed to downlink and distribute foreign-language programming [AMCB, 1997a]. Given its circumstances as a small and poor neighbour of India, Nepal had always pursued a policy of 'prudent inaction' towards transnational broadcasts which has shifted gradually to one of 'liberal access'.

*India:* When StarTV began broadcasting Asia-wide in 1991 it had considerable impact in India because an estimated 20 million out of its 880 million population comprehended the predominant language of broadcast. Most of StarTV's four English language channels were soon available on the extensive unregulated cable networks which had developed to provide alternative programming to the sole, public broadcaster, Doordarshan (DD). As mentioned earlier, in October 1992 a group of non-resident Indian investors launched ZeeTV, a Hindi-language channel catering to both urban and rural areas of India, utilising the same AsiaSat satellite as StarTV. Initially DD responded to the arrival by StarTV and ZeeTV by making its second channels in the urban centres more flexible, international and commercial in programming. Subsequently, the Indian government expanded its satellite channels offerings and regulated the cable industry. Thus the Indian government's initial response to StarTV and

other transnational television may be summed up as 'complacent inaction', which in 1995 changed to 'controlled access' and seems headed further to being one of 'liberal access'. The complex situation in India vis-a-vis satellite, cable and terrestrial television, both transnational and domestic, will be analysed fully in Chapter Six.

#### 4.4.3 North East Asia

This region is dominated geographically by China though Japan is the dominant economic power, and these two nations provide an axis on which to divide it. There is increasing acceptance of the notion of greater China which treats the Peoples' Republic of China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao as a single entity politically, economically and culturally. South Korea and Taiwan were once colonies of Japan and so retain some cultural ties with the latter, though there is also considerable antipathy in the first. Previously under the ambit of the USSR, Mongolia has come to re-assert its national identity only in recent years, while North Korea remains a closed Stalinist state. Even leaving out the last two countries, the national responses within North East Asia display considerable diversity.

Table 4M: Government policies in NE Asia towards transnational satellite television

	<i>Active Suppression</i>	<i>Latent Suppression</i>	<i>Complacent Inaction</i>	<i>Prudent Inaction</i>	<i>Controlled Access</i>	<i>Liberal Access</i>
Japan					1989-95	1995-
South Korea	1997-		1980s-93	1993-96		
PRChina	1980s-91	1994-	1991-93			
Taiwan				1990-93	1994-	
Hong Kong					1991-	

*Japan:* Though the launch of StarTV surprised Japanese broadcasters, it is only one of about 80 satellite television services theoretically accessible in Japan. In addition to the transnational broadcasters such as StarTV, CNNi, ESPN, HBBO, CFL, China's CCTV4 and India's ATN, there are international relays by US and Australian networks using Intelsat satellites, domestic television relays by Russia and China, and domestic broadcasting such as by India on Insat and Indonesia on Palapa [Shimizu, 1993]. In Japan private reception of transnational satellite television was not restricted although re-transmission by cable networks was, and therefore it was a country which practiced 'controlled access'. But these transnational services have had little effect on Japanese households because they have access to as many as seven domestic channels in metropolitan areas, and up to 32 cable channels in Tokyo. Apart from the television alternatives available, there is also the language barrier. Thus by late 1993, less than 500 households in Japan were believed to be receiving StarTV using the three-metre satellite dish required for AsiaSat1 [Shimizu, 1993]. Since the government granted 'liberal access' to transnational broadcasters in 1995, the latter have been tailoring their programming and directing specific channels towards Japanese viewers conjunction with domestic

communications firms [AWSJ, 1995c]. By 1997 the JSkyB, a joint-venture of News Corporation and three major Japanese corporations, was launching a 12-channel service, and was one of a number of other similar ventures being planned [Hughes, 1997].

*South Korea:* Although South Korea had received transnational broadcasts via satellite and spillover, the early government policy on transnational satellite television seemed to be one of 'complacent inaction' as there has been neither restriction on nor regulation of the reception [Vanden Heuvel and Dennis, 1994]. In 1993 the government liberalised the domestic television industry by licensing cable channels to broadcast sports, Korean and foreign movies, and other programmes, in a move which seemed like 'controlled access' [Clifford, 1993]. A Gallup survey is reported to have found that 230,000 households or two percent of all South Korean households had satellite antennae. Dish manufacturers estimated that only 10,000 households used it to watch StarTV while an overwhelming 200,000 preferred to watch JBS, a Japanese satellite broadcast. Rather belatedly, the Korean government decided to launch a domestic broadcast satellite of its own, Moogunghwa or Koreasat 1, in 1995 to wean its populace off transnational television, but with the latter emphasising public broadcasting and education that outcome was in doubt [Won, 1993]. In late 1995, four new cable channels were launched, specialising in a Korean game, cartoons, Christian issues and culture respectively catering to about 370,000 subscribers [AMCB, 1996f]. However in 1997 the government banned the relay of transnational satellite television by South Korean cable networks, while not interfering in their private reception by households, in a move which might be characterised as 'latent suppression' [Asian A&M, 1997g].

*PRC (China):* Only in the early 1990s with the launch of AsiaSat1 and StarTV did satellite dish sales soar in China and by end-1993 there were estimated to be 600,000 to 1 million dishes in use giving 30-70 million Chinese access to transnational satellite television [Ciotti, 1994], believed to be more in the south than north of the country. Galvanised by Murdoch's purchase of StarTV the Chinese government acted in March 1994 to restrict satellite dish ownership to public institutions such as financial, media and education organisations, tourist hotels rated two-star and above, and residential buildings built for foreigners [AWSJ, 1994b]. However, AsiaSat1 was utilised by certain provincial stations to reach remote areas of rugged terrain, giving residents and others an excuse to possess satellite dishes. The Chinese initial response to transnational television could be seen as an example of 'latent suppression' for while it might have wished to ban foreign media, it lacked the political will or logistical ability to do so. Though occasion it exercised 'active suppression', the continued economic liberalisation of the country was leading it inexorably back towards 'complacent inaction' or even 'controlled access' as far as its policy on transnational satellite television.

*Taiwan:* Poor quality and politically conservative programming on the government-controlled domestic channels spurred the growth of an illegal cable television industry offering over 100 channels which caused the reduction of combined prime-time ratings of the terrestrial broadcasters from 100 percent to just 65-70 percent by 1995 [ASIAcom, 1995b]. New legislation in 1993 legalised the status of its 300 cable TV operators, but banned foreign ownership of them and required that 20 percent of all

programming be local. Thus Taiwan's policy towards transnational satellite television has shifted from one of 'prudent inaction' to being a case of 'regulated access' in more recent years.

*Hong Kong:* In December 1990 the Hong Kong government licensed StarTV to operate a pan-Asian satellite television service for 12 years, though it was not allowed to broadcast in Cantonese, the dominant language of the colony. By 1993 StarTV had achieved a penetration in the colony itself of only 5 percent or a daily reach of 253,000 viewers. The station was allowed to offer a pay-TV service from October 1993 provided these channels were made available in Hong Kong through the sole licensed cable provider. Though known to be a *laissez-faire* economy, Hong Kong has nonetheless adopted a cautious form of 'controlled access' towards transnational satellite broadcasting in Asia, balancing its desire to promote the colony as a communications hub whilst concerned not to offend its dominant neighbour and ultimate political master, China. The variegated case of Greater China comprising the PRC, Taiwan and Hong Kong will be discussed in detail in Chapter Seven.

There are other subregions of Asia, notably West Asia, Central Asia and Oceania, of course, but generally they represent peripheral markets for the leading transnational satellite television broadcasters being investigated in this thesis. While StarTV was a pioneer in the field, it was soon operating as one of many transnational broadcasters competing in Asia. In this survey of the politico-economic contexts of the major sub-regional markets of Asia in which these broadcasters operate it is soon evident that new communications technology and government policies alone do not seem to dictate the success of the transnational medium. Thus both the fears of Asian governments regarding erosion of national culture and claims of transnational broadcasters to reach large regional audiences could prove to be somewhat exaggerated. The interaction of other factors such as terrestrial versus satellite programming, cultural and linguistic barriers, and economic affluence in each country may well prove critical instead. The next three chapters explore these issues more deeply in the case of one such broadcaster, namely StarTV, in the context of three major markets in the region, namely Indonesia, India and Greater China.

Chapter Five  
INDONESIAN TELEVISION MARKET

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As the only country in the South East Asia region to espouse a deliberate 'open skies' policy towards satellite transmissions, Indonesia was a natural choice of case-study for this thesis. Having encouraged its citizens to purchase satellite dish-antennae to receive domestic public broadcasts, the government found that it could not easily restrict access to transnational commercial broadcasts, especially since some of those channels were utilising the same national satellite platform. Before its economic crisis of the late 1990s, Indonesia was aiming to join the ranks of newly industrialising countries (NICs) or 'tiger economies' in Asia, which would have made its domestic consumer market an attractive target for multinational marketers. These were some of the expectations of the pioneering transnational satellite broadcasters such as StarTV and CNN, but it soon became evident that 'open skies' policies towards satellite television by the government could be met with 'averted eyes' by consumers. Thus this case-study research is an exploration of why Indonesia was not a runaway success as a market for transnational satellite television. We begin our search for the factors behind the phenomenon with the development of television in the republic.

### 5.1 PUBLIC TELEVISION & POLICY

Television broadcasting commenced in Indonesia as a limited public service in conjunction with the hosting of the Fourth Asian Games in Jakarta in 1962, a show-piece of Indonesia's aspired leadership of an increasingly post-colonial Asia and the Non-Aligned Movement. A brief history of the country now known as Indonesia is probably needful to understand the context. Its globalisation can be traced perhaps to when these 'Spice Islands' started trading with the English and Portuguese in the 16th century, although regional trade with the Indian sub-continent and the Middle East especially predated this. The European trade in spices was taken over by the Dutch who overcame local kingdoms and colonised the archipelago by the early 19th century, which then came to be known as the Dutch East Indies. The pro-communist nationalist movement begun in the 1920s and subdued by the Dutch colonialists, was recognised as a puppet government by the Japanese who invaded the region in World War II. Following the Japanese surrender, the nationalists under Sukarno proclaimed independence but it was only in 1949 after further armed conflict that the Dutch conceded sovereignty. Hence an era of anti-Western sentiment and political non-alignment in the context of the Cold War between communist and capitalist blocs followed, as did economic stagnation subsequently. It was in this context of heightened nationalism that television was first introduced in Indonesia.

### 5.1.1 Capital-based era (c.1964-1974)

Even after the Asia Games, television in Indonesia was confined to the capital city and broadcast for only 30-60 minutes per day, reaching 65,000 sets by 1969. There was no policy or dedicated administrative structure for television under Indonesia's first president, Sukarno, a charismatic leader who saw it solely as a vehicle for his personal communication with the people. It was first established as an operation of the Presidential Foundation and then in 1963 was set up as an independent foundation, funded by license fees and advertising revenue. This was followed by regional channels funded by local commercial interests sometimes in conjunction with local governments, following the decentralised model of radio broadcasting [Kitley, 1997b]. A communist-led coup attempt in 1965 was put down by the armed forces led by General Suharto who soon replaced Sukarno as president and has held that position since. The long-resident Chinese minority, widely resented for their wealth, were alleged to have been sympathisers with communist China, and consequently persecuted and compelled to assimilate culturally. Suharto inaugurated a 'New Order' which concentrated power in the armed forces, propagated an socio-ethical code called 'Pancasila' stressing national unity, favoured economic liberalisation, and overtly repressed communism [Speake, 1993: 292-293]. This New Order was instrumental in forging and perpetuating a national culture, and hence maintained a tight control over film and television [Hooker and Dick, 1993: 2-6], making for a cultural imperialism from within the country [Holaday, 1996].

After the abortive coup control over the regional station at Yogyakarta was centralised under TVRI in Jakarta which in turn was placed under the control of the Directorate of Radio, Television and Film [Kitley, 1997a]. Thus television was recognised as an ideal means for achieving the national goals of integration, development and political stability only after the inauguration of the 'New Order' government of President Suharto and was consequently incorporated in the first Five-Year National Plan in 1969. Still, by 1972 there were still only 212,580 television sets in use, centred around Jakarta with only 5 percent outside the island of Java [Alfian and Chu, 1981: 22-24]. From the beginning TVRI was governed by strict policy guidelines in the ostensible pursuit of cultural preservation and national unity. These were issued as ministerial decrees which had the *de facto* effect of law and which were enforced though believed to be often in an *ultra jures* manner. TVRI was placed under the Ministry of Information and had to work in close collaboration with other government departments and agencies for its development communications programming. Despite such considerable bureaucratic pressures and largely due to budgetary constraints, in reality almost 25 percent of TVRI programming was imported, and comprised mainly entertainment from the US [Alfian and Chu, 1981: 37].

### 5.1.2 Domestic satellite era (c.1975-1986)

The role of foreign multinational corporations in the development of the television medium in Indonesia has a long history. Though the idea of a national communications satellite had been rejected earlier by the policy body Bappenas, a Hughes Corporation representative was said to have met President Suharto at an Intelsat launch and sold him on the idea as a means to integrate Indonesia's islands [Interview Ids04.01].

Geographically the country comprises 13,700 islands, only 6,000 of which inhabited, making it the world's largest archipelago. Straddling the equator in South East Asia, Indonesia spans 5,000 kms east to west and 2,000 kms north to south and has an actual land area of 1.9 million sq km.<sup>8</sup> At over 190 million Indonesia's population in 1993 was more than ten times that of Australia (which has over 1.5 times the former's land mass), and has been growing at an average rate of 16.7 percent over the last decade [BPS, 1992: 3,15]. The cost of installing the satellite-based television system for such a large territory and scattered population could not have been justified on a commercial basis alone, even if Indonesia had been a developed country.

*Palapa:* At the instigation of President Suharto the Indonesian government nonetheless took the radical step in 1975 of purchasing a communication satellite, the first developing country in the world to do so. Christened 'Palapa' after a local fruit it was meant initially to link extractive industries in remote areas with their Jakarta computers and offices, and not for broadcasting. Televisi Republik Indonesia (TVRI) had planned originally to use microwave transmissions instead and thus had no intention to use satellites. But such broadcasts reached only Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Surabaya and Bandung in the first eight years and it was estimated to take 50 years to provide television coverage for the whole country. Hence it decided subsequently to utilise the Palapa satellite for national broadcasts of TVRI and permit the use of satellite dish-antennae. The official stance has been that satellite communications was instrumental in the development of Indonesia because it had improved national efficiency and productivity, enhanced equitable distribution of wealth, aided economic development, helped energy conservation, expanded market opportunities, increased the quality and coverage of national education, assisted the family planning programme, stimulated development of high-tech industries and enhanced dissemination of information to a wide spectrum of society<sup>9</sup> [Parapak, 1990]. Consequently by the 1980s a second generation of domestic satellites, Palapa 2A and 2B, were planned as direct-broadcast vehicles, while by the early the 1990s the third-generation Palapa C satellites were on the drawing board [Interview Ids04.02].

*Advertising:* Upon broadcasting to rural areas via satellite in 1976 the government confined television commercials (TVCs), then contributing 38.8 percent of TVRI's revenue, to the hour prior to satellite transmission. The argument for this policy was to protect rural audiences from materialism and rising expectations. When advertisers protested, the government compromised by allowing two half-hour slots for TVCs on either side of satellite transmission. The revenues from advertising dropped only slightly in 1978 due to on-going contracts, and so the real impact of these policies were not felt till following years [Alfian and Chu, 1981: 35-37]. Advertising was not solicited by TVRI and all television commercials submitted had to undergo review against policy similar to that of programming. Commercials for luxury goods and imported products were discouraged while products which contributed to development and locally-produced goods were favoured. Still 28.4 percent of products advertised were Indonesian and only 6.9 percent were imported, but the vast majority or 64.7 percent were from joint-ventures. Despite the restrictive policies and practices, advertising continued to make up 10 percent of national programming, and even more in Jakarta. But abruptly in 1981, television advertising in Indonesia was banned totally, because the government believed that commercials raised unrealistic material expectations among the masses [McDaniel, 1994: 253-259]. The

announcement to ban both television advertising and gambling dens at the same time implied that the decision may have been to appease the Islamic political party PPP whose women's group had been lobbying for such bans [Kitley, 1994].

The comprehensive longitudinal study between 1976 and 1982 conducted by Chu, Alfian and Schramm [1991] in conjunction with the Indonesian government claimed that satellite delivery of TVRI to rural Indonesia had stimulated considerable social change, though possibly indirectly. Through its development programming the research found that TVRI had facilitated the adoption of 'modern' agricultural practices such as high-yielding rice, chemical fertilisers, pesticides and intensive planting, promoted also via government-sponsored farmers' organisations on the ground. TVRI programmes were also attributed with changes of attitude towards government health clinics, 'Western' child-birth practices and family planning, and towards education and vocational opportunities, while not undermining religious values. Perhaps particularly heartening to the government was the finding that TVRI had contributed to learning of the national language, a lynch-pin in its programme of national integration. However the responses of the sampled viewers may be somewhat biased given the survey had the 'full cooperation of the Indonesian government at central, provincial, and local levels.' [Chu *et al*, 1991: 28-29] and utilised local public servants, especially in the context of the government's practice of extensive social organisation down to the grass-roots level. Nonetheless of interest to the present thesis are the findings with regards to economic behaviour which would have elicited less concern by viewers about ideological rectitude. The research found that advertising on the public broadcaster had achieved statistically significant changes in the purchase of consumer goods, even of those which had been long available in the market and those promoted indirectly through advertisements of related products. This is particularly significant since advertising had been banned a year prior to the research which Chu *et al* [1991: 115-134] imply was commendable foresight by the Indonesian government.

### 5.1.3 Commercial competition era (c.1987 - present)

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Indonesian government issued a series of decrees gradually liberalising the television industry by permitting commercial television stations, a process which will be elaborated in the next section. Despite the introduction of commercial television TVRI continued to have the highest penetration of all the television stations in Indonesia. Still even with 300 re-transmitters of 100km radius each TVRI reached only 35 percent of the population because of the wide dispersion of the islands and their mountainous terrain. Realising that it would require 1,000 re-transmitters to reach the whole country and since that was too costly, the government opted for satellite transmission and permitted the use of dish-antennae by its population [Interview Ids03.06]. This was because that technology required line-of-sight which was difficult given the mountainous terrain and spread of the islands [Interview Ids04.01]. The commercial channels were formidable competitors to TVRI and it had lost much market share to the domestic commercial channels, especially RCTI. But the public broadcaster intended to retaliate by using the IndoStar1 direct broadcast satellite (DBS) free-of-charge to increase its geographical coverage of its unencrypted service from 67 percent, already the highest, to 100 percent of Indonesia's population.

The Indonesian government was embroiled in a controversy in over TVRI license fees in 1990 when President Suharto authorised their collection by a private company, owned by his son Sigit, cousin Sudwikatmono and businessman Henry Pribadi associated with the president's friend Liem Sioe Liong. The firm, Mekatama Raya, had undertaken to increase TVRI's revenues by more efficient collection and higher fees. But the widespread objections from citizens who felt a sense of ownership of the public broadcaster, was uncharacteristically given much publicity in the press. Leadership of this social movement was also provided by respected foundations which urged boycotts, publicised grievances and lobbied members of a parliamentary commission. Perhaps fears that the resentment of the masses might affect elections, led to an announcement that fees could be paid at post offices and that Mekatama Raya would remain only as a consultant on fee collection, though there was no back-down on the fee cost-hike [Kitley, 1997b].

Table 5A: TVRI programmes most watched, 1989

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Programme</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Programme</i>	<i>%</i>
<u>News and information:</u>			<u>Culture and entertainment:</u>		
1	World News	57.5	1	Aneka Ria [variety]	48.5
2	Rural programs	27.0	2	Modern drama	24.0
3	National news	24.5	3	Album of the Week	17.3
4	Sports news	16.4	4	Malay Melodies	16.0
5	Archipelagic news	14.9	5	Believe It or Not	12.9
<u>Educational and religious:</u>			<u>Movies and soap-operas:</u>		
1	Quiz programs	28.0	1	Indonesian films	52.4
2	Religious programs	23.8	2	Hunter	34.8
3	Family programs	17.6	3	Oshin	31.5
4	Knowing Science	12.5	4	Dynasty	7.5
5	Language courses	11.6			

Source: Kohei and Idris [1990].

When TVRI was the sole station, 70 percent programming of domestic programming was Indonesian in origin, but this was less so after the commercial channels began [Interview Ids04.01]. The main national channel TVRI1 had a policy of 80 percent local programming, though in reality it was about only 50 percent. It broadcast from 14:00 - 24:00 hours or 10 hours per day and its programming included drama, movies and variety shows as well as news, religious, information programming [Vista TV, 1993-94]. Prime-time in Indonesia was firstly at 19:30-21:00 hours, and secondly 18:30-19:00 hours, coinciding with TVRI news at 19:00-19:30 hours and non-TVRI news at 18:30-19:00 hours. There was also a morning audience peak at 10:00-11:00 hours [Interview Ids02.06]. The second channel TVRI2 was available only in Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya, Ujung Pandang and other major cities, and was largely a local channel providing programming relevant to each area, and ran from 14:30-21:00 hours, or 6.5 hours each day. In Jakarta, for

instance, it offered an English news bulletin primarily for expatriates [Interview Ids04.02]. While urban-based TVRI2 was growing in popularity like its commercial rivals, the nation-wide TVRI1 was said to be the most popular channel in rural areas where 70 percent of the Indonesian population resides (Table 5A).

As a result of the ban on advertising mentioned earlier TVRI's income was reduced significantly, private enterprise lost investment incentive in television, the station became exclusively a government medium, and it declined in popularity [Kitley, 1994]. Since TVRI paid typically low government salaries, it was not able to attract and retain good creative talent and staff morale was low [Interview Ids03.03]. The print media which had expected to benefit from a boom in advertising income, saw it eroded by sales promotion or 'below-the-line' advertising. So over the following years there were characteristically Indonesian 'polite' protests by the advertisers union (PPPI), national chamber of commerce (KADIN), influential businesspersons, even a Islamic political party and a government-sponsored think-tank. One of the arguments put forward was that advertising was essential for the economic growth and national development envisaged in the governments five-year plan. As a result of these pressures, towards the end of 1987 the government first floated the idea of a television channel sponsored by advertising [Sen, 1994a].

#### 5.1.4 Regulation/deregulation

The Indonesian 'open-skies' policy was initiated because there were blank spots in the public broadcaster TVRI's transmission, but it resulted in Indonesian viewers having access to television from other, transnational sources [Interview Ids02.05]. Since the geographical spread of both RCTI and SCTV soon after their inauguration was nationwide by their cooperative agreement to retransmit each other terrestrially, dish-antennae were redundant for watching domestic television in most of the country. Though by Indonesian regulations, dish-antennae had to point to Palapa to obtain domestic channels this could not be easily monitored, nor was it enforced.

Since there was little written in Indonesia discussing its broadcasting regulations openly, this research was dependent on candid comments from interviewees. They seemed to imply that the regulatory changes introduced have been driven by pragmatism in the face of radical change in the communications environment, as well as economic imperatives given competition for the television industry from neighbouring countries. Paradoxically the ostensible liberalisation, of uplinking for instance, actually allowed the government to gain a measure of control over content being beamed into Indonesia.

The liberal policy towards transnational satellite broadcasts is related to the government's interest in attracting foreign investments to the country by demonstrating the openness of the society and its politics [Interview Ids04.03].

Since Indonesia does not allow foreign broadcasts to be made from its territory, no satellite uplinking of non-Indonesian channels is permitted by the department of telecommunications. But this has only meant economic gain to Singapore which uplinked television programming to satellites while forbidding the viewing of the same by its own population [Interview Ids04.01].

Government regulation is to be changed to permit satellite uplinking from Indonesia and thus allow some local control of content [Interview Ids04.05].

There has been no quota set by the government on local programming versus imported programming on domestic television channels, but the decisions by stations on that issue were governed largely by the greater popularity of local programming. Desirous that Indonesia not become a 'waste basket' for Western culture, the government had advised that broadcasters could face unspecified sanctions if they failed to reduce foreign programming. The recommended ratio was 80 percent locally-produced programmes and 20 percent foreign programmes, but only TVRI met this target while both RCTI and SCTV were about 43 percent local and 57 percent foreign. Broadcasters were also urged to be more selective in their choice of programming; for example, music video clips and programmes which had the potential to cause unrest, were to be avoided [Jacob, 1994]. The Indonesian government has restricted language of broadcast, regulated news and exercised censorship of programming, and interviewees for this research seemed to accept the rationale behind these regulations or at least be resigned to them. Though their comments cast some doubt on the efficacy of these regulations, given domestic broadcasters' attempts to circumvent them and given the availability of spill-over television which undermines them:

Regulations allow only English and Indonesian languages to be broadcast in Indonesia, requiring other language programmes to be dubbed. It is mandatory for kids' programmes to be dubbed and not just subtitled because the government is concerned about foreign cultural influence via language [Interview Ids04.03].

Commercial stations are not permitted to have their own 'news' programmes, only 'current affairs' programmes [Interview Ids03.07].

