IDENTITY, CULTURE AND TELEVISION IN FRANCE

by

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University of Wales Cardiff
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**DECLARATION**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research was a very intense and challenging experience, both intellectually and emotionally. It faced all the possible crisis and setbacks a PhD research can possibly face but it survived and reached this stage because of perseverance and the support received during this period from friends and family.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of identity and culture through the prism of television and policy. It examines the relationship between national culture and identity, nation-state and mediated communication with the intention to clarify and concretise the role of television in identity politics generally. It employs a historical and critical comparative analysis of policy documents and relevant literature. France serves as a case study, providing the framework within which the above relationship is analysed.

The case study examines the development of cultural policy in France with particular reference to the audio-visual industries and more specifically television. Its main actors are a Ministry (Culture and Communication), a man (Jack Lang) a medium (television) and a mission (affirmation of the nation). Overall, the case study focuses on policy formation and the role of the state. The main argument is that the former has become increasingly problematic, as the role of the nation-state has been put in question by external forces.

The study approaches the complex link between identity politics, political/national aspirations and cultural production and the interaction between the factors that influence the formulation and implementation of national cultural and audiovisual policy from different levels: national and international. It creates frameworks within which the above issues are examined: theoretical and policy and focuses on factors, internal and external to the nation-state, with a strong emphasis on the political/ideological factors that play internally and many times as a response to outside pressures.

The thesis is divided in three parts. Each contains two chapters and explores a different set of factors and issues. The first part is the theoretical and policy discussion, providing the tools to evaluate and analyze policy as it appears in the case study. The second and third parts focus on the case study and each approach it from a different set of factors, part two from the internal factors perspective (politico / ideological) and part three from the external ones (internationalization, Americanization, Europeanization). Deregulation, cultural protectionism, francophonie, international audiovisual and cultural policy, cultural hegemony and anti-americanism are some of the issues discussed in this thesis.
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ABBREVIATIONS

ARTE: Association Relative à la Télévision Européenne
CLT: Compagnie luxembourgeoise de Télédiffusion
CNCL: Commission National de la Communication et des Libertés
CNC: Centre national du cinéma
CGE: Compagnie Général d'Électricité
CSA: Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel
F2: 2nd Channel
F3: 3rd Channel
FR3: "France Régions"
HACA: Haute Autorité de la Communication et de l'Audiovisuel
IFCIC: Institut de financement du cinéma et des industries culturelles
INA: Institut National de l'Audiovisuel
M6: 6th Channel
ORTF: Office de Radio Télévision Française
PAF: Paysage Audiovisuel Français
PTT: Postes, Téléphones et Télégraphes
RTF: Radio Télévision Française
SEPT: Société d’Édition et de Programmes de Télévision
SFP: Société Française de Production
SOFIRAD: Société financière de radiodiffusion
TDF: Télé Diffusion Française
TF1: Télévision Française, 1st Channel
DG X: European Commission, Audiovisual Media, Information, Communication and Culture
TWF: 'Television Without Frontiers'
GATT: General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade
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“Paradoxically, national identity is most strongly asserted when it is most sharply challenged, and the internal and external challenges to the French have been substantial…”

“… the audiovisual media have continued to provide the major cultural battlefield, the arena of open conflict between a certain idea of French culture and the financial and technological imperatives in the late twentieth century” (Forbes & Kelly, 1996, p 2, 261).

This thesis is the result of a study of culture and identity through the prism of television and policy. It aims to examine the relationship between national culture and identity, nation-state and mediated communication with the intention to clarify and concretize the role of television in identity politics generally. France serves as a case study, providing the framework within which the above relationship will be analyzed.

The idea for this research sparkled from the interest of the author in identity issues and stimulated by the identity debates of the late 1980s and early 1990s. During this particular period, trends in the national and international communication fields—like satellite communication and transnational flow of images, deregulation and privatization of the media sector, the crisis of the Public Service Television as a result of the above trends and the emerging forces of globalization—generated a new area of intellectual preoccupation reflecting the emerging fears surrounding the possible erosion of national cultures by ‘invading’ alien cultural elements through television images.

The potential attributed to television and its power to forge or dissolve collective identities is fascinating and certainly not a new one. It is this potential that makes television so interesting in this study. The media and the state developed over the years a strong relationship and a dependency, the latter on an ideological level by having its political message consistently relayed to the public and the former on a material one by relaying on the state for the financial means with which to carry out its mission. In addition, public service broadcasting’s triple mission, education-information-entertainment, was to represent the basic values of those nations which were more open, more aware, more relaxed (see Drummond & Patterson, 1986). However, today there is a growing anxiety from countries that feel themselves increasingly overtaken by the popular demand for an ever-increasing number of foreign programs. They fear that the national image as it was represented on television has been slowly effaced. The emergence of new communication technologies and the breaking of the national barriers have altered the relationship between the media and the state. Identity politics are changing too as new factors, external and internal to the nation-state have appeared and seem to contest the existing notions of national identity, national culture and the communication strata of the national societies. It is the transitory period of 80s and 90s that provide a rich terrain of a new set of issues, actors and policies that search to accommodate the old notions of the nation to the new environment of transnational and global politics that interact more than ever with national politics and in many cases seem to have taking over (international trade of cultural goods, transnational flow of information and multinationals of media).
It is this changing relationship, between the media and the state that this research will be focusing on. A policy analysis approach is chosen for the primary reason that policy reflects the role of the state. The efforts of the nation to promote a certain notion of national culture and maintain or construct collective identities is better seen on the policy level. Many nation-states feel that by defending their cultures is a way to reaffirm their national identities and protect themselves from external forces. The media and especially television, to which immense political and cultural power has been attributed, have been in the centre of this struggle for national self-assertiveness and determination. As a consequence, the role of cultural and audiovisual policies has been reappraised within the wider context of national policies. Special emphasis is put on cultural policy, how it nurtures national culture and identity and how it affects certain aspects of audiovisual policy. There are areas that both policies contest. The attention here is on policies that reflect cultural preoccupations. An additional reason, why policy is chosen as an approach is that policy studies are not yet fully developed which leaves space to explore, despite the methodological problems encountered.

In addition to the essential components of this research, there are a number of parameters that come to add to this study. Policies here are regarded in terms of internal and external factors. They are processes that involve a dynamic relationship between internal factors such as the nation-state’s politico-economic and social structures and external factors such as interactions with international and transnational organizations. National policy makers have been seriously considering the pressure of external factors whose role has become increasingly more important (see Campanella, 1993). The increasing power of EU on the decision making level and the pressure for freer global trade has certainly put into question the old mechanisms of nation-state. How does the latter respond to this challenge? How are policies on culture and media affected or involved in this process of redefining the boundaries (political, ideological, cultural)? Are there other factors, internal to the nation state that play an equally important role in the shaping of policies? Considering these questions, the scope of the research can be further narrowed down by focusing on the problem of constructing a national cultural policy, which is undermined by external forces. The ultimate aim is to see how the two sets of factors, external pressures and internal conflicts, interact with each other and how they influence the formulation of policies. As a result, this observation can give us a view over the nation-state’s efforts to preserve its identity as a cultural entity.

Factors are not the only pair in this study. Policy is paired with discourse, here meaning the sum of different forums in which cultural debates take place within the nation. These cultural debates shape and reflect policy and vice-versa. Throughout the thesis, we have the constant appearance of pairs of which most are contradictory, like regulation / deregulation, private / public, high culture / popular culture, national / international - global, liberalism / state interventionism - protectionism, cultural self-determination / cultural hegemony and so on. They all reflect opposing tendencies within the nation-state, which is between the Scylla and Charybdis, the protection of its national culture and market and the expansion of its economy, which is in competition with the

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1 Débat and discours are overlapping concepts in the French case. Often the use of the two terms in documents and relevant literature is confusing as it seems that they are used alternatively to signify the same thing: the description of the process or the actual process itself which brings issues of policy, culture and identity to a forum for debate. They are to be seen thus as more of a cultural discussion among different actors.
multinational corporations, which in their turn are in search of new markets for their goods and services. The temptation for the dominant political power is to favour private initiatives through which it hopes to re-establish its increasingly marginalized control. At the same time, this temptation is hampered by the fear that private forces will open the doors of the nation to outside influences that will erode the national distinctiveness upon which the national political elites have been relaying to maintain their control. The private channels are seen of promoting popular culture, mainly American in origin or in inspiration, which disputes the high culture notion of national culture. Liberalism promotes free trade, which in its turn means free circulation of goods and services, which seems to pose no problem when it comes to aerospace or chemicals but it is problematic when it involves products of the cultural industries. Liberalism then is confronted with protectionism. Can the two co-exist? Can a modern nation-state put out in the free global trade what it chooses to and keep other under a protective regime because it has to safeguard its cultural production and consumption? Why is there such a fear of losing its cultural distinctiveness when it claims, according to the nationalist belief, that its culture is deeply rooted in history? Can you protect a culture by trying to keep it within the borders of an artificially constructed collectivity? These are some of the questions and arguments stemming out of this research.

Having explained why the above components have been chosen for this research (national culture and identity, television and policy), we can now see why France is selected to become a case study. It will be superficial to argue that all nation-states go through the same experience and respond in similar manner. Each nation-state, despite sharing similar traits with others regarding their formation and structure and functioning within an international system of nation-states, operates under a combination of unique to each nation factors which shapes its morphology and the way it acts or reacts to pressures from inside or outside. Choosing one country as a case study can give us a detailed insight on identity and policy issues in the particular country and at the same time, if we choose to place it within the wider community of European nations, to reach some conclusions on the role of the nation-state regarding culture, identity and policy. Choosing, therefore, a country that can stand as a representative is vital to this research.

France is a special case as it combines all the factors and issues discussed above. An ex-colonial country with experience of applying cultural hegemony to others, a strong presence in Europe and a countable force in the international arena, France is also a country with deep anxieties about its cultural identity and a strong distrust to cultural influences from outside, in particular those American in origin that come in the form of audiovisual products. Cultural policies have a very strong background in this country. A combination of different factors, both internal (rooted on influential political and ideological structures of the French society) and external (coming from developments in the international political and economic scene and the increasing importance of the EU and France’s role in it) has shaped a rather particular situation that deserves more attention. The following section introduces the main actors and issues involved in the case study and explain why France has been considered as the ideal case for this research.

An Introduction to the Main Actors and Issues Involved in the Case Study

“Avec la Vᵉ République, la culture est devenue en France une affaire d'État. Pour certains, toute intervention masque une récupération ; pour d'autres, seul l'État peut protéger la culture contre les pouvoirs privés. Cette action politique relève pourtant d'une exigence
The case study examines the development of cultural policy in France with particular reference to the audio-visual industries and more specifically television. Its main actors are a Ministry, a man, a medium and a mission. Of the internal factors affecting this dynamic combination of actors, the political /ideological one is of great importance. It is the interaction of this internal factor with others that come from outside France that shape policies and affect the national discourse on culture and identity.

The ministry is the Ministry of Culture and Communication. Unlike many other European nations, France has always had a strong tradition of political intervention in the domain of culture. In Britain people are used to governments operating at arms length from cultural and artistic activities. In France the power exercised by the Ministry of Culture and the role of cultural matters in the political life of the nation and, in particular, the ways on which it is tied up with the country’s whole sense of nationhood, is singular. Cultural policy is not only a matter of arts and heritage and other such activities but is something deeply enmeshed in the politics and national identity of the country. The role of the Ministry of Culture is at the heart of the government in France and its policy decisions have a critical impact on the political process.

The man is Jack Lang who became minister of culture in 1981 following the return to power of the socialist party and its allies after nearly thirty years in the political wilderness. Under his leader Francois Mitterrand, Lang developed an outspoken cultural policy, which became a matter of intense public debate inside and outside of France. His tenure at the ministry propelled an already important area of government policy to the forefront of political debate. His decisions marked a watershed in the development of French cultural policy and by extension European policy. His policies also indicate the influential role of ideology as it was expressed through the socialist cultural discourse.

The medium is television, which during the post-war period became the dominant cultural industry in France. While romantic attachments are made to the film industry and its cultural mission, the leisure time of people in France –as elsewhere- became more and more integrated with the new medium of television. By the 1960s television had usurped the role of the cinema and become the main receptacle of mass culture in France and beyond. French cultural policy was slow to adapt to the growth of the new medium and the decision to develop broadcasting policy under a separate ministry from the early 1980s had profound implications for cultural policy in France and its impact on politics and the nation. In addition, political interference and expediencies affect policy formulation and implementation that puts emphasis on the role of politics as an internal factor. The regulation of the media, for instance, has been considered as the pure product of the political processes in this country.

The final aspect of the thesis is about a mission. The mission of French cultural policy is the

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3 Culture and Communication share a turbulent relationship, at times together under the same ministry and at others separate under different ones.
affirmation of the nation. Throughout its gestation the French State has sought to use policy to promote the nation and the national life. This has meant emphasizing the pre-eminence of the political elite and the State in affaires culturelles but also maintaining particular images of the French nation and the French way of life. This mission is becoming more and more difficult to propagate in face of the changing political, technological and economic realities of the modern world. The advent of the European Union and its goals of economic and political integration as well as the breakdown of the nation state are posing challenges to this mission.

French cultural policy has gone through a number of changes since the ministry of culture was established formally in 1959. The first period saw the development of an ideological mission, which dates back to the 1930s and is a continuation of the State’s involvement in this sector from previous times. The 1960s saw policy having to adjust to the radicalization of society and the process of cultural democracy, issued in by these changes, forced a rethink in official policy. But most significant were the industrialization and commercialization of leisure activities in the 1970s and the 1980s, which were driven by the arrival of new media technologies, in particular television, and the liberalization of economics. The French state has faced considerable problems in adapting to these changes and this has thrown up several contradictions in contemporary cultural policy. These problems have been accentuated by policy developments outside of France, especially in relation to the European Union (EU) and World Trade Organization (WTO). The time frame for this research is the 1980s and early-mid 1990s. They are the transitory years, showing the fast growth of new factors introduced in the policy arena and the slow adaptation of the old factors to the new conditions. As we move towards the mid 1990s, the trends in the international arena are becoming clearer, magnifying any efforts of the nation-state to maintain its power.

Overall, the case study focuses on policy formation and the role of the state. The main argument is that the former has become increasingly problematic, as the role of the nation-state has been put in question. Identity politics complicate things further, as they reflect insecurities inherent to the nation-state. If it achieves nothing else, the discussion generated in this thesis can illustrate just how tied but also highly unstable are the relationships between nation-state and national culture and media and national identities.

The Research Process: Methods and Limitations

As it was mentioned above, this thesis was inspired by the theoretical discussions of the early 1990s on cultural identities and the nation-state. The case study was formed out of a necessity to apply these theories and the arguments formed in the process of understanding them. The stimulation provided by the examination of identity and national culture theories and the background of the author of this thesis on communication studies, led to the combination of the two, identity and television and the desire to see how identity politics are affected by or affect television and cultural policy. Searching for a framework to place the research, policy was appealing because of its dynamic nature and element of power that is involved in it. However, once the case study was chosen for the reasons explained above, the thesis changed nature and moved towards the direction of an empirical analysis which although it has a strong theoretical and policy framework, it intends not to adopt a single theoretical approach but to produce a study that is well informed of the theoretical issues and arguments.
This is not done so much out of choice as more out of necessity and this signals the first difficulty encountered, this of discipline and methodology. While identity studies are popular and well covered by academics, there is no clear consensus about a systematic approach (see Schlesinger). Similarly, policy studies are yet to be properly developed as a discipline (see Bennet & Mercer, 1998) and there is no clear guideline as to how to approach a topic that combines the issues touched by this research. Communication studies have had a strong impact in this thesis, as extensive research has been done in this field. However, communication research, although more developed as an area, has had its limitations too. In the 1980s and early 1990s, it had difficulties adjusting to the new set of factors in the communication field. A lot of research was directed towards “maintaining and enlarging certain widely agreed political, social and cultural benefits promised by broadcasting operated under public control for the general good” (McQuail & the Euromedia Research Group, 1990, p 313). The tendency in research at the time was of a more domestic/national character, which was indicating the national character of communication systems but not responding to the media changes in Western Europe. Although the more recent developments in communication research offer more comprehensive tools in analysing media changes, communication studies, as a discipline is not enough on its own to provide us with the necessary tools for interpreting all the issues tackled in this thesis. They offer though a useful tool for media policy analysis which is also employed in the analysis of cultural policy, as Scheme 1 further below will show. The lack of a single disciplinary approach can have a positive impact as it gives space for exploring the territory with an open mind and develop an empirical analysis that is based on the author’s observation and analysis of primary material, relevant literature and interviews.

Not having initially a clear method or a single discipline to follow and armed only with the theoretical tools which were themselves contestable because of the lack of clear definitions, the material collected during the field work in France was allowed to shape the direction this research has finally taken. Although there was an initial idea of what it was needed, primary sources, interviews, and relevant literature, very soon the amount of material available became overwhelming. There was not only the French literature to be taken into account, but also the literature in English. This was considered essential, as the two reflect two approaches. The French is more nation-centric and the policy studies more developed. The English, reflecting more what is considered as the Anglo-Saxon approach, is more descriptive and less personal in analysis. In addition, it provided an outside to France view on its policies and position in Europe and thus how one nation sees another. It soon became clear that there was a need for streamlining the search for material. The attention was then directed to two main sources: official documents and specialized literature. The first, including legislation, special reports commissioned by the government, the senate, the different ministries and the EU provided the information for the policy analysis carried by the author of this thesis. The second including books and articles from specialized journals, gave the information needed partly for the policy analysis by adding this time the analysis of others and mainly the analysis of the cultural debate as it evolved in France during the chosen time. Adding to these sources were unofficial interviews and discussions with French and British academics and specialists who clarified ideas and gave directions. Employing both a historical and critical comparative analysis of policy documents and related literature, the attention was on finding those links that bring the main components of this study together. In the case of policy documents where the ideological elements were subtler, this was more difficult to achieve. Having though read a

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4 Especially in the early 1990s when the idea of this thesis was conceived.
5 As it will be seen in the first part of the thesis.
number of such documents, one starts to notice patterns of expressions which if put within a time and political context can reveal the underling discourse.

Allowing the material to shape the thesis and give the direction to a certain extent was beneficial as there were no preconceptions about what it should be the outcome of the research. There was however, the need to develop a method of placing the information in the right context after the material was collected, classified and processed to a first level of analysis. There was the need for creating a solid framework or frameworks within which the final analysis was going to take place.

Trying to find a methodological tool, the idea of forming a structure that has a logical development with different levels that function within different frameworks, employing different tools begun to take shape as soon as the material was collected. This research investigates a configuration of factors that form its object of study and concentrates on processes that are dynamic over time. The suggestion was to develop and employ orienting ‘frameworks’ of analysis that provide guidance to potentially relevant factors and mechanisms (see Sharpf, 1997). A framework should provide an ordering system that describes the location of and the potential relationships among various partial theories and mechanisms. When put together these mechanisms built the framework. The linkages among the mechanisms could be either narrative or analytical, employing a both a historical and critical comparative analysis when it comes to policy documents.

A study therefore that seeks to find out the complex link between identity politics, political/national aspirations and cultural production and the interaction between the factors that influence the formulation and implementation of national cultural and audiovisual policy requires an approach which needs to take place at different levels: national and international; employ frameworks within which these levels function: theoretical and policy; distinguish the factors that act internally and externally to the nation-state, with a strong emphasis on the political/ideological factors that play internally and many times as a response to outside pressures. The study therefore is build around this structure that functions on a multilevel, in a multi-structured framework that brings theories and policy mechanisms together. The following table adopted by McQuail’s (ibid) model of system change, presents in detail all the elements and stages involved in policy-making and indicates the complexity of this process. It also offers a comprehensive framework within which this thesis functions, a conceptual ‘cage’ in which we are trying to locate and make sense of policy processes:

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<tr>
<th>Elements of Policy decision-making&lt;sup&gt;6&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. At a given level [global; European; multilateral; national]</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Different actors [governments; political parties; public broadcasters; private media]</td>
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</table>

<sup>6</sup> This model, although it maintains its main concept, has been slightly modified so that it reflects better the scope of this thesis. See table 1 in the annex for the Sequential Model of System Change that describes in a schematic way the above described process, indicating the effect of factors.
organizations; PTTs, public administrators (national and European), free trade advocates (GATT, WTO)

3. Compete over decisions [relating to matters of: culture, technology; economics; political power]

4. Taken in various fora [as determined by level, terrain and type of actor i.e. cultural, economic]

5. Leading to various actions [law-making, de- or re-regulation, protectionist / liberal policies, investments, new and adopted media operations]

6. Leading to changes [in media structures, contents on offer, audience behaviour, perceptions of identity]

Table 1

The following section gives a more detailed description of this structure and a brief description of what each chapter aims to cover.

The Three Parts of the Project: an Outline

The thesis is divided in three parts. Each contains two chapters and explores a different set of factors and issues. The first part is the theoretical and policy discussion, the introduction and background to the research, providing the tools to evaluate and analyze policy as it appears in the case study. It sets up the theoretical and policy frameworks that allow elaborations on the empirical level.