Besides having 'soft news', that is, sports, entertainment and business news, the commercial stations have still to relay the evening news of TVRI [Interview Ids04.01].

Censorship of domestic television comes under the purview of the Department of Information, but this may not be effective when there is spill-over television. For instance, the soap-opera *Bold and the Beautiful* was censored strictly on Indonesian television but TV3 of Malaysia broadcast less censored and more recent episodes, attracting larger audiences [Interview Ids03.03].

In December 1996 a draft broadcasting law was passed by the national legislature to supersede the ministerial decrees under which the media has been regulated. Like the previous decrees the law seeks to protect domestic broadcasters from foreign competition and extends to the Internet when utilised as a broadcast medium. Among other matters it allows for self-regulation by the domestic commercial broadcasters of programme classification, the broadcast of news programmes other than those of TVRI, and allowed TVRI itself to accept advertising against the preferences of the domestic commercial broadcasters [Boulestreau, 1997]. More specifically, the law also proposed that the number of television stations be limited, that 80 percent of programming be locally-produced and that all foreign programming be dubbed, not just subtitled, into Bahasa Indonesia [Kwang, 1996a: 22]. However, as of late-1997 the legislation had not been signed into law yet by President Suharto prompting speculation that it contains provisions which his family members who have investments in commercial television are unhappy with. Instead it was sent back to parliament to review at the request of the president, a situation without precedence in Indonesia [Television Asia, 1997]. Anyway this draft law represents a further step in the policy of deregulating the television industry in Indonesia, and when finally granted presidential assent without significant revision may further stimulate its growth and sophistication.

In contrast to other South East Asian nations, Indonesia has adopted a liberal attitude to commercial television, including transnational satellite broadcasting, although it seems to have had some reservations. The policy of deregulation since the late 1980s represented a significant move by the Indonesian government away from its past fear of excessive commercialism, cultural imperialism and political subversion via the television medium, and a new recognition of the sophistication of its populace. Using the typology developed in Chapter Four it may be said to have a response of 'liberal access', since little attempt was made by the government to regulate the watching of transnational broadcasts. But by deregulating the domestic commercial television industry ahead of the onset of transnational satellite television, the government astutely fostered strong loyalty to local channels and their culturally-appropriate programming, and thus relative disinterest in transnational channels as the next section will describe.

## 5.2 DOMESTIC COMMERCIAL TELEVISION

In the late 1980s the Indonesian government, in an apparent policy reversal, decided to revive the television industry by decreeing an encrypted commercial television service for the Jakarta area and later another for the Surabaya area. Recognising that the earlier ministerial decree of 1987 which governed broadcasts only in the national capital, the government issued another decree in 1990. This broadened the provisions to allow for one commercial broadcaster for each provincial or regional capital which was still to broadcast only locally and not network nationally, and allow for a commercially funded educational channel which could broadcast nationally [Kitley, 1994]. In January 1993 the Indonesian government issued yet another decree restructuring the television industry to comprise one category of commercial broadcasters, of which it specified a maximum of five, which would be allowed to use the Palapa satellite for national transmission. The second category was as previously for no more than one local channel per provincial capital or major urban centre. Thus the government progressively put in place a domestic commercial industry which would have significant implications for the impact of transnational television in Indonesia.

### 5.2.1 The pioneers

*Rajawali Citra Televisi Indonesia (RCTI)*: In 1987 TVRI licensed RCTI to broadcast and to advertise, purportedly only products conducive to national development, in return for a percentage of revenue to TVRI to be applied to the latter's own operations. It was two years before RCTI commenced broadcasting in greater Jakarta to those who could afford to purchase a decoder and pay a monthly fee, and elsewhere in Indonesia by those who chose to own a satellite dish. RCTI was established as the first privately-owned commercial television station in Indonesia and was jointly owned by two Indonesian conglomerates, PT Bimantara Citra and PT Rajawali Wira Bhakti Utama, the former being controlled by Bambang Trihatmodjo, a son of President Suharto. An agreement signed by the TVRI director as the regulator for the

government and the chairman of RCTI in February 1988 outlined the terms of RCTI's license, especially the limits of its range to Jakarta and required use of decoders. In August 1990 a ministerial decree was issued allowing RCTI to broadcast without decoders for subscribers, to expand its reach outside Jakarta and to increase its broadcasting hours to 18-24 hours per day [RCTI, 1993]. The decoder was rented from RCTI for US\$15 per month and necessitated a US\$70 deposit [Sen, 1994a]. In July 1991 RCTI was permitted by the Indonesian director-general of radio, television and film to utilise the Palapa B2P satellite. Thus it was effectively able to broadcast to the whole country though its reception would be possible only through satellite dish-antennae (referred to colloquially as 'parabolas' locally in Indonesia), unlike TVRI which was downlinked and relayed terrestrially. In 1996, the Indonesian government prohibited plans by RCTI to float its shares for fear that the station would be controlled by foreign investors, perhaps cognisant of the fact that the latter already own 30 percent via indirect investments [Pardosi, 1996b].

Despite the entry of other commercial stations RCTI remained the clear leader in the ratings stakes since its start. The majority of its programmes had consistent ratings and its top 20 programmes in 1993 all had ratings in the 30s. In terms of programming categories, the breakdown was: 50 percent sports and entertainment, 20 percent commercials, 20 percent education, religion and culture, and 10 percent government programming and news. In 1993 its ratio of foreign to local produced programming was 80:20, but it aimed to change that to 60:40 to comply with government policy. Interviewees were at pains to point out the programming constraints under which RCTI had to operate with regards to the sensitive issues of news broadcasts and language of broadcast.

In 1994 RCTI broadcasts from 06:00 to 01:30 hours or 19.5 hours per day. Like all commercial stations RCTI is required to rebroadcast TVRI prime-time news simultaneously, though it may postpone the late news in exceptional situations, such as live sports broadcasts [Interview Ids04.02].

Commercial stations are not allowed to have their own news programmes but they may have current affairs programmes sometimes called 'soft news' as a way of circumventing the regulation [Interview Ids03.07].

Government regulations allow television broadcasts only in English and Indonesian languages [Interview Ids04.01].

Analysis of its strategy by interviewees revealed that despite the constraints imposed by government regulations, RCTI had achieved market dominance through programming targeted at middle to upper classes while attracting also lower classes, perhaps by appealing to their aspirations. Perhaps as the pioneer commercial broadcaster and the market leader, RCTI has its name used by the Indonesian people as the common expression for all non-TVRI television.

The aim of RCTI programming is an audience mix of 60 percent AB (or upper) socio-economic market segments and 40 percent CDE (or lower) segments. The programming positioning of RCTI is middle and upper-middle classes [Interview Ids04.03].

Local soap operas, dramas and other popular programmes are a joint-venture with RCTI approving script ahead or purchase or on a 60:40 revenue-sharing basis. Usually this was on a 6-10 episode trial basis unless the programme was well established [Interview Ids04.01].

RCTI is the market leader by far and its name is a generic term for commercial television in Indonesia [Interview Ids04.09].

*Surya Citra Televisi (SCTV)*: In 1990 a second commercial station, SCTV was licensed by the Indonesian government for the East Java region [Suparto, 1993]. SCTV began construction of its studios in Surabaya in 1990 and the state-of-the-art facilities included satellite uplink<sup>8</sup> and downlink facilities [SCTV, 1993]. Because 80 percent of all advertising agencies and advertisers in Indonesia were located in Jakarta the administrative and marketing offices of SCTV moved there [Interview Ids04.08] though the main production facilities remained in Surabaya. It was founded in 1990 by a group of Indonesian businesspersons who saw prospects for commercial television centred on Surabaya, Indonesia's second largest city. A major shareholder in the SCTV was believed to be Sudwikatmono, a cousin of President Suharto [Sen, 1994a]. Other principals of the consortium which owned SCTV were Mohammed Noer who was a former governor of East Java, and Henry Pribadi who was a brother of the Djuhar Sutanto, a business partner of Liem Sioe Liong [Kitley, 1994] who in turn was considered a close associate of President Suharto. Though SCTV did not belong to any business conglomerate as such it had some private shareholders in common with the Bimantara group of companies which owned RCTI [Interview Ids03.07].

In 1991 the Indonesian government publicly encouraged Jakarta-based RCTI to cooperate with Surabaya-based SCTV in purchasing foreign programming. This might have been in part due to the fact that a major shareholder in SCTV had attempted to gain almost monopolistic control over film import and distribution in the 1980s [Sen, 1994a]. In any case, in January 1992, RCTI and SCTV commenced joint operations in their four major markets, Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya and Bali. But only in August 1993 did RCTI and SCTV start day-time broadcasts [Interview Ids04.10]. Thus there was a quasi-network of RCTI and SCTV before both of them went nation-wide [Interview Ids04.09]. Historically RCTI and SCTV were regional stations and so they were able to share programming without conflict [Interview Ids04.01]. But in August 1993 RCTI and SCTV separated operations, both continuing to use the same transponders on Palapa but different frequencies. The geographical spread of both RCTI and SCTV was nation-wide by cooperative agreement through which relay stations were still shared. The competition for market share and advertising revenue caused by the RCTI/SCTV split saw a change in 1994 from zone-structured rate cards to programme performance-based ones [Grafik McCann-Erickson, 1994b].

SCTV continues to purchase foreign programming and produce 'soft news' programming in conjunction with RCTI for the economies of scale. It seems torn by its obvious success with imported telenovelas which has been imitated by its competitors, and the investment cost of local programming production for its longer term success.

SCTV continues to buy foreign programmes jointly with RCTI for discount prices, and also shares news production with it. SCTV and RCTI programmes had to be scrambled outside of city relay stations because of a dispute with US distributors over royalties [Interview Ids04.08].

Local programmes are more expensive so SCTV has a committee to approve their purchase in stages: first the script and a pilot episode, and then full production. Most such production is done outside the station [Interview Ids 04.08].

It simply imitates the formats of popular foreign programmes because it is still a relatively new station [Interview Ids04.03].

SCTV pioneered the introduction of 'telenovelas' in Indonesia and other stations followed. The appeal of rags-to-riches tales, for example of *Maria Mercedes* is greater and also less complicated than *Dallas* for Indonesian viewers [Interview Ids04.08].

Operating in a market in which RCTI was dominant, SCTV had yet to position itself and establish a niche as of the mid-1990s. It seemed to be competing with both the market leader RCTI as well as another pioneering commercial broadcaster TPI which enjoys sizeable day-time audiences. A diffused business strategy seemed to be the consensus of opinion on SCTV based on the responses of interviewees from within the firm, its competitors and advertising clients:

SCTV now has one-third the market share of RCTI, up from 8 percent to 22 percent of total market in 1994. While RCTI has a general target market, SCTV segments for females in the morning, and for all-family in evening [Interview Ids04.08].

SCTV broadcasts for 18.5 hours per day, between 05:30 and 24:00 hours. SCTV started day-time in August 1993 and so it has a prime-time at 1000-1200 hours like TPI (Televisi Pendidikan Indonesia) and unlike RCTI's prime-time at 1900-2200 hours [Interview Ids03.07].

Though SCTV knows what segment it wants to target, there has not been any programming change to match [Interview Ids02.07].

*Televisi Pendidikan Indonesia (TPI):* In 1991, a third commercial broadcaster was licensed by the Indonesia government as an educational television service: TPI which was to be nation-wide television network and operated as a private non-profit organisation. The manifest purpose of TPI was to provide educational resources of benefit to Indonesian school students, development agencies, domestic businesses and the wider population, in support of national development. Though a private institution, TPI operations were governed by agreements with the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Education and Culture. Its mandate included the provision of entertainment, information and commercial programmes, as a means of generating operating funds. Because TPI was owned by the daughter of President Suharto, journalists alleged that it enjoyed favours from the government, such as the banning of commercials on TVRI but not on TPI, the use of TVRI studios and equipment, and the purchase of television sets for all school in the country [Dausman, 1991].

TPI was owned by a holding company, Cipta Lamtoro Gung Persada whose principal was Siti Hardijanti Indra Rukmana, better known locally as 'Tutut', the eldest daughter of President Suharto [Kitley, 1994]. Though it began broadcasts in 1991, many of its key personnel had been involved with government initiatives since 1968 for education by extension utilising radio and television which were not implemented. In its earlier years when TPI lacked its own facilities, its transmissions were done through the TVRI network. While the facilities were constructed on a smaller scale than that needed by RCTI and SCTV, there were soon plans for transmission by direct-broadcast satellite (DBS) for national coverage [TPI, 1993a]. Since its status as an educational channel required that the majority of its programmes be educational, its own 1992 breakdown of total broadcasting hours was stated as educational programming 38.7 percent; information 20.2 percent; entertainment, 25.5; and commercial 15.6 percent [TPI, 1993b]. Independent sources assessed educational programmes to occupy only 33 percent of its airtime, with 47 percent non-educational and 20 percent occupied by commercials alone [Winton, 1991]. In 1996 Peter Gontha, the executive director of the Bimantara group of companies which owns RCTI, was said to be negotiating to purchase an undisclosed

personal share in TPI [Pardosi, 1996a], another indication that ownership of commercial television broadcasters in Indonesia is not as disparate as was the impression conveyed previously.

The educational programmes were funded as a joint-venture, the production by TPI and free air-time from TVRI. Programmes for high-school (junior secondary) level students were repeated in the morning and afternoon to cater for the fact that most Indonesian schools had two sessions [Interview Ids04.10]. These programmes in mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology and language were planned and produced by the Ministry of Education and Culture, who were responsible for content and the utilisation of them [TPI, 1993a]. Programmes for Universitas Terbuka, the national open university system, were also transmitted by TPI. Non-formal educational and information programmes such as language, agriculture and health catering to children, housewives, unemployed young adults, workers and the general public were the responsibility of TPI which was permitted to fund them from advertising both in their time-slot and in its prime day-time programming [Interview Ids04.10]. Though programme production was carried out by TPI, the planning of them was done in conjunction with related government and non-government agencies [TPI, 1993a].

The unique situation of TPI in comparison to the other pioneering channels RCTI and SCTV was the subject of considerable comment by interviewees. These revolved around the consequences of the transmission support received from TVRI for its greater penetration nation-wide, as well as its extensive commercial programming despite claiming to be an educational service. Unlike its competitors, TPI was able to lay claim to a sizeable loyal following in rural areas during the day, though not in the evening when it had to rely on its own transmitters.

TPI is on air in two time-segments: between 05:30-13:30 hours and 16:00-21:00 hours, though its programming from 06:00-07:00 hours is simply a relay of TVRI [Interview Ids04.02].

Since TPI uses TVRI facilities in the morning it is able to go national cheaply and its programming then is aimed at the (lower) C, D & E socio-economic segments of the population. However, in the evening it is a regional station available only in six major cities because it has to use its own facilities comprising only eight transmitters. TPI's evening programming caters to the (upper) AB socio-economic segments, though some programmes are re-runs of those from the morning broadcast [Interview Ids 04.01].

Having begun in the cities, TPI soon claimed to be nationwide because it used higher powered transmitters and alleged that RCTV and SCTV were mainly urban and middle-class. Because 80 percent of TPI programming is local it attracts a large audience in rural areas and among lower-income segments of the population [Interview Ids04.10].

Telenovelas are the top rating programmes on TPI as they were on the other channels. Its *Paper Love* a Mexican telenovela competes against *Maria Mercedes* and *Cassandra* on SCTV. But TPI is stronger on programmes catering to local and regional cultures since it pioneered day-time programming which together with high local content led to production-house boom [Interview Ids 04.10].

Because the station's in-house production capacity was limited, up to a third of its programming requirements had to be supplied by domestic production houses. For the month of October 1991, for instance, 340 programmes were needed by TPI, comprising 54 instructional programmes for schools, 98 non-formal education programmes, 82 entertainment programmes and 106 news/information programmes [TPI, 1993b].

## 5.2.2 The followers

The second batch of domestic-commercial broadcasters was established after the arrival of StarTV, perhaps approved by the government in order to provide its citizens even greater choice in the hope that it would counteract the impact of transnational satellite television. The two newer broadcasters are studied in contrast in financial size, political connections and broadcast coverage, and therefore were perceived as quite different forms of competition to the existing domestic commercial broadcasters than the transnational broadcasters.

*AnTeve*: The fourth commercial channel, Cakrawala Andalas Televisi operating as AnTeve, commenced in 1994 but though national in intent it suffered from poor transmission quality outside of its base in Sumatra. It commenced broadcasting in February 1993 and went decoder-less in May the same year. AnTeve is owned by the Bakrie group, a long-standing Indonesian conglomerate not seen as having close ties to the political centre [Sen, 1994a]. AnTeve was available initially only in Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya and Medan though it claimed other cities and was soon planning expansion to Semarang, Yogyakarta and Denpasar, Palembang, Ujung Pandang [Lintas Indonesia, 1993]. Due to technical difficulties, including the collapse of its transmitter, AnTeve had to hand some of its programmes to TVRI for nation-wide broadcast on its behalf while it provided adequate transmission only to viewers around Bandung [Interview Ids04.08]. The station was relaunched in early 1994 with a commitment to broadcasting 18 hours per day on a national basis [Grafik McCann-Erickson, 1994b].

AnTeve broadcast daily from 16:30 to 24:00 hours and additionally on Sundays from 09:00 to 12:00 hours. Although no Anteve executives were interviewed, other interviewees had clear views on its positioning in the competitive television market as a 'Westernised' entertainment station targeting the youth segment, and on the questionable success of such a strategy:

As it is characterised by mainly western and entertainment programming, specifically music and sports, it appeals to a younger audience [Interview Ids03.07].

Ante've's market share was high only when it had the broadcasting rights to the Thomas Cup tournament, since badminton was the Indonesian national sport, and other 'live' sports [Interview Ids04.08].

Though it imported expensive programmes Ante've did not achieve significant market share or attract advertisers' confidence because of its technical problems [Interview Ids04.01].

Imported 'Western' programming comprised 29 percent of Ante've programming, of which eight hours per day in the afternoon and late night comprised MTV Asia programmes by arrangement. Having established a reputation for extensive screening of imported game and quiz shows, Ante've adapted two of them in conjunction with their foreign originators [Television Asia, 1995e: 101-104]. In 1996 Ante've made a formal commitment to being a specialist sports and music channel after claiming increased advertising revenue from re-orientating its programming in that direction [Pardosi, 1996c].

*Indosiar Visual Mandiri (IVM)*: Permission was granted by the government in 1994 for an Indonesian conglomerate to form a joint-venture channel with TVB of Hong Kong. Known as Indosiar Visual Mandiri, it was Jakarta-based and part of the Salim Group which is in turn owned by a businessman with close connections to President Suharto, Liem Sioe Liong. It was generally believed in Indonesia, not just

in the media industry, that without that friendship Liem might have found it difficult to obtain a license, being Chinese and thus a member of a politically-sensitive minority. Although Indosiar had not gone to air at the time of the fieldwork for this research in 1994, there was much speculation in the industry about it. The concerns were centred on the channel's strong financial backing from the Salim conglomerate, its owner's ethnicity and political connections in Indonesia, and finally the implications of Indosiar's links with TVB, as the following comments from interviewees indicate:

Because it was owned by a Chinese businessman, this channel might be geared towards ethnic Chinese audiences in Indonesia [Interview Ids02.06].

Indosiar is expected to have more powerful transmitters and to begin with eight or nine cities, far more than previous stations had at their start [Interview Ids04.06].

Indosiar would cater primarily to the broad B, C, D and E socio-economic market segments, rather than the upmarket A segment [Interview Ids04.10].

Backed by a leading Indonesian conglomerate and enjoying the expertise of TVB, Indosiar will have more local and less imported programmes [Interview Ids04.08].

Indosiar intends to adapt successful Hong Kong programming to Indonesia and achieve similar technical quality to that of TVB [Interview Ids04.01].

Indosiar was to run into quite serious controversy when its Indonesia staff complained via the press that they were being superseded and supervised by 150 Hong Kong expatriates from TVB, who allegedly did not have work permits. Indosiar counter-claimed that there were only 40 expatriates in technical roles, from a number of countries and all with valid immigration papers. But the wider issue was concern over cultural imperialism of a sort, by the dominant Hong Kong broadcaster over Indonesian domestic commercial television. It was said, for instance, that the TVB-seconded staff were 'super-producers' capable of high productivity in programme production, in part due to their plan to replicate 800 Hong Kong television drama scenarios in their programme production in Indonesia. Social commentary at the time revealed the fear that the cultural imperialism might then be undetectable, unlike the obvious case of imported foreign programming. But the incident was more accurately a revival of long-standing hostility towards the wealthy ethnically-Chinese local community in Indonesia, precipitated by the liberalisation of the broadcasting industry [Kitley, 1997a].

Soon after its launch in 1995 Indosiar began to challenge the dominance of RCTI in the Indonesian television market through programming 'block-buster' Western movies such as *Terminator 2* and *Judgement Day*. Indeed Indosiar's links to TVB has seen the inclusion of *Return of the Condor Heroes*, *Dragon Sabre* and other violent Hong Kong action series. While such violent programmes would not have been allowed on free-to-air television in Western countries, in Indonesia they have succeeded in winning top ratings nationwide for Indosiar [Television Asia, 1995j: 19]. Indosiar was criticised by the television industry in Indonesia for employing 150 expatriates from Hong Kong in defiance of government policy, but it defended the move by claiming that this reduced dependency on foreign production houses [APT-C, 1995: 121]. Given the continuing demand for domestic programming, Indosiar has commissioned Indonesian directors and actors under loyalty agreements to produce more local comedy for prime-time. However, Indosiar's meteoric market leadership within six months of its inauguration was short-lived and RCTI reasserted its leadership of the Indonesian commercial television market.

Table 5B: Television Market Share in 5 major Indonesian cities, 4th Quarter 1995

<i>Hours</i>	<i>TVRI</i>	<i>RCTI</i>	<i>SCTV</i>	<i>TPI</i>	<i>Anteve</i>	<i>Indosiar</i>	
05:00-08:59	1	58	10	14	11	5	%
09:00-11:59	2	29	22	39	3	5	%
12:00-15:59	1	47	33	9	4	5	%
16:00-18:59	3	39	24	3	11	20	%
19:30-20:59	5	40	11	9	7	29	%
21:30-23:59	7	37	9	22	7	18	%
23:30-01:59	7	18	13	33	6	23	%

Source: PPPI [1996:125]

Thus at the end of 1996, Indonesia had five privately-owned commercial television stations: RCTI, SCTV, TPI, AnTeve and IndoSiar, all licensed to broadcast nationally. TVRI's share of the market had declined with the introduction of commercial television. However outside of Jakarta and the metropolitan areas, TVRI had the highest penetration in part due to the unavailability of the commercial stations or the high expense of access, although it was said to be losing market share to RCTI even there [Grafik McCann-Erickson, 1994b]. By 1995 the newcomer station Indosiar seemed to be threatening the market dominance of RCTI in urban areas (Table 5B) at least in the evening prime-time. Although RCTI kept its top ratings with the help of locally produced programming, Indosiar had considerable success with its blockbuster Hollywood movies and Hong Kong action serials [Television Asia, 1995d]. Besides all the commercial stations, with the possible exception of Anteve, had superseded the public broadcaster TVRI in market share across all time slots, though market leadership among them changes from time-slot to time-slot [PPPI, 1996: 125].

### 5.2.3 The late-comers

Long-standing rumours have it that four other television stations were being planned bringing Indonesia's total to ten, though their launch dates were not confirmed as of the late-1990s. The first of these was Sanitya Mandala Televisi, to be owned by the Sultan of Yogyakarta and based in that city. It was believed that a group with Husein Naro, BGW Budiarto and Peter Gontha as principals had applied for that license earlier but it was passed over because of fear that it would lend itself to political dissent since Naro's father had close associations with the opposition Islamic political party [Kitley, 1994]. The other three new commercial broadcasters were Merdeka Citra Televisi to be owned by Suara Merdeka newspaper and based in Semarang, Ramko Indo Televisi to be owned by Bambang Rachmadi and based in Batam Island, Rhiiau (near Singapore), and Cakrawala Bumi Sriwijaya to be owned by the Bakrie Group and based in Palembang, Sumatra [Grafik McCann-Erickson, 1993]. The government has also stipulated that in future all stations would have to transmit nationally via direct broadcast satellites, thus saving on costs of establishing earth relay

stations. But with the economic woes of the country since 1997 all these newer Indonesian stations seemed unlikely to eventuate.

#### 5.2.4 Direct Broadcast Satellites (DBS)

Since TVRI's penetration was only 37 percent of the Indonesia's territory and 68 percent of its population, its national development programming was not available to an estimated 57 million of its citizens. Another motivation for DBS was that terrestrial stations were difficult to maintain, costing an estimated Rp 150 billion [US\$67 million] per year. Till the mid-1990s all domestic TV stations were transmitted from Jakarta to Jatiluhur and then uplinked to Palapa by Indosat, a government-owned company, and then downlinked to TVROs at Solo, Denpasar, Joyga and then transmitted direct to homes [Interview Ids 4.05]. Even with 300 retransmitters of 100km radius each only 35 percent of the Indonesian population was covered by terrestrial television because of the dispersion of its islands and its mountainous terrain. The government realised that it would need 1,000 transmitters but because of the high cost it decided to allow dish-antennae [Interview Ids03.06]. Furthermore the encroachment of transnational and spill-over television was thought to undermine its cultural integration agenda in some more sensitive and often remote regions of the country.

Therefore the government embarked on a US\$150 million programme to provide its domestic television and radio services via DBS by 1996 [IndoStar, 1993]. Although Indonesia's Palapa series satellites were managed by Indosat, the newer DBS satellites would be owned by MediaCitra IndoStar, a consortium of businesses, foreign and local, among them the shareholders of the domestic commercial television stations. It was generally anticipated that the first satellite would combine domestic public and commercial services, but the time of the fieldwork research there was still some speculation as to the channel utilisation of the satellite's transponders:

The first of four satellites planned, IndoStar-1 will have five transponders, three of them dedicated to television and two to radio. The ground segment would comprise one receiver designed for low-cost analog television reception of up to five channels [Interview Ids04.02].

One receiver is designed for multiple digital television channel reception and would be capable of receiving up to 40 channels, though only 8 had been planned for IndoStar1 [Interview Ids04.09].

Despite the fact that Indostar1 is a light satellite and so will have very limited transponders, the two of those will be assigned to the government for educational, cultural and 'national-interest' programming [Interview Ids04.02].

The educational channel which would be run in conjunction with TVRI and TPI is to provide primary to university level instruction [Interview Ids04.05].

Since DBS could be used to expand distribution through the use of small, inexpensive satellite parabolas, TVRI, RCTI and SCTV would not be encrypt their broadcasts from it [Interview Ids04.09].

The IndoStar system was designed so that viewers throughout Indonesia would have quality reception in all weather of both analog and digital channels direct from the DBS satellite using their present televisions with satellite dish-antennae of less than one-meter diameter, compared to the three-meter ones required for Palapa. The programme was expected to save the Indonesian government billions of dollars that

it would have needed to install television and transmitters nationwide in order to achieve total broadcast penetration. DBS broadcasting required viewers to have new television sets with internal antennae and that was why one of its consortium shareholders was Amcol Graha, the manufacturer of Sony television sets, which made for a good strategic alliance. Perhaps for public relations reasons, the programme also claimed that jobs will be created as the technology for digital television sets was transferred from the US to the Indonesian factories of Amcol Graha, by the construction of ground facilities and the stimulation of the broadcast entertainment industry [IndoStar, 1993].

Meanwhile, two business entities were formed to manage Indonesia's other satellites after PT Telekom was privatised and invested in by foreign and domestic corporations, the latter with connections to the presidential family. The task of operating the newer Palapa C-generation satellites launched in 1996 was assigned to PT Satelit Indonesia Palapa or Satelindo, as it is more commonly known. The management of the older satellites was given to PT Pasific Nusantara (PSN) in which global telecommunications corporations had shares, namely Hughes Communications and Telesat Canada with 11.53 percent each, and Deutsche Telecom Mobilfunk with a 25 percent share. Thus satellite technology which had been sold to the Indonesian government in the 1970s and 80s on the basis of its value in social and economic development, was by the mid-1990s largely in the hands of the corporate sector, both local and multinational.

In this section we have seen how the commercial television stations in Indonesia, especially RCTI and SCTV, though fostered to counteract the anticipated influence of transnational television broadcasters, have undermined the long-standing dominance of the TVRI the domestic public broadcaster. However the government and TVRI appear to rationalise the commercialisation of broadcasting as a shift in emphasis of national cultural policy in the face of new social and economic realities, rather than a reversal of direction. Although the advent of transnational television broadcasts via satellite, to be discussed next, was anticipated in Indonesia better than any other country in SE Asia, their business strategies could not have been fully predicted. In tackling the consequences for themselves of this transnational competition, Indonesia's domestic broadcasting and advertising industries may choose to follow their own economic interests for the future, given the government's partial abdication of its cultural agenda.

### 5.3 TRANSNATIONAL COMMERCIAL TELEVISION

Indonesia represented an attractive market to advertisers and media-owners, domestic and multinational alike. Its economy had seen steady growth over the last decade, with its GNP growing to Rp 139,707 billion (US\$65 billion) in 1993. Although this represented Rp 711,900 (US\$330) per capita, placing Indonesia in the category of developing countries still [PPPI, 1996: 37]. Nonetheless the World Bank expected Indonesia to be reclassified a newly industrialising country by the year 2000 when its per capita income is expected to reach US\$1,000 [PPPI, 1994: 41]. This economic growth was accompanied by growing affluence of the

population as reflected in such indicators as imports of consumption goods, domestic production of vehicles and ownership of television sets. Thus the elite of Indonesia, said to comprise at least 10 percent of its population or about 19 million comprised one of the key markets in Asia which StarTV targeted, even under its original pan-Asian strategy.

### 5.3.1 StarTV

When StarTV began broadcasting in 1991 there was little immediate consumer response from Indonesia. For one thing the main AsiaSat1 footprint covered only the northern parts of the less-populated, though large Indonesian islands of Sumatra and Borneo. Large and more expensive dish-antennae were needed for reception of StarTV broadcasts in heavily-populated Java island and elsewhere in the country. Furthermore, by regulation in Indonesia all dish-antennae had to be directed towards the domestic Palapa satellite, though this was not enforced. Therefore, most of the transnational television watched was those beamed unencrypted via Palapa such as CNNi, HBO, ESPN, Discovery, Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore, though most of the commercial channels were later encrypted for pay-TV. Omnibus research utilising a representative national sample carried out by Survey Research Indonesia (SRI) confirmed the low incidence of satellite television viewing. Only four percent of respondents reported having the ability to receive satellite television in the household, although there are higher incidences in Semarang (24 percent) and Ujung Pandang (9 percent); in many other provincial capitals the figures were negligible. The higher figures for Semarang could be explained in part by the more predominant mode of shared cabling of satellite reception, as well as the large ethnic Chinese population of the city.

*Penetration:* Nonetheless commercial research funded by StarTV indicated that the number of households with access to its channels had been growing steadily from 14,335 in January 1992 to 36,211 in February 1993 [StarTV, 1993a]. This represented a growth rate of 153 percent since its introduction and though a penetration of only 0.16 percent of total TV households, estimated at 22.4 million households. Research in the Medan region on Sumatra island directly under the StarTV footprint, showed that StarTV was available in 87 percent of households which had access to satellite television, though only in 7 percent of all television households. However, 71 percent of StarTV households watched a StarTV channel in the day preceding the interviews, a more consistent pattern of viewership than reported by government research. StarTV households in Medan, comprising some 140,000 viewers, were found also to be significantly higher than other television households on such socio-economic indices as ownership of credit cards, cars, VCRs and CD players. In fact, 72 percent of StarTV households had monthly incomes exceeding Rp 450,000 (US\$225) as compared with only 10 percent of all TV households [StarTV, 1993a].

*Programming:* In its early years StarTV programming for Indonesia was precisely the same that it broadcast throughout the region. When its new owners, News Corporation, differentiated programming on the two beams of AsiaSat1, Indonesia shared the same programming on the southern beam with India which included BBC world news, Prime Sports though with culturally-contextualised sports such as badminton and cricket, StarPlus entertainment programming in English, Star Mandarin and Channel V music programming

which would have had considerable Hindi content for India. At the time of the field research in 1994, there were no ratings published for StarTV or any other transnational satellite channels, and certainly no cult following for any of their programmes. Unlike India and China, programmes of similar genre to that available on StarTV, if not identical programmes, were readily available on domestic commercial channels in Indonesia, duly dubbed or at least subtitled. With its MTV channel earlier and its in-house successor Channel V, StarTV might have had universal appeal with Asian youth but had not had similar success with Prime Sports, except when sports of local interest such as badminton and soccer were shown [Interview Ids02.04].

Research conducted by Survey Research Indonesia (SRI) in 1994 indicated that only two percent of respondents watched transnational satellite television the previous day and one percent each claimed to have watched it between two to seven days previously or longer. None of this negligible number watched it for any significant length of time, though 98 percent of respondents declared themselves to be irregular viewers of satellite television [SRI, 1994b]. The pattern seemed to be that of quite random viewing of channels. This viewership situation could change with the introduction of direct-broadcast satellites since they would make dish-antennae redundant and audiences would require only a US\$100 locally-made aerial to pick up a high-quality signal. In 1995, StarTV announced that it had reached an agreement with Indovision, the Indonesian pay-TV company, to transmit fifteen of its channels. These encrypted channels from the AsiaSat2 satellite were to be made available to subscribers with dish-antennae and decoders. This was in addition to StarTV's composite free-to-air channel on Palapa, and its other free-to-air channels on AsiaSat1.

### 5.3.2 Dish-antennae ownership

It was difficult to estimate dish-antenna ownership and therefore satellite television reception in Indonesia. Based on licenses issued by the government the semi-official estimate is of 500,000 satellite dish-antennae in operation throughout Indonesia. But in relation to such statistics in Indonesia, as in many developing countries, any researcher has to settle for some consensus of opinion through different data sources, rather than await a definitive census:

Working estimates of the government and market research organisations put the number of parabolas (satellite dish-antennae) at 500,000 to 600,000 [Interview Ids03.05].

Only 10,000 are StarTV-capable since larger parabolas were needed to receive StarTV transmissions except on Borneo and Sumatra islands [Interview Ids03.06].

Parabolas are only 600,000 out of a 190 million population [Interview Ids04.08].

There might be up to five times the official number operating illegally [Interview Ids03.03]

There are probably 1.2 million parabolas based on spare parts exported from the US west coast [Interview Ids01.03].

Since an Indonesian had succeeded in creating a home-made parabolas out of a concrete concave in the ground for less than US\$100, accurate data collection was rendered even more difficult [Interview Ids01.03].

Newspaper advertisements and handbills for satellite dish-antennae and installation indicated that manually-tuned receivers suitable for domestic and regional broadcasts, such as from South East Asia and the South Pacific, ranged in price from Rp 950,000 to Rp 1.6 million (US\$500-800). Remotely-controlled,

stereo and variable-direction receivers capable of receiving StarTV, American, Russian, Chinese as well as domestic/regional channels costs between Rp 6.5 to Rp 12.5 million (US\$3,500-6,000) [Suara Pembaruan, 1994]. This is considerably more than receivers for domestic/regional channels alone, and would be beyond the means of even middle-class Indonesians, except via illegal cable sharing. The majority of the dish-antennae seem to have been installed in the period between the introduction of domestic commercial television in 1987 (available only by satellite to remote areas) and soon after the advent of transnational satellite television.

Table 5C: Ownership of dish-antennae in Indonesia, 1993

<i>Year installed:</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Size of dish</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1982-1987	31	2.2	3 to 4 metres	1,155	82.0
1988-1993	1,374	97.6	5 to 6 metres	84	6.0
			7 to 10 metres	30	2.3

Source: Ishadi [1994]

Although a license was required to own a dish-antenna even for domestic reception there were estimated to be five times as many illegal ones and each was widely shared. However, in reality there was only a minuscule audience for such broadcasts, estimated at less than 4.0 percent of the urban population, believed to be expatriate or ethnically Chinese, mainly residing in provinces neighbouring other South East Asian countries and watching their stations [Survey Research Indonesia, 1993-94b]. The impediments to viewing Star TV seemed to be the linguistic barrier as Indonesia does not have a English-language colonial heritage nor a dominant Chinese ethnic group, and the economic barrier of owning or sharing a dish-antenna for the majority of its population. Thus the most popular form of foreign programming watched was feature films and the most popular foreign channel was TV3 from linguistically-similar Malaysia, largely available via spill-over signals in border provinces [Kohei and Idris, 1990]. This was in keeping with the majority of dish-antennae owned being of small to average size suitable for domestic satellite reception on which Malaysian channels were also available (Table 5C).

### 5.3.3 Reception cooperatives and spillover

The cost of dish-antennae for reception of transnational channels was considerably more than dish-antennae for domestic channels alone. Newspaper advertisements and handbills for dish-antennae purchase and installation indicate that manually-tuned receivers suitable for domestic and regional broadcasts, such as from Southeast Asia and the South Pacific, range in price from Rp 950,000 to Rp 1.6 million (US\$500-800). Remotely-controlled, stereo and variable-direction receivers capable of receiving StarTV, American, Russian, Chinese as well as domestic/regional channels cost between Rp 6.5 to Rp 12.5 million (US\$3,500 to US\$6,000) [Suara Pembaruan, 1994]. Given the high cost of dish-antennae, they would be beyond the

means of even middle-class Indonesians except via illegal cable-sharing. Interviewees repeatedly mentioned the practice of informal dish-antenna cooperatives of various forms:

On the outskirts of Jakarta and Sumatra smaller parabolas are used costing Rp 650,000 (US\$300) or about the cost of a television set and purchase is possible by instalments [Interview Ids03.08].

There is the practice of 'alisan' or mutual-pools for buying parabolas and cable-sharing also operates. Research by Padjajaran University on West Java villages in the early 1990s found many viewer co-operatives and therefore that viewership per set was very high [Interview Ids04.01].

Since many parabolas could be cabled to as many as 20 homes and each home could have a sizeable extended-family or neighbourhood audience, unlike in developed countries, it was difficult to estimate cable/satellite viewership [Interview Ids03.04].

Table 5D: Top 20 television channels watched by dish-antennae users in Indonesia, 1993

<i>Channels</i>	<i>Origin</i>	<i>Satellite</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
RCTI	Indonesia	Palapa B2P	113.0E	1,309	93.8
TVRI	Indonesia	Palapa B2R	108.0E	1,074	75.0
TV3	Malaysia	Palapa B2P	113.0E	1,031	73.9
TPI	Indonesia	Palapa B2P	113.0E	691	49.5
CNNi	USA	Palapa B2P	113.0E	319	22.9
RTM1	Malaysia	Palapa B2P	113.0E	300	21.5
SCTV	Indonesia	Palapa B2P	113.0E	299	21.4
AnTeve	Indonesia	Palapa B2P	113.0E	268	19.2
StarPlus <sup>†</sup>	Hong Kong	AsiaSat1	105.5E	142	10.4
MTV	Hong Kong	AsiaSat1	105.5E	112	8.0
Australia TV	Australia	Palapa B2P	113.0E	75	5.4
BBTV	Thailand	Palapa B4	118.0E	36	2.6
Channel 1	Philippines	Palapa B2P	113.0E	35	2.5
Channel 11	Thailand	Palapa B2P	113.0E	23	1.6
Channel 3	Philippines	Palapa B2P	113.0E	35	2.5
BBC	Hong Kong	AsiaSat1	105.5E	15	1.1
Star Mandarin	Hong Kong	AsiaSat1	105.5E	12	0.9
TV1 Beijing	PRChina	AsiaSat1	105.5E	10	0.7
NBC	USA	Intelsat -		8	0.5
NHK	Japan	Intelsat -		7	0.4

Source: Adapted from Ishadi [1994: 3, 33]; and Nielsen SRG [1995] *Satellite guide to Asia*

It is quite evident from Table 5D that most of the transnational channels watched were those easily accessible from one or another of the Indonesian domestic satellites. The sole transnational channel among the top five channels watched was CNNi which was on Palapa B2P. All the same, according to the research thus summarised [Ishadi, 1994], the channels that were watched were primarily those of the domestic public

and commercial broadcasters of Indonesia, and its neighbours particularly Malaysia and to a lesser extent Thailand and the Philippines on the same satellites. The only other transnational channels which any significant penetration were those of StarTV which were available on another satellite, AsiaSat1, though it was located fairly close to the Palapa satellites and therefore probably needing minimal adjustment of the dish-antennae for reception. Since other transnational channels on Palapa such as ESPN, Discovery and HBO were later encrypted and a decoder was needed in addition to the satellite dish, their viewership became considerably less than for domestic commercial or spill-over channels [Interview Ids04.08].

Extensive research conducted by the Indonesian government in both urban and rural areas on TVRI viewing in the pre-commercial television period suggested that the only significant audiences for transnational television were for Malaysian channels, with 2.18 percent for TV3 and 1.62 percent for RTM1 [Kohei and Idris, 1990: 49]. The most popular categories of foreign programmes were films, culture and news, possibly as an alternative to the nationalistic, development-oriented programming of the domestic broadcaster. The overseas channels most received in the household, with or without dish-antennae were those of Malaysia, particularly its privately-owned TV3. Again, Semarang led the ratings, which might again be explained by the preference of its dominant Chinese population for the higher non-Malay/Indonesian programming of that channel. But it was Medan which registered consistently high ratings (4 to 15 percent) on most regional and transnational television channels, with the exception of Singapore's. This might be explained both by the fact that Medan being in Sumatra had a native population that was most similar linguistically and culturally with that across the Malacca Straits in peninsular Malaysia.

It may be worth noting at this point that Indonesia is comprised politically of 27 provinces, 242 regencies, 56 municipalities, 3,639 subdistricts and 62,061 villages [BPS, 1992: 3, 15] which harbour considerable cultural diversity. No official figures were publicly available for ethnic groups or language use, for reasons of political sensitivity. However, it is estimated that 94 percent of the country comprises indigenous Malays, of which the Javanese at 75 million and the Sundanese at 31 million predominate, both largely resident on the over-populated Java island where the capital Jakarta is located. Other significant groups are the Madurese at 12 million, Minangkabau and Bataks at 6 million each, with the Sumatran Malays and Bugis at around 5 million each. The official language is Bahasa Indonesia which is similar to the Malay language used in Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei, though some 17 other languages are spoken in the country by more than a million people each. Of the estimated 7.6 million Chinese population, only 20 percent are believed to have retained their language [Johnstone, 1993: 292]. English is taught as a subject in secondary schools and is the language of business, though it is not widely spoken. Due to this language barrier there has been no significant audience for transnational television in Indonesia and dish-antennae seem to have been used mainly to enhance reception of domestic and spillover television of similar language and culture such as from Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei.

#### 5.3.4 Pay-TV subscription

PT Matahari Lintas Cakrawala, or Malicak for short, gained approval from the Indonesian Ministry of Information in late, 1993 to sell decoders for transnational television broadcasts. Malicak is an Indonesian-owned firm with corporate links to other broadcasting and publishing businesses. Among its shareholders are Amcol Holdings, a Singapore corporation; Bambang Trihatmodjo, the son of President Suharto and president-director of Bimantara Citra which owns RCTI; Anthony Salim, the son of Liem Sioe Liong who is a close associate of President Suharto and owner of Indosiar Mandiri TV; and Peter Gontha, vice-president of Bimantara Citra who is also advisor to SCTV and a close associate of Bambang Trihatmodjo, the son of President Suharto [Business Times, 1995]. Furthermore the chairman of Bimantara Citra which has a stake also in SCTV is Indra Rukman, the husband of Suharto's eldest daughter whose owns 'educational' channel TPI, thus illustrating the close web of ownership within the Indonesian domestic television industry now extends to the pay-TV franchise [Cable & Satellite Asia, 1996c].

Although the ownership of Malicak comprises a select group of Indonesia's political and economic elite, its programme offerings were drawn from various global media corporations. The pay-TV service marketed as Indovision initially provided access by dish-antennae owners to CNNi, HBO, The Discovery Channel, ESPN and TNT/Cartoon Network. Although these transnational channels were transmitted from one of Indonesia's satellites Palapa B2P, the same one that carried the domestic commercial channels (though not TVRI), these were in encrypted form. Indovision was forecast to have one million cable subscribers by year 2004 out of the current 13 million TV households in Indonesia, or 30-40 million television audience. Cable television in Indonesia had been a form of informal community access to free-to-air satellite television but the industry was in transition to commercial pay-TV services. So potential subscribers were persuaded that they would be buying not just an integrated receiver-decoder system but programming of their own choice [Interview Ids04.09]. Subsequent to the purchase of a decoder at Rp 1,475,000 (US\$670) the subscriber needed to pay a US\$410 annual or US\$120 quarterly subscription fee [Indovision, 1994].

A year after it began operations, Indovision had only 5,000 subscribers, much less than its projections, and this was attributed to the high cost of installation and monthly fees. In April 1995 StarTV joined the Indovision stable with a 24-hour composite channel of its free-to-air Star Plus, Channel V and Prime Sports channels, via a decoder costing only US\$335. Soon Indovision entered into a management and distribution contract with StarTV to offer the latter's four channels in addition to its other foreign channels and its own channels. Under the deal subscribers would receive 15 channels in all using a single decoder for a monthly subscription of Rp 63,250 or US\$28, or almost a third less than before [Asian A&M, 1996b]. All the Indovision channels would utilise the Digistar digital compression and encryption technologies for which the StarTV parent company News Corporation owns the proprietary rights. Naturally these developments which gave StarTV considerable control over Indovision had been viewed by the other transnational broadcasters with some consternation, especially since they were charged up to US\$500,000 each for uplink costs [Cable & Satellite Asia, 1996a: 9-10]. Nonetheless the final line-up included CNBC, NBC, CNNi, TNT/Cartoon Network, BBC World, Discovery, ESPN, Home Box Office, MGM Gold and four StarTV

channels. In addition StarTV entered into deals with Indonesian production houses to produce local programming for its own channels for the Malay/Indonesian region. Among its offerings demonstrating a commitment to regionalisation, even quasi-domestication were Star Plus Indonesia, Star Sports in Indonesian, and Film Indonesia, a 24-hour movie channel, as well as three channels in partnership with RCTI, namely Citra Junior, Citra Melate and Citra Hiburan [Asian A&M, 1997e].

Although Indovision had the only pay-TV license issued by the Indonesian government as at late 1996, the situation seemed set to change, prompted in part by disenchantment over StarTV's control over Indovision. The overseas telecommunications carrier Indosat was believed to have teamed up with SCTV and Indovision shareholders to plan a pay-TV service via cable or MMDS, and has acquired a film production house to provide programming. Not to be outdone, the domestic telecommunications carrier, Satelindo, had plans to install cable in major cities and has contracted RCTI to provide programming. A privatised Indonesian satellite company, Satelindo was planning its own DTH service from Palapa C1 in association with Hughes Corporation of the US. Finally, the Lippo Group, a large Indonesian-Chinese conglomerate has purchased equipment for a high-performance cable system for initial installation in private housing in suburban Jakarta and plans to go nation-wide [Walker, 1996: 10-11]. Aided by a growing middle-class, choice of more satellite channels and cable providers, and introduction of DTH technology, multichannel households in Indonesia were predicted to reach 805,000 by the year 2005 [Flynn, 1996: 109]. What channels will be offered on these pay-TV services when established is yet unclear, but they are likely to be a combination of domestic and transnational channels, giving Indovision considerable competition. Prior to the economic downturn cable and satellite penetration was expected to be around 10 percent and to generate revenues exceeding US\$500 million by 1998 [Book and Krill, 1996]. But given the relatively high cost of pay-TV subscription for this developing nation, transnational satellite television will remain an elite and generally urban medium in Indonesia as it is most elsewhere in Asia.

Incorporation of the developing countries of Asia into a truly regional market has been envisaged by the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) trade grouping and on a smaller scale in South East Asia by the ASEAN Free Trade Area, both of which comprise leading economies of the region including Indonesia. Whether transnational satellite television takes off will then depend largely on continued economic growth in the region, and on whether individual governments are enlightened enough to decide like Indonesia on deregulating access by consumers, whether via dish-antennae or cable. These would in turn influence whether multinational marketers advertised their global products and services on the medium, which we will examine on a comparative basis in a later chapter. Since advertising is driven by audiences, the next section deals with the question of whether transnational satellite television's time has come yet in Indonesia, in terms of viewers' channel loyalties and programme ratings.

5.4 TELEVISION CONSUMPTION

The falling cost of dish-antennae, economic affluence and growing literacy in English and could well have meant increasing cultural impact via transnational television, but the Indonesian government seemed unconcerned. It appeared to be counting on audience loyalty to domestic commercial stations, a number of which were in place or planned as described in an earlier section. Most of them were owned by large conglomerates with political connections, and could weather short-term financial losses should there be a battle with the transnational television broadcasters for audiences and advertisers. Nonetheless it would be worth examining the audiences in Indonesia for television, both transnational and domestic, to understand better the business confidence and seeming complacency of government.

5.4.1 Domestic public television viewership

Of the 189 million people of Indonesia, only the elite owned personal television sets. As of 1994, there were estimated to be 8.99 million television sets in Indonesia, of which 7.09 million were colour sets. It was also estimated that there were an average of 10 persons having access to each. Quite characteristically for a developing country, projected figures for 1994 indicated that almost 45 percent of the population was under 19 years and about 63 percent under 29 years of age. Only 6.4 percent of the population aged 15 years and above had received no schooling, and the level of education attained by Indonesians in this age group was gradually increasing [BPS, 1992: 3,15]. In 1991, 48.0 percent of Indonesia's population aged 10 years and above claimed to have spent some time watching television in the previous week as compared to 47.5 percent in 1981 [BPS, 1984; BPS, 1992]. According to Indonesian advertisers agencies the total viewership aged 10 and above was 92 million, which represents 77 percent of the Indonesian population, though access to television was higher in the urban areas (Table 5E).