Part One: Chapter 1

This chapter engages us in a theoretical discussion of the relevant concepts and issues that provide a conceptual framework, which contributes to a greater understanding of how culture, identity and policy relate to each other. It centres around culture and tries to link certain notions of culture, like high culture, to what is generally perceived as national culture. This provides in its turn the link to institutional expressions of culture and the role of the state in forming identities.

Chapter 2

In this chapter we see how cultural policy is formulated; who is responsible for its formulation and implementation; what is the environment within which cultural policy takes place; what the issues and factors involved in its implementation and what are the pressures of today. But most importantly, how does cultural policy relate to cultural industries and particularly the electronic media, the primary containers of modern culture. Answering these questions might help us to answer the question posed at the end of the last chapter: how much cultural policy is justified, especially in its protectionist expression. This analysis will help us to locate and understand better the nature of the specific case study. Although this chapter focuses on policy, the use of theory is inevitable. It is a chapter that links the theoretical discussion of chapter One with the case study.

Part Two

The second and third parts focus on the case study and each approach it from a different set of factors, part two from the internal factors perspective and part three from the external ones.

Chapter 3
This chapter discusses the development of modern French cultural policy, the traditions that have shaped it and the major actors involved in it. Although there is no need for the purpose of this research to give a complete historical profile of the French cultural policy practises, in order to appreciate current and recent policy, it does help to understand what elements of cultural policy have remained constant over the years and what variations and changes have taken place. This will lead to the analysis of cultural policy implemented during and after the decade of 1980s. Overall, this chapter functions as the background to the case study. It develops a methodological approach that helps us to evaluate the development of French cultural policy and highlights the ideological influences.

Chapter 4
The main focus of this chapter is how different French governments have dealt with these issues and the results of their actions during this critical period since 1981. It is an attempt to examine the changes in the processes of the audiovisual policy making and the content of policy and their effect on the function of French television. This is done by examining the main factors and issues involved in the policymaking process, highlighting the importance of internal factors, mainly the political/ideological (political expediencies, state intervention, socialist and liberal ideologies) and their relation and impact to culture and television. This is a policy analysis orientated chapter with additional emphasis on the cultural debate and how it evolved in France.

Part Three
This is the last section of this thesis that seeks to understand the influence of the external on the nation-state factors, regarding policy-making in the field of media and culture.

Chapter 5
This chapter focuses on a limited but crucial aspect of European development that may be called the ‘cultural dimension’ and, in particular, the role of the media in it. The aim is to follow the evolution of audiovisual and cultural policy in the EU and France’s role in this process, through a combination of conceptual and policy analysis. France serves as an example of the national vs. the European - indicating the complexity of policy-making at a national and European level and the delicate politics of identity, which have become more complicated as new actors, external to the French nation add their pressure. It will be argued that when it comes to media and cultural issues, France is considered a very influential power within EU. The European audiovisual policy is French inspired and it bears the stamp of France’s preoccupation with the role of state intervention in shaping the national culture. The chapter will be divided in two main sections, the European policies and the identification of the problematic areas and France’s position and responses.

Chapter 6
In this last chapter, France will be placed within an international context, setting new parameters for examining the formulation and implementation of cultural and audiovisual policies and how they relate to France’s efforts to sustain a strong profile in the international politico-economic arena. The new parameters and the main themes of this chapter will be international cultural debate, Foreign Audiovisual Policy, anti-Americanism and cultural protectionism. It is hoped to show that despite France’s lack of success in the international media market, its audiovisual and
cultural policies abroad are still reflecting old tendencies towards cultural imperialism. Ironically it is the latter that France uses in her accusations against US products and her arguments about cultural protectionism and cultural exception. The chapter brings out the issue of globalization and aims to show how a modern nation-state deals with the increasing outside pressures and loss of power.
Part One: Theoretical and Policy Discussion
CHAPTER 1: Towards a Theoretical Framework

“The twentieth century has been a unique period in world cultural history. Humankind has finally bid farewell to that world which could with some credibility be seen as a cultural mosaic, of separate pieces with hard, well-defined edges. Because of the great increase in the traffic in culture, the large-scale transfer of meaning systems and symbolic forms, the world is increasingly becoming one not only in political and economic terms … but in terms of its cultural construction as well; a global ecumene of persistent cultural interaction and exchange” (Hannerz, in Beynon & Dunkerley, 2000, p 87).

National culture has been at the centre of long running debates regarding media imperialism, internationalization and lately globalization, as it is claimed that the former has been eroded by the latter processes. National policies have been affected by these processes too as the nation-state employs the former in its effort to protect its cultural distinctiveness. This is a hugely problematic area and trying to identify the theoretical framework for research, which deals with the problem of constructing a national cultural policy, is not an easy task. This is mainly because of the multiplicity of closely interrelated concepts, (culture, national culture, global culture, national and cultural identities), the diversity of the factors (socio-economic, political/ideological and internal and external to the nation-state) and issues involved (globalization, cultural hegemony, cultural self-determination and national sovereignty). However, engaging ourselves in a theoretical discussion of the above can provide a conceptual framework that will contribute to a greater understanding of how culture, identity and policy relate to each other.

All these concepts and issues form a kind of chain, where an understanding of each segment is dependent upon an understanding of the others. Therefore, the first problem, regarding the theoretical framework of a study like this, will be how to dismantle this chain and which segments to choose to focus on. The second problem, related to the first, is that of interdisciplinarity. It seems almost impossible to study these concepts from one specific disciplinary perspective. There are a number of approaches, historic, sociological, cultural and policy studies and others, each contributing a different interpretation.

In addition, the sheer variety of issues connected to the nation-state and its relationship to culture - as expressed through the implementation of national cultural policy - makes it almost impossible to study more than a few key aspects of this relationship. Furthermore, the lack of a clear and stable terminology greatly contributes to the confusion created by the overlapping boundaries of the different concepts related to them, have all proved notoriously difficult to define, let alone to analyse.

The way nation-states construct and relate to their national culture varies. A combination of different factors (political, ideological etc) affects this relationship to such an extent that the study of a particular case, like the French, needs to focus on the factors related to that specific case and the conditions from which they have emerged. Yet, before examining the specific factors that shape or affect the relationship between the French nation-state and its national culture, it is useful to clarify some of the most important concepts and issues that relate to this research. In this
chapter, emphasis will be placed on culture (which is at the centre of all arguments), nation-state (the main actor in implementing policies), problems of defining national culture and identities (the tension within the nation), communication and its role in the formation of national culture and, finally, international trends (as they are expressed through the destabilizing forces of globalization).

This research is not shaped by a single theoretical approach. The aim, in what follows, is to examine a number of theoretical positions that relate to the question of constructing national cultural policy. This will contribute to the actual aim of this study, which is to produce a theoretically informed policy analysis and make thus an attempt to bring theory and policy together. The dismantling of the chain starts with the concept of culture, as it was felt that before any argument can proceed, its principal subjects need to be clarified and defined within the set policy framework.

1. The Centrality of Culture

Why is culture so central in our understanding of policy formation and why is national culture so vital for the survival of the nation-state? Why are culture and its regulation so central in contemporary policy debates? In other words, why should we be concerned with whether national cultures can protect themselves against globalization? Before explaining these questions, it is important to start with the concept of ‘culture’. If we accept that culture shapes human practices, we need to begin by defining what we mean by culture.

1.1 Definitional Problems

Culture is a notoriously difficult concept which has a long and complicated history of its own - a history which has produced many variants and much ambiguity. This is not only because of its complex development in many European languages, but also because of its usage by several ‘distinct intellectual disciplines’ (Williams, 1988, p. 87).

The complexity is evident in the variety of attempted definitions that exist. Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952), American anthropologists, collected more than hundred and fifty definitions. This implies either that there is a lot of confusion regarding the understanding of the concept or, as Tomlinson puts it, that culture is so large a concept that it can accommodate all these definitions: “they all grasp some aspect of a complex whole” (1994, p.4). Tylor, in his anthropological definition of culture, described this sense of culture as a complex whole: “...which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, custom, and many other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (in Tomlinson, 1994, p. 4). Culture, here, gives an organizing concept for description of the way of life of a collectivity. These beliefs, customs, habits etc. form a heterogeneous whole that is characteristic of a certain society, distinguishing it from others that exist at different times and in different places.

7 Culture: “…action de civiliser, état de ce qui est civilisé, c’est à dire ensemble des opinions et des mœurs qui résulte de l’action réciproque des industriels, de la religion, des beaux-arts et des sciences” (Hell, 1981, p.6.) This definition shows that in the French language the words culture and civilization overlap and there are synonymous to high culture. But it is in the German language that we find the richest variety of terms expressing the nuances of the concept of culture: Bildung, Kultur, Zivilisation and an incredible number of derivatives and composed words that form the German universe of the term culture.
Tylor seeks to break culture down into its component elements, relate them to one another, to the environment and to the needs of humans. The examination of the function of cultural phenomena is at the centre of the anthropological definitions, so that Thompson labelled them ‘descriptive conception of culture’. It, usefully, distinguishes between the material and non-material aspects of culture and mentions its collective character but it does not fully indicate the complexity of the phenomenon of culture, as it will be seen below.

While in cultural anthropology, culture is mainly related to material production, in other disciplines like history and cultural studies it is primarily related to signifying or symbolic systems. The symbolic conception gives a more complex interpretation of culture:

“Culture is the pattern of meaning embodied in symbolic forms, including actions, utterances and meaningful objects of various kinds, by virtue of which individuals communicate with one another and share their experiences, conceptions and beliefs” (Thompson, 1994, p. 132).

Cultural phenomena according to this conception are symbolic and the study of culture is mainly concerned with the interpretation of the meanings embodied in symbolic forms, rendering thus intelligible a way of life that is shared by a group of people. However, although this conception reveals the complex relationship between culture and the people that share it, there are still some limitations. Thompson adopted and enlarged this conception of culture by adding the element of power. His structural conception of culture emphasized the symbolic character of cultural phenomena and the fact that these phenomena are set in structured social contexts. He emphasized the importance of socio-historical circumstances in which actions, utterances and other phenomena such as works of art, are produced and circulated by specific individuals and groups with varying degrees of power, to other specific individuals. For Thompson, the structured social contexts within which cultural phenomena are produced, transmitted and received are very important in the examination of culture. Symbolic forms can indicate the social conditions of the production - an utterance, for example, can be marked by the accent, idiom, and tone of a particular social class or regional background. In addition, cultural phenomena can be seen as expressing relations of power:

“...as serving in specific circumstances to sustain or disrupt relations of power and as subject to multiple, perhaps, divergent and conflicting interpretations by individuals who receive and perceive these phenomena...“ (Thompson, 1994, p. 135).

This element of power is very important when it comes to the construction, sustenance, and promotion of national culture and how this is related to the nation-state. What makes Thompson’s approach to culture more interesting is what he calls the ‘processes of valorization’, by which he means the ways through which symbolic forms are credited with certain values (p. 12). The social contextualization of the symbolic forms suggests that they

8 The culture of a group of people or society is the array of beliefs, customs, ideas and values, as well as the material artifacts, objects and instruments which are acquired by individuals as members of the group or society” (Thompson, 1994, p. 129)

9 Geertz is among those anthropologists who wrote extensively about the symbolic conception of culture. When Thompson refers to this conception, he mainly refers to Geertz’s work.

10 The term structural, as Thompson uses it, is not related to ‘structuralism’.
can become the objects of complex processes of valuation, evaluation and conflict. The symbolic and economic values of culture are particularly interesting for this research. The symbolic value is the:

“...value that symbolic forms have by virtue of their ways in which they are estimated by the individuals who produce and receive them, by virtue of the ways in which they are praised or denounced, cherished or despised by the individuals” (ibid, p. 12-13).

This implies that culture is also a matter of perception, which is affected by a number of factors and can also be manipulated by specific individuals (or institutions) with certain degrees of power and authority. This is a hypothesis that can be useful in the examination of national culture - and how it relates to the nation-state - and more specifically in the examination of cultural policy. The way the members of a group of people perceive, value and consume their culture can be vital for the functioning of this group and the formation of their collective identity. Two cultures might and often share common practices, but the ways in which they justify them and the meaning and importance they attach to them could be, and are generally, different.

Economic value is the value that symbolic forms obtain when they are offered for exchange in the market. This does not necessarily mean that all symbolic forms have economic value. However, the process of economic valorization of symbolic forms plays an important role in modern capitalist societies. The development of the cultural industries provides us with an example of cultural forms that have acquired an economic value. The production and circulation of symbolic forms in modern societies has become inseparable from the activities of the media industries. In our days, they sustain the global circuits of economic exchange on which the international movement of information, knowledge, capital, production of commodities and trade and marketing of goods and ideas depend.

The more important culture becomes - as in the case of the nation-state - the more significant becomes its symbolic, political and economic value and the more significant are the forces, which shape, regulate and govern it. Whatever has the capacity to influence the general shape of culture, to control or determine the way cultural institutions work or to regulate cultural practices, exerts a definite kind of power over cultural life. An example is the power to control how many and what kinds of foreign television programs can be transmitted by the national channels (Hall in K. Thompson, 1997, p. 227-8). The symbolic and economic value of culture provide us, in this case, with the problematic of whether culture is determined by forces external to it - political and economic - as they are expressed by the state and the market or whether culture is linked to the economy and political and social power in such a way that cultural expression and regulation is a process of mutual determination.

This theoretical reflection on the concept of culture and related issues indicates the very complexity of the term. Trying to tie down culture to some broadly acceptable definition, like Tylor’s, is likely to lead to a level of generality, which makes the definition theoretically useless. Definitions like Thompson’s explain more sufficiently the complexity of culture by highlighting the symbolic and material value of culture. However, as the concept of culture is polysemic, one definition of culture is almost impossible. From the above observation of existing definitions, it could be said that the concept of culture could be expressed through two complementary dimensions. The first contains culture in its larger sense, as a way of life of a collective entity. The second dimension presents culture with a narrower sense, as the process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development.
This first definition derives from the classical conception of culture, which emerged in the late 18th century:

“...the process of developing and ennobling the human faculties, a process facilitated by the assimilation of works of scholarship and art and linked to a progressive character of the modern era” (Thompson, 1994, p.126)

Although this conception has lost its appeal today, there are some aspects of it - like its emphasis on the cultivation of ‘higher’ values and qualities, discrimination between ‘cultured’ and ‘uncultured’ persons and its appeal to artistic works - that remain with us today and are implicit in some of the every day uses of the word culture11.

Perhaps, what we need is not to understand what culture is - something that anthropology tries to do - but how people perceive and use the term in contemporary discourses. This is precisely the approach Raymond Williams takes when he identifies three ‘broad active categories of usage’. The first is what was mentioned above as the classical conception of culture. The second presents culture as a ‘particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, group or humanity in general’. The third usage describes culture as ‘the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity’ (Williams, 1998, p. 90).

In the second usage, culture is the ‘property’ not of individuals, as the first usage implies, but of groups (or periods) - of ethnic groups, societies, subgroups. Culture in this sense is plural. This plurality disputes the idea that there is one correct pattern of human development and implies that different cultures can exist at the same time, with equal value. It also implies a sense of the sovereignty of particular cultures: “…the idea of ‘how life is lived’ is a judgment to be made by the particular collectivity that possesses this culture and by no else” (Tomlinson, 1994, p.8). This idea has become a matter of principle to modern nation-states that in many cases, like France, apply strong cultural policies in order to protect the right for cultural self-determination.

The third usage is the most widespread. In fact, it is the applied form of the first sense: “the idea of a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development was applied and effectively transferred to the works and practices which represent and sustain it” (Williams, 1988, p. 91). Culture is music, literature, painting, theatre and all these activities associated with ‘high’ culture. This is the dominant view of culture in a range of key cultural institutions and usually a national cultural policy is based on this view12.

The above three senses of culture, as they have been described by Williams, seem to ‘coexist’, sometimes overlapping, sometimes complementing each other. Thus, it is very

11 A newspaper advertisement in California, for instance, encouraged people to watch the public television channel, rather than the commercial stations (and the ‘popular’, ‘mass culture’ they offer), in order to ‘get a little culture’ (meaning high culture), while American Express’s ‘cultural pass’ admits its members to museums, art galleries and opera houses at reduced prices (Lull, 1999, pg 131).
12 Paul Willis’s policy recommendation to the English cultural authorities advocating recognition and financial support for the ‘common culture’ provoked controversy as they could not see how the ways of living, aesthetics and cultural products of working class youth can receive equal attention as the high-class art forms and upper-class ideologies and lifestyles that British national cultural policy traditionally supports (Lull, 1999, p 131).
difficult to have one ‘true’, ‘proper’ sense, dismissing other senses as too general or too restricted. Williams advises against the search for one ‘true’ meaning of the term:

“It is clear that, within a discipline, conceptual usage has to be clarified. But in general it is the range and overlap of meanings that is significant. The concept of senses indicates a complex argument about the relations between general human development and particular way of life, and between both and the works and practices of art and intelligence“ (Williams, 1988, p. 91).

As Intzessiloglou suggests, a definition of culture “ne doit pas être une définition fonctionnelle. [Mais]... une définition pour chaque usage différent“ (1985, p. 164). Keeping in mind the above distinctions of culture (particularly as ‘high’) and its symbolic and material value (themes that work their way throughout the case study), what we need to understand at this stage is how different forms of culture shape identities and their role in the relay of forms of power across relations of nation and ethnicity. But before this, we need to clarify what is the nation-state (the main actor in implementing policies) and national culture (the main focus of cultural policies) and how they relate to each other.

2. Nation-State and National Culture: the Construction of Identities

When we think of culture in relation to a tribe, nation, or region we move from the universality of the concept of culture to the plurality and diversification of cultural expression. White (1959) argues that these so-called cultures (national, regional, tribal etc.) are not self-contained, closed systems as the culture of humankind is but the product of a constant flow of cultural exchange and influence.

Culture is thus not static. However, the political discourse of national culture and cultural identity demands that we perceive this process as frozen and enshrined in concepts like national heritage or our cultural traditions. It is perhaps because human beings need to feel a sense of belonging that cultural identity is conceived in static. As Madan Sarup puts it: “it is culture that forms us; without culture there would be no identity at all” (1996, p. 183). He sees national cultures as systems of representation and by using these systems, nations identify and represent the differences between people and give them this essential sense of belonging.

In the modern world, national cultures are one of the main sources of identity. Travelling abroad the first question someone usually has to encounter is an inquiry about his/her nationality. We are made to feel proud of our national cultural heritage and encouraged to defend our national/cultural identities when we feel they are under threat. As Smith accurately describes:

“... a sense of national identity provides a powerful means of defining and locating selves in the world, through the prism of the collective personality and its distinctive culture. It is through a shared, unique culture that we enable to know ‘who we are’ in the contemporary world“ (1991, p. 17).

The very strength of national identity lies in its ubiquity. It pervades the life of individuals and communities in most spheres of activity. It is manifest through traditional values, myths and memories as well as in languages, institutions and ceremonies. In its social
function, the national bond provides the boundary within which social exchange takes place and the means for distinguishing us from the outsider. In the political domain, it affects the decision-making regarding the laws that regulate the everyday lives of each citizen. In our modern world, systems like the nation-state and national identity have become the only universally accepted source of ‘inter-national’ legitimacy (Smith, 1991). Gellner believes that modern man would feel lost without a sense of national identification, yet national identities are not things we are born with:

“The idea of a man without a nation seems to impose a [great strain] on the modern imagination. A man must have a nationality as he must have a nose and two ears. All this seems obvious, though, alas, it is not true. But that it should have come to seem so very obviously true is indeed as an aspect, perhaps the very core, of the problem of nationalism. Having a nation is not an inherent attribute of humanity, but it has come to appear as such” (Gellner, 1993, p.6).

But how homogeneous and unified are national cultures and identities? How and why do people come to perceive themselves as sharing a common identity and culture? What is the relationship between national culture and nation-state? The answer to these questions might help us to understand better why cultural identities and their protection are at the centre of contemporary debates.

2.1 Imagining the Nation

Trying to define the nation and describe its main characteristics is a rather difficult task. Definitions of the nation move from the description of the nation as an imagined or invented community (Anderson, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1983), to a special type of ethnic group (Smith, 1973), a political collectivity forming a nation-state (Breuilly, 1985) and a society defined in terms of its social communication (Deutsch, 1966). Depending on which factors you choose - psychological, cultural, political or communicative - the meaning of the nation changes. However, none of these factors, alone or in combination can fully explain the phenomenon of nation.

Timothy Brennan talks of the nation as been both historically determined and general. He reminds us that the word nation refers “both to the modern nation-state and to something more ancient and nebulous - the natio - a local community, domicile, family, condition of belonging (1990, p. 45). The Latin roots of the term (natio) seems to indicate a people related by birth and the quality of innateness seems to be very important in its meaning. In the formation of modern nations, the demands of historical development brought peoples together by factors other than ethnic relationships.

However, the distinction between the modern meaning of nation and the original one is important. Nationalists usually try to obscure this distinction. By placing their countries in an ‘immemorial past’, they manage to hide their arbitrariness. Raymond Williams comments on the importance of this distinction:

“Nation as a term is radically connected with ‘native’. We are born into relationships, which are typically settled in a place. This form of primary and ‘placeable’ bonding is of quite fundamental human and natural importance. Yet the jump from that to anything like
the modern nation-state is entirely artificial” (Williams, 1983).