Table 5E: Total Indonesian television viewers aged 10 and above

	<i>Population</i>	<i>TV viewership</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Urban areas	42m	40m	95%
Rural areas	78m	52m	66%
Total	120m	92m	77%

Source: PPPI [1994: 28]

Research conducted by the government of Indonesia in late 1989 sought to identify the programmes usually watched. For some unknown reason, it chose to differentiate between viewership and popularity when the rankings turned out very similar, to place films in a separate category from culture and entertainment, to classify television serials together with feature-length movies under films, and to compare responses to specific programmes with programme genre. Perhaps most controversial must be the finding that when asked which programme genre the respondents wished to see increased on TVRI, 26.9 percent

opted for more religious programmes, 23.0 percent for more news, and 17.0 percent for comedy [Kohei and Idris, 1990: 39-51]. This is probably an indication of response bias, caused by the fact that the research was conducted by government officials, though it could also be a reflection of the 61.1 percent rural Indonesians in the sample.

What might be reasonably deduced by the figures generated in that research was that world news, local variety shows and dramas, Indonesian-language movies, and dubbed dramas were the most watched. Unfortunately the researchers handled the reasons offered for their popularity in a highly structured fashion: as being informative, educational, entertainment, truthful, and so on. Of the domestic news and information programmes, world news was by far the most popular registering 49.5 percent of responses in contrast to the runners-up, rural programs at 5.3 percent and national news at 4.3 percent. In the category of education and religion, top-ranking went to religious programmes and quiz programmes which registered responses of 16.7 percent and 13.5 percent respectively. But these were significantly less popular than world news as well as the most popular culture and entertainment programme classified as 'Aneka Ria Safari and others' [Kohei and Idris, 1989-90: 45-48].

#### 5.4.2 Domestic commercial television viewership

Within the domestic audience there was little differences in segmentation as all stations aimed at the middle class: RCTI claimed to have the middle/upper middle as its target audience, while SCTV positions itself as 'family-oriented'. However there was some segmentation by time, that is, each station reaching identical segments but at different hours [Interview Ids02.02]. TVRI2 and RCTI were the more popular channels as they provided local news and information from urban centres. TVRI1 remained the most popular channel amongst the rural population which comprised 70 percent of Indonesia, for some of whom it was the only channel accessible.

At the time of fieldwork in Indonesia in 1994, the most popular programmes on domestic commercial television were a mix of telenovelas, action dramas, and period dramas, virtually all of them of foreign origin. Interviewees had their specific explanations for the popularity of these and other imported programming in terms of their appeal to Indonesia cultural values and tastes, rather than alleging any 'Western' cultural imperialism. Country-of-origin appeared to be irrelevant so long as local audiences were able to relate well to the text and develop their own interpretation.

Telenovelas such as *Paper Love*, *Cassandra* and *Maria Mercedes* were the top rating programmes in Indonesia and were particularly popular with down-market audiences [Interview Ids02.09].

There is a story of a factory which changed its lunch-time to match the time-slot of *Maria Mercedes*. Its popularity is not due to Brazilian culture but lifestyle of wealth portrayed, and the audience is probably not concerned that it is not American either [Interview Ids02.02].

*Oshin* from Japan is popular, but not as much as *Maria Mercedes*, perhaps because it is about hardship which people can relate to [Interview Ids02.07].

The popularity of US programme *McGyver* may be because it uses Asian settings every now and then [Interview Ids02.09].

It is Hindu epics such as *Mahabhrata*, *Chankriya* and *Ramayana* which have the highest ratings when shown because the culture is close to that of the Javanese, the dominant ethnic group.

Likewise, Chinese classics such as *Tales of the Sword* and *Holy Book* from Hong Kong, dubbed into Indonesian, have a large following [Interview Ids04.10].

The preponderance of imported programming on Indonesian television in 1994 might also be explained by cost and their popularity by relative quality, as is the case throughout much of the developing world. Responses by Indonesian interviewees suggested that the situation was gradually changing with more local programming being commissioned by the domestic television stations, and the entry of related businesses such as radio stations into programme production. However much of it involved the adaptation of popular foreign programme formats, sometimes by a foreign production house. For instance in 1995, Anteve commissioned a 200-episode Indonesian version of the popular US programme, *Family Feud*, to be produced by the Singapore subsidiary of Grundy Productions which was set up just a year earlier to tap the South East Asian programming market.

Local television programme productions cost US\$15,000 for a 24-week series, whilst imported programmes cost US\$2,500-3,000 for each 48-minute episode, plus trailers provided free [Interview Ids04.03].

Prambors Radio [a leading Jakarta-based radio network] is going into TV production for the commercial stations because of the demand for programmes catering to the target audience it specialises in, namely 15-25 year olds. It is already into music and drama production, some of them made into movies, and future programmes for television might include news [Interview Ids04.06].

Table 5F: Top 10 rating programmes on Indonesian commercial television, 1996

<i>Programme</i>	<i>Genre</i>	<i>Origin</i>	<i>Channel</i>	<i>TRP</i>	<i>Viewers [000]</i>
Doel Anak Sekolahan	Serial	Indonesia	RCTI	36	7,477
Bagi-Bagi Dong	Movie	Indonesia	Indosiar	33	6,788
Rahasia Sikembar	Movie	India	RCTI	32	6,654
Balas Kasih Ibu	Movie	India	RCTI	30	6,263
Ba-Sho	Sitcom	Indonesia	RCTI	29	5,995
Symphoni Dua Hati	Serial	Indonesia	RCTI	29	5,897
Dewa Kejahatan	Movie	India	RCTI	29	5,887
Rahasia Masa Lalu	Movie	India	RCTI	28	5,846
Balada Tiga Sahabat	Movie	India	RCTI	28	5,694
Shangrila	Serial	Indonesia	RCTI	27	5,576

Source: Neilsen SRG Indonesia's *SRI Telescope*, abstracted in Asian A&M [1996b]

The demand for local production had also been expanding since the lifting of the 10-year ban on television commercials in the late 1980s and because the Indonesian government had been supportive of the use of local production houses [Andrei, 1993]. By 1996, half the highest rating television programmes on domestic television in Indonesia were Indonesian productions, mainly sitcoms and serials, almost all of them on the first commercial station, RCTI (Table 5F). While the remaining five top programmes were foreign they were of Indian and not 'Western' origin, unlike the situation in earlier years, and were of movies, which

might be explained in terms of minimal 'cultural discount'. The growth of domestic commercial television and popularity of local programmes as well as transnational satellite channels regionalising their programme offerings might further stimulate the local film industry in Indonesia.

#### 5.4.3 Transnational satellite television viewership

Omnibus research utilising a representative national sample carried out by Survey Research Indonesia (SRI) confirmed the low incidence of transnational satellite television viewing (Table 5G). Only 4 percent of interviewees reported the ability to receive satellite television in their households. Although there were higher incidences in Semarang (24 percent) and Ujung Pandang (9 percent), in many other provincial capitals the figures were negligible. The higher figures for Semarang might be explained in part by the more predominant mode of shared cabling for satellite reception as well as the large ethnic Chinese population of the city. The overseas channels most received in the household, with or without dish-antennae were those of Malaysia, particularly its privately-owned TV3. Semarang again led the ratings, which might again be explained by the preference of its dominant Chinese population for the higher non-indigenous Malay/Indonesian programming of that channel. However, Medan registered fairly consistently high ratings of 4-15 percent on most regional and transnational television channels, which with the one exception of Singapore's were all government-owned. This might be explained by the fact that Medan in Sumatra had a native population that was most similar linguistically and culturally with that across the Malacca Straits in peninsular Malaysia.

Table 5G: Transnational channels received in urban Indonesian households, 1993

Channel		Jakarta	Bandung	Surabaya	Medan	Semarang	UPandang	
Malaysia	RTM1	1	2	1	7	8	5	%
	RTM2	-	1	1	10	1	3	%
	TV3	1	1	2	15	23	9	%
StarTV	BBC	-	-	-	5	-	3	%
	Chinese	-	-	-	5	-	1	%
	MTV	-	-	-	5	-	1	%
	Prime	-	-	-	5	-	1	%
	StarPlus	-	-	-	4	-	-	%

Source: SRI [1993-94]

Likewise interviewees of this research were unanimous about the low incidence of transnational satellite television viewership, and seemingly dismissive of its relevance to their organisations. Though their explanations for these varied somewhat, they seemed to revolve around prohibitive cost of access to the broadcasts for the masses, and the cultural appeal of transnational television programming to only the urban elite segment of the population.

Of the 189 million population of Indonesia only the elite have access to satellite television for news, information, education [Interview Ids02.01].

While the top segment of society could appreciate foreign programmes, they have a preference for local programming as well [Interview Ids02.05, Ids03.06].

Satellite television claims a penetration of 10 percent of 'A' segment households, namely the top three to four percent of the Indonesian population. Since the 'A2' segment earned Rp 700,000 (US\$315) per month and above, 'A1' earned upwards of Rp 500,000 (US\$225), the buying power of this expanding middle-income group is high by Indonesian standards and increasing [Interview Ids02.06].

In the middle-class suburbs of Jakarta and other major cities where teachers, doctors, and civil servants live, three out of ten homes have access to satellite television [Interview Ids02.07].

As parabolas are expensive, it is largely expatriates and wealthy Indonesians who can afford personal parabolas [Interview Ids04.01].

These views find corroboration in the findings of government research conducted in 1993 (Table 5H), which indicated that satellite television was very much a middle-class phenomenon in Indonesia, attracting 77.1 percent of its audience from that socio-economic strata alone. Only 20.0 percent of its audience was drawn from the lower class which constitutes the vast majority of this developing nation. Unfortunately there were no statistics on socio-economic classes and income levels for the general population available for comparison.

Table 5H: Average family monthly spending of Indonesian satellite television homes

<i>Socio-economic status</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<u>Lower class:</u>		
Rp 250,000 (US\$125) & below	280	20.0
<u>Middle class:</u>		
Rp 251,000 - 500,000 (US\$250)	530	38.0
Rp 501,000 - 750,000 (US\$375)	286	20.5
Rp 751,000 - 1,000,000 (US\$500)	149	10.7
Rp 1,001,000 - 1,250,000 (US\$625)	75	5.4
Rp 1,251,000 - 1,500,000 (US\$750)	35	2.5
<u>Upper class:</u>		
Rp 1,501,000 (US\$750) & above	41	2.9

Source: Adapted from Ishadi [1994]

As Chinese languages were effectively in disuse in Indonesia, StarTV Mandarin programmes might not have had much appeal to local ethnic Chinese. One government interviewee believed though that dish-antennae might be used to watch Beijing TV, by the sizeable Chinese populations who had retained their language in Java, Sumatra and West Kalimantan. The language barrier had since been reduced as the satellite technology allowed for the provision of separate sound-tracks in alternative languages, as was done by

StarTV for its Prime Sports channel in English and Mandarin. Besides, StarTV had since begun broadcasting a pilot television channel directed at Malay/Indonesian-language audiences.

Census data on social activities reported that television-viewing ranged from 11.21 percent among those 25-29 years of age to 38.64 percent in the 30-64 age group [BPS, 1991: 25-30]. Over the post-commercial television period of 1989 to 1992 'television viewing yesterday' ranged between 55.5 to 58.5 percent while media penetration rates for television among all adults ranged between 55.6 percent to 61.4 percent [PPPI, 1993]. However, more recent research conducted by SRI in 1993 indicated that only two percent of respondents watched satellite television the previous day and one percent each claimed to have watched it between two to seven days ago and longer. None of this negligible number watched it for any significant length of time, though 98 percent of respondents declared themselves to be irregular viewers of satellite television. Therefore the pattern seemed to be that of quite random viewing of channels [SRI, 1993-94a]. While research found that most dish-antennae were directed vertically towards the Palapa satellite, it also found the majority of Indonesian were motivated to purchase them in order to watch foreign rather than local television programming (Table 5I). This was a candid admission in government-sponsored research, though there was a sizeable number who cited what was vaguely classified as 'other reasons'.

Table 5I: Utilisation of satellite dish-antennae in Indonesia

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<u>Direction of dish-antennae:</u>		
Horizontal	249	17.8
Vertical	732	52.4
Rotated	415	29.8
<u>Reason for purchase:</u>		
Watch local programmes clearly	380	27.2
Watch foreign programmes	863	61.8
Motivated by wife/children	313	22.4
Necessary for job/status	99	7.1
Not so expensive	60	4.3
Most neighbours already have it	21	1.5
Other reasons	335	24.0

Source: Ishadi [1994]

More recent research done in East Java for Australia Television confirms the continued dominance of Malaysian television, specifically TV3 in the transnational viewing preferences of Indonesian audiences [Cohen, 1996]. Although access to other regional stations from Singapore, Thailand and Brunei was available, including Malaysia's public broadcaster RTM1 and RTM2, it does seem like TV3 is the most appealing to Indonesian audiences in a similar way to which RCTI dominates domestic viewing (Table 5J).

It is also clear that some of the transnational are achieving higher viewerships in Indonesia than the regional broadcasters. Yet of these it is MTV which the runner-up to TV3, though it is unclear whether this is in fact a reference to Channel V since the latter is not mentioned and MTV is listed beside the other StarTV channels. In any case it does appear that music television has the best chance of crossing cultural and language barriers, at least among youth. The next preferences in transnational channels are the news-oriented channels of CNNi, Australia Television and Canal France, which accords with news being cited by 91.3 percent of East Java respondents as being either important or very important benefits of having dish-antennae. It is worth noting that 64.0 percent of respondents disagreed that transnational television programmes were superior to domestic ones, but 86.5 percent agreed that they provided better information on international affairs. The research also found that viewing of transnational television programming averaged 2.12 hours daily, which took place mainly between 6pm and midnight [Cohen, 1996: 14-25].

Table 5J: Transnational television preferences of Indonesians in East Java, 1995

<i>Station</i>	<i>Origin</i>	<i>Reception %</i>	<i>Watched last week %</i>	<i>Watched yesterday %</i>	<i>Watched most days %</i>
TV3	Malaysia	92.7	42.7	22.0	21.0
MTV	Pan-Asian	72.7	40.7	30.0	54.0
CNNi	Global	68.0	20.0	13.3	27.9
AusTV	Australia	78.7	16.7	9.3	12.2
CFI	France	66.7	12.0	7.3	18.8
TV Philippi	Philippines	82	8.0	3.3	7.7

Adapted from Cohen [1996]

This viewership situation in Indonesia could change further with the introduction of the direct-broadcast satellite (DBS) IndoStar in 1996 since it would make dish-antennae redundant and audiences would require only a US\$100 locally-made aerial to pick up a high-quality signal. CNNi, HBO and other transnational broadcasters using IndoStar are encrypted for pay-TV subscription whilst local broadcasters such as RCTI and SCTV would remain free-to-air. Furthermore with DBS there would be control of the up-link from within Indonesia, and thus there could be some measure of government regulation of content, even that of transnational broadcasters who utilise the satellite. But the cost of access, suitability of programming content and government regulation could continue to be dampers on the penetration and viewership of transnational satellite television in Indonesia. Although access to transnational satellite television in urban areas is currently facilitated via a domestic cable provider, this may be condoned by the government only because any cultural influences would be limited to Indonesia's socio-economic elite minority who are already quite well-integrated into the capitalist world-system.

Although Indonesia adopted an 'open skies' policy towards transnational satellite television, in reality there was only a minuscule audience for such broadcasts, a small urban minority, believed to be largely expatriate, local socio-economic elite or ethnically Chinese. Otherwise the audiences are those Indonesians residing mainly in provinces neighbouring other ASEAN countries and watching their culturally-similar stations via spill-over signals. The impediments to viewing StarTV especially in its early days as an English and Mandarin broadcasters seemed to be primarily the linguistic barrier as Indonesia did not have a English-language colonial heritage nor a dominant Chinese ethnic group. Perhaps equally significant was the financial barrier of owning a dish-antenna for the vast majority of its population, or even of sharing one. The next two Asian case-studies in this thesis, India and China, are also developing countries, yet their political-economic, socio-cultural and media environments are somewhat different to like Indonesia's and so they pose other interesting challenges to transnational satellite broadcasters.

## Chapter Six

### INDIAN TELEVISION MARKET

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As the second largest market for StarTV after Greater China, the South Asian subcontinent is a fitting site for analysis of the impact of transnational satellite television. Soon after its arrival StarTV was the market leader among all the transnational and domestic channels available in cable television households in India, cable being the dominant mode of satellite reception in the country. Transnational satellite television is an urban elite phenomenon in India with a quarter of all StarTV households located in affluent suburbs of the metropolitan cities of Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta and Madras. The Indian government had initially proposed a law to restrict what it defined as cultural invasion by satellite television, but later its public broadcaster resigned itself to competing, even collaborating with commercial satellite broadcasters, transnational and domestic. This chapter will analyse the phenomenal growth of transnational satellite television in the context of its domestic cultural industries and wider economic development.

#### 6.1 PUBLIC TELEVISION & POLICY

As with most developing countries, television in India began as a social experiment and tool to aid economic development and national integration, rather than entertainment and commercial promotion. Quite remarkably it functioned without direct competition in the form of commercial television due to the socialist policies of successive governments, right up till the arrival of transnational satellite television. Yet paradoxically the predominance of development communications on domestic public television may have spawned the growth of the informal video and cable industries which in turn spurred the penetration of transnational satellite television. In this section we shall chart the significant phases of the development of public television in India leading up to and since the arrival of StarTV and other commercial broadcasters.

##### 6.1.1 Social-educational phase (c.1959-84)

After initial reluctance by the government to introduce television due to the cost of the medium, television began in 1959 through UNESCO assistance for an experimental station providing social education for 20 minutes two days a week to viewing and discussion groups called teleclubs within a 40km range of Delhi. Another service for schools was established in 1961. In 1965 the government permitted the inclusion of entertainment programming and the social/educational programming became less significant a component over time. In 1967 additional programmes for farmers in 80 villages were initiated and by 1970 there was three hours of programming available weekly within a 60km radius of Delhi. But because it was of low power and limited range, television in India developed with a distinct urban and middle-class bias [Khanna, 1987].

*Rural experiment:* The development of television in Indian continued to have the classical traits of dependency on the developed world and adherence to the 'Western' model of modernisation. Access to television received a boost in 1975-76 with the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) which used a NASA satellite to bring educational programming to 2,400 rural Indian villages through locally-built television sets and 'chicken-wire' antennae. After SITE, India experimented with a number of satellites before launching its own satellites in 1982-83, equipped to transmit television, radio, telephony and data. These Insat satellites and the hosting of the Asian Games later prompted the massive growth of television in the country till by 1986 its terrestrial transmitters covered 70 percent of its population [Hudson, 1990: 202-205]. Considerable research was done on SITE but these concentrated on short-term effects of exposure to television, while ignoring long-term exposure to popular music, Indian films and drama, radio, newspapers and other forms of mass media, as Hartmann *et al* [1989: 256-263] concluded. One fact that emerged from an anthropological evaluation of SITE at a village was that the most important factor influencing programme preference was use of the ethnic-group's language, particularly the village's own dialect [Agrawal and Malek, 1986: 52]. A lesser-known extension of SITE was the Kheda Communication Project which experimented with decentralised production of television programming for development and so its broadcasts via satellite to some 1,000 villages in the early 1980s were highly successful [Contractor *et al*, 1988].

While the year-long SITE experiment may have provided invaluable experience to Indian engineers and administrators, and been a stimulus for the local electronics industry, besetting issues concerning programming and control of the television medium went unacknowledged by the Indian government. Pendakur [1991] traces the experiment with satellite television to the recommendations of major US electronics corporations such as General Electric, RCA, ITT and Westinghouse in the Indian market. In their battle against All-India Radio's proposal for a terrestrial television system to be developed over 20 years, these firms had an ally in Vikram Sarabhai, the head of India's space research programme, who had close connections to the most influential family in Indian politics, the Nehru-Gandhis. Mitra [1993a: 32-36] alleges that all the research conducted on SITE failed to consider the wider issue of state hegemony of rural culture via television. He also points out that the social and cultural implications of the entry of advertising into the medium was not researched at all, in the determination to find financial support for expansion of the television service.

*Advertising:* In 1976 the television service, Doordarshan (DD) was delinked from All-India Radio and became a separate department of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting with its own director-general [DD-ARU, 1994b]. The very same year DD began accepting advertising, despite its mandate as a public broadcaster to development communications. Furthermore, although DD was said to average a 70 percent reach of India's population, Vilanilam [1989] demonstrated that the majority of products advertised on it were beyond the purchasing power of 90 percent of them. Therefore he argued that such advertising was out of touch with the Indian poor's basic needs for food, clean water, shelter, literacy and education. Through content analysis Srikandath [1991] found that most Indian television commercials promoted the cultural values of high technology and modernity, and consumerist lifestyles with packaged foods and household gadgets. While the television medium may have sought in the 1970 and 80s to meld the rural and urban,

traditional and modern segments of India into one, the television advertising still seemed targeted at its socio-economic elite. However, the government was also a major user of the medium for social advertising via both commercials and entertainment programming, although as Kumar [1992] pointed out this nexus between governments and corporate advertisers raised ethical issues.

If one were to trace its roots in India, advertising accompanied the introduction of industrial capitalism in the late 19th century, when the colonised country became a market for Britain's mass production and a supplier of raw materials [Indian MIB, 1988]. A condensed history at this point may give some perspective to these comments. India was the site of some of the oldest civilisations in the world, having extensive trade links with other Asian and European kingdoms. But it was trade with Portugese, French and British begun in the 16th century which led in the next three centuries to gradual annexation of various regions on the subcontinent. As a result of wars both in Europe and India by 1805 the British East India Company came into control of virtually the whole subcontinent, and this was consolidated as the British Indian Empire by the early 20th century. Opposition to British political rule and economic exploitation in the early part of this century culminated in India gaining independence from the British Empire in 1947 when it also separated acrimoniously from the newly formed state of Pakistan [Speake, 1993: 283-290]. Thus upon attaining independence in the late 1940s the Indian nationalists had adopted a socialist economic model of relative self-sufficiency, and thus the country's intelligentsia has reacted since to any form of perceived neo-colonialism such as advertising and marketing by multinational corporations.

### 6.1.2 National culture phase (c.1982-1992)

About the time India hosted the Asian Games in 1982, DD switched to colour transmission and shifted its emphasis from social/educational to cultural/entertainment programming, although the distinction was not entirely clear. Also in 1984 a second channel was commissioned for the Delhi metropolitan area and over the next four years for Bombay, Calcutta and Madras metropolitan areas in which local language/ethnic preferences in programming were catered to partially, though the primary motivation might have been to target the urban elite. Transmitters within each state around these metropolitan centres were connected together progressively in the late 1980s to form regional networks [DD-ARU, 1994a: 92-94]. Apart from minor changes in programming and distribution there were few developments in DD till the arrival of transnational television in 1991. DD continued to be a government bureaucracy and monopoly despite parliamentary inquiries over 1960s and 1970s such as the Chanda and Verhege Committees. These culminated in reports which advocated greater diversity of providers, even from within the public sector, and autonomy from political abuse such as was seen during the Emergency imposed in the 1970s by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi [Thomas, 1990: 4-13].

*Programming:* Television was still seen as a catalyst of social change by becoming a medium of communication for national development, sensitising society about social justice, and educating the population and developing its human resource [Acharya, 1987: 90,117]. The idealised role assigned to DD as a public broadcaster was to make people all over the country aware of their national cultural heritage and appreciative of the cultural expressions which were hardly known beyond their local environments [Saksena,

1991]. However, a programme flow study by Joshi and Parmar [1992] found that in all television centres, local drama/movie programmes accounted for almost a quarter of transmission time, which is unsurprising given the fact that India is the world's largest producer of feature films. Information programmes dealing with health and agriculture occupied another quarter while education took up 12 percent of the time, with sports and news following closely. The percentage of foreign programmes was low generally and even nil in some regional centres, with Doordarshan doing most of the programme production in-house. The success of a Mexican telenovela in promoting social/educational themes such as family planning and women's rights in Latin America was replicated in India in 1984 with the similar development of an indigenous soap opera called *Hum Log*. The series ran into 156 episodes and enjoyed ratings of up to 90 percent in Hindi-speaking North India or an average of 50 million viewers [Singhal and Rogers, 1989: 88-121]. Although it had social development agenda, *Hum Log* was also the first sponsored programme of DD and its success spawned numerous other local soap operas created by India's film industry and co-opted by its advertising industry, because of their popularity with audiences.

An important determinant of programme acceptance was cultural relevance because another television genre found to be popular in India was that of historical epics. However, on analysing the text of the televised epic *Mahabharat*, Mitra [1993] found DD responsible for perpetrating a Hindu-Hindi cultural hegemony of India, a society which in reality is highly multicultural and multi-religious, in defiance of the constitutional commitment to state secularism. Religion is another dimension of ethnic, even national cultural identity in India given the post-colonial history of its partition from Pakistan and Bangladesh. Though the nation is officially secular, Hinduism is the predominant religion followed by Islam, Jainism, Sikhism, Christianity and other sects [Rayner, 1992]. In recounting the religious significance given to watching a related epic *Ramayana*, Vilanilam [1996: 83] goes further to allege that broadcasting of such epics might have been responsible for rise of Hindu fundamentalism in the Indian political sphere.