Hugh Seton-Watson (1977) wrote in his extensive study of nations and states that there is no ‘scientific’ means of establishing what all nations have in common. One of the most accurate descriptions of the nature of nation is given by Anthony D. Smith: “A nation can ... be defined as a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historic memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members” (1991, p. 14).

The above definition indicates clearly the complexity of the nature of nation and its multi-dimensional character. The nation here implies a cultural and political bond, bringing together in a single political community a group of people who have in common a historic culture and homeland. Here, we must make clear the distinction between the nation and the state. The latter “refers exclusively to public institutions, differentiated from, and autonomous of, other social institutions and exercising a monopoly of coercion and extraction within a given territory” (A.D. Smith, 1991, p. 14). Both nation and state refer to a historic territory and appeal to the sovereignty of their people. However, a state does not need to be a nation - although many aspire to become nation-states - while a nation must be a state. On the one hand various governments invent traditions to give permanence and substantiality to a transient political form and on the other, nationalists re-invent and add meaning to existed cultural symbols in order to claim the legitimation of a nation as a state and thus the right for self-determination.

This idea of invented traditions and consequently of invented nations has been developed extensively by a number of academics who argue that many of the traditions of modern societies, while they appear to be of long established practices rooted deeply in the national history, are, in fact, of very recent origin. For the construction of nations and national identities the element of myth is essential: a tale which places the origin of the nation, its people and their national character so long back in the past that it cannot be located, lost in mythic times (Hall et al, 1994). This is what Hobsbawm and Range’s work on ‘The Invention of Tradition’ is supporting:

“It is clear that plenty of political institutions, ideological movements and groups - not least in nationalism - were so unprecedented that even historic continuity had to be invented, for example by creating an ancient past beyond effective historical continuity either by semi-fiction (Boadicea, Vercingetorix...) or by forgery (Ossian, the Czech medieval manuscripts). It is also clear that entirely new symbols and devices came into existence ... such as the national anthem, ... the national flag, ...or the personification of ‘the nation’ in symbol or image” (Hobsbawm, 1983, p.7).

Invented traditions, according to Hobsbawm, foster cultural illusions, especially those related to national identity. Nations, therefore, are imaginary devices whose existence depends on an

13 National self-determination and sovereignty are the most important elements in the age of nationalism. The idea of self-determination, developed first by Kant, is the main doctrine behind nationalism. The concept is based on the principle of diversity. “People differ from one another in their peculiarities and idiosyncrasies. These differences are considered to be things holy, which must be fostered and preserved” (Snyder, 1990, p. 361). National self-determination sees humanity divided into separate and distinct nations which consist of sovereign states. Nationalism, responding to this need for self-determination, wants to bring those people - who believe themselves to be united - together under the same political roof, able to rule themselves.

14 National anthems for example date at earliest from the mid-eighteenth century.
apparatus of ‘cultural fictions’. The narrative of the nation takes place in the form of national histories, literature, the media and popular culture. They provide a set of stories, images, historical events, national symbols, rituals and customs which represent the shared experiences, heroic moments and disasters, all of which give meaning to the nation. Through these ‘cultural fictions’ we learn to associate ourselves with this ‘imagined community’ as Benedict Anderson defines the nation:

“It is imagined because members of even the smallest nations will never know more of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in their minds of each lives the image of their communion” (Anderson, 1983, p.15).

He completes his definition of nation by adding two more specifications: that it is imagined as limited - ‘has finite, if elastic boundaries, beyond which lie other nations’ - and as sovereign (autonomous from other states, with legislative authority) – ‘because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordered, hierarchical realm’. Anderson's conception of nation, as Schlesinger has put it, is “the sense of nationhood as one looks outward from within” (1987, 247).

National identities therefore exist in the imagination of people, according to Anderson. This however does not imply that it is a false imagining, nor that real communities exist which can be advantageously compared to nations: “Communities are not to be distinguished by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined” (Anderson, 1983, p. 15). What makes Anderson's argument interesting is his reference to the style in which communities are imagined and to the origins of nationalism. He argues that a concurrence of historical events around the end of the eighteenth century made ‘natio-ness’ imaginable. The rise of print capitalism in Europe plays a pivotal role in this process. The improvement of the printing technologies contributed to the commodification and mechanized production of books and especially newspapers which in their turn played a very important role in the construction of a national consciousness. The consequence from the increased dissemination of printed media was the establishment of a vernacular language as the ‘national language’ and the creation of a new conception of ‘national community’ by the convergence of time and space that it created in its representation.

Anderson, supports the idea, that ‘national imagining’ is a phenomenon of modernity, which can only exist within the context of the technological and economic changes that created modern capitalist societies. Moreover, the style of imagining the ‘nation-ness’ is a mass-mediated style, developed mainly in literate societies with a well-structured communication system. It is, as Tomlinson puts it, ‘an imagination encouraged by reading the national newspaper’ (p. 82).

Giddens on the other hand argues that the nation-state is a modern phenomenon of the past two centuries and sees the emergence of the nation-state as integrally bound up with the expansion of capitalism, distinguished from the absolutist state. National identities are modern compared to ‘pre-existing forms of group identity’ and depend upon the formation of a national public sphere based upon print, which also allows “the invention of history in some form or another” (1985, p. 212). He emphasizes the importance of the production of ideas in the process of social reproduction and the role of nationalist intellectuals in the construction of the modern nation-state. The idea of ‘imagining the community’ as Anderson has developed it, also appears in Giddens
work on the nation-state (1985). In this case, the 'conceptual' component of the 'nation-state' is seen as another expression of 'imagining the community':

“Nationalism is the cultural sensibility of sovereignty, the concomitant of the co-ordination of administrative power within the bounded nation-state. With the coming of the nation-state, states have an administrative and territorial ordered unity which they did not possess before. This unity cannot remain purely administrative, however, because the very co-ordination of activities involved presumes elements of cultural homogeneity. The extension of communication cannot occur without the 'conceptual' involvement of the whole community as a knowledgeable citizenry. A nation-state is a conceptual community in a way in which traditional states are not." (Ibid, p.219)

To conclude with the main theories of the school of invention, Gellner’s work on nations and nationalism is a necessary addition. His approach focuses mainly on the cultural dimension of nationhood. Following his argument, the formation of nation-states is the inevitable result of industrialization and its processes of centralization. Using Ernest Renan’s definition of nation, he abstracts the two composing elements of nation, will and a shared culture, to prove that although they are essential in the construction of nation-states they are not enough. For “even if will were the basis of a nation, it is also the basis of so much else, that we cannot possibly define the nation in this manner” (Gellner, 1993, p.54). Human history, he continues his argument, is endowed with cultural differentiation. Cultural boundaries are not always clearly defined and this rich cultural differentiation, to quote him, “does not... normally or generally converge either with the boundaries of political units... or with the boundaries of units blessed by the democratic sacraments of consent and will” (p. 54). It is in the era of industrialization - which promoted a standardized system of education and linguistic uniformity - that the relationship between polity and culture became closer.

Gellner calls this standardized literacy and education based system of communication ‘high culture’ which has made possible the definition of nationality in terms of shared culture:

“... when general social conditions make for standardized, homogeneous, centrally sustained high cultures, pervading entire populations and not just elite minorities, a situation arises in which well-defined educationally sanctioned and unified cultures constitute very nearly the only kind of unit with which men willingly and often ardently identify. The cultures now seem to be natural repositories of political legitimacy” (p. 55).

The combination of will and culture and their convergence with political units makes up the recipe for the modern nation-state. It is under these circumstances that polities seek to expand their boundaries to cover the culture they represent and protect or even impose this culture within these boundaries. Gellner sees the nation as the product of nationalism, which uses the ‘pre-existing, historically inherited proliferation of cultures or cultural wealth’ in a selective way (sometimes inventing them) to justify its cause.

What makes Gellner’s position interesting is the attention he pays to culture and its unifying role. For the citizens of the nation-state the limits of their conceptual world are mainly defined by the national culture:

16 “A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Only two things, actually, constitute this soul, this spiritual principle. One is in the past; the other is in the present. One is the possession in common of the rich legacy of rememberances; the other is the actual consent, the desire to live together, the will to continue to value the heritage which all hold in common” (Renan in Hutchinson & Smith, 1994, p.17).
“Culture is no longer merely the adornment, confirmation and legitimation of a social order which was also sustained by harsher and coercive constrains; culture is now the necessary shared medium, the life-blood or perhaps rather the minimal shared atmosphere, within alone the members of the society can breathe and survive and produce. For a given society, it must be one in which they can all breathe and speak and produce; so it must be the same culture. Moreover, it must now be a great or high (literate, training-sustained) culture, and can no longer be a diversified, locally-tied, illiterate little culture or tradition” (1993, p. 37-38).

Culture in this case is equivalent to the official version of national culture, as described by Raymond Williams in his third usage of culture, the culture that is imposed from above and applied by a range of key cultural institutions. No matter how different, as Stuart Hall comments, its members may be, a national culture tries to unify them into one cultural identity and includes them thus in the same great national family (1994, p. 296). It is this unifying element of culture that makes it indispensable to nation-states.

2. 2. National Culture and Collective Identities

National cultures are not composed only of cultural institutions, which implement cultural policies as part of the state apparatus. Symbols and representations are also part of what constitutes them. Stuart Hall sees national cultures as a discourse: “a way of constructing meanings which influences and organizes both our actions and our conception of ourselves” (1994, p. 292-3). National cultures provide us with space in which versions of collective identities can be developed. They construct identities by generating meanings about the nation in ways that we can easily identify with.

Schlesinger (1991) suggests that national identities are best understood as specific kind of collective identities which involve a dynamic aspect of collective action, the marking of boundaries within a system of social relations which demand mutual recognition. National cultural space (another expression of national culture) offers collective frames for such action. These frames, defined by Snow and Bendford (Gamson, 1992, p 12) are sets of beliefs and meanings, which motivate group activities and create group identities: the process of defining the ‘we’ with regard to others who have different goals and interests. Melucci’s definition of collective identity consists of: “an interactive and shared definition produced by several interacting individuals who are concerned with the orientations of their action as well as the field of opportunities and constrains in which their action takes place” (1989, p. 34). According to Melucci, for some groups, the question of ‘who we are’ becomes an essential part of the group-forming experience and he suggests that social movements negotiate this meaning of ‘us vs. others’ in a conflicting process over time. Collective identity can be seen as a temporary and ongoing form of identification, which needs to be constantly negotiated over time and across space. This is attained trough the selective use of shared tradition (symbols and rituals), collective memory (of disasters and moments of triumph), as well as the setting of boundaries, territorial and symbolic, which distinguish the insiders from the outsiders. A definite social space is essential for the construction of collective identities. Cultural space is where the elaboration of various cultural identities takes place. It serves as an incubator for hybrid identities.

For Schlesinger, space and time are important elements in the construction of national identities. The contents of ‘our culture’ change continually with the passage of time, “the elaboration of
national [or other cultural] identity is a chronic process” (1987, p. 261). What we consider to be our culture at any time is the summing up of cultural memory up to that moment. This collection of cultural memory is done in a selective way in which political and cultural institutions play an important role. To quote Wallenstein, “one doesn’t construct an ideology out of air. One builds on what one finds - in terms of language, religion, and distinctive life-style”. But he continues to argue that linguistic homogeneity and passion are social creations and cannot be justified as simple continuities of tradition. “They are social creations moulded with difficulty in times of travail” (1974, p. 353).

National identities fulfil certain functions for individuals and groups, which have made them indispensable for the sustenance of modern societies. Distinguishing these functions helps us to understand better the diverse power of national identities. Anthony Smith (1991) sums up these functions, which he divides appropriately into ‘internal’ and ‘external’. The main internal function national identity fulfils for the members of a large group is that of socialization as nationals and citizens. It provides them with a social bond based on shared values, symbols and traditions and satisfies the need of individuals to belong. The external functions are territorial, economic and political. National Identities function within a definite social space, an historic territory that locates the group in time and space. Economically, “by defining the membership, the boundaries and {consequently} the resources, national identity provides the rationale for ideals of national autarchy” (p. 16). In political terms, national identity provides the base for the legitimate state.

National identities, in our modern world, contain both cultural and political identities and they are located in political communities as well as cultural ones. This is very important because it means that any attempt to forge a national identity, with all its cultural connotations, can be a political action with political consequences. It is thus for the benefit of the nation-state to safeguard the continuation of the cultural tradition upon which national and cultural identities are based. One way of securing this continuation is through the media. But how do the media relate to national culture? Moreover, why media are seen as vital in the circulation of symbolic forms that can enable or disable the nation from expressing its cultural distinctiveness?

2.3 Media and National Culture

The media have always played a significant role either in the construction of modern nation-states or in their preservation, by providing them with a ‘space’ in which national culture can be portrayed as the unifying element of the nation. As was mentioned above, communication played an important role in the construction of a national consciousness through the spread of print media. Before the development of the media industries, most people’s sense of the past and belonging to a community was shaped mainly through the symbolic content exchanged in face-to-face communication. With the development of mediated forms of communication, this sense of belonging was increasingly reinforced as it was made easier to imagine the shared space and time. Today, mediated symbolic forms increasingly shape our sense of our place in the world and culture is largely an electronically mediated culture.

There are many ways in which national symbols can be displayed and the symbolic identity of the culture potentially reinforced, as McQuail points out (1993, 297-8). Certain kinds of media content can be seen as expressing and promoting national identity by selecting for transmitting significant ceremonials and events, e.g. royal (e.g. the Queen’s Speech), parliamentary or state occasions, ceremonies which express national identity and values, remembrance of national heroes, holidays and religious festivals, etc. This may remind us of what Billing (1995) calls banal nationalism. The
media of mass communication, he argues, constantly flag the world of nations. They routinely use a deixis of little words like ‘us’ and ‘here’ which reinforce the national identity of their users. Banally, the media address ‘us’ as a national first person plural and they situate ‘us’ in the homeland within a world of nations. Special television coverage of such matters like national participation on international events (e.g. Eurovision song contest, Cardiff Singer of the World) may be taken as a sign of active engagement by the media with the national culture. Media coverage can also be ‘beneficially cultural’ in a more informal way by paying attention to unique or characteristic sports and activities like carnivals (e.g. Rio, Venice) and festivals (e.g. Proms). Another indicator of cultural identification in content is the use of familiar national themes, stories, genres and myths which may also be indicators of cultural specificity, even if many have become international property (e.g. American Westerns, Chinese kung-fu movies). Media can thus actively participate in creating a feeling of distinction among audience. Heider gives an example of how the Indonesian film industry played an important role in creating over the years a sense of community among the inhabitants of a vast archipelago, by assisting the standardization of the Indonesian language and by heavily employing distinct cultural symbols that are unique to Indonesia as a whole and common to its diverse inhabitants (quoted in Bamyeh, 1993, p. 57). Even watching foreign films or programs can strengthen our national identity by reinforcing the feeling of ‘us’ versus the ‘others’, simply by pointing at the cultural differences, e.g. language.

The media’s ability to reinforce collective identities attracted from early on the attention of the ruling elites who saw in the media a great tool for policies that can affect the cultural and communication forms of expression of their citizens. Governments often make the effort to create structures of communication whose aim is to preserve or enhance a national distinction. An example of such structures has been the Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) (see Blumler, 1992), which has played a very important role in the preservation of national culture and identity. Imbued with a cultural vocation, it was considered responsible for the preservation of the national culture and the guardianship of cultural values by maintaining domestic production, by sponsoring non-commercial programming and by promoting national debate on public issues. PSB was seen as a cultural rather than economic enterprise and the representation of the national culture in ways accessible to all the citizens was one of its main roles for decades. Until recently, most of the European nation-states have used this cultural function of the media in order to promote some of the nation’s goals.

Governments’ efforts to maintain such structures of communication are usually made when it becomes clear that a nationally distinct feature is threatened to end under pressure from forces outside the nation, like international image and information flows, so much so that there stands a need for an added effort to preserve it. French policy makers for instance support the idea that there can be no national cinemas without aid to the national cinema, which in this case is seen as an expression of their national culture. The crisis of the PSB that started in the 1980s under pressure from the liberal forces of the capitalist economy showed how unprepared and unwilling governments were to let go of this tool of cultural promotion. The changes (economic, technological etc.) that started taking place at the time, affecting many aspects of the modern nation-state, called into question established values, institutions and structures of society. These changes are associated with the privatisation of broadcasting, the promotion of commercial values and a popular culture that opposes the ‘high’, national culture as it has been promoted by PSB. There is a polarity thus created between public media and private media and ‘elite’, ‘high’, ‘national
culture’ and ‘popular’, ‘mass’, ‘global culture’. Media institutions have ceased to operate within the confines of a single-nation state and this change has brought many issues to the centre of new debates (transnationalization, globalization) and re-introduced old debates on cultural autonomy and imperialism.

The media and especially television have been in the centre of many debates related to cultural autonomy and cultural self-determination (see the UNESCO debate on culture). Cultural autonomy, in its broadest meaning, involves the right of people to express and enjoy their own culture, in the sense of a ‘symbolic’ or communication environment which they can associate with, which serves their self-determined needs, or which they have produced for themselves. (McQuail, 1993, p. 291). Having access to media channels and content, which corresponds with the values and experience of receivers, is seen as a guarantee for cultural autonomy. The assumption that these receivers have and share a pre-existing sense of cultural identity lies at the heart of this claim to protection from contents that originate outside the boundaries of the culture of the receiver.

Cultural defence, as Schlesinger (1991, p.299) indicates, may also be illuminated if looked at as the active mobilization by states against invasions of their communicative space from outside (e.g. cultural imperialism). Notions of strategic and tactical uses of communication are not unfamiliar to our understanding of the construction of cultural collectivities and the workings of media. This is no accident, for the media and wider cultural fields are indeed to be conceived as battlefields, as spaces in which various forms of dominance take place. They are by their very nature part of the public domain and therefore objects of public policy making and legal action.

The media and their relation to culture will be reappraised within the cultural policy and cultural industries context in Chapter 2. In the following final section of this chapter, we will touch upon the issue raised above, the way the relationship between media and culture is being changed by forces external to the nation. This will help us to understand better the policy issues raised in the third part of this thesis that focuses on external factors.

3. From Transnationalization to Cultural Globalization

Issues like cultural imperialism; Americanization, transnationalization, internationalization and globalization have been at the centre of contemporary debate. The theoretical speculations especially about globalization are never ending and there are always new issues or aspects adding to the argument about whether it will obliterate the nation-state and its distinctive cultural identities. It is not possible to follow all these debates and keep track of the latest ones. What is considered more appropriate is to focus on how the early debates were formed and around which themes they evolved. This also reflects the period of time that the thesis is focusing on (80s and early 90s).

3.1 Transnationalization and Cultural Imperialism

Transnationalization is a concept widely used in studies of international television flows. As a process, it can be seen within the wider concept of transnationalism, a global phenomenon, with economic, political and cultural dimensions. Transnationalism was initially defined only in economic terms. However, its political and cultural dimensions
became evident very early. Organizations, like the EU, formed on a transnational basis, are a political expression of this phenomenon and the spread of the communication media on a global level is an example of its cultural dimension (Bamyeh, 1993).

It is this cultural dimension of transnationalism that has caused a lot of concern among scholars and policy makers and has generated a lot of discussion about its possible effects on national cultural autonomy. Transnationalization had not been defined, at the beginning, as a cultural problem, mainly because the media were organized on a national basis (reinforced by the idea of nationalism). International television flow was generally seen as problematic in the context of competing ideologies and nation-states (it was seen more as a matter of international politics rather than culture). This limited perception of transnationalism was revised and the problem was redefined under new circumstances: the alarming increase of the international flow of media context; the dominant position of the US in this flow (Tunstall, 1977) and the competition on a global level between the ideologies of communism and capitalism as it was expressed in debates about international communication flow in UNESCO (McPhail, 1981).

The variety of terms and issues related to transnationalization reflect the different dimensions of this process and the different approaches to it. Commercialization, internationalization, modernization, deregulation and cultural globalization have been examined within the same framework of transnationalization, as processes all interrelated to each other. For Featherstone (1990), globalization is a process whereby a series of cultural flows produce both cultural homogeneity and cultural disorder and transnational cultures, which can been perceived as ‘third cultures’ oriented beyond national boundaries. The deregulation movement, according to Schiller, can be explained as the structural reorganization of the world economy under the direction of the transnational corporations (TNCs), assisted by the new information technologies (in Drummond & Patterson, 1985). Liberalization as related to deregulation does not have negative connotations for all, though. It is seen as promoting modernization, helping certain nations to modernize and thus improve their standards.

Americanization, cultural imbalances and media imperialism represent another perspective through which transnationalism is being examined. The central argument of the cultural imperialism thesis is that certain dominant cultures threaten to overwhelm other more vulnerable ones (Tomlinson in Thompson, 1997, p. 122). Media imperialism follows logically from cultural imperialism. Some theorists like Mattelart and Schiller (see footnote) argue that if US or Western control of culture is admitted, then it is clearly achieved through control of mass media which creates the conditions for conformity to the hegemonic culture and limits the possibilities of effective resistance to it. The USA was accused of cultural imperialism for saturating by overflowing the international market with its media products, especially third world countries that had no mechanisms of protection. Interestingly the argument was transposed from the third world countries to the first. In the 80s it was impossible to discuss transnational media cultures without bringing in the spectre of Americanization as many European countries considered, and still do, that the American media products are a threat to their national cultures (Scovmand and Schroder 1992). Although the cultural imperialism thesis is taken over by globalization, it was the main discourse in France in the 80s and cultural protectionism is its product.

The area in which the cultural imperialism thesis remains most alive is in the policy debates conducted at the national level. Transnational culture(s), media and national cultural identities are another group of issues related to transnationalization process. Sensitivities about what distinguishes us regarding our national cultures have increased along with ideas that national cultural identity needs protection from foreign influences. Cultural imperialism has been the fear against which protectionist policies have been employed, as we will see in the case of France in the GATT dispute. Cultural protectionist policies relate to a wider politics of national identity and they raise many questions concerning the legitimacy of state intervention in cultural practices. One of the issues involved in our case for instance, is the assumption that there is a monolithic or homogeneous French culture that is under threat and in need of protection.

A starting point in the examination of the process of transnationalization in the communication field is the role of the Transnational Media Corporations (TNMCs). Here the analysts have also to deal with the role of the nation-state and how its cultural and communication policies are affected by the expansive policies of TNMCs. As the world has become a series of economic centres consisting of both nation-states and transnational corporations - with the nation-state being the spatial reference point for most of the transnational practices (Sklair, 1991) - the goals of these corporations and the host governments come very often in opposition, each representing and defending its own interests. The financial imperatives that drive TNMCs are not in accordance with the politico-economic and cultural objectives of the host nation. The ongoing debate is whether transnational media corporations pose, and to which extent, a threat to national sovereignty and cultural integrity.

The right to national sovereignty is expressed, according to Gerson (1993), through the ability of the governments to create laws that regulate economic and other activities within the national boundaries. Taxes, tariffs on imports and regulations on product quality are some of these regulations. The issue, as Gerson puts it, is about the ability of the host nation to maintain control over the activities of TNMCs when it is felt that the interests of the latter are contrary to the interests of the host country. This ability has been weakened by the deregulation process, a cross-national trend, that has as a main concept the lifting or abolition of government regulations on a range of economic activities in order to allow markets to work more freely, according to the classical capitalist economic theory (1991, p. 173). This deregulation process has affected the audiovisual sector by breaking the monopoly of the nation-state on broadcasting, which has allowed the TNMCs to have a bigger access to national information systems. Schiller argues that:

“As the transnational corporate order grows stronger, ... with the assistance of deregulated private information networks, it usurps and corrupts cultural expression and information diversity” (in Drummond & Patterson, 1985, p. 17).

The extraordinary growth of TNMCs during the decade of 1980s has had a profound influence over the international market place of ideas. Mowlana notes that the “{TNC} has become one of the chief organizers and manufactures of the international flow of communication” (quoted in Gerson, 1993, p. 15) and Bagdikian argues that “they exert a homogenizing power over ideas, culture and commerce that affects populations larger than any in history” (1991, p. 807). The question of whether to treat media products differently from other types of products and services

is another issue related to transnationalization, which has recently been the main subject of debates among academic scholars and policy makers in a national and international level (e.g. the dispute of France over audiovisual products in the GATT agreement). Within the concept of transnational economy, media products are viewed as commercial products and any attempt to impose program quotas is viewed as economic protectionism (Gerson, 1993). Here is posed the question of whether it is the responsibility of government to place itself as the regulator of culture (and if not whose responsibility it is). Giddens (1985) argues that the nation-states are still the major political systems of the modern world, controlling the structures in which we all live and which are now involved in transnational dynamics. National policy making is still the crucial level of political, economic and cultural decision-making. However, as the world’s economy becomes more fully deregulated the spectre of policy issues changes considerably and the national cultural and communication policy makers have to take under consideration the new conditions and adopt their policies according to them.

This section showed to us some of the ways in which transnationalization and cultural imperialism relate to cultural policy issues. The following section will focus on globalization. The reason why we need to address the issue of globalization here is because it is argued that it contests the nation-state and its culture and that like cultural imperialism and transnationalization, it is a shaping force regarding national policies on culture and media.

3.2 Globalization, Culture and Nation-State

Globalization is the general frame within which different processes are taking place, leading to major transformations in a worldwide level. As a term, it started to be used widely among the intellectual, business, media and other circles during the decade of 1980s, acquiring, in the process, a number of meanings with varying degrees of precision.

The problematic issues that are coming out of this term are basic for the approach to the phenomenon of globalization. First, there is the central question of meaning. Second, there is the problem of evidence (neither the indices nor the extent of its actual occurrence are always clear). Finally, there is the problem of evaluation. It is not easy to evaluate the positive or negative effects of globalization, to whatever extent it (however defined) actually is occurring (Ferguson, 1992). This has caused a certain frustration to those intellectuals who tried earlier to give a relatively strict definition of globalization, as a part of their effort to elucidate the different aspects of contemporary meaning and change.

As a result, there are many theoretical debates that are going on, trying to conceive and identify the current situation. Some argue that we have entered a period of ‘post-modernity’ (Harvey, 1989), a new kind of economic-cultural structure. Robertson (1990), in his turn, argues that globalization is closely related to modernity, as well as to postmodernity. He deals with it as relatively recent phenomenon and sees the phase of accelerated globalization as having been taking place since the 1980s. The shift towards the idea of homogeneous nation-state, that took place during that period, was itself, according to Robertson, one aspect of this accelerated process and it has to be understood not as an obstacle, for it was itself an idea which became rapidly globalized. National societies and the system of international relations are, together with the conception of individuals and humankind, the basic components of globalization (1990). Although, for Robertson, it is in terms of the shifting relationships between the main components (national societies, humankind and individuals) that globalization has occurred in recent centuries, he finally argues that, today,
there is a general autonomy and ‘logic’ to the globalization process. The global system is not a consequence of the development of the inter-state system or of processes of intra-societal origin. He believes that globalization is more complex and culturally rich than that.

Some others argue that these recent changes reflect the final and highest development and natural extension of capitalism and describe this structure as late capitalism (Jameson, 1990) or ‘high modernity’ (Giddens, 1990). In this latest level of capitalism the intense economic and institutional restructuration that takes place is characterized by an accelerated transnationalization and globalization - which is accompanied by an increased pressure towards the creation of transnational markets and distribution systems, breaking established boundaries and rendering problematic existing territories20 (Ang, 1990). This transnational process also includes the flow of cultural commodities, which have been spread throughout the world by the new communication systems.

Within this situation, the nation-state, the most important carrier of culture until now, has found itself in a very challenging position.

What is noteworthy throughout these debates is that the role of the nation-state has been put into question. Broadly speaking, it is argued that the era of the nation-state is over. One of the main arguments sees the suppression of the nation as a part of the move to a post-modern society. Nations - functional for a world of competing industrial states - have been considered as passé in the service society of an interdependent world, which is based on computerized knowledge, and communication systems that penetrate national boundaries. It is the possibilities of creating large institutional units based on these vast telecommunication systems and networks of information that have eroded the power of nation-states and not capitalism and its transnational corporations, as the other argument claims. The resources, range and specialized flexibility of these corporations allow them, according to this second argument, to offer information on a global level, threatening the viability of national cultural networks (Smith, 1990; 1991).

Nevertheless, there are those who defend the view that the nation-state is not passé and those who argue that it remains a crucial point of reference (Schlesinger, 1992, 1993). Its functions, social, institutional, economic and cultural, continue to provide the very important base upon which national identity is shaped. The sense of national identity provides, in its turn, a powerful means of defining and locating individuals in the world, through the prism of the collective personality and its distinctive culture. It is through a shared culture that people are enabled to know ‘who they are’ (Smith, 1991, p. 17).

The capacity of culture is very important in our contemporary world, where the forces of restructuration at a global level have caused a sense of uncertainty and confusion. Therefore, the nation-state - the main container of national culture today - and culture are bound together. As long as nation-states play an important role in the global system, they will keep protecting their national cultures. Nevertheless, if we accept that ‘global culture’ exists, then how can we identify it?

Among the most obvious and tangible forms of cultural globalization are the products of the Western media: television with its capacity for instantaneous transmission via satellite; global icons like Madonna and the Spice Girls; and the global expansion of products like McDonald’s. But is this mélange of disparate components enough to build a global culture?

20 In the capitalist world-economy, the division of labour requires flows, which means that the state boundaries must be permeable and so they are (Wallenstein, 1991, p. 191)
Here lies one of the arguments against the possibility of a global culture. National cultures are based on common values, myths and memories of earlier events and periods in history and they have very strong roots in time. It is only when we come to the varying elements of a common culture that we can differentiate one population from another (Smith, 1991). This contributes to the creation of collective identities, which act in a continuing process that includes the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion (Schlesinger, 1992). It is impossible to talk about a common culture and cultural identity, without distinguishing the ‘us’ from ‘them’. As Featherstone says, to apply this on a global level means imaginatively to create an ‘outside’ to the globe, ‘the sphere of global threat captured only in the pages and footage of science fiction accounts of space invaders, inter-planetary and inter-galactic wars’ (1990, p. 11). Shared patterns of consumption, promoted by transnational corporations and general ideas, like humankind, are not enough to build collective identities in a global level.

National cultures still play an important role. Yet, this does not mean that they will stay intact through all the recent changes, or that there is no space for another level of culture. As Schlesinger argues the existence of the one does not exclude the existence of the other: we need to think in terms of the simultaneous interaction and parallelism of different cultural levels within given social formations (1991). If change is a constant feature of culture why object to it? Perhaps what is at stake is the autonomy of culture.

**Conclusions**

In this chapter, we tried to emphasize the centrality of culture from different perspectives and embrace those issues that connect relevant concepts with policy. Having examined national culture and how it relates to the nation-state and collective identities, we established that they mutually affect and depend on each other for their survival. We also established that there is an element of power involved in this process, which is the driving force behind policies. It is the very nature of the nation-state that makes it necessary to protect its national culture by official means. This is vital for its survival and for the construction of national identities. But to what extent are national cultural policies justified? One could argue that even if national cultures are created and sustained by policies, they nevertheless become part of everyday life, a way of expression of the citizens of the nation-state. Culture and the different forms it takes (national or other) is by its nature a very creative force which enriches the people’s lives and contributes to the development of humankind.

Having established the centrality of culture, the next step in the analysis involves determining the relation between cultural policies and the cultural industries. The following chapter will develop some of the issues discussed in this chapter and try to place them within the policy frame.
CHAPTER 2: National Cultural Policy and the Cultural Industries

“Cultural policy as an instrument used by a nation or city to project an image is ... untouchable in so far as it contributes to their identities. A nation’s search for its identity can be seen from these aspects of its cultural policy which are concerned with projecting an image; these aspects tend to be fairly consistent over time and with each other: the image a nation or city wants to project but also the image, often idealised, it has of itself” (D’Angelo & Vespérini, 1988, p. 23).

“It is of fundamental importance to our political and cultural sovereignty that our broadcasting system be an accurate reflection of who we are, of how we behave, of how we view the world. It plays a major role in defining our national, regional, local and even individual identities. It is therefore, much more than just an industry” (Spivak quoted in Moran, 1996, p. 242).

Promoting cultural identity has been one of the main aims that underlie cultural policy. Having established in the previous chapter the importance of cultural identity, it is easy to understand why it has received so much attention by cultural policy. The logical step now is to see how is cultural policy formulated; who is responsible for its formulation and implementation; what is the environment within which cultural policy takes place; what are the issues and factors involved in its implementation and what are the pressures of today. But most importantly, how does cultural policy relate to the cultural industries and particularly the electronic media, the primary transmitters of modern culture. Answering these questions might help us to answer the question posed at the end of the last chapter: how much cultural policy is justified, especially in its protectionist expression. This analysis will help us to locate and understand better the nature of the specific case study which will follow in this thesis.

This chapter therefore is going to be about the environment within which cultural policy takes place and most importantly the changes that are occurring within this environment: the increasing importance attached to culture, the growing economic importance of cultural industries, the changing leisure patterns, the development of media and especially TV and film as central to cultural output, the changing international scene and the debate about the nature of national culture in the international arena. UNESCO’s contribution to cultural policy research provides a very useful background for the examination of these changes in the third section of this chapter. The first section will focus its attention in understanding what is cultural policy (objectives, models) and who is responsible for its formulation (state). The second section will then bring the cultural industries into the discussion, since they serve as the environment within which we will place and

21 This quote comes from a study commissioned by M. Spivak of the Canadian Senate on the development of regional film and television production in Canada (1989).
examine cultural policy. This is a vital link to the case study, which is the examination of French cultural policy from a cultural industries perspective.

Although this chapter focuses on policy, the use of theory is inevitable. It is a chapter that links the theoretical discussion of chapter One with the case study. It is also a preliminary step towards investigating the nature of attempts to protect national identity through specific policies. It starts with defining cultural policy. The aim is not to formulate an accurate definition of cultural policy but to attempt to give a representative image of its complexity by just pointing at the variety of existing definitions and objectives in the hope that this will serve as a suitable starting point for this chapter.

1. Defining Cultural Policy

1.1 The Concept of Cultural Policy

The concept of cultural policy has been examined by many official bodies, ranging from general philosophical statements of desirable objectives to detailed programs for various realms of national cultural affairs. According to UNESCO, cultural policy is:

“… the sum total of the conscious and deliberate usages, action or lack of action in a society, aimed at meeting certain cultural needs through the optimum utilization of all the physical and human resources available to that society at a given time” (UNESCO, 1969, p. 8).

While this definition sounds rather general and evasive, its elaborations have led many countries to bring together disparate educational, recreation and arts guidelines under the title of cultural policy. Not much effort has been put into the conceptualisation and theorization of cultural policy, except perhaps by cultural economists attempting to justify government’s support for the arts. As a result, cultural policy does not exist as a clearly defined area of study with an agreed research framework (see Bennett, 1998; Kawashima, 1995). This, in its turn, has led to a lack in interpretive and conceptual works, as most of the literature consists mainly of descriptive case studies and narrative national reports (e.g. the Culturelink Database of Cultural Policies and Council of Europe’s...
National Reports on cultural policy). This lack of clarity at the conceptual level can cause confusion at the policy level, as the lack of clearly stated objectives can affect its effectiveness. A clearly defined cultural policy requires processes that define its cultural values, goals and priorities which in their turn provide the foundation and the criteria for programs of initiatives and expenditures which can advance those goals - most often seen as the terrain of ‘explicit’ cultural policy-making (Adams & Goldbard, 1995). Although those goals are often similar (promotion of cultural identity, diversity, creativity, participation and development), what differentiates one state’s cultural policy from another is the degree of its explicitness and under what objectives it chooses to operate. In the following section, particular attention will be placed on one of these objectives, the protection of cultural identity, as it is central to this thesis argument.

1.2 Objectives of Cultural Policy

Cultural policy can have a wide range of objectives among which the (re)discovery, (re) assertion or protection of cultural identity is the most often expressed. The question of defending national identity from forces external to the nation is broad and complex. Governmental attempts to define and construct national identities through the implementation of cultural policies are found in most countries, across widely differing political systems. The media appear, in all cases, to form an essential component of these attempts.

There are two aspects of cultural policy concerned with national identity. One relates to the perception of imported material as a threat to national identity. Whole cultural policies have been based on a defence of national patrimonies against what are seen as the corrosive effects of the dominant metropolitan culture, i.e. the French, Indian, Canadian way of life in opposition to the American. The Jamaican Minister of State in Charge of Culture expressed this concern in the following way:

“No matter how innocuous and socially meaningless an imperialist play, movie or cartoon may seem to us, it produces a cultural stream of influence that contradicts the stated goals of national liberation” (quoted in Nettleford, 1979, p. 132).

With the increased privatisation of the media, this aspect of cultural policy has been more clearly articulated, especially about the effect of imported media products from the USA. Many countries argue that imported entertainment carries messages of lifestyles, behaviour and consumer patterns that are not always appropriate to or compatible with their national culture and interests. It is not only Third-World or developing countries that have articulated this threat, but also European and other Western countries. Canada’s concern over this matter, for example, dates back to 1957, with the Fowler Royal Commission on Broadcasting stating:

“As a nation we cannot accept, in these powerful and persuasive media, the natural and complete flow of another nation’s culture without danger to our national identity. Can we resist that tidal wave of American cultural activity? Can we retain a Canadian identity, art

25 Which, in this case, are considered as synonymous to cultural identities, which in their turn are perceived as homogeneous.
and culture - a Canadian nationhood?... Is it possible to have a Canadian nation at all?26 (McPhail, 1987, p. 28).

Following the theoretical arguments of Chapter One, commitment to the nation implies identification, recognition of and pride in the national culture. In addition, culture is seen as necessary to the survival of the State and anything that threatens any aspect of domestic culture, threatens the survival of the state. Therefore, the government's intervention is required to ensure that national culture survives and prospers (Noberman, 1987). Specific mechanisms have been introduced as part of cultural policies to protect and promote national identity, including laws imposing Quotas on foreign media imports, prohibition of foreign ownership and control of media outlets and tariffs and other restrictions on foreign cultural products.

While this aspect of cultural policy is about defending the cultural identity of the nation, the other aspect relates to countries that are still in the process of building a national awareness. Most developing countries are still struggling to overcome a long history of cultural colonization, the fact that their media, libraries and theatres are still dominated by the cultures that colonised them long time ago. Many former colonies, particularly in Africa, are still in the process of constructing a nation in areas whose borders, drawn by colonizing powers on the basis of geometry and arbitrary divisions of empire, “corresponded to no significant geographical or economic or cultural units” (Seton-Watson, 1977, pg 474). As these borders continue to exist, it has been considered imperative to create a collective identity that can function as a state among states in the international system:

“The new [African] elites ... denounced the trend towards the creation of national consensus based on language as ‘tribalism’. They hoped to develop mass loyalties not to individual indigenous cultures but to a new social order founded on growing material welfare for the masses and on growing pride of the masses in their state2 (Seton-Watson, 1977, p. 472).

References to the need for nation-building are found in most cultural policies of these ex-colonies, as the following statement of a Zairian cultural official shows:

“The whole people needed to be mobilized for increased national awareness... national awareness is impossible unless the nation is perceived and apprehended ... as a whole and in each of its parts... the Ministry of Information... is responsible for getting the Zairian people to play a real part in the running of their institutions and in promoting the values of the Zairian nation as a whole” (quoted in Bokonga, 1980, p. 9).

These countries feel that in order to participate in a pre-established global system of nation-states, they have to unify the numerous tribes and language groups that exist within their borders into a

26 As a response, the Canadian Broadcasting Act stated that “the national broadcasting service should... contribute to the development of national unity and provide for a continuing expression of Canadian identity” (Schafer, 1976, pg 66). According to this decision, Canadian program content regulation was mandated for the radio and television, part of which was to limit the annual imported programming to under 50 percent. Canada has now made a special agreement (ALENA) with US regarding importing media products.
group, which shares a collective identity, i.e. national. While the objectives of a cultural policy that is concerned with the construction of identities are very clear, the final results are not always desirable, as in the process of unifying (constructing) the nation, many cultural groups lose their autonomy and in many times their right to cultural expression.

The implication underlying both of the above aspects of cultural policy - protection from cultural penetration and the promotion of indigenous identity - is that there exists an agreed-upon standard ‘national culture’. This assumption, according to Philip Schlesinger, is questionable as ‘national cultures are not simple repositories of shared symbols to which the entire population stands in identical relation. Rather, they are to be approached as sites of contestation in which competition over definitions takes place’ (1987, pg 260). The establishment of a cultural policy involves precisely such ‘competition over definitions’. Some policy makers may try to cover over or eliminate internal definitional clashes. As a response, cultural diversity has been introduced as one of the main objectives of cultural policy, in an effort to promote and protect ‘cultural pluralism’, ‘multiculturalism’ and the individual expression of ‘minority groups’ within the nation-state.

Another relevant objective of cultural policy is the democratisation of culture through increasing participation, which aims to make elite and popular culture available to more people, as both spectators and creators. Cultural policy makers in Europe tried earlier on to democratise high culture by using different methods like subsidising theatre tickets. This did not succeed because the majority of the population saw this as an effort to promote an established culture that does not reflect their interests. Cultural democratisation has since tried to change direction and focus its attention to questions like how to encourage and sustain democratic media; ensure media literacy, to enable people to use the media for democratic expression; encourage and sustain participatory, face-to-face cultural activities in societies saturated with mass-distributed products (Webster’s World of Cultural Democracy, 1998). These are expressions of concerns over the increasing impact of urbanization and the proliferation of mass media over the social and cultural activities of modern societies.

Another aspect of cultural policy is that of development. Modern cultural policies are increasingly linked to development through the efforts of UNESCO. Development is seen as a “process that enhances the effective freedom of the people involved to pursue whatever they have reason to value” (UNESCO, Our Creative Diversity, 1996). This view of human development is a culturally conditioned view of economic and social progress, which focuses on increasing the capabilities of people and enlarging their choices (as, for example, the right to participate in the cultural life of the community), not just the enlargement of material products. Cultural policies according to this position can stimulate the economic life of the nation by promoting cultural activities that contribute to the prosperity of its citizens (i.e. the production of films can provide employment to many artists).