Considerable social research during this era analysed the impact of commercialisation of the medium on the programming fare. While Indian television did not resort to large-scale use of imported programming, its locally produced programmes were criticised for appealing to mass tastes instead of being socially relevant or negating cultural values [Khanna, 1987: 26-27]. Upon researching Bombay viewers, Narayanan [1987] attributed television with causing the decline of social conversation, neglect of school-work, addiction and passivity in viewership, though helpful in relaxation and alleviating boredom. Similarly research by Trivedi [1991: 89-95] found all the usual disruptions to social life that he sought to investigate, but notably those in the 'upper class' sample were most inclined think that television had to little or no impact on Indian culture as a whole. Commercialisation of the medium was implicated also in the portrayal of women on Indian television, a key focus of programme research. Content analysis research sponsored by UNESCO demonstrated that women were under-represented, were subservient to men, and played traditional family-based roles. Even a feminist serial seeking to enhance the status of women was undermined by sexist commercials by the programme's sponsors [Krishnan and Dighe, 1990]. A significant number of commercials were found also to include women unnecessarily, to portray women in traditional roles or to

treat women in a derogatory manner, even if they were middle-class, upper caste, urban with consumerist lifestyles [Prasad, 1994: 88-102].

Despite its programming inadequacies DD penetration continued to grow, because between 1982 and 1992 the number of government television transmitters increased from 39 to 531. Though this emphasis on hardware has been criticised for having led to dependence on advertising revenue and neglect of programming quality [Bhargava, 1991: 6]. Over the same period the number of television sets also increased significantly from 2.1 million to an estimated 34.9 million sets making for a maximum Indian audience of potentially over 200 million individuals. Video parlours provided the poorer classes who could not afford a VCR with an entertainment alternative to the dismal programming on DD, and were estimated to number around 50,000 by 1988 [Noble, 1989]. Cable and satellite television had seen phenomenal growth in that time, one survey indicating total cable viewership at 12.9 million individuals and satellite viewership at 1.65 million individuals at the end of 1991, just prior to the arrival of StarTV. The growing popularity of the newer Hindi channel, ZeeTV, ensured continuing growth and estimates by 1993 were of some 15 million viewers of transnational satellite television in urban areas, and, though no reliable estimates existed in semi-urban areas, similar growth was believed to occur. The change was exemplified by the drop in ratings of popular programmes such as Hindi films on Doordarshan's primary channel DD1 from over 80 percent down to 49 percent [Kamik, 1993].

*Advertising:* In the early 1990s Doordarshan (DD) had lost its previously steady 20 percent growth each year to its transnational and domestic commercial television competitors, before it decided to reorganise and diversify in response. In order to meet the increased demand for programming to fill its new channels, DD proposed to sell time-slots on them to programme producers or media brokers who in turn would air programmes attractive to audiences and be authorised to sell advertising time to marketers. The allocation of time-slots was to be on a first-come-first-served basis, but alleged irregularities prompted a legal challenge by newspaper companies expanding into the television medium [Bhatt, 1994: 89-101]. So till the court rejection of the scheme, it was possible to lease time-slots from DD's second urban-based channel, DD2, and put programmes on them within broad censorship guidelines. For instance, DD would sell time-slots to a media broker, for Rs 10 million (US\$3.3 million) which in turn sold advertising to various clients for Rs 20 million (US\$6.7 million) and paid Rs 5 million (US\$1.7 million) to the programme producer. In this way DD had circumvented government restrictions on the advertising rates it could charge.

Following directives of the High Court, Doordarshan subsequently started accepting only sponsored programmes. Under the new 'stop-gap' scheme, a sponsor was to pay Rs 75,000 (US\$2,500) for a 30-minute non-film based programme, or Rs 300,000 (US\$10,000) for a movie-based half-hour programme [Economic Times, 1993]. Another alternative was for DD to buy rights to a televised event such as the World Series cricket and then invite bids for a sponsor. A third alternative was for a programme producer to approach DD with suitable programmes and seek time-slots, the telecast charge paid to DD being fixed according to the time-slot sought, such as prime-time. In a half-hour programme, the programme producer was allowed to sell two minutes of that in the case of film-based games shows, and only one minute in the case of soap-operas and films, with DD retaining the right to sell the remaining advertising time permitted by

law. The final alternative available to advertisers was, of course, the usual one of purchasing advertising spots for television commercials. All of these alternatives demonstrate that throughout this era DD was beholden to advertisers and thus geared to entertainment programming to obtain ratings and revenue, regardless of its attempt to maintain some semblance of being a public broadcaster with a national social and cultural agenda.

### 6.1.3 Ethnic-entertainment phase (c.1993-present)

With economic liberalisation within the country and globalisation pressures from without, India's political system had been more willing to accept change in its broadcast policy. The de facto 'open-sky' policy which came about with StarTV spelt the slow death of DD, especially in urban areas though rural regions still had little choice but its channels [Sinclair and Hemphill, 1997: 13-21]. Thus StarTV's contribution since 1991 has been to rouse the monopolistic public broadcaster which previously was politically dominated, complacent and inefficient. It reacted strategically to transnational satellite television by re-launching all the metropolitan-based DD2 channels as a single nation-wide Metro channel in January 1992 to cater to an urban, middle-class, youth, upwardly-mobile audience similar to ZeeTV's. Initially this was offered terrestrially to a few major cities but by 1994 was available via satellite to 15 cities [Interview Ind02.05]. In August 1993, DD was re-organised as five satellite channels apart from the primary channel: one each for business news and current affairs, entertainment (Metro channel), music, sports, and enrichment, though only three channels were actually launched. Later realising that its enrichment, sports, music and business news channels would not attract programming, sponsors or audiences, DD re-organised its six channels into DD1 as its primary channel, DD2 as its Metro entertainment channel, DD3 as an up-market channel in English, with DD4, DD5 and DD6 as regional language/ethnic channels [Bhatt, 1994: 96-102].

*Penetration:* Doordarshan was characterised by media executives interviewed as sitting on a goldmine since it was the only television broadcaster in the world which could reach 200 million viewers, as when it screened Indian movies. It still dominated India since it alone had three channels available terrestrially in any region without the need for private dish-antennae or cable operators: DD1 reaching 45 million homes, DD2 reaching 12-13 million homes and DD3 reaching 7-8 million homes. The intelligentsia of India watched Doordarshan, especially DD2 which concentrated on entertainment and was ethnic-language based. Despite the hue and cry previously from political and social leaders over its adverse effect on Indian culture, DD broadcast 2.5 hours of MTV daily on its Metro channel [Interview Ind02.07]. Even the flag-ship channel DD1 had national programming only from 20:30-24:00 hours and at other times provided sub-national programming in ethnic languages or dialects. It still maintained four hours of educational programming and six hours of social programmes: news, women's issues and development. But DD also commissioned privately-produced quizzes, shorts and chat shows and produced social/educational programming in-house. It was believed that DD would ultimately become a commissioning house, thus incurring less production costs while providing better programming.

Doordarshan went into satellite broadcasting itself with DD1 being made available on Insat 1D, broadcasting partially in Bengali, Oriya and Telugu languages, and on Insat 2A partially in Assamese, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Tamil, Marathi, Kannada and Gujarati languages. A further five-channel package of

Metro Entertainment, Music, Business & Current Affairs, Sports and Enrichment was broadcast terrestrially to six million television households in four metropolitan areas: Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta and Madras from December 1993, and available via Insat 2B and satellite dish-antennae to the rest of India or another 4.9 million cable television households. These new channels were to experiment with semi-privatisation by leasing time to private production houses who would create programmes without DD preview and sell commercial time to advertisers [HTA, 1993]. By August 1994 in a determined bid to combat the growing sub-regional ethnic-language satellite channels such as Asianet, JainTV, UdayaTV and SunTV, Doordarshan re-organised itself once again, this time into 10 ethnic language channels in addition to the National Network, Metro Channel and Enrichment Channel, each uplinked from the regional station where that language was dominant and made available via a satellite antenna throughout the country [HTA, 1994c].

Thus it was possible for Indians to watch programming in their own language or ethnic culture regardless of where they were located in the country. Entertainment on Metro had expanded in response to its rising popularity and with the manifest intent of giving stiff competition to the Star channels. A broad range of programmes had been put together including the 300-episode *Dallas*, a Hindi serial *Mirch Masala*, a multi-star *Junoon*, a detective serial *Gehrai*, and many Bombay-film based programmes [Interview Ind02.05]. A re-designed, up-market, English-language DD3 was launched by Doordarshan in November 1995, featuring two award-winning movies weekly, one international and one Indian, a daily episode from Discovery Channel, classical music, and an hour-long news programme daily incorporating in-depth analyses. Broadcast free-to-air from Insat 2-C, India's newest satellite, and available via cable throughout the country plus terrestrially in the four major cities of Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta and Madras, DD3 was designed to compete head-on with the transnationals like StarTV, TNT/Cartoon Network and others [International Cable, 1996]. Thus DD was compelled by competition to give voice to different groups and perspectives, and provide better production quality and more interesting programming.

*Programming:* The rationale of Doordarshan became that it was better to lose DD1 audiences to its own DD2 to DD15 channels than to ZeeTV and StarTV channels. Thus the DD2 or Metro channel, which enjoyed two hours of prime-time every day, screened popular Hindi movies, privately-produced quizzes, film-shorts and chat shows that were Indian clones of StarTV and ZeeTV programming genre. Over time Doordarshan news presentations became less stilted, and though its news coverage still had scope for improvement, public issues were often discussed candidly [Straits Times, 1993a]. One DD executive commented that 20 years earlier when national integration was paramount such a strategy of decentralisation would have been unthinkable, but today there was recognition that national culture could co-exist with ethnic diversity in a symbiotic relationship [Interview Ind02.05]. But the more pragmatic reason for DD putting in this considerable effort was to counter the growing impact of transnational satellite television on its advertising revenues, although the latter had been found by surveys to attract only about five percent of the Indian viewership. Lack of access to satellite dish-antennae, particularly in rural areas, and the prevalence of English in satellite television programmes then were the primary explanations for the transnationals not achieving higher penetration and viewership [Times of India, 1993].

When the Indian government proposed a law to restrict the 'cultural invasion' by satellite and cable television, StarTV countered with an offer of a transponder on its satellite, as a means of saving one of its larger markets [AWSJ, 1993b], which was not taken up. Instead Doordarshan embarked on a Rs 7,000 million (US\$233 million) expansion of the television network, to achieve 95 per cent coverage of the country's population by 1994. On its newer channels, DD programming began to resemble its transnational satellite television competition. It began to broadcast imported soap-operas such as *Dallas* and *Dynasty*, incorporated MTV programming into its schedule and pursue rights to international sports competitions such as Wimbledon. Its aggressive wooing of advertisers has also meant changes to its own standing rules with regard to the use of foreign models and locales, and permitting advertising by foreign banks and airlines. But DD had also gone to the extent of denying use of its satellite uplink facilities for the transmission of an Indian cricket series by StarTV to which it had lost the domestic telecast rights [Pathania, 1996]. Then in October 1994 when its Channel 3 was relaunched DD tied-up with Asia Business News (ABN), a satellite business channel for the region to provide stock-market information from around Asia to its viewers [Mullick, 1994b].

In its determination to upgrade DD had tied-up with CNNi for staff training and technical assistance [Interview Ind02.07]. Furthermore an agreement was worked out between CNNi and Doordarshan and approved by the Indian cabinet, by which a transponder on Insat 2B was to be utilised by CNNi in return for a quantum increase in the dissemination of news of India globally [Rai, 1994]. CNNi began broadcasting from July 1995 but the deal, worth US\$1.5 million annually to DD, faced constant calls from opposition parties in the Indian parliament for its cancellation and objections from other transnational and domestic commercial broadcasters denied uplinking rights. Meanwhile DD quietly entered the pay-TV arena with its Movie Club Channel in 1995 transmitted 15 hours daily from the Insat2B satellite. In conjunction with the National Film Development Corporation and Canal Plus it screened 28 movies per week [APT-C, 1995: 105]. Yet on the development communication side, after a long hiatus, there were plans to launch in 1997-98 one satellite, Gramsat, dedicated to rural development communications, and in 1995 there was a short-term experiment to train women elected to the village councils [Joseph, 1996]. All of DD's strategic moves suggested that, due to its dependence on advertising revenues, DD no longer saw itself having a special role as a public broadcaster, no matter what the political rhetoric claimed.

*Advertising:* Despite efforts by DD to woo viewers, sponsors and producers back to the national network, commercial revenue from the main DD1 channel declined over 1993, as advertisers displayed a decided preference for the Metro channel, where in fact the proceeds went to the private programme producer and not to Doordarshan. Figures for October 1993 were Rs 2,260 million (US\$75 million), against Rs 2,300 million (US\$77 million) the previous year. In the first half of the year, the Metro channel got 24 hours of advertising, of which 10 hours was a shift from Doordarshan's main channel, whose share of advertising shrunk from 21 percent to 17 percent and that of regional networks from 79 percent to 73 percent. The introduction of a one-minute increase in free commercial time (FCT) on DD1 was one attempt to entice programme producers back to the main channel and to help finance costs of big-budget productions with a more than corresponding cut in FCT on the DD2 or Metro channel to compensate. Although scheduling of 'hit' programmes was altered on DD2, the television rating points (TRPs) for this Metro channel showed a

negative impact from these changes, as for example the music programme *Superhit Muqabla* which went down from 50 to 30 TRPs. Advertisers were evidently unhappy with the changes to the Metro channel, and there was a threat of them looking elsewhere, for instance to cable television, if differences cannot be resolved. In accordance with suggestions from the advertisers, a new programming mix was planned by DD with the main and Metro channels complementing each other, the aim being to have the viewer flipping from channel to channel within DD [Kang, 1993].

The general consensus among advertising agencies was that DD had been successful in fending off the competition from transnational television broadcasters, as proven by the fact that most advertisers were still attached to DD. When advertisers switched to StarTV which reached nearly 20 million of India's 870 million people, paying as much as US\$4,500 for a one-minute time slot, DD geared up to fight transnational satellite television on their own terms. A dissenting view would be that DD's unfettered expansion from one monochrome station to 15 colour television channels in a decade had nevertheless been characterised by debacles, alleged corruption, a failed teletext venture and sometimes heavy news censorship. For Lall [1994] DD had failed to compete with commercial satellite television due to its inability to produce quality programming to match its ambitious expansion plans in the face of continued globalisation, privatisation and diversification of India's broadcasting industry. Breakdowns in service, poorly-timed programme slots, mistakes in cues, graphics and captions, and overall lack of creativity continued to be the case with DD when fieldwork in India was done in 1994 for this research.

As a public broadcaster Doordarshan had constraints on its development initially such as the policies on cultural integration and political unity of the Indian nation. Twenty years ago national integration was paramount on the Indian political agenda, yet even in the 1970s and 1980s there was evidence that television broadcasting in India was furthering the agenda of its political and economic elite. Observing the influence of the media on political reform movements in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s and early 1990s may have caused some concern to governments in Asia and helped motivate their leaders to learn how to be able to manage social change. Thus with politico-economic liberalisation and globalisation of the world-system, the Indian political structure has been prepared to accept further change in broadcasting policies not envisaged before the 1990s. Symbiotic diversity seems to have become the new catch-phrase in cultural policy in India as in many developing countries, and in the following sections we look at some of those changes in the regional and national television environment which prompted India's political and economic elite to re-examine their policies and strategies.

## 6.2 TRANSNATIONAL COMMERCIAL TELEVISION

By the mid-1990s about a dozen commercial networks, with over 50 channels between them, competed for a share of the Indian television market. It was said that the pioneering pan-Asian satellite network, StarTV, had considerable impact in India because a sizeable proportion of its 880 million population, estimated at 20

million, comprehend its predominant language of broadcast, English. Soon after it began broadcasting most of StarTV's four English language channels were available on the unregulated cable networks. Its success was soon emulated by other transnational television networks, among them CNNi, ABN, Australia Television, and Sony, not to mention domestic commercial ones using the satellite medium such as ZeeTV, Jain, and ATN. This section will examine the performance of StarTV in the context of the increasingly competitive environment for satellite and cable television that is India.

### 6.2.1 StarTV

*Penetration:* Almost exclusively urban, StarTV audiences were only a fraction that of DD with its reach in both urban and predominantly rural India. Still this was achieved despite the fact that audiences had to pay cable operators for the privilege of watching the transnational service. Particularly in the urban slums prior to the growth of local language channels, audiences for StarTV were watching programming which was somewhat unrelated to their daily lives, though no less absorbing. Thus comments by interviewees on the seemingly insignificant size of StarTV audiences need to be seen in this wider context.

StarTV caters to the elite: only 10 percent of Bombay and 6-7 percent of Delhi, cumulative or in other words, watching Star Plus for a minimum of 5 minutes per week [Interview Ind03.03].

By 1994 they still had very low viewership, even when satellite and cable television (audience research) panels were boosted to get 'A' socio-economic status population segment [Interview Ind01.03].

The highest rating on StarPlus is about 3 points, compared with ZeeTV at 35-40 points, and DD around 65-70 points [Interview Ind01.05].

The success of StarTV was primarily because it became part of a cluster of channels on pre-existing neighbourhood cable networks in television entertainment-starved India, the development of which will be explained in a later subsection of this chapter. In the early years of StarTV, cable television in India was largely an urban phenomenon and comprised a significant fraction of urban television households, even if it was a small minority nationally. This was demonstrated by research conducted in India and acknowledged in approximate terms by interviewees:

StarTV viewers are a sub-set of cable subscribers, namely 70 percent of all cable viewers, and 90-95 percent of those in Bombay [Interview Ind03.04].

The latest figures in 1994 indicate 45 million households with television sets, 8 million households cabled (20 percent) persons per set, amounting to 300 million viewers for DD1, and 50 million for satellite and cable television which is about the population of Britain [Interview Ind02.07].

On an all-India basis, satellite and cable television comprises 20-25 percent of television homes, but in cities it was larger [Interview Ind01.08].

On the basis of a survey of 20,791 households across 122 cities and urban towns in late 1993, the penetration of StarTV was estimated to be 7,278,000 homes which account for 25 percent of all TV households, 17 percent of total Indian households and 88 percent of non-terrestrial TV households (Table 6A). The highest penetration was in the city of Ahmedabad at 57 percent of all TV homes, followed by Bombay: 40 percent and Bangalore: 32 percent, all three of which were rather cosmopolitan cities. The Indian states with the highest penetration of TV homes were in the north and west of the country, namely Gujarat: 58

percent, Haryana/Himachal Pradesh: 43 percent, Madhya Pradesh: 33 percent, and Maharashtra/Goa: 33 percent [StarTV, 1994a].

The second largest market for StarTV across its footprint was South Asia (or the Indian subcontinent) and West Asia (or Middle East), of which India was the proverbial jewel in the crown. In India alone StarTV households numbered 10.2 million in 1994 and, counting ZeeTV part-owned also by News Corporation, was the market leader among all cable households in urban India which number 11.8 households or 37 percent of all TV households. Cable was the dominant mode of satellite television reception at 84 percent. StarTV was an urban phenomenon in India with a quarter of all StarTV households located in the six metropolitan cities of Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta, Madras and Hyderabad. Regionally, while western India had the highest penetration at 91 percent of cable households, the south was a close second at 90 percent. Since the average StarTV household comprised 5.9 persons, there were an estimated 60 million viewers. They were more affluent with monthly household incomes of Rs 3,370 (US\$1,100) compared with Rs 2,727 (US\$900) of all TV homes, and owned more luxury consumer goods. StarTV household members had a higher comprehension of English at 49 percent than general households at 42 percent, and 'viewership yesterday' was over 20 percent of all StarTV households and highest among the upper socio-economic groups. It is noteworthy that 'viewership yesterday' was highest in Madras, Hyderabad and Cochin in South India [StarTV, 1995a] where Hindi is not dominant and where the number of English-educated is probably higher.

*Programming:* The reasons for the popularity of StarTV were not uniform across channels or across audiences, and had to do with specific programming. Interviewees offered their opinions of why each channel had special appeal to particular segments of Indian society, which emphasised pre-existing cultural adaptations, such as to its colonial experiences. For Prime Sports, the explanation for its popularity had to do with its commitment to broadcasting cricket matches which has a loyal national following dating from its introduction by the British colonists:

Indians are not enthused over sports except for cricket, and there is no interest in soccer except in the states of Bengal and Goa [Interview Ind01.11].

Prime Sports is of interest to Indians, for example, only when cricket tournaments were shown; otherwise it has a minuscule audience in India. But Prime Sports has been influential on domestic television, for DD began showing major tennis tournaments from semi-finals onwards, mimicking Prime Sports which did so from their start [Interview Ind02.07].

One reason why Prime Sports is doing well is that it still has founder-advertisers on multi-year contracts [Interview Ind02.04].

The BBC television service seems to have benefited from the reputation for even-handed reporting which its radio service had among its sizeable and long-standing audiences among the English-educated in India. But one interviewee did point out that the service was not as unbiased as it claimed to be, while another interviewee felt that it was popular not for its worldwide but Indian news coverage which probably provided a counterpoint to the staid DD coverage of the same. In fact the BBC coverage of the Ayodhya mosque destruction in December 1992, a relatively local incident prudently ignored by DD, was widely blamed for provoking or at least fuelling communal riots nation-wide [Straits Times, 1992]. This may be one of the more legitimate arguments made against transnational satellite television by governments in the region and may

necessitate a code of ethics to sensitise journalists, editors and producers of news services about the consequences of news items put to air, if not a self-regulatory body for the transnational satellite television industry.

BBC television has considerable credibility in Indian eyes because of their experience of the BBC radio service and also because of the historical experience of the British Raj [Interview Ind01.11].

BBC world service is funded by Foreign Office and so is not autonomous of the government as believed by viewers, unlike the BBC domestic service which is funded by license fees [Interview Ind02.07].

Even BBC is popular only if there is a news item on India, for weekly round-ups like India Business Report, or when an Indian documentary is shown [Interview Ind01.03].

The only other channel which attracted comment from interviewees was the StarTV music channel, originally MTV and later Channel V though often mistakenly referred to by the former name. There was little doubt that it had revolutionised advertising creativity and consequently had considerable impact on Indian youth, though there were doubts expressed about how long the trend would last. Channel V's popularity with audiences and advertisers was attributed to its promotion of a hybrid Indian-global youth culture rather than a 'Westernised' youth culture.

The StarTV music channel, MTV has a following among the youth in metropolitan areas [Interview Ind01.02]

Watching MTV might prove a short-term trend since their parents may not continue paying for it unless it is part of a pay-TV programming package [Interview Ind02.08].

Channel V has done better than MTV only because of top-rating programmes such as 'BPL Oye!' which features Hindi film songs [Interview Ind03.03].

In keeping with its regionalisation strategy following the Murdoch take-over of the network, in late 1994 StarTV increased its collaboration with ZeeTV, the domestic commercial broadcaster and UTV, a local programme production house, both of which its parent company News Corporation also partly owns. This resulted in joint production and marketing of two new channels, one free-to-air and another subscription-based. The first, EL TV, was a Hindi general entertainment channel which transmitted two hours initially and would expand as it introduced subregional/ethnic programming such as 3.5 hours of Tamil programmes in early evening. The second, Zee Cinema, was a pay-TV movie channel which is in competition with Star Movies which also broadcasts English-language movies with Hindi and Arabic subtitles. In January 1995, StarTV sold 50 percent of its highly successful Channel V to other multinationals: EMI Music, Sony Pictures, Warner Music Group and BMG Entertainment. Having thus increased its strategic alliances in the music entertainment industry Channel V was split a couple of months later into Hindi and Mandarin services, the former offering some 'live' programmes from Bombay [APT-C, 1995: 38-39].

In October 1996, the Star Plus channel introduced locally-produced Hindi-language programmes serials, soap-operas and game-shows into its evening prime-time, displacing the English-language programming of similar genre for which it was famed. There was speculation that even its English-language programmes would be increasingly produced in India. A case in point was the new Star News slot which was farmed out to a local independent production house, New Delhi TV. ZeeTV accused StarTV of breaking an understanding that the latter would not offer more than 10 percent Hindi-language programming.

The new relationship between the two allied broadcasters was characterised as 'competitive collaboration' or partners in some channels and competitors in others [Asian A&M, 1996d]. This surprise move pitched StarTV not only against ZeeTV but also DD, SET and a host of new Indian commercial channels in the intense battle for advertising revenues. About the same time, StarTV hired as its chief executive in India the former director-general of Doordarshan. Soon after News Corporation gained approval from the Indian government for direct investment in News Television India, paving the way for it to gain domestic broadcaster status [Boulestreau, 1996b]. Together these developments have come to symbolise the completion of StarTV's transformation from a global, pan-Asian up-market broadcaster to a quasi-domestic mass-market one.

### 6.2.2 Other transnational channels

*CNNi*: The first experience of transnational satellite television for South Asia was not StarTV but coverage of the Gulf War courtesy of CNNi, and this was historically more important in opening up the Indian market than it has been given credit for. It was broadcast via a USSR satellite as a statement of Turner's vision of détente and a vain attempt at distancing CNNi from US foreign policy biases. CNNi had pioneered the satellite television market for 24-hour news, even though it was mocked in the US in its early years. Yet CNNi was successful in the US and in Europe while the long-running BSkyB was still struggling. Through CNNi, a number of relatively 'closed' societies now had experience of news from a different perspective. In 1992 when CNNi broadcasts for South Asia moved to ArabSat, it was not able to organise other satellite television providers in Asia to follow it to that platform. Then ArabSat let CNNi down when it moved its satellite toward Middle East to attract other clients and so CNNi was a non-player in India until quality of its signals were stable. By contrast the entry of StarTV was a success because it was part of a cluster of channels on AsiaSat1.

Table 6A: Non-terrestrial channels received in Indian households, 1993

<i>Channel</i>	<i>Delivery</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>All TV households</i>		<i>StarTV households</i>	
StarTV	Satellite	English	25	%	100	%
ZeeTV	Satellite	Hindi	25	%	95	%
Video channel	Cable	Indian-lang.	26	%	91	%
English channel	Cable	English	16	%	60	%
SunTV	Satellite	Tamil	8	%	31	%
Pakistan TV	Satellite	Urdu	7	%	26	%
ATN-Gold	Satellite	Malayalam	7	%	28	%
ATN-One	Satellite	Malayalam	6	%	23	%

Source: Adapted from StarTV [1994a] *Homes Penetration Report: India*.

'Gang of Five': Subsequently CNNi put together a consortium of broadcasters dubbed 'Gang of Five' on ApStar1 and ApStar2 comprising HBO, Discovery, ESPN, Turner, and CNNi, with Channel 9

(Australia), NBC, ABN and other channels joining in later. Since CNNi had encrypted its signal it had two income streams: 5-star hotels which paid subscriptions on a per-room per-day basis, and homes via one or two cable-operator networks per city mainly in South India which paid voluntarily [Interview Ind02.07]. In 1995 CNNi negotiated with Doordarshan to broadcast via the Insat2B satellite to a potential audience of 16 million viewers in India and an additional five million households elsewhere in South Asia for an annual fee of US\$1.5 million. It was a deal objected to by opposition political parties concerned about cultural imperialism, as well as domestic commercial broadcasters who had been prohibited on legal grounds from broadcasting via Indian domestic satellites previously. Still in July 1995, CNNi began broadcasting 22.5 hours of its own programmes together with 1.5 hours of Doordarshan news and current affairs. In turn Doordarshan broadcast CNNi for an hour each day on its DD1 national, DD2 metro and DD3 channels. Bolstered by this development, CNNi has signed similar re-broadcast agreements with domestic broadcasters in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the Maldives [Lahiri, 1995c].

*Others:* Other transnationals followed suit though they have penetrated the Indian market via other means than Insat, notably the PanAmSat satellite Pas-4 launched in late 1995. Through it and via the Indian Modi Entertainment Goups satellite channels and cable network Disney and ESPN became available to India [Zubrzycki, 1996]. Then Asian Business News launched an Indian service, ABNI, in conjunction with an Indian production house, TV18, and broadcast also via the Pas-4 satellite to over a million households [Masters, 1996a]. It then tied up with the large Hinduja cable network which had a two million-strong subscriber base primarily in Bombay, Delhi and Bangalore. The same year MTV staged a come-back, adopting its rival Channel V's strategy of Indianising its service and going one better by having a three-hour slot on Doordarshan in addition to its own 24-hour service [Asian A&M, 1996c]. Also in early 1996 The Discovery Channel stepped in to fill the void left by Doordarshan's abandonment of documentary production and broadcast due to financial constraints and the inability of documentaries to attract audiences and advertising sponsors. Though largely using US programming partly Hindi-dubbed, Discovery was planning to dub them in other Indian languages and produce local documentaries with some foreign expertise [Television Asia, 1996b].

The Japanese had also entered the market quietly on the Pas-4 satellite with the Sony Entertainment Television (SET) channel, owned 60 percent by Sony and 40 percent by Argos Communications Entertainment, a Singapore firm. Drawing initially on soap operas, serials, game shows and movies from Sony's Columbia Tristar and Indian movies from the Argos 400-title library, the channel commissioned 1,000 hours of Hindi programmes in its first year [APT-C, 1995: 102]. It would add two more channels, one in Tamil and the other a music and movies channel [Narang, 1996]. At the end of 1996 there were plans for a joint-venture digital satellite channel by CNBC/NBC and StarTV which would offer entertainment and news programming and possibly be carried by the Hinduja's InCableNet network [Asian A&M, 1996c]. A striking similarity of all of these transnational broadcasters was their commitment to cultural contextualisation of their programming which has necessitated strategic alliances with Indian production houses and cable networks, even other players in the Asian television market.

### 6.2.3 Cable television

India was cabled long before transnational satellite television arrived because entertainment programming on DD channels was limited and predominantly in Hindi. So neighbourhood cable operators, known locally as 'cable-wallahs' provided Hindi and English movies, along with soap-operas like *Dynasty*. These cable services were popular as they were less expensive than borrowing from video libraries and more convenient than using video parlours. Video news was also on offer as an alternative to DD's more politically-innocuous version. The leading news-magazine, *India Today*, produced *Newstrack*, while the Hindustan Group produced *India View*, and both sold these programmes to individuals and cable operators [Interview Ind02.02]. Beginning in 1984 in Bombay and spreading to Gujarat and Maharashtra, it took another six years to reach Delhi and was then largely an urban phenomenon. Thus the cable industry had been around for almost a decade, taking advantage of the lack of laws governing their operations, to wire apartment blocks and urban neighbourhoods [Rahim, 1994]. It is only since the launch of transnational satellite television channels that the number of cable television networks grew exponentially (Table 6B).

Table 6B: Cable television network growth in India (estimates)

Year	Operators	Year	Operators
1984	100	1990	-
1985	450	1991	6,000
1986	800	1992	15,000
1988	1,200	1993	50,000
1989	2,000	1994	150,000

Source: Chaitra Leo Burnett [1994a]

When the Gulf War began, cable operators who had been around for almost a decade, took to buying satellite dish-antennae in order to relay CNNi's 'live' coverage of it. Having invested in the hardware they sought new uses after the War. Initially all satellite dish-antennae were tuned to CNNi but since the end of the Gulf War were re-directed to AsiaSat 1 for StarTV and ZeeTV channels. Since satellite dish-antennae cost Rs 20,000-25,000 (US\$650-800) each, most consumers chose to have access to satellite television via cable subscriptions. Thus StarTV reach in India benefited from the pre-existence of cable television in India, and the cable industry received a further boost in consumer demand in late 1991 to mid-1992 from the advent of satellite television. The role of cable operators in the growth of StarTV in India was a point made repeatedly by interviewers:

StarTV concentrates on India and Taiwan because of cable which in the latter case, for instance, is 60 percent of the entire country [Interview Chn01.03].

Cable operators created the market for StarTV and ZeeTV, and they could ruin the market if its views are not acceded to [Interview Ind02.08].

Essentially StarTV has replaced video libraries which are now in decline, but some StarTV programmes have been seen before via those libraries [Interview Ind01.11].

Each cable operator wielded considerable control over programming seen, although he or she needed to take into account the majority opinion of the neighbourhood. It was not possible for a cable

operator to provide all 20 channels available because of the costs of purchasing multiple satellite dish-antennae and of a receiver for each channel transmitted to homes. So they practiced channel-sharing, showing ZeeTV all day on one channel while all other satellite stations shared the remaining 10-12 channels provided to homes among themselves or with cable operator-selected movies, often two stations per channel over a 24-hour period (Table 6C). For instance, Bombay which drew its residents from all over India had suburbs which were segmented ethnically and so cable operators provided the ethnic language programming which was preferred in their neighbourhoods. The subscription charge was about Rs 100-150 (US\$3-5) per household for a 12-channel package.

Table 6C: Size and services of Indian cable TV networks

<i>Number of subscribers</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number of channels offered</i>	<i>%</i>
Less than 100 subscribers	6	One channel	5
101 to 250 subscribers	22	2 to 3 channels	23
251 to 750 subscribers	35	4 channels	35
751 to 1000 subscribers	20	6 channels	27
1001 to 1500 subscribers	2	More than 6 channels	10

Source: Khare [1993]

Cable operators came from varied backgrounds though unaccountably video library owners had not diversified into this industry. Because of the relatively low set-up costs of using the family television set and VCR, unemployed sons, housewives, students and the less-educated tended to get into this business. The average 'cable-wallah' operated from a small room in an apartment block on the roof of which there were 2 or 3 satellite dish-antennae. Along one or more walls would be a bank of VCRs which taped satellite broadcasts for later transmission or played movie videotapes. Along with a divider, receiver, frequency modulator and booster, the total investment was about Rs 50,000 (US\$1,700). Each cable operation covered a radius of half to one kilometre and every neighbourhood had about four operators, each differentiating itself by service and programme offerings [Interview Ind01.06]. Since competition was fierce, many offered free installation and more programming such as up to 16 television channels and two movie channels. Years ago cable operators started by just providing one DD channel and one video channel which screened three movies a day and they charged about the same subscription fee then as presently.

Cable operations in a number of cities were alleged to be controlled by organised crime or under the protection rackets of corrupt local police. Perhaps for that reason the cable industry in the Bombay area was virtually controlled by the criminal underworld [Interview Ind02.08]. The Cable Operators Federation of India wanted to see some regulation of the industry as they had currently no legal recourse when cables were stolen or illegal tapping occurred. There had also been moves towards cooperative operations such as establishing single control rooms, through cable operators' associations. Between 25,000 and 35,000 cable networks and SMATV systems were estimated to be relaying free-to-air satellite channels into one in three Indian television households. Co-operation between operators was imperative if only to reduce costs since

subscriptions had not increased in proportion to the amount of programming offered, and there was to be an entertainment tax at 35 to 40 percent of subscription revenues imposed by government. Added to this was the amendment to the copyright law which enforced copyright and prevented operators from illegally redistributing encrypted channels [Cable and Satellite Europe, 1994a].

Expectations of the broadcasting industry in the mid-1990s were that cable networks would continue to be instrumental in the further growth of transnational television in India. In fact interviewees speculated that in the future pay-TV systems developed by existing and newer transnational and domestic commercial broadcasters would be used to deliver their channels, perhaps in conjunction with local cable operators. Though there was some dissent about the feasibility of its implementation in India.

By April 1995, some 37 new stations will be on satellite and cable television [Interview Ind03.07].

Most StarTV channels are expected to become pay-TV channels since this would represent a major income source with minimal effort such as charging the cable operator a nominal fee per subscriber [Interview Ind02.02].

Out of the 12 million cable viewers, 8 million might accept their cable operator passing on the cost to them by asking for another Rs 10-20 [US\$0.30-0.50] more each month in subscriptions [Interview Ind01.10].

Given the relatively free or cheap access to transnational channels thus far the concept of pay-TV and pay-per-view is unlikely to be popular with the general population in India in the near future [Interview Ind01.03].

With growing numbers of satellite channels to re-transmit, India's cable operators would be forced to upgrade their systems, making a strong case for mergers. The lack of trust between cable operators in Bombay may be a barrier, but the industry would ultimately have to be run on a corporate basis with adequate infrastructure. Merging among themselves or accepting investment from outside the country may be the only option, causing India to be one of the world's most lucrative markets for cable hardware [Malhotra, 1994]. Together with the passing of the Cable Bill and other broadcast legislation, the estimated 50,000 cable operators were expected to be forced to merge or else go out of business, as most of them had neither the expertise or finance to expand alone. Major global and domestic electronic and communications firms were expected to enter the cable industry in India are investors and franchisors, and as a result a shake-out of the industry was very likely by the late 1990s.

Table 6D: Media ownership and regulation in India, mid-1990s

<i>Medium</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>Regulation</i>
Press	Private	Independent
Radio	Government	Controlled
	Private	Controlled
Cinema	Private	Independent
Terrestrial TV	Government	Controlled
Satellite TV	Private	Independent
Cable TV	Private	Controlled

#### 6.2.4 Liberalisation/deregulation

Transnational satellite television was one of the few media which were independent of government regulation (Table 6D), while domestic terrestrial television remained a state monopoly in the early to mid-1990s despite various proposals for change [Venkateswaran, 1993: 15-16]. In the Government's efforts to restrict it and restore advertisers to Doordarshan, the finance ministry issued a directive to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), banning the release of foreign exchange specifically for advertisements on transnational TV channels, particularly StarTV. To advertise on StarTV a firm had to be a qualified exporter, approved by RBI. The sole advertising brokers for StarTV, Mediascope Associates, were instructed by the RBI that companies without a minimum annual export income of Rs 1 million (US\$33,000) were not allowed to advertise on StarTV [Interview Ind01.10]. There were only three or four advertising media agents approved by RBI who got paid in Rupees by their clients, deducted their commission and then claimed foreign currency from the RBI. But this stipulation was dropped after representatives from those channels held discussions with ministry officials and threatened to take the government to court for acting unconstitutionally [Interview Ind04.01]. This episode is illustrative of the difficulty of the government in regulating the industry indirectly in the absence of specific laws, especially given the democratic nature of Indian society.

Under pressure from both an adverse balance of payment situation and foreign lenders, India hastened economic liberalisation in almost all sectors in mid-1991. Under the then finance minister Manmohan Singh, the reforms aimed at reducing fiscal as well as external deficits through expenditure cuts, devaluation, and measures to encourage foreign capital inflows. While they were welcomed by business groups and the middle class, opposition from the rural electorate, the moderate left and much of the Congress party slowed the reforms. Only through understanding the many players: the World Bank, transnational corporations, domestic business groups, the state, the middle class, can StarTV's continued reception in India be understood [Conlon, 1994], a point which interviewees acknowledged. The advent of transnational satellite television in Asia and the liberalisation of the Indian economy were concurrent yet independent events which stimulated the development of each other all the same.

Satellite television arrival coincided with economic liberalisation virtually to the day [Interview Ind04.04].

Though foreign exchange controls have been lowered, but they are not thought to affect the media much because other export controls are still in place for political reasons to prevent the invasion of foreign cultural values and even ZeeTV is not exempt from them [Interview Ind01.01].

Transnational television broadcasting itself was probably not violating any Indian laws or international regulations, though the cable system which was the primary means of disseminating the signal in India almost certainly was. So until laws governing cable systems were in place most cable systems were quasi-illegal, though there was no way that the Indian government could have turned back the clock by making them manifestly illegal. In fact the early growth of StarTV in India resulted from a vacuum in the broadcasting regulations then as the interviewees were quick to point out. Ironically while StarTV and ZeeTV were free of Indian regulation they were subject to regulation at the point of signal uplink, namely Hong Kong.

A legal vacuum exists vis-a-vis satellite and cable television since up-linking from India is prohibited while cable systems and satellite dishes proliferate [Interview Ind01.02].

Previously no satellite up-linking was permitted in India, but an exception was made for ESPN with Indian cricket [Interview Ind 02.08].

Both StarTV and ZeeTV are controlled by Hong Kong laws regarding the proportion of programmes by category, language, and so on [Interview Ind 02.03].

ZeeTV is not allowed under its license from Hong Kong to produce news, only current affairs programmes [Interview Ind 01.05].

Because India is geographically larger than all of Europe, the government cannot go back on satellite television through, for example, the removal of satellite dishes [Interview Ind01.01].

Cable operations were primitive in the early 1990s since there was no government policy statement or any form of regulation apart from the stipulation of the Indian Telegraph Act dating from the 1890s that cables do not cross roads and not be buried in the ground. The Act, modified in 1980s, required a licence only for satellite dish-antennae directed at Insat satellites for a nominal one-off fee of Rs 50 (US\$1.70) though in practice there is no policing of this requirement. Furthermore since cable operation was private, there was no censorship of its programming [Interview Ind01.02]. The Cable Bill passed in early 1995 required that all cable television operators be registered with their local post office, though after the deadline only those in major towns had done so. A minimum of 51 percent equity must be held by Indian residents which does not seem to faze the multi-service providers run by non-resident Indians. Furthermore every cable operator had to re-transmit at least two DD channels, one of which had to be the sub-regional language channel, but because these DD channels require the purchase of additional equipment by cable operators, their inclusion will be limited in the short-term. All encrypted services were subject to the programming and advertising codes applicable to DD, but how cable operators will self-censor them is unclear. The Indian government reserved for itself the right to suspend cable operations on vague grounds of public interest and law-and-order [Lahiri, 1995b: 25-26]. The net result of this Cable Bill will be further consolidation of the industry and dominance by big business, both domestic and foreign, which would further test the survival of India's innumerable small cable operators.

As transnational satellite television and domestic cable operations were mutually complementary rather than oppositional, one view expressed was that the latter ought to be encouraged by the government as a means of information dissemination. Dua [1991] argues that cable networking has the potential with technological development to become a form of interactive communication and to influence television programming. The Congress government in power in the mid-1990s was in favour of deregulation of the media industry to permit investment by multinational corporations, though there were reservations among them and especially the opposition. Thus there was much conjecture at the time of the research fieldwork about the form of that regulation by interviewees from industry as well as policy-making bodies, which was revealing about their preferred scenarios.

The prime minister, Narasimha Rao, is in favour of the deregulation of press and television, particularly in allowing foreign equity. But he is opposed by politicians and the press oligopoly, for instance the Hindustan Times which has the most to lose as single edition/single city paper [Interview Ind02.04].

Further deregulation is on the cards and the proposed bill before parliament recommended city-wide private commercial television stations similar to the British and Australian model [Interview Ind04.03].

But no satellite uplinks would be allowed, only terrestrial broadcasting, and no foreign equity in these stations will be permitted. There would be no separate legislation for satellite television dishes or DBS, as the only permitted form of reception would be through cable television while the only mode of transmission for stations like ZeeTV, JainTV and so on would remain transnationally [Interview Ind04.03].

Networking of stations will also not be allowed because of the government's fear of the media as illustrated by Indira Gandhi's emergency press censorship in the 1970s [Interview Ind02.04].

In 1995 the Supreme Court of India ruled, among other things, that there were no geographical barriers to communication, that every citizen should have access to broadcast signals, and that single-source information was at odds with democratic society. More specifically it ruled that the airwaves were not government property but public property which could be used by any Indian citizen and that DD had no right to forbid other broadcasters from uplinking their signals to a satellite [Lahiri, 1995a]. Under pressure from the Supreme Court judgements for a new broadcast media law and independent supervisory authority, the government convened two committees to review a previously proposed broadcasting law and propose a new broadcasting policy. One committee recommended that both domestic and transnational channels be allowed to uplink from India, while the other recommended that uplinking be limited only to domestic channels while foreign equity in them be prohibited. In anticipation of some liberalisation of the law and in order to raise revenue, DD began permitting Indian domestic channels to uplink to satellite or transmit via microwave their respective news bulletins from DD facilities around the country [Wanvari, 1996c].

Speculation was rife within the industry at the start of 1997 that a new broadcasting law was imminent which made DD independent of the government, license terrestrial broadcasts by commercial television throughout the country, permit up-links from India, and allow foreign equity in domestic broadcasters. In anticipation of such a bill passing domestic commercial satellite broadcasters, ZeeTV and SunTV lodged applications to broadcast terrestrially [Asian A&M, 1997c]. However in May 1997 a protectionist bill was presented by the Indian government and shelved by the parliament citing other pressing legislation, but not before convening yet another committee to review and recommend changes to the bill. Meanwhile the American Business Council has drafted its own bill as part of its lobbying effort for foreign equity and up-linking rights on behalf of broadcasters such as StarTV, CNNi, ESPN, Sony, MTV and CNBC [Asian A&M, 1997h]. Periodically there are press reports of visits by the likes of Rupert Murdoch and Ted Turner to India which invariably include audiences with the Prime Minister and other top politicians and officials. It is quite clear that global media corporations have a vested interest in the decisions of Indian politicians concerning their domestic media policy, possibly taking advantage of the instability of successive coalition governments since the last national election.

As we have seen in this section, India has attracted a number of transnational channels into a relatively untapped television market, with StarTV and CNNi trail-blazing the way for ESPN, MTV, Sony and others. With a per capita income comparable to that of China, India in the 1990s represents an attractive consumer market to multinational corporations, even if the figure is still a contrast with that of developed countries. Only in recent years has it sought integration into the capitalist world-system, shifting to a market-based

domestic economy open to foreign investment and trade. For much of the 50 years since its independence India adopted a semi-isolationist socialist form of political-economy while it became self-sufficient in agriculture, and the tenth-most industrialised country in the world. Thus the growth of transnational satellite television in India is symptomatic of the liberalisation of the country, a slow process given reservations about social and cultural change, not to mention political and economic dependency. Nonetheless the qualified success of transnational satellite television has been accompanied by the unprecedented development of a vibrant domestic commercial television industry in India into which we next look.

### 6.3 DOMESTIC COMMERCIAL TELEVISION

As the world's seventh largest country geographically and second-most populous country India is a market which can support a large and complex domestic television industry, as the recent years of economic liberalisation and media policy of 'latent access' have demonstrated. Dominating the South Asia region geographically, politically, economically and culturally, India is flanked to the East by Bangladesh and Burma, to the north-east by China, Nepal and Bhutan, to the north-west by Pakistan, to the south by Sri Lanka and the Maldives which are subsidiary audience markets for television targeting India. Its own 23 metropolitan cities, the major ones being Bombay with 12.6 million, Calcutta with 10.9 million, Delhi with 8.38 million and Madras with 5.36 million, have formed the primary target market for the transnational satellite television channels as we have seen in the previous section. But it is India's total population of 846.3 million or 16 percent of the world's population densely occupying only 2.4 percent of the world's land mass [Indian MIB, 1993] which must be the market driving the growth of the new domestic commercial television broadcasters we shall examine in this section.

#### 6.3.1 ZeeTV

In October 1992 a group of domestic and non-resident Indian investors launched ZeeTV, utilising the same AsiaSat1 satellite as StarTV. It was a Hindi-language channel able to cater to both urban and rural areas of India, the latter relatively untouched by StarTV. Though Doordarshan had long reached that segment, ZeeTV was free of the former's restrictive programming policies. ZeeTV represented diversification into the entertainment industry by the Essel Group of Indian entrepreneur Subhash Chandra, which was in the packaging business. To launch this channel Chandra formed a joint-venture in Hong Kong called Asia Today Limited (ATL) in partnership with StarTV and unnamed non-resident Indian investors. While Essel was responsible through a firm called Zee Telefilms Ltd for producing the programming, ATL was responsible for the uplinking of the channel from Hong Kong [Nadkarni, 1993: 24-25]. ZeeTV was broadcast across three time-zones, targeting the Indian domestic market as well as NRIs (non-resident Indians) in the Middle East, and was said to have become profitable after just six months on air. In December 1993 News Corporation purchased a 49.9 percent stake in Asia Today, acceptance of the minority position explained as a means to avoid an adverse reaction by the Indian government [Dubey, 1993b].

*Programming:* The ZeeTV programme staples of Hindi films, variety shows, games shows and talk shows provided Indian viewers with a refreshing alternative to the staid programming on DD, most of them made by its own subsidiary Zee Telefilms. Months after its launch ZeeTV was challenging DD channels for their share of the higher socio-economic segments of Indian television audiences (Table 6E). Following equity participation by News Corporation, plans were announced by ZeeTV to double its broadcasting hours to 24 per day by mid-1994, to launch a second channel possibly in other Indian languages on the next satellite, AsiaSat2, and to explore potential markets for Hindi-language programmes in Europe, North America and Africa [Dubey, 1993b]. To cope with the increased demand for programming, ZeeTV turned to independent production houses, among them United Television (UTV) which supplied also DD.

Table 6E: Share of Indian prime-time audience: AB socio-economic class, 1993

	<i>DD1</i>	<i>ZeeTV</i>	<i>DD2</i>	<i>StarTV</i>	<i>Others</i>	
Sunday	28	27	17	3	25	%
Monday	8	20	56	15	1	%
Tuesday	15	39	28	15	3	%
Wednesday	24	31	23	19	3	%
Thursday	11	21	51	11	6	%
Friday	12	23	37	20	8	%
Saturday	25	24	17	10	24	%

Source: HTA [1993a] *The changing media environment*.

Towards the end of 1994, ZeeTV unexpectedly terminated its long-term agreement with UTV for the production of some of its more popular serials citing poor production values. The real reason was believed to be ZeeTV's displeasure at having lost its bid to purchase a 49 percent stake in UTV by the News Corporation subsidiary 20th Century Fox [Mullick, 1994a]. In diversifying its production sourcing, ZeeTV formed a production company in Sharjah, considered joint productions with Pakistani companies, and began purchases of programming in other Indian languages [Dziadul, 1994]. By 1996 ZeeTV was reported to be exploring the possibility of dubbing some of its Hindi programmes into sub-regional Indian languages to reach new audience segments as well as dubbing sub-regional programming into Hindi for its prime market [AMCB, 1996c]. In response to a highly diversified market that followed the launching of several satellites and new rival channels, it began operating in the late 1990s as a multi-channel broadcaster called Zee Network comprising ZeeTV, EL TV (targeted at the youth market), Zee Cinema and Music Asia [Wanvari, 1996a].