Democratization and decentralization of culture as we will see in Chapter 3, have been essential parts of the French cultural policy and strongly associated with the Socialist governments. Their aim was to shift power in cultural affairs from central to local authority by increasing the local share of the national budget for culture and handing over decision making in cultural matters to city and provincial authorities. The increased regional autonomy was seen as a way to involve more people in local cultural activities.
Objectives do not have to operate in isolation. A national cultural policy can have multiple objectives that can work at different levels but achieve the same aim. Promotion of cultural identity for instance can work together with the development aspect of cultural policy, as the former can help local film artists to create film that represent the national character and at the same time stimulate the economic life of the nation by providing jobs to local artists. In general, these objectives are part of a coherent system (policy) whose degree of explicitness determines the impact the latter has in the organization of the nation’s cultural activities. The section below illustrates how explicitness can distinguish one cultural policy from another and gives a comparative framework within which French cultural policy can be placed. Special emphasis will be given to the U.S. as within a comparative framework, it can highlight the French position on cultural policy and magnify the difference in approaching the cultural industries.

1.3 Degrees of Explicitness in Cultural Policy

In some countries, cultural policies are made explicitly, through a process, which includes detailed legislative and regulatory mechanisms, defined by an agency charged with this responsibility, (i.e. Ministry of Culture/Arts Council), while in others, they consist of simple philosophical statements or a series of guidelines concerning education, elite and folk art, sports and the media. Most of the Western European countries apply cultural policies that are explicitly defined. France and Sweden are good examples. Cultural policy in these two countries is fully developed and incorporated in the official policy planning.

There are countries, like the United States, where cultural policy is not formally defined. The absence though of a clearly articulated policy is to be considered a policy statement in itself - not to have a cultural policy is to have a policy of leaving cultural matters to the marketplace. The anti-policy argument that comes from the United States is based on the following points: that articulating co-ordinated policy would prevent the free activities of individual agencies; that government cultural policy-making would eventually lead to unjustified state interference in cultural development; and the conviction that there is no need to elaborate public policy since the government’s cultural mission is to follow the lead of the private sector, that there are no other proper public goals in the realm of culture (Goldbard & Adams, 1986). We can trace some the causes of the opposition between the French and American governments regarding cultural products and their position in the World Trade Agreement in this anti-policy position, which sees no role for the state in the protection and promotion of cultural life.

Nevertheless, the absence of an official policy does not mean that there are not systematic patterns of governmental activity. The Reagan administration, for instance, had a coherent cultural policy.

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28 At the center of this argument is the hypothesis that totalitarianism emerges from the statement of public goals in cultural action. Daniel Boor’s, librarian of Congress, comment in a policy roundtable in 1981, that “the countries that have cultural policies are, of course, totalitarian countries...”, clearly states this supposition (The New York Times, 25 April 1982).

29 Under the Reagan administration, the United States distanced themselves from the international cultural discourse. Their withdrawal from UNESCO was seen as an indication of, first, an indifference to global cultural problems and second, a specific national policy agenda which sought to maintain the US dominance in the film industry [supporting the Motion Picture Export Association's campaign against foreign restrictions on film imports from the United States] (Goldbard & Adams in Raskin & Hartman, 1988).
consisting of controlling access to the media and affirmation and appropriation of US ‘eternal truths’, such as patriotism (Canclini, ed. 1987, p. 63). It is impossible for a government to avoid making cultural policy, which does not have to be used in the traditional way, i.e. to protect one’s national culture within its territory or abroad. It can equally be used to promote one’s culture abroad and the USA provides such an example. Below, it will be demonstrated that although the USA does not have an explicitly defined cultural policy, its articulation is expressed through a number of governmental agencies and is an essential component of foreign policy.

The USA has build its national identity around the idea of democracy and this is what it promotes abroad:

“The idea of democracy is inextricably linked to the national identity of the United States. Even during the most isolationist periods in our early history, our relatively young country was seen as a shining beacon to individuals and families seeking personal freedom” (USAID, 18/06/01).

The United States Agency for International Development promotes this identity through a number of developing projects around the world. It could be said that the promotion of these ideals that shape American culture does not only reinforce the country’s image abroad but that it can also reinforce the country’s image to its own citizens by transferring to them the message of a strong democratic nation that serves as a model to others. This is assisted by the U.S. Department of State whose Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs designs cultural programs that serve to “highlight the creativity and dynamism of American society … while…foreign audiences and partners are… influenced by the freedom of expression that is a hallmark of the arts in the US” (U.S. Department of State a, b, 18/06/01). It employs a number of projects through which it exposes American culture abroad.30

The same Bureau has a Feature Film Service (ibid, c) that provides free films to international festivals and cultural events through the embassies around the world, which gets private support from the Motion Picture Association of America and other related institutions. The film program, according to this Service, is designed to illustrate such concepts as rule of law, independent judiciary, free press etc. It also spells out very clearly in its objectives statement that the film program provides a linkage between trade issues and intellectual property rights by promoting the American film industry overseas. The American government is fully aware of the impact their culture has. What is striking is the arrogance that accompanies it. In a U.S. Information Agency document (18/06/01), Portrait of the USA, in the section titled ‘exporting popular culture’, it is stated that “for better or worse many nations now have two cultures: their indigenous one and the one consisting of the sports, movies, television programs and music whose energy and broad-based appeal are identifiably American”.

It is clear from the above that cultural policy is not an alien concept for the U.S. government and that forms of cultural policy are mainly employed to promote American culture abroad with special

30 Some of these programs are the Fulbright Program, which sends American professors to teach abroad, the Study of the United States, which promotes better understanding of the U.S. for foreign university faculty, the Office of Citizen Exchanges which gives grants for media development, the International Cultural Property Protection which represents U.S. responsibilities in protecting cultural patrimony of other countries etc (ibid). The author of this thesis had the opportunity to work with Fulbright professors who on many occasions give lectures on American culture. She was also contracted by ACCELS (an agency of the State Dept) to contact interviews for the English Teaching Exchange program, which sends English language teachers to the States to study American culture so that upon their return they can teach American culture and society. During this experience, it became very clear that the promotion of American culture abroad was a very strong component of American foreign policy.
emphasis on popular culture. One could say that the USA has an externally driven cultural policy and this can be perceived as a rather aggressive one as it is often disguised in the form of development and exchange or as trade. It is important to understand how the USA’s foreign policy is linked to cultural policy, even if it is not clearly articulated. Clarifying this will help us to understand better France’s fears and protectionist policy vis-à-vis the American ‘threat’.

No country can refrain from having cultural impact. National cultural policy - whether it is explicit or not - is the expression of this impact. Also, it has to be made clear that, as part of a government’s program, cultural policies are oriented by the government’s overall guiding principles, and reflect thus its larger policy aims. Implicitly or explicitly they are designed to assist the government’s political position. The degree of explicitness shapes models of cultural policy.

1.4 Models of Cultural Policy

The two main approaches of state and non-state intervention in cultural action shape models of cultural policy whose variation also depends on the particular needs of the nation-state. To start with, cultural policy is integrated in general planning, which is the case with most countries. A more advanced variation of this model is that in which the state considers that it has responsibility for culture deriving from the role it has undertaken towards the nation, and that it is the duty of the State to replace private initiative which is not always capable of carrying out this task successfully (see table 1, traditional and social welfare state).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF STATE</th>
<th>Traditional centralized state</th>
<th>Social welfare state</th>
<th>Liberal state</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IMPACT OF THE MARKETS</td>
<td>Limited by status-based segmentation of public</td>
<td>Limited by public provision of the arts and cultural goods</td>
<td>Limited by professionals using their monopoly of expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MODE OF PERCEIVING PUBLIC</td>
<td>Privileged strata vs. population at large</td>
<td>Citizenry endowed with cultural rights</td>
<td>Customers with purchase power of cultural goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT</td>
<td>State bureaucracy prestigious institutions</td>
<td>Public bureaucracy, public cultural service networks</td>
<td>Private entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. State models and how they shape Cultural Policy Models*

This we could say is the case of France, Canada and other Western (except USA) and developing countries, which, although they operate in capitalist economies, find the protection of national cultural production essential to their survival. In direct opposition to this model is the view that one should be aware of centralization and of a predominant role for the State in the direct management of cultural institutions. The danger here is of cultural action being reduced to uniformity and for fear that the controversial element in art be neutralized. The supporters of this

approach prefer to limit State intervention to financial assistance, free from any conditions (the *laissez-faire* approach to cultural policy) [UNESCO, 1969].

While some countries discuss cultural policy on an advanced level, there are other countries which have just started building up policies, for example the ex-communist countries in Eastern Europe which used to have a centralized cultural policy, based on political propaganda and whose priority now is to establish free democratic procedures upon which new cultural policies can be based. The Czech Republic, for instance, is trying to create a new concept of cultural policy based of the principles of freedom of expression and cultural democracy for artists (Culturelink, 1998).

The question of who decides in cultural policy is vital in the distinction between the different models. The *laissez-faire* model (see table 1, liberal state), which holds that the function of the state should be restricted to promoting freedom of the markets, means that those with the most power and wealth will have the best opportunities to affect the nature and quality of cultural life. The *cultural democracy* model (closer to the social welfare state’s approach to cultural policy, see table 1), on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of providing everyone with the opportunity to participate in such decisions. The Danish cultural policy, based on this model, has a long tradition of public support for artistic and cultural activities. Democratisation and decentralization are the main aims of this policy (op.cit).

The trend now shows a shift towards the *laissez-faire* model as it is represented by the liberal state with emphasis on the market and increasing attention to the economic side of culture. Countries functioning in the capitalist economy, find it increasingly difficult to ignore the economic input of the cultural industries to their economies, which adds to the existing pressures from outside forces. The cultural industries are inextricably linked to the activities of the modern nation-state. Whether part of the public or commercial sector, they are under the regulation and/or protection of the state. The examination of cultural industries is essential to the study of national cultural policy and activity. The following section will concentrate on these two areas, as their understanding is important for chapter 4, which examines French cultural policy through the audiovisual industry.

### 2. The Cultural Industries

The role of the cultural industries has changed enormously over the past two decades. In theory as well as in practice, they have moved from playing a secondary role in policy formation to the focus point of government action. As Jean Chesneaux observed,

> “the culture of modernity is industrially produced under government warranty to the extent that the cultural sector is one of the rare areas where the government can hope to

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31 The main trend, though, is private sponsoring. With the state economies collapsing and the natural anti-trust in governmental intervention in the cultural activities of the nation, these countries have turned their eyes in the West for inspiration, adopting the market model and searching for private money. The collapse of state culture created a gap rapidly filled by an uncontrolled free market. One area that has suffered greatly from these changes is the cultural industries and particularly the media. Having been always seen as the propaganda tool of the government, television has been abandoned and very little attention has been paid to it. Cultural policy makers have neglected this area. This is a personal observation of the author of this thesis who had the opportunity to take interviews during her participation in a cultural policy training course (CEU, Budapest, July-Aug 1999) from representatives of Eastern cultural policy makers and in particular the Hungarian Public Service Broadcasting.
escape from world-wide constrains and claim a certain amount of protectionism without risking too-severe reprisals” (Chesnaux quoted in Miége, 1989 p. 38).

The Frankfurt School tradition, crucial in the development of the concept of cultural industry, helped to identify and analyse the characteristics of modern industrial cultural production and its impact on people’s cultural practices (Adorno, 1991). The use of industrial technologies, they argued, by the cultural industries has as an effect on the standardisation of culture.

“On explique volontiers l’industrie culturelle en termes de technologie. Le fait qu’elle s’adresse à des millions de personnes impose des méthodes de reproduction qui, à leur tour, fournissent en tous lieux des biens standardisés pour satisfaire aux nombreuses demandes identiques” (Adorno et Horkheimer, 1974).

Although, the theories of the Frankfurt School have provided us with the critical tools of examining the role of the media in modern society, it is no longer possible to adopt those ideas, which claim that authentic art is totally foreign to the industrialization of culture. Similarly, it is no longer possible to consider artistic and cultural production as if it depended mainly on patronage or small commercial production (Miége, 1984; 1989). The cultural industries have attracted a lot of attention from political economists like Miége in France and Garnham in Britain, who indicated that cultural activities have become objects of valorization by capital. The political economy approach took a “stand against a whole tradition of idealist cultural analysis”, a tradition which, “delineated in the British form, for instance, by Raymond Williams… defines culture as a realm separate from, and often actively opposed to, the realm of material production and economic activity” (Garnham, 1990, pg 154). This twofold nature – both cultural and economic - builds up a distinctive profile for the cultural industries.

This approach broke the traditional link between cultural policy and cultural activities and products. The relationship between the media and cultural policy also changed. Traditionally, Public Service Broadcasting was linked to cultural policy by being seen as a natural carrier of national culture. At the same time the media have been seen as enemies to the cultural domain. Official policies tend to be differentiated between the ‘high arts’ and the mass arts of film, radio and television. The media have been associated with the market and seen thus as a consumerist activity. This has led the governments to subsidize and support the ‘high’ arts, in order to make them more widely accessible. The media, already widely accessible, were seen in general to be in need of control rather than to be supported by the state.

The arts are seen as different from other goods. Art is recognised as a response or a product of different cultures. The state is expected to acknowledge the function of arts in society by recognizing that artists and their creations are neither goods or services, but citizens and products with particular and important functions (Pick, 1993). Accordingly, it is within the scope of the national cultural policy to assist the artists and their work when the number of audiences they attract is not substantial enough to keep them financially

32 This change in attitude was also indicated in the speech of Mitterrand, the French President at the time, who pointed out that “creativity is becoming a development factor, and cultural activities are establishing themselves among the expanding sectors around which the future is being organized” (François Mitterrand, speech at the symposium ‘Creation et Development’, Paris, Sorbonne, 13 Feb 1983).

33 Bernard Miége is a leading French Marxist and an expert of the cultural industries. He supervised this thesis while the author was conducting her fieldwork in France, at the Centre de Documentation of CRESEC, Institut de la Communication et des Médias, at the University of Stendhal, in Grenoble where he was a the time the director.
independent, which is also a result of the market competitive forces (Garhnam, 1990). Therefore, the public intervention in the form of subsidy is seen as necessary and justified by the following arguments:

“... 1) that culture possesses inherent values, of life enhancement or whatever, which are fundamentally opposed to and in danger of damage by commercial forces; 2) that the need for these values is universal, uncontaminated by questions of class, gender and ethnic origin; and 3) that the market cannot satisfy this need” (Garhnam, 1990, p. 154).

By rejecting the market, the policy makers refused to admit that most people’s cultural needs are supplied by the market as goods and services. Today, the cultural industries with the aid of technological advancements are responsible for large segments of modern cultural activity. These businesses, for the most part private and profit-oriented, occupy an important place in culture. They provide technical services and guarantee the production, reproduction, distribution and dissemination of works. For the majority of the population, cultural industries, combining entertainment and the arts, represent the main point of contact with artistic creation. They provide us with the principal mechanisms for exchanging the cultural products and experiences which enable a society to produce and distribute books, periodicals, films, discs and other products that shape and reflect it, in many ways, as a community.

Consequently, any discussion of the cultural industries re-focuses our attention on the dominant market forces. Here, we employ the definition of culture that sees it as the production and circulation of symbolic meaning, as a material process of production and exchange, which is determined by, and part of, the wider economic processes of society. Following this definition of culture, we come to describe cultural industries as those institutions which employ the characteristic modes of production and organization of industrial corporations to produce and disseminate symbols in the form of cultural goods and services which are generally seen as commodities. The notion of cultural industries generally includes printing, publishing and multimedia, audiovisual, phonographic and cinematographic productions as well as crafts and designing.

As has been mentioned above, culture provides the space for the expression of difference and the use of cultural goods is an indicator of social and individual difference. As a result, the demand for any of these products is not easy to predict. Therefore, the cultural industries, in order to survive, have to provide for their public not only a single cultural good but also a cultural repertoire across which the risks can be spread. This repertoire, together with the drive to audience maximization and the need to create artificial scarcity by controlling access, are the main characteristics of the cultural commodities. This shows, as Garnham (1990) argues, that the cultural process is not only about producing cultural goods and performances but also creating audiences for these goods. And their function is not restricted only in the production of cultural goods that can be matched to a given audience, but also the matching of the cost of production of these cultural repertoire to the spending capacity of that certain audience. It is cultural distribution - the access to audience - that has the real power in the cultural sector.

What attitude then should we take regarding the market and the cultural process? According to the classic tradition mentioned above, culture and the market are by nature antithetic, a view that is strongly supported by the socialist ideology, which is opposed to the capitalist mode of production. French cultural policy was primarily defined along this line, especially under the socialist governments. The market was seen as the enemy. However, the only alternative to the market that governments have managed to create, with the partial exception of broadcasting, is to subsidize the
existing cultural preferences of the better-off or to construct a new form of public which is not attractive to the popular audience.

It is clear therefore that the traditional approaches to cultural policies are not adequate enough to deal with the economic importance of the cultural sector. The audiovisual sector has long been neglected within these policies. A more up to date national cultural policy needs to stimulate debates and direct the official attention towards the role of its audiovisual aspects and broadcasting. Most of the contemporary cultural practices are centred on broadcasting which means that a lot of time and money are spent on the consumption of audiovisual products, which in its turn has made the broadcasting industry one of the major sponsors of cultural expression. In Britain, the BBC, for instance, spends more money per annum supporting cultural workers - in the form of employing scriptwriters, film directors, singers etc. - than the Arts Council (Garhman, 1990, pg 166). The arts and culture serve as a main source of content for the cultural industries, they create jobs and contribute significantly to GDP, ranging from 0.8 to 3 per cent in the European Union countries (UNESCO, 1997). Furthermore, the success of films, records and even books is more and more linked with their exposure on the electronic media. Cultural policy makers are now forced to stop looking at the media in isolation and invest in alternative ways to work with them. The increasing economic impact of creative activities cannot be ignored (see Annex for chap 2, table 1, for a representative image of the world trade of cultural goods today).

The implications of the above situation for national cultural policies are very much part of the international agenda, spanning from the late seventies and the early speculations of UNESCO on cultural industries to the late nineties and the GATT negotiations regarding audiovisual products. How preoccupied the European countries have been regarding their role vis-à-vis the cultural industries, is shown in an early attempt to define these industries and plan a policy of intervention. Television was seen as central part of the cultural industries:

“dans la mesure où son fonctionnement est commandé par les critères industriels et commerciaux plutôt que culturels: l’ impératif de gagner un nombre maximal de consommateurs qui est imposé par le concurrence entre les chaînes..., le considération des coûts de fabrication qui est devenue décisive pour le choix des programmes, le lien étroit entre techniques de tournage et contenus de programmes, la nécessité d’importer et d’exporter, leur rôle dans l’économie du cinéma donnent aux sociétés d’Etat la plu part des caractéristiques d’une entreprise industrielle‖ (Girard, Sept-Oct 1978).

What is worthy noticing in the above definition is the distinction between television dictated by cultural criteria and television as part of the cultural industries, dictated thus by industrial and commercial criteria. The first distinction is associated with the concept of public service broadcasting which remained, in many ways, separate from the concept of the cultural industries. This contributed to the later crisis in the public service television, as it was not fully prepared, despite receiving state funding, to face the commercialisation of the sector.

Admitting that the cultural industries were the main disseminators of culture today, the European countries expressed, at that stage, their concern regarding the commercialisation of culture.34 Early

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recommendations suggested the stimulation of national audiovisual production and quality, the encouragement of importing and exporting of quality programs, a better integration of the industrial cultural products in the activities of the local cultural services (libraries, cinemas etc.), support to the cultural producers who without financial aid cannot continue producing quality products as they cannot compete with the market etc. Some of the above suggestions show that the majority of the European cultural policies were, and still are, based on the traditional model of state intervention in the cultural field.

Realizing that a large part of the cultural industries is controlled by multi-nationals and that it is very difficult for the nation-states to find ways to influence them, a later study showed how the activities of the international or multinational cultural industries and the national cultural policies can influence one another. Moving from the late 1970s to the late 1990s, the above issue remains the same, only more complex, as the factors involved in the shaping and implementation of cultural policies have increased -- regional, national, supranational (i.e. European Union), global (WTO). Unesco has not only followed this development but also contributed to it by maintaining a debate forum on the development of cultural policy.

3. UNESCO's Contribution to Cultural Policy

The role of the cultural industries in cultural policy has received considerable institutional attention through UNESCO. A series of meetings and conferences about cultural matters brought the notion of cultural policy into sharp focus in the 1970s. Debates over the role of cultural policy have evolved from early predictions in the late 60s and 70s over the place of media in cultural policy to attempts to rectify and re-adopt these policies to the present situation, accepting that policies should reconsider their position regarding the cultural industries.

The best way to see how the UNESCO debate has evolved across the years regarding cultural and communication policies is to follow a chronological analysis of different reports, as they provide valuable material regarding the development of national cultural policies in relation to the cultural industries. The analysis of cultural policy practices, especially in the 1980s, as seen and reported by UNESCO, is necessary as it helps to place chronologically the case study of this research. Understanding the wider framework within which the French cultural policy has taken place since the eighties - i.e. the trends in cultural practices and production - contributes to a better understanding of the conditions that shaped the specific cultural policy.

3.1 The Question of Definition

The reason why UNESCO gave such a generalised definition of cultural policy (see section 1.1) in the late sixties, was due to the reluctance to adopt a specific concept of culture believing that cultural development on a national scale does not find its ultimate ends in a particular concept of culture, since various conceptions reflect different sets of values that are not accepted by all.