*Penetration:* ZeeTV had a major competitor in the public DD2 or Metro Channel which was available only in the four metropolitan cities. It was more watched than ZeeTV since satellite and cable television households which could receive the latter comprised only 40 percent of all TV households. In rural areas ZeeTV penetrated only 902,000 households or 5.1 percent of all TV households, which was evidence that Doordarshan was the only channel with a significant reach in that sector [Rai, 1994]. Still the

achievement of ZeeTV in such a short time was considered by interviewees commendable in India's very competitive television environment.

Viewing alternatives are growing with not only DD1 or National Network, DD2 or Metro channel, DD regional/ethnic language Channels 3 to 11, ZeeTV, and four StarTV channels, but JainTV, SunTV, Udaya's Kanada channel, and CNNi as well [Interview Ind03.03].

The domestic DD and ZeeTV channels are not specific by programme genre, in contrast to the transnational channels such as Prime Sports, Channel V and CNN, except possibly StarPlus [Interview Ind03.07].

India has the ability to build satellites with 50 transponders each. StarTV is no match for Doordarshan if the latter choose to compete [Interview Ind04.02].

The penetration of transnational satellite television in India grew exponentially only through the popularity of ZeeTV, especially in the cities of the north and west of the country. Cable networks did not take off till the arrival of ZeeTV, and its predecessor and stable-mate StarTV was the beneficiary. The reasons for ZeeTV's outstanding track record was canvassed among interviewees and there was consensus of opinion on the 'cultural discount' factor in programming being critical:

Only 0.01 percent of Indians can identify with StarTV programming. While StarTV launched MTV in September 1991, and other channels by December 1991, its penetration was only 1 million households till ZeeTV was launched. Only in October 1992 when ZeeTV joined it on the same satellite, did cable connections increase leading to significant StarTV penetration [Interview Ind02.01].

While ZeeTV started out piggy-back on StarTV's popularity, by 1994 it is StarTV that is piggy-backing on ZeeTV's popularity. Claiming over 7 million households in urban and rural India, Zee is the dominant satellite channel, particularly in the Hindi-speaking west and north of the country. Though strongest in cities over a million in population, it has significant penetration even in smaller towns [Interview Ind02.05].

StarTV is an English-language medium niched by sports, news and so on, while ZeeTV is the start of real programming choice for the Indian mass audience [Interview Ind02.05].

India cannot be used as a dumping ground for international programming for it has resisted cultural domination for 5,000 years. Only three percent can speak English and so unless transnational satellite television channels entertain in Indian languages, they will never attract audiences [Interview Ind01.11].

By early 1996, ZeeTV was claiming a penetration of 15 million out of the estimated 40 million TV households in India, not counting other audiences abroad. In Europe where it broadcast 17 hours a day as a pay-TV channel via the Astra 1D satellite and used SkyTV's channels for direct-to-home broadcasting, ZeeTV claims 83,000 subscribers and a viewership of some 350,000 viewers in Britain alone among expatriate Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans. About 30 percent of its European programming was made locally at its fully-equipped London studios, while the rest was supplied by Zee Telefilms [Sidhu, 1996]. ZeeTV is also carried for 1.5 hours daily on the pay-TV International Channel which reaches 7.2 million Asian homes though not all of them are ethnically Indian. Since the early 1990s it has been available in Mauritius, which has an ethnic Indian majority, via an arrangement with a domestic broadcaster there. It was launched also in Fiji in mid-1996 as a pay-TV service in conjunction with TVNZ, catering to a sizeable ethnic Indian population there. From 1996 ZeeTV was also available as a premium-tier channel on the South African pay-TV service, Multichoice, targeting the estimated 500,000 Indian households throughout Africa [Singh, interview 1996].

### 6.3.2 Other Indian commercial television

*Asia Television Network (ATN)*: Inaugurated in August 1992 ahead of ZeeTV, with much publicity as the world's first Hindi satellite television channel, ATN failed to take off since its reception required cable operators to install a second dish antennae at some expense to receive a few hours of programming per night. It was overtaken by ZeeTV which commenced two months later and was available along with the StarTV channels from AsiaSat satellite. No advertising was placed on ATN since it had only a short run then. Later ATN, broadcasting two channels via the Russian Stationar satellite, managed to reach to 8 million viewers or 6 percent of all Indian TV households by January 1994. The ATN One channel had programming links with other satellite television channels, carrying Reuters, the American ABC and Thames TV, while the ATN Gold channel programming majored on Hindi movies and general entertainment [APT-C&S, 1995]. To make itself more attractive to cable operators, ATN was said to be planning a multi-channel cable television network, with four of the 16 proposed channels being pay-TV channels [Entertainment Times, 1993a]. But interviewees seemed fairly sceptical of ATN claims of channel expansion, penetration and viewership, making comments such as:

ATN promises five channels but from past experience the industry tends to discount their promises [Interview Ind02.04].

By mid-1993, ATN was claiming that 65 percent of cable operators in Bombay had installed a second dish and were distributing its channels, while Indians in the Middle East and in Europe were also reached by ATN [Interview Ind01.02].

ATN is not watched much in India because it is not re-transmitted by cable operators. One reason is that while CNNi and JainTV are on the same satellite, ATN is on a separate one. Even though its programme schedule is in the newspapers it is not popular with audiences, and so there are few advertisers on it [Interview Ind01.07].

<sup>4</sup> The industry scepticism was well-founded since ATN ceased transmission shortly thereafter and only recommenced in mid-1996. By migrating to the PanAmSat satellite Pas-4 from Gorizont, it was able to reach 77 percent of Indian audiences which was comparable to ZeeTV at 85 percent and StarTV at 82 percent. A key to ATN's resurgence might be its programming and marketing alliance with the Modi Entertainment Group (MEG) and the latter's 26 percent equity partnership in the former [Narang, 1996]. It is worth noting that MEG's competitive strength in turn lies in its strategic alliances with Disney, ESPN, and United Artists among other global media corporations such as Carlton Communications of the UK. In 1996 ATN was going public to raise funds to fund two new channels, ATN Prime and ATN Music, to broadcast from Pas-4 as well as Gorizont II, and enter the DTH market [Lahri, 1996c].

*JainTV*: Financed by non-resident Indians, 'Jain' is an acronym for Joint American Indian Network, but might also be named after its main shareholder, Dr. J.K. Jain, or after the Jain sect of Hinduism of which he was a member. Denied access to state television in the 1980s, Dr Jain, a political activist with the Janata party, the largest single party in the opposition, used to travel the country showing political videos from high-tech equipped vans. In operation since January 1994 and transmitting from the Russian Stationar satellite, JainTV was the first 24-hour channel and soon penetrated 66 percent of all cable operators in India. Since the Stationar21 satellite was located at 103 degrees, and AsiaNet was on 105 degrees, the same dish antennae could be used to receive both, with only an additional low-noise block needed [Interview Ind02.06]. Circumventing Indian laws by uplinking from near Moscow, JainTV innovated the real-time broadcast of

Bombay Stock Exchange prices, late-night adult movies, and 'live' coverage of state elections. Once again, interviewees were not confident in JainTV's future, questioning its claims, credentials and hidden political agenda:

Though previously only a studio-owner, Jain TV has achieved one-third of ZeeTV penetration through 'good' packaging [Interview Ind02.04].

JainTV broadcasts mainly Hindi programmes, though some Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil, and Kannada language ones as well, usually around the time of their respective festivals. JainTV admits to be lacking in software, and hence repeats programmes, broadcasting good programmes only from 8:30-9:30pm [Interview Ind01.04].

Rather misleadingly the 14 'channels' mentioned in its public relations material really refer to different programming categories [Interview Ind02.06].

JainTV is not a significant player but it is clearly pro-BJP (the opposition party) despite its denials. It is considered the 'Saffron' channel in the advertising industry, given its religious links. It is funded by Non-Resident Indian (NRI) money, mainly from Sindhis and Punjabis abroad. News programming will eventually be de-controlled in India, a situation for which JainTV was said to be waiting [Interview Ind01.11].

In an attempt to increase its penetration JainTV also floated a proposal to form a cable forum with cable operators to assist in the procurement of quality programming in return for sharing the advertising revenue [Cable Quest, 1994a]. It also had plans to outfit its fleet of 125 video-vans with satellite dish-antennae to bring JainTV to India's rural market [Kap, 1994]. However by 1996 it was off-air pending a public issues to raised Rs 180 million (US\$5.2 million) to upgrade its studio and software library [Masters, 1996a]. JainTV ceased to be mentioned in the industry media and did not appear in any comprehensive listing of Indian television channels, perhaps its decline due an ideological disdain of collaboration with domestic political power or transnational economic power.

When broadcast and advertising industry executives were interviewed for this research in 1994 they were manifestly aware of the channels in the south of the country but considered it a niche market of little import. All the same they recognised even then that the next stage in the development of satellite and cable television was the shift from India-wide Hindi to state-based ethnic-language programming.

In the Indian television market it is possible to niche only by language [Interview Ind01.04].

Because 50 to 60 percent of country is Hindi-speaking, ZeeTV, JainTV, and ATN are in that language, though JainTV incorporates some Tamil and Bengali programming [Interview Ind03.02].

Now there is a Tamil station, SunTV, a Malayalam station, AsiaNet, and a Kannada station, Udaya, all of them appealing to ethnic preferences [Interview Ind01.03].

In Madras, ZeeTV has only 20 percent penetration in contrast to 60 percent for SunTV [Interview Ind03.03].

SunTV is used primarily to reach Tamil Nadu, and so other audiences are considered a bonus, for example Tamils in the Middle East [Interview Ind01.10].

Generally speaking JainTV, SunTV, AsiaNet have still not taken off by late 1994 [Interview Ind01.07].

*SunTV:* The world's first Tamil-language satellite service was provided by SunTV which transmitted from the Russian satellite, Gorizont, and reached 8 percent of all Indian TV households by January 1994 [APT-C&S, 1994] with programming which was mainly blockbuster Tamil and Hindi movies. It was only with the advent of regional channels such as SunTV in April 1993 that cable began to grow in Tamil Nadu [Interview Ind01.04]. Still, the penetration of SunTV in October 1993 was low in Madras, at only 4 percent of all TV households due to the low penetration of satellite television in general.

But it was higher in the rest of the Tamil Nadu state at 14 percent and even higher at 21 percent in the cosmopolitan city of Bangalore in neighbouring Karnataka state [HTA, 1993d]. However, by 1996 SunTV had achieved advertising revenues of Rs 450 million (US\$12.9 million), a 200 percent increase over revenues of the previous year [AMCB, 1996c]. With a penetration of 86 percent of Tamil Nadu, it was the only satellite network in India other than ZeeTV to turn profitable, which was enough to be wooed by StarTV in vain. In its primary market, the Tamil Nadu state where Tamil is predominantly spoken, SunTV had three channels: SunTV, Sun Music and Sun Movies, out of a total of seven competing channels [Wanvari, 1996b]. By the end of that year SunTV was being retransmitted by Singapore CableVision with which it shared cable subscription and Sri Lanka's private Maharaja Television with whom it shared advertising revenue [Narang, 1996]. Perhaps recognising the limited market and competitive environment of its home state, SunTV was targeting wealthier diasporic Tamil communities globally.

*Gemini & Eenadu:* In neighbouring southern state of Andhra Pradesh, where Telugu is spoken by its 70 million population, two competing channels began in 1995. Gemini TV was owned in partnership with SunTV and other Madras-based film studios, while Eenadu TV had links with the leading Telugu newspaper of the same name. Although Gemini TV broadcast for only 12 hours a day, it was leading in advertising revenues over Eenadu TV which broadcast 18 hours [Wanvari, 1996b]. Yet by 1996 there were reports that Eenadu TV had achieved a viewership of 3.3 million [AMCB, 1996c]. In another southern state of Karnataka, where the Kannada language is spoken, Udaya TV broadcasts for four hours daily and was also part of the SunTV stable. The only southern state in which SunTV had no television channel as of the mid-1990s was Kerala where Malayalam is spoken and where Asianet had a considerable head-start with its integrated satellite and cable operation.

*Asianet:* This first Malayalam-language channel was beamed via the Russian satellite Ekran M which does not require a satellite dish antennae, just a helical one costing only Rs 4000 (US\$1,300). Since Kerala did not have a pre-existing cable network Asianet created a unique distribution network by inaugurating 15 satellite dish 'farms' across the state where dish antennae needed for the various satellites such as AsiaSat and Ekran-M were installed and signals redistributed to as many as 100,000 neighbouring households. This cable system was set up with the approval and technical support of the Kerala state's electricity board enabling the use of its poles for cabling, and utilised broadband UHF which allowed for up to 50 channels as compared with the 11 to 12 channels possible on the VHF cable systems in the rest of the country [HTA, 1993d]. Asianet did not succeed well initially because of its insistence on subscribers using its cable system. But this satellite channel received a boost when the US cable network, Falcons Communications, bought a 40 percent stake subsequently and it has since expanded into a variety of multi-media services [The Hindu, 1994], including an alternative cable phone network. Its 18-hour daily programming comprises a mix of entertainment and information programming in both Malayalam and English, including a few hours of Australia Television. In 1996 it was achieving advertising revenue earnings of Rs 70-80 million (US\$2.6 million) through targeting Malayalee viewers in both resident in Kerala and in the Middle East as expatriates [Wanvari, 1996b]. Asianet was the precursor of many multi-service providers which came to dominate the Indian satellite and cable television industry.

*BITV*: Meanwhile in the north the long-anticipated BITV channel was launched in mid-1995 by Business India, a group of companies with interests in magazine publishing, exhibitions, on-line information and market research. Beginning as a seven-hour omnibus channel with 80 percent of its programming in Hindi on a Russian-owned Gorizont satellite, it migrated later in the year to the American-owned Express 6 satellite to offer separate entertainment, current affairs, youth and sub-national language channels. To produce sufficient programming for its channels BITV had entered into agreements with a leading international production house, All American Fremantle, to create Indian clones of their popular game shows and serials, as well as with local production houses. To differentiate itself from the competition which majored on entertainment programming, BITV also developed a news team of over 35 correspondents in 14 bureaux nationally, and since they were drawn from the print media had them trained by US-based consultants. While the uplink to Gorizont was through Russia, the uplink to Express 6 was via neighbouring Nepal which did not impose the same restrictions on commercial broadcasters as India [Lahiri, 1995c]. As of end-1996 BITV was the last significant broadcast entrant in domestic commercial television in India.

### 6.3.3 Multi-service providers

To overcome the problems of limited distribution of channels on the previously neighbourhood-based cable networks in India, many newer and some older players in the cable market were forming new multi-service providers who rebroadcast only satellite channels with which they were affiliated, produced programming for domestic channels and were often also local channel operators themselves. The new regulatory environment for cable television, allowed for the involvement of foreign or NRI investment in this upgrading process.

*IN Network*: A subsidiary of the Hindujas Group, a non-resident Indian business, this was the first dedicated multi-service provider in the Indian market. It was involved in franchised distribution of multiple cable television channels through IN Cablenet, in programme acquisition and production through IN Vision, in niched publications through IN Print, and in the production and distribution of movies through IN Movies. The company began with IN Mumbai comprising one interactive and three movie channels distributed to 1.2 million homes through franchised cable operators. Eventually IN Network planned to serve 15 Indian cities with 99 channels each via a centralised source, as well as providing other value-added services such as telephony, video conferencing, computer networking, video-on-demand and pay-TV. To compete against the market leader ZeeTV, IN Network opted to find a niche as a city-centric channel, providing programming specific to each city it operated in as well as more generic channels such as Cable Box Office and Cable Music [Lahiri, 1995f]. In 1997, IN Cablenet consented to distribute the NBC family channel and its sister business channel CNBC into an estimated 2 million households in India [Asian A&M, 1997j].

*Siticable*: Most notable among the many entrants into the market was Siticable, which concentrated on northern India and New Delhi in particular. A major rival to IN Network and owned jointly by ZeeTV and StarTV, it claimed over 2 million subscribers in 141 Indian cities by early 1997 [Wanwari, 1997]. That same year both Siticable and In Cablenet agreed to collaborate by carrying each others' programming, instead of competing ruthlessly and even litigating against each other. It was believed however that the real reason for

the truce was because News Corporation was interested in an equity stake in IN Cablenet, after disappointment with Siticable's poor distribution in Mumbai (previously known as Bombay).

*RPG/UIH:* Around Calcutta another multi-service provider, RPG Group, was entering into franchising arrangements with cable operators, producing programmes in the Bengali language and transmitting 32 channels in conjunction with the UK-based United International Holdings (UIH). The service delivers several Doordarshan channels, ZeeTV, ATN, StarTV channels, SunTV and Raj TV. The RPG Group, which also owned the state's Electric Supply Board, was planning a value-added services network incorporating tele-shopping, video-conferencing and educational services [Lahri, 1996e: 8]. UIH in turn teamed up with United Breweries of India which also owned Tamil-language Golden Eagle TV and Kannada-language Udaya TV to develop cable networks for Bangalore, Bombay, Hyderabad and New Delhi [Bailes and Hollister, 1996: 98].

*Others:* Through establishing United Cable Network (UCN) BITV became a multi-service provider in three cities by leasing satellite dish antennae to or negotiating equity arrangements with existing cable operators, through which it achieved a subscriber base of 200,000 households [Vora, 1997]. IITL, another joint-venture of Falcon Cable of the US, this time with the Hindustan Times publishing group, claimed between up to 20,000 subscriber homes [Asian A&M, 1997e]. By 1996 there were reports that a Gujarati channel launched by Shristi Videotech was hoping to break-even in its first year of operations since the state of Gujarat alone had 20 percent of India's cable homes [AMCB, 1996c]. All these Indian multi-service providers have subscribers in the tens and hundreds of thousands in marked contrast to the situation of independent neighbourhood cable operators in the hundreds or low thousands. However, none of these figures supplied by the multi-service providers could be verified independently as of the mid-1990s and so advertising agencies have had to accept them at face value for their media planning purposes.

#### 6.3.4 Programme production & export

Unlike other countries there was little interaction between the prodigious Indian film industry and the television industry, till the success of *Hum Log* soap opera and the growth of video parlours around the mid-1980s. Still domestic television programming in India remained largely an in-house affair of DD till transnational satellite and local cable television spurred demand for more and varied programming. Filling programme time on the 13 to 15 channels it created to combat the competition was a challenge to DD when its own production facilities and equipment were lacking. This demand had a considerable impact on the development and growth of independent production houses, which as we have noted earlier served also as media brokers between DD and advertisers. There were said to be at least six to eight major television production houses, and numerous independent producers operating in India in the mid-1990s. Transnational television broadcasters such as ZeeTV, StarTV and BBC2 were negotiating with such production houses for serials, news-magazines and docu-dramas, as were Asian satellite and cable television networks in UK and the US. Thus this relatively new Indian industry was estimated to be growing at more than 50 percent per annum, with some production houses claiming to be growing even faster.

*Nimbus:* One such firm was Nimbus Communications which began in 1990 with airing on domestic television international sports tournaments in football and cricket. It then diversified into dubbing foreign programmes, particularly for children, and into acquiring movies for television and marketing them to advertisers. Since then Nimbus had produced more than 150 programmes of its own which represent over 1200 broadcast hours, in as many as nine different languages using its own in-house 'creative directors' to oversee the work of free-lance directors and crew. Nimbus claimed to have a turnover in excess of Rs 52 crores (US\$17 million) though an industry source estimated that it sold US\$25 million in advertising media alone. It had more than 200 clients across the country including such multinationals as Hindustan Lever, Pepsi, Cadburys, Procter and Gamble, Johnson and Johnson, Kelvinator, Brooke Bond and Gillette [Nimbus, 1994]. Nimbus was the largest production house in India by sales, all of which was placed with DD. It did not work with ZeeTV for fear of political fall-out of being perceived by the Indian government as a partner of DD's chief rival. In the mid-1990s Nimbus produced, purchased and sold Indian programmes both for domestic television and for export, mostly to the UK and the US, some to the Middle-East and former USSR, South East Asia, and even Japan. Thus Nimbus was in part responsible for a reverse programme flow from the Third World to the First [Interview Ind02.04].

*UTV:* Another production house was Bombay-based UTV which started with entertainment programmes such as game shows, chat shows, before diversifying into soaps, serials, and business programmes. In 1993 UTV created 700 television episodes, 50 advertising commercials, 24 corporate video documentaries, 27 hours airline in-flight programming, not including the dubbing of 104 animated episodes [UTV, 1994]. UTV was producing over 600 hours of TV programming in 1994 ranging from soaps to sitcoms, quiz shows to talk shows, children's programmes to travelogues for the Doordarshan metro channel, ZeeTV and other satellite broadcasters [de Sousa, 1994]. It preferred doing movie-based programmes which had low production costs, and yet were quite certain of attaining high ratings. UTV either sold one-off programmes it produced to DD, or negotiated a price for production. ZeeTV purchased programmes from UTV but sold its own advertising spots as UTV was obliged under that contract only to produce programming [Interview Ind01.03]. By the end of 1994, UTV was to have 10 separate programmes telecast regularly on ZeeTV alone. UTV was still managed by Indians and treated as independent from ZeeTV in which News Corp had a similar ownership interest. Subsequently UTV had added studio complexes in Delhi and Madras to Bombay, and within three years had produced 500 hours of original programming for almost every channel on the South Asian region, in addition to dubbing and television commercials. In 1996 UTV entered the Southeast Asian television market, setting up studio complexes in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur to produce multi-language programming in English, Tamil, Malay, and Bahasa Indonesia [UTV, 1996]. It has also developed another business side-line in dubbing programming into Indian languages for the major transnationals [Lahiri, 1996b].

*Others:* The demand for programming on the public and commercial channels fueled the growth of other production houses in India, an increasing number of which established joint-ventures or strategic alliances with foreign media corporations. HTV, a New Delhi production house owned by the Birla family which also owned the Hindustan Times newspaper, signed an agreement with the British media

conglomerate Pearson and Hong Kong's TVB for a US\$48-65 million joint-venture to produce programming and launch up to two satellite channels [Karp, 1994]. Channel Eight, a Calcutta-based production company has achieved a cult following for its Bengali-language soap opera *Jononi* on DD and has followed that up with chat shows, game shows and serials for ZeeTV, EL TV and JainTV as well [Lahiri, 1996a]. Plus Channel, another production company despite its name, produced programming for DD as well as international clients like BBC, South African Broadcasting Corporation and Mauritius Broadcasting Corporations [Dziadul, 1994]. Beginning with three video magazine programmes for DD in 1991, it rode on the expansion of DD2 Metro so that by 1995 it was producing a number of daily and weekly programmes ranging from business to soap-operas [Ninan, 1996:171]. Overall, the trend among production houses in India seemed to be to form either a strategic alliance or joint-venture with a global media corporation, and to expand the markets for programming to countries in Europe, North America, Africa and the Asia-Pacific where there are diasporic Indian communities.

For India, the feasibility of transnational broadcasts via satellite technology was the catalyst for the rapid development of a domestic television industry which had been long suppressed by laws forbidding commercial television broadcasts. The phenomenal growth of transnational television viewership in India widely reported was really of domestic commercial television such as ZeeTV, Asianet and SunTV which rode in on the coat-tails of the transnational broadcasters such as StarTV and CNNi. In addition the growth of viewership for both domestic and transnational broadcasters via satellite is owed to the pre-existence of cable operators in urban areas, a fact recognised by the more recent multi-service providers which have sought to franchise them. This early substitution of video and movie-based entertainment for the largely high-brow cultural, patronisingly educational, propagandist Hindi-language programming on the public broadcaster DD, was in turned spawned by audience demand in India which we will look next at more closely in the transnational satellite television era.

#### 6.4 TELEVISION CONSUMPTION

Viewership of domestic and transnational television in India is largely circumscribed by language in the ethnically-diverse country. Hindi is the quasi-national language particularly in the north though resisted in the south, but India has also over a dozen major languages with rich literary traditions, and innumerable minor languages. According to a 1981 census, Hindi is spoken by an estimated 264.5 million followed by Bengali at 51.3 million, Telugu at 50.6 million, and Marathi at 49.5 million [Indian MIB, 1993]. In terms of the other standard demographics of a market, about 75 percent of the Indian population were rural, only 52 percent were literate and over 57 percent of the population were under 25 years of age [Lintas, 1993]. These basic facts and figures have had significant implications for the domestic and transnational broadcasters vying for audiences and advertisers in India since the early to mid-1990s, when the fieldwork for this research was conducted.

#### 6.4.1 Domestic public television

*Programme ratings:* Ratings for DD programmes had dropped from pre-satellite television days in 1990 to post-satellite days in 1992, even prior to the inauguration of ZeeTV, though subsequently ratings for DD fell only when ZeeTV was on-air and offering attractive alternative programming [HTA, 1993b]. Doordarshan attempted to maintain its high ratings between DD2 Metro and DD1 National network by varying the former's programme times, but that only resulted in a sharp fall in ratings and advertiser disenchantment [HTA, 1993c]. Still Doordarshan commanded significant ratings in the 41 million households nation-wide in which its DD1 National was available free-to-air, and in the urban metropolitan areas where DD2 Metro was available likewise (Table 6F).