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35 Résolution n 3 concernant les industries culturelles adoptées par la conférence d'Athènes, 24-26 oct. 1978, conférence des ministres européens responsables des affaires culturelles.
36 A large part of this analysis is based on the reports of the French analyst Augustine Girard who was already arguing in the 1970s for the rediscovery of the forgotten cultural industries at the center of contemporary cultural policy. He emphasized the importance of 'industrial cultural products' in providing the largest number of people with access to culture and creativity (Girard, 1983; UNESCO, 1997)
Although culture was given a general meaning and recognized as a human right, it was closely associated to the nation-state. Cultural policies, at that early stage, were conceived as a purely national issue, a mechanism available to culturally sovereign states forging their own national identity. The absence of a working concept within UNESCO worked in favour of the national culture as seen by the official apparatus of the nation-state which was free to define its national culture the way it served it better.

UNESCO started to consider the potential of the media as a new art form, as early as the late sixties. It was thought that modern media could help in reviving traditional arts and also contribute in the creation of new art forms. Broadcasting and especially television could make possible a direct transition from traditional oral culture to a new oral culture. The problem for them, as it was considered at the time, was to evolve a form of expression of their own. Only in this way it was possible to “disinfect the mass media, which now threaten to corrupt civilization” (UNESCO, 1969, PG 15). Despite the attention that was given to the media at that early stage, these remained early speculations and no substantial measures were taken towards a more coherent media policy.

3.2 Cultural Trends in the 1980s

The above attitude has shaped both the working concept of cultural policy and its relation to the media and it lasted until the beginning of the 1980s, when UNESCO reappraised its position regarding cultural policies through a number of intergovernmental conferences. What happened at the beginning of the 1980s, with the appearance of two concurrent, parallel cultural trends, affected dramatically the cultural field. On the one had, we had an explosion in the cultural life of the different sectors of the population which led to substantial changes in terms of the time spent on cultural activities, the access to cultural facilities and the consumption of ‘cultural’ products. On the other hand, however, the policy makers did not respond to this change. They continued supporting the development of traditional institutions that were satisfying only a small section of the population, namely the ‘cultured’ or ‘educated’ classes. The reason for this lack of convergence between the two trends was that attempts to study cultural policies had concentrated on the traditional forms of dissemination and envisaged the democratisation of institutions, which had always been associated with the ‘élites’. They failed to recognise the increasing importance of commercial broadcasting and the cultural goods consumed by large sections of the public (Girard, 1983).

During the 1980s and 1990s public attendance at cultural institutions like opera and theatre declined while public access to literary and artistic works through ‘industrial cultural products’ increased immensely. These concurrent trends posed a problem for cultural authorities, as the main aim of most cultural policies is broadening public access to culture (democratisation and decentralization). Therefore, refusing to incorporate the media in their policies would mean refusing to face up to reality which was indicating that success in democratisation and decentralization could be better achieved through the industrial cultural products in the market place than the products subsidised by public authorities. This observation was supported by Van der Staay who commented in 1979: “Commercialised mass culture is the best democratic culture

37 “Culture is an inalienable and indivisible human right; it pervades all aspects of life” (Venice Conference).
38 The series started in Venice in 1970, with the 'Intergovernmental Conference on the administrative and Financial Aspects of Cultural Policies' and ended in Mexico in 1982, with the 'World conference on cultural Policies (MONDIACULT).
that Europe has known and it is egalitarian in the sense that all social classes accept it and are involved in it” 39. However, not everyone agreed with this statement.

There were those who argued that a transmitted or reproduced cultural product does not have the same ‘cultural value’ as a work directly experienced in the theatre or auditorium and that a distinction has to be made between the different areas of cultural activity. Yet, how can we differentiate, as Girard (1983) put it, in terms of ‘cultural effect’, between seeing a film in a cinema and watching the same film at home on television? Despite the efforts made by the different cultural institutions to increase the audience for works of art in a large manner, the results were not impressive. Over the same period, however, industrially produced works attracted a much broader audience. In the early 1980s, after two decades of institutionally oriented policy, it was recognised that the cultural message ‘does not get through’, especially among certain groups of the population. During the same period, the problem of meeting the increased demand for cultural products became more evident and it was reluctantly accepted that the problem cannot simply be resolved by multiplying cultural institutions. The cultural industries were the only ones to satisfy this demand. Recognizing this was a big step in the 1980s. However, cultural policies still seemed to be exclusively concerned with the point of production (institutions and creators) not with the means of dissemination, an issue brought to light by UNESCO in the late 1990s (UNESCO, 1997).

3.3 Cultural Production, National Identity and the Media

The production of cultural products through industrial means was not the only issue that preoccupied UNESCO during this period of time. It was inextricably linked with this other very important issue of protecting national cultural identity. The international character of the cultural industries meant that sooner or later cultural products would lose some or all of their national character, and this fear has remained with us, until today.

In terms of equipment and production, the international division of labour is worldwide, with production and distribution being shared by a limited number of multinationals. The result of this has been the, artists, publishers and programme makers moving outside their national borders or linguistic areas which were too restricted for production to be profitable. The rapidly expanding market was a big challenge for the national cultural industries, which at the time did not fully realize the effect of deregulation -the emergence of private channels and satellite television -, on their national markets. The expansion of the markets was expected to give each country a chance to broadcast its culture to other countries.

The phenomenon of cultural exchange, made easier through the industrialization of cultural production, was seen as both positive and negative at the same time. Negative, if the consumption of imported products is not compatible with the cultural models specific to the nation-state; if it prevents the development of a national system of production which cannot compete or provide material that is as attractive as material produced abroad at considerable expense. Countries with small linguistic groups are the first to be affected by the opening up to cultural exchange.

This phenomenon, though, could have a positive effect if appropriate national or international measures were taken in time to ensure that the national system of cultural production was brought

39 The Netherlands delegate to the conference of the Council of Europe on cultural Decentralization, Nuremberg, 1979.
up to the level of the international competition, in which case, the products of the cultural industries could become a powerful asset in the dissemination of national cultures (Girard, op. cit). Girard, expressing the hopes of UNESCO in his report on Cultural Development (1983), considered this as an excellent opportunity for each country to disseminate the most universal aspects of it culture. He believed that cultures have always been transnational and have always mutually enriched each other. Where, then, did the protection of national culture as seen by UNESCO fit in this? Despite the inevitable cultural exchange, he believed that it is necessary to speak of cultural 'non-dependence' - the ability of a country to keep down excessive imports and to ensure competitive national production (p. 42). He predicted, though, that countries with little program-making capacity could easily become dependent on countries with powerful cultural industries. He suggested that, in order to resist the influx of foreign products and the trivialization of culture, artistic creation should be protected as:

“by reinterpreting the past, it makes it possible to gain a better grasp and understanding of the present. Showing a preference for living art is preserving the cultural identity of a nation in the face of the products of the huge transnational corporations engaged in the cultural activities” (Girard, 1983, p.127).

Girard insisted, though, on the cosmopolitan aspect of national cultures and the importance of cultural exchange. He believed that you cannot protect the cultural identity of a nation by simply closing its borders to outside cultural influences. The best way to do this is to increase the endogenous cultural production, invest in cultural activities and expand the capacity of the nation for creative art, by supporting and promoting creative artists, for they are the custodians of the cultural identity of the nation. Most developing and industrialized countries in the 1970s were aware of the implications, for the future of culture, of the relations between the media and creation, as it was shown by the recommendations at a UNESCO conference in 1973:

“Help creative artists develop their ability to use the possibilities offered by audiovisual technical resources. Encourage the growth and use of the mass media to reflect the true cultural identity of peoples and build a better society. Formulate integrated policies for culture and communication, which take into account both the cultural potential and the dangers of the media and establish appropriate mechanisms for broad participation in determining such policies. Foster public appreciation of creative works through the media and maximum access and participation by audiences in the communication process, including a continuous flow of ideas between the public, the artists and the producers” (quoted in Girard, 1983, p 134).

The distinction between artistic creation and cultural production is very interesting at this point. To recognize the socio-economic importance of cultural production was a significant step in cultural policy making which has been framed mainly within the European aesthetic tradition - a tradition that refused to incorporate economic and industrial realities in its planning (UNESCO, 1997). Once the notion of cultural production was accepted, the following question came out: “on what conditions can cultural production remain national and on what conditions can endogenous cultural production withstand the adverse international repercussions of this system of production?” (Girard, p 129). State intervention was seen as inevitable. The state should keep the monopoly of the main media (but not the messages) and provide the financial resources that would encourage the production.

American cinema opened a new era in the dissemination of cultural influence just after the Second World War and started the long debate on cultural hegemony and media imperialism, as expressed
in the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO), reflecting the early preoccupations regarding news and television flow, advertising and communications technology. During the 1970s and 1980s, UNESCO became a forum mainly for Third World demands for the ‘decolonisation of information’. The critique of US domination of information and entertainment programmes was also seen as an attack on capitalism. It was not only the news and entertainment values which were felt to be alien to many non-Western societies, but also the transnationalized economy represented by American communication industries (Roach, 1990; Tomlinson, 1991). A great example of these preoccupations is the speech of the French Minister of Culture at the time, Jack Lang who expanded the debate on cultural hegemony beyond the Third World countries by including countries like France facing an imminent danger by the Americanisation of their culture (UNESCO, 1982). His speech had a great impact, which can only today be fully valued. He anticipated, in a way, globalisation and its effects not only on Third World countries but also on developed western countries. Globalization was synonymous to Americanisation, a debate that comes up to our days.

All these preoccupations were reflected in the Mexico City conference40 of UNESCO in 1982 which was the first step towards redefining cultural policies responding to the new trends in cultural industries. At this point, the necessity to adopt a working concept of culture was imperative, as conceptual confusion in the past had affected the setting of policy objectives. The new vision of culture was far broader than the fine arts and the heritage, as it was up to then perceived by the traditional model of cultural policy:

“That in its widest sense, culture may now be said to be the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs” (The Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies, UNESCO, 1982 Cultures no 33 1983).

The notion that drew the most attention and carried the greatest weight was that of cultural identity coupled with intercultural relations. Cultural identity was unanimously recognised as a dynamic principle of originality, creativity and free expression. While recognizing cultural identity and individual capacity for self-expression as an inviolable principle, the conference endorsed the idea of giving every culture an overall sense of the universal. A community that is only looking inwards, focusing in its own authenticity risks to become stereotyped unless its cultural pluralism within and beyond its national or regional frontiers is constantly activated through effective interaction between different cultures. Although culture defines the personality of a community, it also determines its openness to others in a world where no culture can survive any longer in isolation, therefore identity and co-operation in the field of culture are not contradictory principles but complementary aspects of the same struggle (The Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies, UNESCO, 1983).

40 The conference’s agenda included the following issues: 1) the fundamental problem of culture in the contemporary world (cultural identity and intercultural relations, cultural dimension of development, culture and democracy, cultural rights, participation in cultural life and creativity); 2) cultural policies and cultural action (preservation and presentation of cultural heritage, stimulation of artistic and intellectual creativity, links between policies for culture, education, science and communication, cultural industries and cultural production, planning, administration and financing of cultural development; and 3) international cultural co-operation (Makagiansar, pg 16).
Cultural industries could easily become an instrument of cultural dependency and alienation, but they can also be important in the promotion of cultural self-determination. As we can see, the nation’s cultural self-determination constitutes the core of any argument. If we can sum up the main issues preoccupying UNESCO, reflecting thus the concern of its member-states, from the late sixties to the late eighties, we can see the passage from defining what cultural policy is, and whether nations need cultural policies, to a focus on what are the objectives and priorities and the role of the cultural industries. What links all these issues together is the main concern over the protection of national culture and cultural identity. This concern has not changed over the years; it has only evolved to a more complex one, as the issues surrounding it are increasing.

3.4 Cultural Trends in the 1990s

“A country’s culture is not static or changeless. On the contrary, it is in a constant state of flux, influencing and being influenced by other cultures, either through voluntary exchange and extenuation or through conflict, force and oppression. A country’s culture therefore reflects its history, mores, institutions and attitudes, its social movements, conflicts and struggles, and the configurations of political power, internally and in the world at large. At the same time it is dynamic and continually evolving” (Our creative diversity, Report of the World commission culture and development, UNESCO, 1996).

This description of national culture by UNESCO rearticulates the concept by keeping some of its old elements and incorporating new ones that reflect the global dynamics. As national cultures have been drawn into new global inter-connections, the profile of cultural policies has become more fluid and uncertain. These changes have opened a new face in cultural policies, which has forced UNESCO to reconsider cultural policies and the role of the state in cultural matters in an increasingly globalized world. The challenging issues of today are more pressing than ever as the language of culture is taken over by the international language of trade and commerce (i.e. are nationally produced films cultural or commercial products); multilateral institutions which have no cultural mandate are establishing policy frameworks that affect culture (i.e. WTO); and cultural policy thinking has little influence on public sphere issues that go beyond the traditional arts domain. Under these circumstances, UNESCO has felt that it is vital to make governments and policy makers to understand that cultural creativity and diversity are an immense asset in the livelihood of the modern nations whose morphology is changing fast.

It is not any more a question of whether governments should adopt cultural policies but how they should do so more effectively. New questions have come out indicating new needs. What can states do to help different cultural communities live together as one national community? Can national identity be defined so that all communities can identify with the country and its self-definition?

“The cultural domination of hegemony is often based on the exclusion of subordinate groups. The distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’ and the significance attached to such distinctions is socially determined and the distinctions are frequently drawn on pseudo-scientific lines so that one group can exercise power over another and justify to itself the exercise of that power. Distinctions based on ‘race’, ‘ethnicity’ or ‘nationality’ are artificial, without any basis in biological differences2 (our creative diversity, UNESCO, 1996).

The above questions and the rejection of race and ethnicity or nationality as factors defining the nation, shows that UNESCO is seeking to define a new civic culture that can accommodate
cultural diversity: “the most durable way of doing so is to create a sense of the nation as a civic community rooted in values shared by all components of the national society” (The power of Culture, Background document, UNESCO, 1997). In the background document prepared by UNESCO for its latest intergovernmental conference on Cultural Policies for Development, there is a very useful account of the new trends together with a number of recommendations, indications themselves of a changing world.

UNESCO has stressed the need to reassess the position of local and national cultures through Globalization and regional integration. Policy-makers need to understand better how the intellectual property industries are organized on a transnational basis, while traditional forms of cultural production continue to express national cultures and circulate within their country of origin. While in the cultural fields there has been an important shift towards international networking (i.e. co-productions), international cultural exchange is still considered an extension of foreign policy. Countries which have recognized the importance of creation, copyright and cultural industries and have given them the appropriate attention are in a better position, both economically and culturally, while nations which have neglected them are left with the choice of either being overtaken by foreign cultural products and contents - which includes heavy royalty payments and a sense of cultural identity under threat - or adopting a strict protectionist policy.

Cultural industries are once more linked to creativity and cultural diversity. Keeping under consideration that the creative autonomy of artists is still constrained by market forces, the policy challenge for governments is how to play a more proactive, yet less intrusive role in promoting creativity. Dissemination of artistic work is as important as creation and production. In the context of today's cultural industries, it is also important to take into account the processes of marketing, distribution and audience development.

Public service media continue to be in the UNESCO’s agenda. Media remain within the context of culture as they continue to reflect images of our acts and ourselves. As television is the primary vehicle for culture, cultural policies have to ensure that the media provide diversified programmes, which not only promote a shared national identity but also give a pluralistic expression to the variety of social, political and cultural values. As the identity crisis of public service broadcasting continues, the question is how we can reaffirm and reinforce its educational and cultural role. Suggestions indicate the need of the public service to adopt to the enormous changes in the sphere of communication by integrating certain cultural, political and ethical values and thus redefining itself as pluralistic, diversified, innovative and open to the new media.

The challenge of the new media technologies to cultural policies is the latest addition to the issues preoccupying UNESCO. The current trends of technological convergence, economic liberalization and international trade give public policy concerns in the cultural area very limited space. Discussions in forums such as the WTO, or NAFTA refer to these issues in purely commercial terms (i.e. GATT agreement and the problem over cultural products). Public policy is at a turning point, as national governments cannot tackle these questions alone. Cultural questions such as linguistic diversity, freedom of expression, the right to access and content and the fate of domestic cultural industries in the global economy cannot be solved by the dominant international electronic commerce approach. Policies on a national scale do not suffice, as agreement on an international level is required for such matters.

UNESCO reflects these concerns with the opening of a new debate on culture, trade and globalization as a response to the cultural exception argument led by France during the GATT
agreement. Following the recommendations of the intergovernmental conference on Cultural Policies in Stockholm in 1998, UNESCO brought together a group of experts to discuss the issue ‘Culture: A Form of Merchandise Like No Other? The main consensus of this meeting was that ‘culture was not only a matter for the economy or an economic concept’ (1999). It is interesting to see how the debate over culture has evolved. Earlier it was made an effort to recognize the economic aspects of cultural activity and now the effort is to keep certain cultural products outside the world trade agreements. On a concluding note of this section, we will quote Elie Cohen who was the author of one of the chapters of the UNESCO’s World Culture Report 2000:

“… accepting the preservation of the national institutions which endeavour to promote national works and agreeing that national firms which benefit from this specific status be protected accordingly”.

He also suggested accepting a body such as UNESCO to define what qualifies as cultural diversity deserving cultural exception; so as to avoid sole control by market forces. UNESCO has been a powerful ally for France. It has provided the forum within which France has taken all its preoccupations about national culture and identity. It has used UNESCO conferences to launch its attacks on the USA, as we will see in chapter 6.

Conclusions

In this chapter, we tried to bring together cultural policy and the media in an effort to show that they are very linked and that their function is mutually influential to each other. We followed the development of cultural policy over the last two decades and pointed out the problematic areas in relation to cultural industries. As Tony Bennett suggests (1998), the problem is conceptual and modern cultural policies need to redefine themselves in a broader way (a policy that is concerned with the conduct of those institutions and organizations, whether public or private, which are involved in the production and distribution of cultural goods and services and the management of cultural resources). Therefore, an expansive definition will bring together, under the same policy, areas of cultural activity which were not covered by previous definitional frameworks, encompassing both publicly-funded (i.e. public-service broadcasting) and private (i.e. the commercial media) cultural organizations as being equally important from a public policy point of view and as needing to be understood in the light of their interaction with one another. The role of the commercial sector (commercial broadcasting media, film etc) in organizing a realm in which publicly-shared meanings and values are produced and circulated is just very important because of their greater audience rich and influence. Cultural policies, therefore, have a crucial part in securing the development of democratic cultural rights, through their role in regulating the activities of the commercial cultural sector.

As the importance of forces external to the nation-state increases, the role of national forces/factors risk to lose their importance in the decision-making regarding national matters. It is within this context that French cultural policy has to operate. Moving from the transitory period of the 1980s to the de facto situation of the 1990s, the response of French cultural policy to internal and external pressures, forms the ideal case study, as it combines most of the issues discussed in the above two chapters. The following two chapters will introduce the French cultural and audiovisual policy, starting with the internal factors of influence. To understand the fears caused by external forces, like Americanization and globalization, we need first to recognize those factors that
act from within the nation-state. It is their influence that shapes the national terrain and their peculiarities that give the distinctive identity to French cultural policy.
Part Two:
Case Study/
Internal Factors
CHAPTER 3:
Modern French Cultural Policy:
Traditions and Innovations

“La politique culturelle est une invention française. Elle est le fruit d’une préoccupation constante des pouvoirs monarques ou républicains de s’accaparer, au nom d’une mystique nationale, la protection d’un patrimoine artistique et, par extension, d’encourager ce qui le deviendra” (Djian, 1996, p. 11).

“… the political boundary, this product of a legal act of delineation, produces cultural differences quite as much as it results from them” (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 66).

This chapter discusses the development of modern French cultural policy, the traditions that have shaped it and the major actors involved in it. In France, cultural policy came into its official status in 1959, when André Malraux became the first French minister in charge of cultural affairs. There is no need for the purpose of this research to give a complete historical profile of the French cultural policy practices, but in order to appreciate current and recent policy, it does help to understand what elements of cultural policy have remained constant over the years and what variations and changes have taken place.

This retrospective covers mainly the historical period of V\textsuperscript{th} republic with references to previous moments in the French history where we trace segments of cultural policy that might carry their influence over into the present. This will lead to the analysis of cultural policy implemented during and after the decade of 1980s. During this period, major political changes have left their mark on cultural policy. In May 1981, François Mitterrand became the President of the republic with a left-wing government, which remained in power until March 1986 and was re-elected again in 1988. In between these times a right-wing party returned to power with a liberal approach to cultural policy. Both approaches, the socialist and liberal, have left a strong impact in the way cultural policy is practised in France. This alternation of political power\textsuperscript{41} has made the examination of the specific subject more complex. However, this provides us with an excellent case study of cultural policy, highlighting the importance of the internal factors, i.e. the political traditions. The chapter, therefore, starts by outlining these traditions and the major actors in relation to French cultural policy (state, intellectuals, cultural universalism, mission civilisatrice).

Overall, this chapter functions as the background to the case study. It develops a methodological approach that helps us to evaluate the development of French cultural policy.