Table 6F: Top 10 rating programmes on DD1 National & DD2 Metro, 1994

<i>DD1 Programme</i>	<i>Genre</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>DD2 Programme</i>	<i>Genre</i>	<i>Rating</i>
Hindi Film (Sat)	Movie	65	Junoon	Soap	56
Rangoli	Film songs	61	Sree Krishna	Mythology	56
Chandrakanta	Soap	59	Super Hit Muqabla	Film-songs	55
Chitrahaar	Film songs	58	Kanoon	Serial	52
Reporter	Serial	57	Dekh Bhai Dekh	Soap	52
Tehkikat	Serial	45	Ajrabi	Serial	52
Sansar	Serial	44	Kismat	Serial	49
Alif Laila	Serial	40	Imtihaan	Serial	46
Hindi Film (Tue)	Movie	37	Dard	Serial	44
Surabhi	Quiz	36	Hindi Film (Sun)	Movie	44

Notes: DD1 reach: 41 million households, average ratings of 17 cities; DD2 reach: 13 million, average ratings of 5 cities: Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Lucknow. Source: Adapted from *The Economic Times* [1994b].

The more popular programme genres in India were said by broadcast executives interviewed to be those which offered escapism and entertainment to the masses, and therefore movie and movies-based programmes had the highest ratings by far. This was said to be true even of the 'intelligentsia' or urban elite of India, and Doordarshan had long catered to such preferences. In the period when StarTV was relatively new and dominant among the few satellite broadcasters, interviewees seemed to think that this characteristic of Indian audiences would insulate DD from serious competition for audiences.

Films can be on their 20th run but they remain popular among quite diverse cultures within India, even the English-educated. And non-film based programming is only slowly growing in popularity [Interview Ind01.11].

But Doordarshan also appeals to these viewers [urban elite who watch satellite/cable television]. The intelligentsia of Indian society watch DD2 which concentrates on entertainment, and is ethnic-language based thus appealing to ethnic minorities, although DD1 is more education/ information-oriented [Interview Ind01.02].

Clones of First World programming such as soaps and game-shows are commonplace in Indian television (DD?) because they are successful formulae for attracting audiences and they fulfil the same escapist role as movies [Interview Ind02.05].

*Media habits:* With the onset of satellite and cable television, there was a more significant shift in time spent on the various broadcast media than with print media, and video watching was completely subsumed into television. It was also found that average viewing time for DD fell by almost half, for videos dropped to zero, whilst for satellite and cable television it rose from scratch to more than all media previously (Table 6G). Analysis of ratings for popular Doordarshan programmes in September 1990 before satellite and cable television and in April 1992 about six months after also indicated a slight fall in ratings, though more so for the less popular news programme than the more popular Hindi serials, movies or film-based music programmes.

Table 6G: Changes in media usage in India since satellite and cable television

<i>Medium</i>	<i>Pre-s/ctv</i>	<i>Post-s/ctv</i>	<i>DD programme</i>	<i>Pre-s/ctv</i>	<i>Post-s/ctv</i>
Doordarshan	67 min.	39 min.	Samachar	36 TRPs	36 TRPs
Satellite/Cable	-	97 min.	News	20 TRPs	15 TRPs
Video	10 min.	-	Chitrahaar	70 TRPs	67 TRPs
Magazine	10 min.	10 min.	Hindi movie	70 TRPs	61 TRPs
Newspapers	19 min.	19 min.			

Source: Mudra Communications [1994a]

Changes in viewing habits and lifestyles across social classes and in both urban and rural areas were said by interviewees to have accompanied the advent and growth of satellite television in India. It was particularly significant among the middle-classes, however defined, since they did have the means to purchase television sets, even second television sets but could not afford more extravagant forms of entertainment. On the one hand some interviewees felt the need to defend the resilience of Indian audiences and Doordarshan's ability to counteract cultural imperialism. On the other hand, one interviewee felt the need to minimise the novelty and thus impact of transnational television.

Changes happened especially among the middle-class, who adapted to its round-the-clock availability in own living rooms because they had limited means for entertainment, unlike upper classes. They responded to this 'satellite invasion' with an increased demand for second tv sets [Interview Ind02.07].

The Indian viewer is quite selective, and not captivated solely by whatever appears on the television screen. This is especially true of urbanites who to lack time and so watch selectively across channels with no loyalties to any of them [Interview Ind01.05].

Indian culture is under attack but Doordarshan believes it can have resilience through promoting its own culture, learning from the lessons of the former USSR states which failed to invest in cultural production and now had to import programming [Interview Ind02.05].

For all the novelty of transnational television only independent news programmes are new to India, since other programme genres have been on domestic television (DD) and cinema before Star arrived [Interview Ind01.01].

In the villages, where the transnationals did not as yet have any significant penetration, DD continued to dominate viewership simply because there was little alternative. Nonetheless programming and

advertising on the public broadcaster was said to be having an impact on consumer lifestyles in village India not dissimilar to that attributed to transnational or domestic commercial television in the cities.

Even village life has adapted to accommodate the TV set through community viewing, although DD has greater impact in these settings than satellite TV channels. Bedtime in the villages is around 9pm and so only DD programming schedule appeals, besides DD being often the only channel available [Interview Ind01.10].

Although development programming was unimaginative, it still has an audience since often villagers watch the community TV set regardless, because it is their sole source of media entertainment [Interview Ind02.04].

Even there [villages], signs of the impact of TV can be observed in the use of household appliances to save time, the carrying of transistors to fields while working, or the acquisition of TV sets in village homes [Interview Ind04.03].

*Cultural discount:* Language of television programming was considered by interviewees to be an important determinant of viewership in India as elsewhere in the world. The public broadcaster Doordarshan was said to be responsible for promoting the so-called national language, even to the south the country which had long resisted its implementation, through its predominance in domestic programming, especially through the popular Hindi movies. Fearing the loss its franchise over Hindi language programming to domestic commercial channels broadcasting via satellite, DD was diversifying into subnational ethnic language channels thereby abandoning its national integration rhetoric for commercial expedience.

For Doordarshan, 90 percent of its programmes are in Hindi, 8 percent English, 5 percent all other languages of India [Interview Ind04.04].

The use of Hindi, officially the national language but resisted particularly in the south of the country, is spreading among the population via movies rather than by government clout [Interview Ind01.01].

DD has taught Hindi even to the south informally through its programmes [Interview Ind01.03].

To this end Doordarshan has commenced multi-ethnic programming through its metro channels which are being made available nation-wide through satellite delivery [Interview Ind01.01].

While there was a resultant increase in television coverage, audience segmentation in India is not by geography but by class and ethnicity [Interview Ind04.04].

Conversely, the foreignness of the language of broadcast was stressed by interviewees as a significant factor in explaining why transnational television channels were not able to attract a large audience in India. Although India might have the largest English-speaking population in the world, this was still a small percentage of its total population by any estimation. Besides this English-educated minority did not necessarily have anglophilic cultural tastes and in fact were even alleged to prefer entertainment programming in their ethnic languages.

StarTV caters to the English-educated, but only to up-market audiences at low-cost. Today only 3 percent of its population speak English and so unless a medium entertains in Indian languages it will never attract an audience [Interview Ind01.11].

Because western soap-operas engross viewers when they can relate them to their own lives, these programmes attract only the top-end of the Indian audience market [Interview Ind01.04].

India boasts more English-language speakers than any other country in the world, but the cultural milieu is unique. Even highly educated persons find ethnic programming appealing, and find it a strain to follow overseas accents. Thus ethnic programming was popular, and contributed to DD's success [Interview Ind01.10].

Thus transnational satellite television was believed by all interviewees to be unlikely to overtake DD in terms of market share. However, an early pilot study conducted by the Centre for Media Studies in Delhi found that DD was already losing English-speaking viewers to BBC on StarTV for news, and Hindi viewers to ZeeTV for entertainment, among the 15 percent of viewers that had access to cable [Times of India, 1993]. This trend could only gain momentum over the 1990s with the influx of more transnational and domestic satellite channels, and the exponential growth of cable networks in India. But DD was fighting back in the late 1990s by reinventing itself, going to the extent of incorporating programming from such transnational broadcasters as CNNi and MTV into an English-language DD3 channel [Karp, 1995]. It was said to be even considering bids for equity participation in the channel by various global media conglomerates eager to gain greater access to the Indian market [Zubrzycki, 1997].

#### 6.4.2 Transnational commercial television

*Media habits:* Despite being the first comprehensive transnational satellite television broadcaster to the country in October 1991 StarTV did not attract Indian audiences immediately after launch because prime-time on the early service was based on Hong Kong time where the signal originated. While this was soon fixed, StarTV was still watched only by the elite of India and then only selected programmes such as soap-operas were. While newspaper and magazine articles were soon citing examples of obsessive watching and discussion of certain programmes in middle-class households, this research's respondents in India were convinced that viewing of StarTV was by no means as extensive a social phenomenon as portrayed in the popular press. The following statements indicate that the popularity of StarTV may have had to do with its novelty value and inexpensive access in the context of limited entertainment alternatives in India then:

StarTV did not expect to take-off initially in India, and only in 1992 did it slot programmes into Indian prime-time such as *The Bold & the Beautiful* and *Santa Barbara* [Interview Ind01.04].

Star was popular because it was the first foreign channel available and was for awhile the only station to watch apart from DD [Interview Ind02.08].

After an initial euphoria over soap-operas among the elite ended, programmes such as *The Bold & the Beautiful* and *Santa Barbara*, which are on air 8:00-9:00pm Monday to Friday, are watched in only 2-3 percent of all cable households in Bombay [Interviews Ind 01.11].

Soon after the advent of satellite television in India, the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) conducted research to ascertain public perception of and reaction towards the medium. Selecting five cities nationwide: Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Hyderabad and Cannanore, they interviewed 300 cable subscribers altogether between January and September 1992 on the impact of satellite and cable television on the day-to-day lives of their families. The researchers found between 56-97 percent of their respondents by cities had watched StarTV channels, over three-quarters of them watching Star Plus and BBC World Service regularly while MTV rated a mention by between 73 to 89 percent of the younger respondents. BBC fared better than CNNi with comments citing immediacy, geographical spread and depth of coverage, though again there were perceptions of irrelevance to India. One consequence of the availability of these foreign news sources was that between 8 to 15 percent of respondents had ceased watching Doordarshan news because it was perceived as uninteresting, uninformative, biased and of generally poor quality, perhaps more

so than previously. Given their cult status among certain segments of Indian society, the foreign soap-operas such as *The Bold and the Beautiful* and *Santa Barbara* were considered to be entertaining, imaginative and humorous by the vast majority of respondents, even though some had reservations about the values expressed or their relevance to India, or had difficulty understanding the dialogue. Sports programmes on StarTV had almost unqualified praise [IIMC, 1993].

*Programme ratings:* A comparison of three market research studies of satellite television penetration and viewership conducted in 1992 found quite significant variation, which might be explained by the universe used, sample size, test period and methodology. For instance, the programme ratings for *Bold & Beautiful* and *Santa Barbara* on Star Plus ranged from 2.6 to 18.0 rating points, while the ratings for popular Hindi programmes on Doordarshan varied between 12.0 to 42.0 points, though a more realistic comparison would be with a popular English programme on Doordarshan like *The World This Week* scored between 15.5 to 29.0 points. The authors of the report implied that their own figures, which were on the low side, were more representative since their research was conducted after the start of ZeeTV in October 1992 when, they argued, casual viewers of DD, StarTV and cable channels switched over to ZeeTV [IMRB, 1993]. Later research confirmed that domestic television commanded a higher viewership of television even among the higher socio-economic classes [HTA, 1993a]. The figures also suggested that the viewership of satellite television was skewed towards the Hindi-language broadcaster ZeeTV rather than the English-language StarTV and other transnational channels.

Only in November 1992 when satellite television did take off in India, did an established research firm begin monitoring viewership using panels: the first for DD1 & DD2 viewers, and a second for satellite and cable television viewers. But it was limited to nine major metropolitan areas because of a lack of funding, and therefore its conclusions were tentative. It found that StarPlus attracted the urban elite: only 10 percent of Bombay and 6-7 percent of Delhi viewers watched it cumulatively, that is, for a minimum of five minutes per week. If viewing any StarTV channel was considered, then the viewership rose to about 20 percent, but for ZeeTV viewership was around 60 percent since its programming was 90 percent in Hindi [Interview Ind03.03]. According to figures circulated by a leading advertising agency, StarTV commanded just 8 percent of the Indian television audience divided among BBC World: 1 percent, MTV: 1 percent, Prime Sports: 3 percent and StarPlus: 3 percent. It illustrated this by pointing out that top rating programmes on StarTV such as *Santa Barbara* attracted audiences of just 6.2 million viewers while DD's *Samachar* attracted 100.9 million [HTA, 1993b].

Of all the channels and programming directed at India in late 1993, the top five programmes were sports programmes, particularly cricket which was possibly the closest thing to a national sport (Table 6H). Soap operas on Star Plus came a distant second, with the frequently-mentioned *Bold & Beautiful* and *Santa Barbara* trailing more recent offerings. These were followed by world news on BBC and pop music programmes on MTV which prior to indigenisation then did not have populist appeal, while there were no ratings for the Star Mandarin channel since its viewership in India would have been negligible even when it was also available on the southern beam of AsiaSat1. These ratings were based on research conducted in three major cities in India, presumably Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta.

Table 6H: Top 20 rating programmes on Star TV channels in India, Nov-Dec 1993

<i>Programme</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Programme</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Rating</i>
<u>Prime Sports:</u>			<u>BBC World:</u>		
Five Nations Cricket	Sat	16.3	International News	Tue	1.5
Five Nations Cricket	Wed	10.4	International News	Wed	1.4
Five Nations Cricket	Thu	6.8	International News	Wed	1.3
Int'l Triathlon Maui	Wed	5.4	Newsnight	Wed	1.3
Five Nations Cricket	Mon	3.4	International News	Fri	1.3
<u>Star Plus:</u>			<u>MTV:</u>		
Anything But Love	Sat	3.9	MTV Sports	Sat	0.9
Richmond Hill	Sat	3.8	MTV's Most Wanted	Mon	0.9
Baywatch	Sat	3.3	VJ David Wu	Tue	0.8
Bold & Beautiful	Wed	2.7	VJ David Wu	Fri	0.8
Santa Barbara	Wed	2.7	VJ David Wu	Thu	0.8

Source: SRG [1993c]. *SRG Multimarket Telescope*

A common view expressed by interviewees was that the impact of transnational satellite television was largely on the urban socio-economic elite of Indian society, and even then through specific channels such as news channel BBC. There was greater impact by television on society as a whole when Doordarshan was the sole channel, but when StarTV arrived, its impact was confined to the socio-economic top-end of Indian society.

Selected programmes such as Bold & the Beautiful and Santa Barbara on StarPlus which are on air 8:00-9:00pm Monday to Friday, and weekly round-ups on BBC, such as India Business Report, on Sunday are watched by the elite [Interview Ind01.03].

Only StarPlus and BBC channels enjoy truly transnational audiences, and in India have an impact on the up-market segments [Interview Ind03.02].

The programming of satellite (transnational) television broadcasters exercises little influence on India because it enjoys no synergy given the cultural difference [Interview Ind01.08].

Shields [1996] is of the view that India's cultural and political problems stem from a failure of its national integration project and a crisis of representation even prior to the arrival of transnational satellite television, though the latter tends to be blamed. Among interviewees there seemed to be ambiguity of opinion about the relationship between transnational satellite television and national sovereignty. On the one hand they believed that broadcasters like StarTV were detrimental to the national culture, and on the other they acknowledged that India could not remain a closed society any more than any country could. In a few cases, the same interviewee held both viewpoints at the same time. They were conscious also that despite rhetoric of nationalism, even the public broadcaster was involved in relaying foreign programming or clones thereof, and even of strategic alliances with the transnational broadcasters.

It is dangerous that the government has no control of broadcasts as when BBC stirred up communal riots over the fairly obscure matter of a mosque demolition by highlighting the incident

without impartiality. Pakistan does the same with its news propaganda, as might CNN in future [Interview Ind01.01].

The new imperialism via 'western' media is insidious, dangerous and harmful. It smacks of an old imperialist attitude which implies that there were no problems when the colonists were in power. And that ever since independence there has been chaos. Thus the 'global village' comprises only half-truths or partial, selective coverage of news [Interview Ind01.01].

No dynamic society can afford not to synthesise inputs into its own mainstream and that as the pace of communications increases, so must the pace of synthesis [Interview Ind02.05].

Audience research conducted in two unnamed metropolitan cities in India found that DD, Star Plus, BBC, ZeeTV and SunTV were the more popular among its 263 respondents [Goonesekera, 1995]. It revealed that for news, current affairs and sports the foreign programmes were preferred, while for culture-specific programmes such as movies and serials, the Indian programmes were preferred. Likewise a survey conducted by Melkote *et al* [1996] on the relative impact of StarTV versus Doordarshan, found that the primary motivation for watching the former was learning about new things, places and cultures while the secondary motivation was to have a pleasurable and relaxing activity. In the case of Doordarshan, the motivations were the same but in reverse order, which reaffirms the preference Indians have towards entertainment in their own culture. But more significant was the finding that in terms of viewing frequency StarTV programmes were preferred over Doordarshan programmes in the genres of music and dance, education, sports, variety, children's, while in the genres of serials, news and movies they tied. However these two studies may not be representative of India since the first was conducted in two metropolitan cities, while the second was conducted solely in Madras, the capital of the southern state where Tamil is the dominant language rather than Hindi, and where perhaps English is more widely understood than the north. In this context both Hindi and English might be colonial languages, and the programmes on Doordarshan and StarTV similarly foreign which sets the stage for the cultural differentiation in the India's growing domestic television, public and commercial.

Table 6I: Top 10 rating programmes for Indian satellite & cable households, 1994

<i>Program</i>	<i>Channel</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Channel</i>	<i>Rating</i>
<u>Bombay:</u>			<u>Delhi:</u>		
Tara (Tue)	Zee	48	Tara (Tue)	Zee	48
Phillips Top 10	Zee	47	Close-up Antaksari	Zee	39
Close-up Antaksari	Zee	44	Tara (Sat)	Zee	38
Tara (Sat)	Zee	41	Phillips Top 10	Zee	36
Campus	Zee	40	Dekh Bai Dekh	DD2	36
Banegi Apni Baat	Zee	37	Chandrakanta	DD2	35
Super Hit Muqabla	DD2	34	Campus	Zee	34
Dekh Bhai Dekh	DD2	33	Super Hit Muqabla	DD2	33
Commander	Zee	31	Banegi Apni Baat	Zee	32
Horror Show	Zee	31	Sree Krishna	DD2	32

Source: Adapted from *The Economic Times* [1994]

6.4.3 Domestic commercial television

*Programme ratings:* In the top 10 ratings for the 6.25 million cable and satellite television households in India, ZeeTV matched and often overtook DD, achieving this through a fare of music and quiz programmes based on popular Hindi movies made in 'Bollywood' or Bombay's film industry (Table 6I). Even though StarTV was cited the most in early denunciations of the detrimental 'Westernising' effects of the satellite television, clearly the more significant satellite channel in India was its Hindi associate, ZeeTV which followed soon after. However criticism of ZeeTV was muted as it was seen as a domestic medium or defended as such by the industry, even if purveying 'Indian culture' in quite a different way from the public broadcaster DD:

While Star is seen as a 'western' invasion, Zee is seen as home-grown, even though it is associated with a major player in world market [Interview Ind02.01].

StarTV may have a minuscule audience but people are watching or else they would not subscribe. However its impact is a 'hum' compared to ZeeTV's 'bang' [Interview Ind02.04].

ZeeTV is essentially a new medium for reaching Indians [Interview Ind01.07].

It (ZeeTV) undermined idea of elite audience since its mindless entertainment was liked even by the wealthy and intellectual [Interview Ind01.02].

It is not always the major broadcasters who enjoy the highest ratings in a particular area. In the regional city of Pune, for instance, local community news of about 15 minutes every night at 9:00pm, distributed by 62 cable operators is the most popular with viewers [Interview Ind03.02].

*Cultural discount:* Research by IMRB classified the states by extent of ZeeTV penetration of all television households and found more of average penetration, namely 15-25 percent, or below average penetration, namely below 15 percent than of high penetration, namely above 25 percent by their definition (Table 6J). Thus evidently the appeal of ZeeTV was still limited to the Hindi-speaking north and west of the country and it was generally shunned in the east, tribal- north-east, and south of the country. The two exceptions were the states of Uttar Pradesh and Hariyana, which could be attributed to low cable penetration of their rural regions.

Table 6J: Penetration of ZeeTV in India by states, 1993

<i>High</i>	<i>Locn</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Locn</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Locn</i>	<i>%</i>
Gujarat	W	55	Maharashtra	W	23	Hariyana/Chand	N	12
Madhya Pradesh	W	33	Rajasthan	W	22	Uttar Pradesh	N	11
Delhi	N	30	Karnataka/Goa	S	19	Andhra Pradesh	S	11
						Bihar	E	9
						Orissa	E	8
						Assam/NE	E	8
						West Bengal	E	6
						Tamilnadu	S	3
						Kerala	S	1

Source: Adapted from IMRB [1993]

ZeeTV certainly had the edge over its stable-mate StarTV in terms of cultural relevance to Indian audiences. However, despite the publicity otherwise ZeeTV was not a national phenomenon in the strict sense of the term, and ever less so than DD1 National ever was. The relative unpopularity of ZeeTV's outside of the north and west of India was picked up on by the interviewees as evidence of the language factor being critical for ratings.

Only 20-25 percent of cable homes watch any Star channel, but for Zee it is 60 percent, since the latter's programming is 90 percent Hindi [Interview Ind03.03].

Still Zee is restricted to geographical pockets, that is, the north and west of India where Hindi is spoken and to areas already linked to cable [Interview Ind01.05].

ZeeTV commands only 20 percent of cable homes in Madras in contrast to the Tamil-language satellite channel, SunTV - proof that people prefer television in their mother-tongue even if they can understand English [Interview Ind01.08].

While the programmes on ZeeTV are 'Western' in genre such as game shows and talk shows, they are adapted to the Indian context. So ZeeTV, StarTV and BBC are negotiating for serials and docu-dramas from Indian production houses [Interview Ind02.04].

Table 6K: Top Indian satellite and cable channel penetration and viewership, 1996

Rank	Channel	Type	Launch	Penetratr %	Viewership %
1	DD1	Public	August 1982	100	83.4
2	DD2	Public	August 1993	100	62.2
3	ZeeTV	Free-to-air	October 1993	100	20.2
4	Home TV	Free-to-air	May 1996	70	20.0 (est.)
5	Star Sports	Free-to-air	August 1991	100	17.2
6	Sun TV	Free-to-air	March 1993	40	5.8
7	Udaya TV	Free-to-air	October 1993	40	3.8
8	Zee Cinema	Pay-TV	April 1995	100	3.0
9	El TV	Pay-TV	December 1994	100	2.0
10	Star Movies	Pay-TV	October 1994	100	1.6
11	Raj TV	Free-to-air	October 1994	40	1.6
12	Vijaya TV	Free-to-air	November 1994	40	1.4
13	Star Plus	Free-to-air	August 1991	100	1.4
14	Channel V	Free-to-air	May 1994	100	1.2
15	JJ TV	Free-to-air	August 1995	40	1.2
16	BBC World	Free-to-air	August 1991	70	0.4
17	DD Movie	Free-to-air	April 1995	70	0.2
18	DD3	Public	November 1995	100	n/a
19	Asian Music	Free-to-air	April 1996	100	n/a
20	MTV	Free-to-air	February 1996	70	n/a

Source: Adapted from Television Asia [1996e:61] *Guide to Satellite & Cable 1996*.

#### 6.4.4 Mixed multi-channel television

In 1995 there were estimated to be 16 million households in India which were cable or multi-channel subscribers, representing about 36 percent of all TV households, or 10 percent of all households in the country and this figure was predicted to reach 26 million homes or 30 percent of all TV homes by the year 2005 [Flynn, 1996: 92]. Cable was being laid at the rate of 25,000 households per day and a conservative estimate of cable households in the year 2000 was 60 million, out of a then total of 82 million television households [Bailes and Hollister, 1996: 104-105]. The top twenty satellite and cable channels in India in 1996 (Table 6K) indicates that the leaders despite all this competitive upheaval were still DD1 and DD2, with ZeeTV and StarTV alongside them as far as penetration is concerned but lagging in viewership.

In researching the industry it is no longer valid nor reasonable to make qualitative or quantitative comparisons of viewership simply between StarTV, ZeeTV and DD as archetypical channels because there are about 50 channels from at least half as many broadcasters on offer in India. The media environment in India has changed rapidly over the 1990s with the growth of both transnational and domestic television, and their availability via ubiquitous cable operators or larger multi-service operators. As this dissertation has observed, transnational satellite television has moved from being perceived as an invasion to being an ally to both Indian commercial broadcasters, public broadcasters, cable operators and multi-channel operators. This process of globalising India's domestic television and domesticating transnational television for India, has been concurrent with India's own political and economic transformation from a socialistic closed economy to a capitalistic open one. A similar, though perhaps more radical marketisation of the economy, has occurred in the Peoples Republic of China, where the political structures remain unswervingly communist. The development of transnational satellite television in the context of the Greater China region comprising Hong Kong and Taiwan as well, where has been little tradition of media freedom, will be examined next.