\textsuperscript{41} This shift from left to right is characterized at times form an excess of liberalism which in the name of freedom has allowed the interest of the market economy to draw the rules in cultural policy and at other times, by an excess in state intervention which in the name of justice has become a hindrance in the cultural initiatives of creators, animators and cultural organizations. The cultural industries will be heavily affected these changes as chapter 4 will show.
1. Traditions and Actors

“Il n’y a pratiquement pas de ministère qui ne soit concerné par la culture: pour le moins chaque ministère entretient ses monuments historiques… s’occupe de l’animation culturelle de son personnel… et subventionne d’innombrables associations aux activités plus ou moins culturelles ou socioculturelles” (Mesnard, 1990, p. 17).

“L’image de la France est indissociable de sa culture: les touristes étrangers le savent, qui se rendent en grand nombre au Louvre ou au Centre Georges-Pompidou… Cette effervescence artistique est parfois mise à l’actif d’une tradition française originale de politique culturelle, dans laquelle l’État interviennent de façon constante, ce qui soulève des polémiques de manière récurrente” (Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, 1996).

The State’s role in the cultural affairs of the country is complex, indicating a high level of involvement, which can be traced back to the XIV century, and the older traditions of royal and aristocratic patronage of the arts. This tradition was inherited by democratic governments as part of what is seen as a natural continuation of the State’s cultural obligations. The State’s central role in cultural policy has contributed to the shaping of this particular type of cultural policy.

1.1 The Etatiste Tradition

The political and administrative history of France is characterized by a highly centralized state which is involved in all parts of the French life, including its cultural activities, justified as Caron (1989) puts it: “par la pression d’exigences qui ne sont pas proprement culturelles, mais qui naissent du rôle général de l’État dans la France moderne”. The State is a dominant feature of the French political landscape.

It promotes itself as the guardian of the nation’s interests, which is projected to French citizens who are reminded constantly of the generous and rather paternalistic nature of their State. The sign, for instance, displayed prominently until recently outside the Louvre, is part of this self-image promotion: “Ici, l’État veille à la sauvegarde de votre patrimoine culturel” (Hazareesingh, 1994, p. 152).

The emergence of the modern French state is the result of a complex combination of different factors. To understand the particularities of the French nation-state we need to see how the French nationalist consciousness developed. The emergence of European nation-states was preceded by the development of nationalist consciousness during the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Germany, Poland, Greece and Italy, for instance, became nation-states after they had established their national identities. It is the case where the nation, or those parts of the population that consider themselves to be a nation, aspire to create its own state (Alter, 1985, p.14-15). In the French case, however, the state building preceded the nation building, which was the result of laborious social and political engineering, carried out by successive generations of French elites against the opposition of local social forces. The French nation - the political nation as Alter distinguishes here - was created, from above, following more or less the principle of cuius regio eius patria (ibid.). The result was that the French nation incorporated within its frontiers groups of

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42 Since the XVII century, the State assumed the role of the ‘protecteur des arts’, which meant financial and moral support to the artists and writers. The creation of the Comédie-Française (1680), the establishment of the Académie Française for the surveillance of French language and the building of big monuments were all manifestations of a State seen as a patron of the arts (Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, 1996).

43 In other countries, the state appears less dominant in the political discourse. In the States, for example, the term is used often but only as a way of designating a unit of sub-central government. In Britain, it is recognized only with reference to the ceremonial aspects of government, while in Germany, its use provokes painful historical associations (Hazareesingh, 1994, p. 151)
varying origins, cultures and languages. It was not until very late - by the middle of the twentieth century - that the creation of a unified linguistic community was attained through the intervention of the State which tried to eliminate ‘horizontal particularisms’ (i.e. regional dialects)\(^{44}\) and any other ‘alternative institutional focuses of identification’ (i.e. the Church). The universalization of the French language, through a central educational curriculum, did not only suppress the development of regional dialects but it also gradually alienated peripheral conceptions of culture from the mainstream.

The State’s power was also reinforced by the recurring experiences of war and conflict on French territory and the rivalry with Germany\(^ {45}\), which produced domestic tensions that often forced the French State to assert its position in the international arena, producing an aggressive foreign policy. The theme of nation has been central in French political thought and practice since the revolution. The king was replaced by the nation as the main source of political legitimacy. Since then, the concept of nation became a domestic political weapon; opponents were attacked as enemies by the nation. The revolutionary wars “… brought out xenophobic aspects, exalting the uniqueness of the French nation as the embodiment of progress and justifying its components as acts of liberation” (Tombo, 1991).

The circumstances in which the construction of the French nation took place created the supporting background for the ideologies of State domination, contributing thus to a further expansion of the administrative power in France (Hazareesingh, op.cit). The French State considers itself the natural protector of its own creation, the nation itself, charged with the responsibility to maintain ‘La pérennité de l’être collectif’ (Burdeau, 1970).

### 1.2 Culture and the State

The intervention of the state in the cultural affairs of the country dates back to the ancient régime. This monarchical centralization was continued by the Jacobin tradition, maintaining a hegemonic position in French intellectual approaches regarding the relationship between the State and civil society. Inheriting the étatiste tradition from the monarchs, the modern French State inherited as well a historical legacy, which it felt responsible for. A sense of history is considered as an essential element for the national unity, which the State claims to be its main purpose. And culture, part of the historical legacy of the nation, finds in the State its natural protector. How, then, can a State like the French whose identification to the nation is a vital element to its survival, ignore the unifying value of the country’s cultural life?

In the present time, however, the cultural functions of the French State are not only justified by the need to protect the ‘patrimoine national’ because of its unifying role but also by other reasons, economic and social. Culture is a significant sector of the French economy, providing creative

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\(^ {44}\) This linguistic policy continued well into the twentieth century, an example of which was the following sign in Brittany: "Défense de parler Breton et de cracher par terre " (Hazareesingh, p. 166). This is an indication of how sensitive still was the idea of a unified culturally nation.

\(^ {45}\) As nationalism started playing a significant role in the European state-system, borders became central in the battle over the national identity of groups. The absence, therefore, of secure border in the east of France maintained the issue of national identity at the centre of political debate and the problematic status of Alsace and Lorraine became consequently an issue of national identity and not just a dispute over a piece of territory.
activities and employment to a large number of people. The State has therefore one more reason to intervene in the name of employment, high standards of artistic creation, increase of exports (films, music, books) etc. The economic mission of the State goes hand in hand with its cultural mission. The social mission comes to add to them. The reduction of working hours has left the working population with more free time, which in its turn has increased the consumption of cultural/entertainment products and services. The State cannot disregard the fact that there is a big demand by the public for cultural products, especially audiovisual (Caron, 1989). Its role, therefore, is to satisfy the need of its citizens for a balanced social life by providing cultural activities, venues and products.

This last mission of the State, the socio-cultural one, has been expanded into a new conception of the role of the State which has evolved from its role as a patron of the arts and the protection of the national heritage to the promotion of the cultural equality of all its citizens - the right to have equal access to culture. It was the same philosophical and political movement which led the State, at the end of the nineteenth century, to assume the responsibility to provide free and obligatory education to all its citizens, that also led French governments to assume responsibility for equal access to the cultural life of the country, especially for those who were in a disadvantageous position because of geographical, social or educational reasons. Key notions in this mission have been the ‘action culturelle’ and ‘action socioculturelle’, both terms referring to activities and institutions which approach cultural practice not as an end in itself but as a way of socialising people, especially the young and culturally deprived. André Malraux’s cultural policy was inspired by this idea which, during his time in the Ministry, took the form of ‘démocratisation culturelle’, an expression of which was the ‘maisons de la culture’.

This concept of the ‘Etat-Providence’ has been very dominant in France, determining the relationship between the State and the public (Caron, 1989, p. 13). An example of this come form the 1946 Constitution which affirms this concept by declaring that “la Nation garantit l’égal accès de l’enfant et de l’adulte à la formation professionnelle et à la culture”.

1.3 Cultural Universalism

As we have seen from the above analysis, the State has a central position in the cultural life of France. There are, however, other elements in the cultural and political history of France that have contributed to the shaping of this particular case study - elements that are strongly linked with the State tradition. The French State assumed the role of the protector of the arts not only for the above-mentioned reasons of which ‘prestige nationale’ is a significant one, but also because it believed in the ‘valeurs humanistes’ of the French culture.

French cultural universalism - inherited from absolutism, the Enlightenment, Jacobinism and conservative republicanism - is a strong element in the French elite discourse about the nation. The belief in the inherent superiority of its cultural values has been an important element of French nationalism. This belief is best captured in France’s colonial policy. The French saw their colonies as an opportunity not only for material acquisitions but also as an excellent opportunity to expand and continue their culture. The universality of the French civilization was an important element in the Third Republic’s policy for colonial expansion. When the colonization period reached its end, France was faced with a crisis, as losing its colonies meant the weakening of its ‘mission civilisatrice’. The regression of the French language in the world encouraged the typically French

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46 In 1985, the number of jobs provided by the cultural sector (including radio and television) was estimated to more than half a million with 160 million francs earnings (Caron, 1989, p. 11).
obsession with material and intellectual decline. The future of the French nation is a recurring source of anxiety for both politicians and intellectuals whose fear of cultural decline has fuelled nationalist reactions (Hazareesingh, 1994). The result of this national obsession is the continuation of a strong foreign and national cultural policy. In fact, the French never stopped trying to restate the greatness of their national character.

The idea of an exclusive cultural identity of France, based on the cultural universalism and the civilizing mission, was cultivated by French governments, which promoted “the idea and practice of a True France as the only hope for national renewal” (Lebovics, 1992, p. xiii). This cultural imperative, the result mainly of conservative cultural thought, was cultivated and disseminated in both left and right political rhetoric - both claiming to be the sole representatives of the French heritage - in public monuments, in the Arts and at all levels of French education.

Culture and politics presupposed each other in a country where cultural activity was seen as an essential part in the reinforcing of the republican character of the state. Culture and education were considered indispensable for the continuation of the French civilization. The link, therefore, between cultural production and political identity had a symbolic value. The last actors and their traditional role in the cultural affairs of the country are the intellectuals whose presence in the French debates about culture is constant, as we will see in the following chapters.

1.4. The Intellectuals

In a political system where culture and education have been given such an important status, it is not surprising that the participation of intellectuals in public life has been so active. The State and the intellectuals have been interfering with each other's affairs for a long time. This closeness is found in the recruitment of political elites from the intellectual strata, the intervention of public authorities in the cultural endeavours of intellectual groups and the involvement of intellectuals in the public life by questioning and criticising political and social conditions.

The intellectual practice which dominated for a long period the political scene of modern France was based on a moralistic concern with universal values of truth, liberty and justice and a conception of the universality of reason which gave the right to anyone with a certain level of cultural authority to intervene in the political life of the country - in the form of manifestos, demonstrations and published articles (Gildea, 1997; Hazareesingh, 1994). This fluid conception of the socio-professional identity of the French intellectual, as Hazareesingh accurately describes, was an amalgam of the different roles he could perform at the same time: the role of thinker, producer of culture, bearer of a particular moral and philosophical outlook, adviser to the prince and political activist (p. 52, 53).

The intellectuals’ position on popular culture exercised a strong influence on the representation of national culture, which was essentially comprised by a notion of high culture. The media were the 'bête noire' for the intellectuals who opposed to the kind of culture they promoted. Alain Finkielkraut’s much discussed book, ‘la Défaite de la Pensée’ (1987), represents this hostile disposition towards mass culture, and a pessimistic assessment of the state of contemporary culture:

“La barbarie a donc fini par s’emparer de la culture. A l’ombre de ce grand mot, l’intolérance croît, en même temps que l’infantilisme. Quand ce n’est pas l’identité culturelle qui enferme l’individu dans son appartenance et qui, sous peine de haute trahison, lui
refuse l’accès au doute, à l’ironie, à la raison - à tout ce qui pourrait le détacher de la matrice collective, c’est l’industrie du loisir, cette création de l’âge technique qui réduit les oeuvres de l’esprit à l’état de pacotille (ou, comme on dit en Amérique, d’entertainment) " (Finkielkraut, 1987, p. 165).

The intellectuals however, had more reasons to be hostile to this new form of culture, as they felt displaced by the mass media. Intellectuals need for a public presupposed a certain control over the media of the time. Satre, for example, and his contemporaries had editorial control of their reviews, elaborated coherent schools of thought with the primary aim to influence the opinion of the few that mattered. In contrast, the new media content was controlled by the numbers of sales and ratings, not interested in schools of thought but in celebrities (Gildea, 1996). The philosopher Gilles Delouze wrote an article expressing this bitterness of the French intellectuals for their rejection by the media:

“Journalism, by means of radio and the TV, has become more and more conscious of its power to create events ... Journalism discovers within itself autonomous and self-sufficient thought... Intellectuals and writers, even artists, are thus required to become journalists if they wish to fit in. It is a new type of thought, the interview-thought, the chat-thought, and the thought – in - a-minute... Everything begins with the TV and the dressage performance to which the interviewers make consenting intellectuals submit” (Deleuze, cited in Beaud & Panese, 1995, p. 391).

The mass media became intellectual producers in their own right, creating and promoting a type of popular culture, which was threatening to traditional high culture of the classical republican period. The decreasing importance of the intellectual’s role in French society did have an impact and led many to believe that the era of the French intellectuals was over. A marking event was the silence of the intellectuals at the beginning of the 1980s when the Socialist Party came to power. However, their influence on certain issues continues. The Socialists and their cultural policy carried traces of this negative position towards the mass media, a fact that was seen in their inability to assess properly their importance, as we shall see in chapter 4. Interestingly though, when the debate on culture became international with the cultural exemption of audiovisual products, many intellectuals and leading academics rushed to take the side of the nation-state in defence of national culture, as we will see in detail in chapter 6.

All the above traditions of étatism, cultural interventionism, mission to civilize and the intellectual’s political and moral obligations, have contributed to the creation and development of modern French cultural policy. Carrying these influences in mind, we can now proceed in discussing how modern cultural policy has developed. To start with, we will need a methodology that will facilitate the evaluation of the policy.

2. Modern French Cultural Policy: the Old and the New

There are different ways of approaching the development of French cultural policy which can be approached not only chronologically but also in terms of the priorities each official authority set for its cultural policy. According to this approach there are three main lines: the ‘ligne monarchique: mécénale, volontiers centralisée et patrimoniale’, which puts first the ‘Pouvoirs publics’; the ‘ligne libérale:

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47 Here we will focus mainly on French approaches as they were considered them more appropriate for this study.
individualiste et romantique, soucie d'abord de liberté d'expression’ which puts first the creator, and the ‘ligne démocratique: préoccupée de réduire le fossé entre le vaste peuple et la grande culture’: interested in the public, the consumers of culture and its accessibility (Ory, 1994, p. 848). Pascal Ory (ibid; 1994) argues that there is in fact a continuation between these three lines, each incorporating elements of the others. Rioux also supports Ory’s argument about continuation by stating that there has been a relatively harmonic coexistence of the old and the new policies on culture (Rioux, 1993). The triptych of ‘protection, creation, diffusion’ forms the rather elastic definition of what is called French national cultural policy.

The study of French cultural policy can be approached not only from the angle of continuity as Ory and Rioux do. Donnat (1988) in his effort to create a ‘généalogie de champs culturel’, identifies the lines of transformation which contributed, since the 1950s, to the shaping of the cultural sector and consequently, of modern French cultural policy. If there is continuity in the way cultural affairs are dealt with in France, there is also a discontinuity in the sense of changes that have transformed the cultural sector and forced the authorities to readopt their policies, based on traditional principles and ideas, in order to respond to the new socio-economic realities.

Donnat starts with the explosion of the concept of culture, indication of a process of expansion and increased complexity of the French cultural sector whose spectacular effects started to become more evident in the 1980s. This explosion of the notion of culture took place in three different areas: leisure, economy and communication. The increase of free time and of leisure activities with a vague cultural character have created a new concept of the ‘loisirs culturels’. The expansion and diversification of leisure activities and products in separate up to recently areas of commerce, tourism, sports and culture, contributed to the restriction of the autonomy of culture. In addition, the progressive integration of cultural industries in the cultural domain and the recognition of the cultural dimension of the production and promotion of goods that were not considered as cultural before - like fashions and design - contributed to the importance of the economy of culture.

Culture and economy appeared to get closer, as creativity and creation got fused together, an example of which was the famous ‘économie et culture, le même combat’ of Jack Lang in the 1980s. And last but not least, the development of the sector of communication, annexed in the ministry of culture, contributed further to the expansion and confusion in the cultural field. The lack of a clear distinction between their roles has caused the beginning of debates on the cultural functions of communication, particularly in relation to the audiovisual sector. The interference of these three sectors in the cultural domain led to the saturation of the concept of culture, making thus more difficult its examination.

Donnat proposes a way to examine French cultural policy based on a model (scheme 1) that shows the new dynamics in the sector. He sees the cultural field as a space organized around the four following poles: “esthetique - la culture comme fin; marchand - la culture comme moyen, informativo-éducatif - la culture comme message, and ludique - la culture comme prétexte (leisure)” (p. 93).
This model as shown in the above scheme indicates clearly the loss of the homogeneity and autonomy of the cultural domain which is now organised around a double opposition between the ‘esthetique’ and economy and between the educational and leisure. It also functions under the opposition between the sector dominated by the aesthetic/educational principles - subsidized areas - and the sector dominated by the economic/leisure principles - cultural industries and communication.

This scheme helps us to follow the main changes in the cultural sector and the evolution of the different phases of modern cultural policy. There are three successive phases, starting from the Malraux period (1959 - 1969), leading into the transitory period of the 1970s and followed by the Socialists period. The analysis of these different periods will be pointing at both continuities and discontinuities of the traditions and expansions of the sector. In that sense, both Ory and Donnat’s approaches will be very useful tools.

2.1 The Predecessors

2.1.1 Front Populaire

Perhaps the starting point of modern French cultural policy could be traced before the Second World War, at the time of the Front Populaire, whose cultural policy was the practical synthesis
from which sprang all the theoretical formations of post-war cultural policies (Ory, 1994). The *Front Populaire* followed the third line discussed above, the popularization of culture, effectively the same as the later ‘*démocratization culturelle*’, which laid the theoretical basis for the later network of ‘*maisons de la culture*’. Its main ambition was to take high culture to the people: there was but one culture of which all had the right of equal access, working class and intellectuals. It, however, recognised the importance of recreation time, which involved activities other than those related to high culture, for example sports. The *Front Populaire* had a lot of innovative ideas regarding cultural policy, such as decentralization, provincial arts festivals, *Maisons de la Culture*, reform of national theatres etc., but it did not have the opportunity to apply all of them as its time in power lasted only two years. However, the legacy they left behind was to be continued by Malraux, the first French minister of culture and especially also by Mitterrand’s Socialists who considered themselves to be the spiritual heirs to the *Front Populaire* (Watchtel, 1987, p. 13).

### 2.1.2 Malraux and his ‘Affaires Culturelles’

It was rather ironic that it was not a left-wing government but a Gaullist one that put into practice the *Front Populaire*’s plans for democratization. The first Ministry of Culture was created in 1959 and André Malraux, a humanist intellectual and old revolutionary, was appointed Minister of State and put in charge of cultural affairs.

Malraux shared a lot of ideas on culture with the Popular Front and earlier socialists. His *maisons de la culture*, part of the democratizing process, were designed to bring high culture to all levels of population, throughout the country. However, his admiration for De Gaulle led him “to develop the Front’s cultural humanism into a nationalist mystique in which democratization became a means of achieving national consensus” (Loosely in Raymond, 1994, p. 119).

De Gaulle’s priority after the war was national reconstruction. This included a cultural reconstruction as well, as culture was considered to play an important role in the economic and political revitalization of the country. De Gaulle also wanted to restore the country’s international prestige and he saw in culture an ally. As culture has always been a very important element of French national identity, it was “reconstructed as a national institution and as a vibrant profusion of ideas, images and narratives” (Forbes & Kelly, 1996, p. 100). Cultural policy offered ideological support for the regime and served as a repository of moral values. Malraux had a symbolic role to play along with his role as a minister. His past associations with the left and his present alliance with the Gaullists made him a sort of a bridge among the different political and intellectual groups. He had the ability to convince both conservatives and the Centre of the Leftist ‘myth’ of state patronage, by combining the Jacobin tradition of the Left with the Right’s traditional notions of nationalism (Fumaroli in Watchtel, 1987, p. 13).

His ministry objectives set out by the *décret du 24 juillet 1959* 48, were the following:

> “Le ministère chargé des affaires culturelles a pour mission de rendre accessibles les œuvres capitales de l’humanité, et d’abord la France, au plus grand nombre possible de

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48 The ministry did not include the Radio-television which Malraux was keen to have or *Relations culturelles extérieures*, both vital sectors that if they were included in the new ministry, they would have been great assets for a more progressive cultural policy. Radio-television was a sector too close to the government, serving political expediencies, therefore they were not so keen to let it be under the control of a minister whose plans for democratization were not letting much space for political manipulation of the media.
Français; d’assurer la plus vaste audience à notre patrimoine culturel, et de favoriser la création des œuvres de l’art et de l’esprit qui l’enrichissent”.

This text indicates the links between the elements of continuity and change in the cultural policy at the time: humanist universalism goes along with the protection and advancing of national heritage at home and abroad and support for creation, while increased access to culture comes to embraces them all. The heritage mission was a continuation of a long tradition. The new was in the idea for democratization and support for the creation policies, which proved to be the most controversial at the end.

Malraux initiated an ambitious programme of architectural restoration, the listing of sites and monuments, the stimulation of the theatre in the province, the _avance sur recettes_49 (subsidies for the cinema), and large art exhibitions. But his time in the ministry was mostly marked by the creation of the _Maisons de la Culture_, called by Malraux himself the ‘cathedrals of modern times’. His goal was to place one cultural centre in each department of France, equally funded by the state and the local authorities, with a third source of income coming from the box-office receipts. They were intended to contribute to a social transformation by applying the lessons from the Front's theatrical decentralization to high culture, and becoming multidisciplinary arts centres offering space for theatre, music, cinema and television, science, exhibitions and lectures. He told the National Assembly in 1966: “We must, in any way, be sure that each child in France can have the right to paintings, to theatre, to cinema, just the same as a the child's right to the alphabet” (Cabanne, 1981, p. 142).

The democratization, however, was a few steps short, the involvement of the local people was not meant to be in the socio-cultural sense. Malraux saw the MC more as centers of professional excellence and advanced creative research located in the different regions of France, aiming also at decentralizing the arts.

Behind Malraux’s ideas of decentralization and democratization was his own conception of the metaphysical and civic purposes of art in the modern world. The highest forms of culture were for Malraux ‘un supplément d’âme’, against all the barbarity of modern life and mass culture. He was particularly polemical against the mass media, which he called ‘dream factories’. His speeches became a vehicle for his ideas and ideals, an example of which is the speech he gave for the inauguration of the _Maison de la Culture_ in Amiens, 19 March 1966, where he expressed his criticism for the media:

“... jamais le monde n’a connu des usines de rêve comme les nôtres, jamais le monde n’a connu une pareille puissance d’imaginaire, jamais le monde n’a vu ce déluge d’imbécilité... La puissance de rêve de notre civilisation est absolument sans précédent et voici où se pose le problème que j’ai posé tout à l’heure... Ces usines si puissantes apportent les moyens du rêve les pires qui existent, parce que les usines de rêve ne sont pas là pour grandir les hommes, elles sont là très simplement pour gagner de l’argent... ” (Malraux, 1996, p. 323).

49 The _avances sur recettes_ mechanism was part of Malraux’s cultural policy aim for helping creation. A system of selective aid to new films was to complement the automatic aid initiated during the Fourth Republic and modified by Malraux. It was certainly a step forward in helping the cinematographic creation, however, incomplete, as other necessary measures were not materialized, such as better relations with television, modernization of cinemas and reform of taxation (Lacouture quoted in Loosely, 1995, p. 39).
The *Maisons de la Culture* were a response to the barbarity of the media world, an indispensable tool of defence against these *puissances de rêve* which cynically exploit the most primitive forces within human beings: ‘le sexe, le sang et le mort’ (ibid, p. 324). Cultural policy's role, therefore, was to take the highest forms of human achievement to the masses, in order to help them resist this overflow of mass culture and also allow France once more to be true to its unique past. This idea and practice of a True France as the only hope for national renewal has been recurrent all through the modern French cultural policies.

Despite the innovative ideas and enthusiastic plans, Malraux’s cultural policy met with criticisms. Jacques Rigaud\(^{50}\) gives an insight into Malraux’s period in the Ministry, highlighting some of the mistakes that took place on the administrative and policy level:

“A head of State like General de Gaulle and a man of Malraux’s calibre could, if they had really wanted to make culture a national priority, have added to these services of Arts and Letters other areas like Radio and Television, the Cultural Relations Department of the Quai d’Orsay [Ministry of Foreign Affairs], the socio-educational sector, responsibility for the Institut de France...” (Rigaud quoted in Poujol, 1991, p. 259).

Malraux’s vision for the democratization and decentralisation of culture was never fully implemented and the MC never fulfilled their fundamental role in the French society (only fourteen were built)\(^{51}\). In fact, Malraux had no real strategy for the democratization of culture. His actions were based on the belief that “to convert the ignorant and bring them to recognize the value of works of art it was sufficient to give them a chance to see them …; those who for geographical or social reasons had no contact with it could not fail to be illuminated by the unmistakable beauty of it as soon as they were confronted with it” (Council of Europe, 1991, p. 28). At the end, the MC failed to attract the lower classes to high cultural events, as it was proved that eliminating the material barriers to culture, for example ticket prices, while ignoring the symbolic barriers referred to by Bourdieu, was not enough to make high culture popular.

The first ten years of the ministry of *Affaires Culturelles* (1959-1969) were evidently dominated by Malraux and his conception of art and high culture. At his point, it will be useful to use Donnat’s (1988) approach, as it gives us on overall account of the Malraux years and the changes that took place in the cultural field during this period. If we follow scheme 1, we can see that cultural policy in those years was structured around the aesthetic pole. Culture was considered to be something serious, elevating, far from any light entertainment, which was marginalized in this scheme. This focusing on the aesthetic pole of the cultural domain was accompanied by a constant anxiety to keep a distance from the economic pole, in this case referring mainly to the cultural industries, which were kept in the margins. Only the ‘septième art’ - cinema - was accepted, while Radio-television was ignored for a long time before it was given a place in the democratization of culture, seen, though, only as a facilitator of transmission, with no cultural merit of their own. Another main characteristic was the effort to connect the aesthetic pole with the educational pole. The primary function of the Ministry was its capacity to protect and promote the national heritage, make culture a factor in the personal development, socialization and education of its citizens. The State in this case was responsible for the development of national identity and democracy.

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\(^{50}\) Director of the ministerial cabinet of one of Malraux’s successors, Jacques Duhamel.

\(^{51}\) The reasons were many: funding (the overall budget of the ministry was very poor, 0.5 % of the state spending) - their running cost was unexpectedly high -, artistic policy - dominated mainly by theatre -, cultural policy - focused too much on high culture, not allowing space for popular entertainment and amateur productions - and finally politics (disputes between local authorities and central control from Paris) (Forbes & Kelly eds, 1996, p. 152).
This model of cultural policy dominated the 1960s, but it progressively started losing its coherence, as the big project of democratization was abandoned. It was not replaced by any new project in the 1970s, which were characterized by the lack of an ambitious cultural policy.

The State’s cultural policy in the 1960s did succeed to give cultural matters the importance they deserved but it also failed in many ways. It was prescriptive and sought to impose a single, normative model of culture from top down. The events of May ’68 demonstrated the failure of the Malraux’s democratization policies and the resulting need for a new cultural democracy, which would recognize the plurality of cultural practices in different communities or groups. The socialist critique of Malraux fuelled the intellectual demands of May 68’s ‘cultural revolution’ for a more active, provocative culture. Those events gave the opportunity to the Socialist Party to revise its own cultural doctrine during the 1970s.

2.1.3 The Transition of the 1970s

Nevertheless, Malraux’s legacy continued long after his departure from the ministry in 1969. From this date to 1981, a succession of Ministers or Secretaries of State (eight in total) occupied the ministry, before the long reign of Jack Lang started, lasting ten years like Malraux (Rigaud, 1995). This, undoubtedly, had an effect on the policy level, as new projects had never enough time for a proper implementation and appraisal of their results. We cannot name all the projects they adopted here, but we can highlight the main trends in the 1970s and analyse those factors that changed the cultural field during this period.

Regarding continuities, most of the lines of action that came from Malraux were respected and continued - the projects and institutions he initiated and established were kept and carried on. However, certain points of his policy were reviewed or deviated from. First of all, the Maisons de la culture building programme was abandoned and there were many reasons for this, apart from the obvious economic ones - the successors of Malraux preferred to replace the MC by smaller and less costly centres d’action culturelle (Council of Europe, 1991). Duhamel criticised Malraux’s ‘cultural action’ as a simple distribution or diffusion of a ‘culture de consommation arrosée d’en haut’ and proposed instead a policy, which would facilitate individual creativity and endorse diversity (Loosely, 1995, p. 51). From the late sixties to the late seventies, Classicism and the role of art were questioned and the opposition between ‘democratization of culture’ and ‘cultural democracy’ became a familiar theme of cultural policy debate. After the crisis of May 1968, cultural policy “could no longer rely on the self-evidence on which it had previously been based and there were successive attempts to find it a raison d’être” (Forbes in Mazey & Newman, 1987, p. 134).

52 During the transitory years of the 1970s, two Ministers were distinguished for their work: Jacques Duhamel (1971-1973) and Michel Guy (1974-1976). According to Rigaud, André Malraux gave cultural policy its prestige, Jacques Duhamel its credibility, Michel Guy its modernity and Jack Lang ”son assise dans l’opinion et même sa popularité” (Rigaud, 1995, p. 69). Duhamel, in fact, succeeded where Malraux had failed, to increase the budget of the ministry, which reached 0,55 % in 1973 (Djian, 1996). He introduced a system of cultural contracts, developed in participation with local councils, and a Fonds d'Intervention Culturelle (FIC) was created to provide assistance on one-off basis.
As democratization was implicitly questioned and decentralisation was considered "dépassée", the market forces appeared to play an increasingly important role in the cultural sector. Girard even suggested in 1978 that the emerging cultural industries could in fact assist democratization:

“Le progrès de la démocratization et de la décentralisation est en train de se réaliser avec beaucoup plus d’ampleur par les produits industriels accessibles sur le marché qu’avec les ‘produits’ subventionnés par la puissance publique” (Girard, 1978).

Factors linked to changes in economy, technology and society, contributed to the creation of mass culture. The increase of cultural production because of the technological advances in reproduction, the success of artistic forms considered up to then marginal in their field (e.g. rock music), and above all the appearance of new aesthetic values introduced by the audiovisual creation reduced the gap between the "culture cultivée" and the "culture de masse" (Donnat, 1988, p. 97). It became increasingly more and more difficult to maintain the line between the cultural sphere and this of entertainment (cultural industries).

The cultural industries and the media were not, however, fully trusted and this can be seen in a number of reports like in the 6th Plan which, although, it acknowledged the fact that cultural development requires the skilful use of television and the products of the cultural industries, yet expressed a hesitation:

“Whatever the quality of their products at present in the way they represent the world, television and cultural industries forge the mentalities that make the civilization of tomorrow. It is unthinkable to leave this power in the hands of public or private firms without the people, through those politically responsible for the nation’s cultural development, having any real choice in the matter” (European Commission, 1991, p. 33).

This mistrust of the impact of the media on cultural life, expressed even more explicitly in the 7th Plan, remained as a permanent feature in various official reports, and since television was a public service at the time in France, the intervention of the State was acceptable. However, the cultural industries in the private sector were not affected by the measures taken by the authorities at the time. Communication, until then part of the Ministry of information, became at last part of the Ministry of Culture in 1978. It was the first time, following Rigaud’s (1995) words that “ce terme ambigu de communication entra dans la terminologie gouvernementale, avec une acception nouvelle, empruntée aux Anglo-Saxons” (p. 93). The idea that a government must have an official policy regarding audiovisual communication, which could be under the Ministry of culture, was a novelty, much needed. In fact, it marked a positive evolution of the political world of the country, used until then to consider radio-television as part of the government’s propaganda. Communication was to be separated again from the ministry of culture when the Socialists came to power and joined back in 1988. This is one more indication of the lack of persistence in cultural and communication policy in France.

After Pompidou’s death, the Gaullist regime reached its end with the election of Giscard d’Estaing in 1974, which opened the way to a more liberal policy. Although the développement culturel was not drawing its inspiration any more from Malraux’s democratization, it was still based on the dominant dogma of State intervention in securing cultural equalities. The liberalism Giscard d’Estaing introduced had no place for such beliefs. Where culture was concerned, liberalism meant a dependence on market forces rather state intervention. The Ministry was degraded to a Secrétariat

53 In his book ‘La Démocratie française’, Giscard hardly devoted a few lines on culture, which according to his political thinking was not a priority (Rigaud, 1995, p. 85).
and alternatives were sought to direct state subsidy - corporate sponsorship was introduced bringing fears for a further commercialization of culture (Loosely, 1995).

Summing up, the changes that took place during the 1970s in the cultural domain were characterized by a process of expansion - diversification of the cultural field and the lack of activity on the policy level which can be better understood, according to Donnat (1988), in conjunction with the following multiple phenomenon:

“L’éclatement du pôle esthétique sous l’effet de pressions internes (les avant-gardes) et externes (nouvelles expressions liées notamment à l’importance croissante de de l’audiovisuel: la connection ‘spontanée’, c’est-à-dire en marge de la politique culturelle et en partie en réaction contre elle, entre les pôles économique et ludique (développement des industries culturelles); l’échec de la tentative de connexion entre les pôles esthétique et éducatif (la démocratization)”(p. 98).

The 1970s was the decade in which the old cultural and ideological beliefs were put in question and France started coming to terms with modernization - and accepting its manifestations, like mass entertainment. Since 1968, France has felt an increased cultural uncertainty. Concerns about cultural specificity and cultural integrity have become very pressing over the years, dominating both intellectual and policy debates especially since the 1980s and during the 1990s (Forbes & Kelly, 1996).

The following section will discuss in detail the socialist cultural policy and how the cultural debate was affected by the socialist ideology and the Socialist Party’s rhetoric. The shift in power in 1986 is used to show how ideological oppositions can affect cultural policy.

2.2 The Socialists and their ‘Combat Culturelle’

Cultural policy reached its apogée with the coming of the Socialists to power in May 1981. Their election marked a new stage in the evolution of national cultural policy and this for three reasons, according to Djian (1996): ideological, political and cultural in the sense of a renewal in everything cultural. Since the Front Populaire, the artists and intellectuals have been sympathetic to the ideas of the different socialist movements in which they saw a natural ally. It was expected, thus, that the coming of a socialist government would mobilize these people in the design and implementation of cultural policy. In addition, the radical change of the new political power in seeing culture - culture pour tous et par tout - had a significant impact on the policy level. Finally, the increased importance of culture was reinforced by the charismatic personality of the minister of culture, Jack Lang and the increased demand for cultural products, which eventually expanded the notion of culture.

Culture has always had a special place in the ideology of the French left, as Lang said in an interview in which he argued that:

54 The role of local authorities as founders of the arts was reappraised. Guy, the minister of culture under Giscard, introduced the chartes culturelles. Contracts between the state and the local authorities, involving one-off initiatives proposed by the local agency. This new policy changed the Gaullist view of the state’s role in decentralization and gave local authorities the opportunity to be actively involved and not just following centrally made policies (Loosely, 1995).
“The left is built on the idea that the individual is our most important resource (les premier de patrimones). Consequently, the left has always wanted to break with traditional power hierarchies and place respect for the individual and not just the profit of the privileged few on centre stage. Socialism means the same thing - giving a voice to those without one.... Culture takes everything into account from the rights of man to economic realities” (Lang interviewed by Hauss, 1985, p. 214).

The preoccupation of the French socialist party with culture was not something new. Socialists in Europe have a long tradition in seeking the support of the intellectuals and cultural institutions - a source not only of support but legitimacy as well:

“Historically, intellectuals have been attracted to parties of the Left, and many have played active political roles. More recently, as socialists in southern Europe - Spain and Greece as well as France - spent many years out of power, wedged between Rightist majorities on one side and communist parties on the other, they came to see cultural affairs as a medium for quietly promoting new ideas and social change, a stepping-stone to eventual success in the political arena” (Watchtel, 1987, p. 3).

The Socialists developed highly ideological policies on national and international levels, with a strong cultural agenda during the opposition years. Consequently, when they found themselves in power they had to keep up with their promises and also face new issues, coming mainly from external to the nation sources - the spread of American popular culture in Europe, for example, that became a source for an extreme sometimes nationalism often expressed in the new socialist cultural policies. Anti-Americanism with all its associated meanings was a common element in most socialist parties in the 1970s and early 1980s55. Mass culture became the anathema to those idéologues that saw capitalism asphyxiating active cultures. As capitalism depends on mass consumption to maximize profit, it does not allow much space for individual expressions of culture. The increased globalization of capitalist economy has caused fears for an eventual suppression of national cultures. This became a sensitive spot of French Socialists who believed that French culture:

“s’efface elle-même progressivement devant le cosmopolitisme à l’américaine. La pop-music, le western, le feuilleton télévisé, la bande dessinée nous permettent d’imaginer ce que pourrait être demain une culture de masse à l’échelle planétaire“ (from L’action culturelle dans le combat politique, quoted by Loosely, 1995, p. 57).

In the same spirit, Mitterrand wrote in 1974: “It is worthless to expect a cultural development from a society dominated by the search for maximum profit” (quoted in Watchtel, 1987, p. 16).

Gramsci’s ideas were very influential in the thinking of the French Socialist Party. They both shared a deep distrust of large-scale capitalism and its negative effects on cultural autonomy. His writings on creating social change attracted a lot of attention because they introduced concepts of institutional structure, ideology, education and culture, issues long supported by the French Left

55 “Que salgan, que salgan, que salgan / Que salgan los Yankies de aquí / No queremos beber Coca-Cola / Cruzcampo queremos beber” (let the Yankies go from here, we don't want to drink Coca-Cola, we want to drink Cruzcampo - a local Sevilla beer) (quoted in Tomlinson, 1991, p. 78). This slogan, sung in a anti-NATO demonstration in Spain in 1985, shows not only the very strong anti-American feelings that were at the time in southern Europe but also the cultural level of American imperialism. The Spanish leader of the Socialist Party, Felipe Gonzalez had mixed his anti-NATO campaign with anti-American political and cultural sentiments. Similar slogans were sung in Greece in demonstrations organized by the Socialist Party (PASOK), all of them indications of a new national cultural awareness.
itself. Gramsci redefined not only a new theory of socialist revolution but also the nature of the political power in the West by putting emphasis on the strength of civil society over government authority (Watchtel, 1987). His philosophy was better expressed in the politics of ‘cultural action’ that was developed in the Socialist municipalities in the 1970s. In order to fight bourgeois hegemony, cultural creativity should be spread to all levels of the society, especially the working class (Loosely, 1995, p. 57). This meant culture not only for everybody but also by everybody.

2.2.1 The Socialist Cultural Debate

The cultural debate in France evolved at different stages and the Socialists seemed to follow by developing accordingly their cultural agenda. Starting from the firsts years of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs where there was hardly any national debate on cultural policy, it moved to the next stage when the newly founded political group, the Fédération démocrate et socialiste, under François Mitterrand, initiated a cultural programme that was to be defined in a more detailed way in the 1970s. In fact, it was the crisis of May 1968 that forced the socialists to adopt a more radical position regarding the changes they wanted to bring in the state’s cultural policy. The new programme (Changer la vie: programme de gouvernement du parti socialiste) of the Socialist Party was published in 1972 and it contained a detailed section on cultural policy (Une politique socialiste de la culture). In the following years the Socialist Party developed further its policy on culture. Just before the elections of 1981, the PS published its 110-point programme (for some of these points see annex for chapter 3, Table 1).

The cultural debate reached its height just before the elections of 1981. Suddenly, culture came to the centre of politics and acquired a new dimension. Most documents, prepared by the Socialist Party, started with criticising the state of culture and the arts in France and trying to define what caused it. According to this, culture was in crisis as national creativity was stagnant and Paris continued attracting the main cultural activities which, elitist in nature, satisfied the privileged few, leaving the rest of the French people with the less challenging productions put out by the cultural industries (Council of Europe, 1991, p. 246).

Trying to identify what had caused this despairing situation, the Socialist Party, naturally, pointed the finger at the capitalist system and the multinationals that dominated France. It was a direct accusation to the previous governments, which by not giving sufficient funds permitted capitalism to dominate the cultural domain. The proposed solution was a cultural policy that would aim at “breaking the hold of high finance over cultural activities at large: films, the theatre, books, records, television, videotapes etc.” Nationalization of the firms in the artistic and cultural sector, creation of public or co-operative organizations in the cultural industries sector and more corrective or compensatory interventions by the state, those were some of the several proposed remedies. In addition, there were some new aims that were giving priority to creation, equal distribution of cultural activities all over the country and support to minority cultures. And because all these proposals would not be attainable without the appropriate financial backing, an increase of the ministry’s budget was promised (the famous 1% of the state budget) (Council of Europe, 1991).

56 Bourgeois hegemony, according to Gramsci, is a condition of ideological, cultural and political dominance that is separate from the actual political power, which he sees as a by-product (Watchtel, 1987, p. 15).

57 In 1972 the Communist and Socialist Parties signed a ‘Programme commun de gouvernement du parti communiste français et du parti socialiste’ (27 juin 1972) which contained a section on culture, ‘La vie culturelle’. Later on, in 1980, the Socialist Party came up with a more detailed programme: ‘Projet socialist pour la France des années 80’ which also included a section on cultural policy, ‘La culture, moyen de la responsabilité’.

Although, the proposals tackled sensitive issues and tried to approach cultural policy as a whole by linking culture with economic and social structures, they left out important areas and that refers to the cultural industries in particular. There is no mention of how culture relates to the cultural industries (apart from the promised fixed book price) and no elaboration on the cultural impact of mass communication. The media on the other hand were treated separately and only in relation to freedom of expression\(^59\).

Forbes (1987) explains the limited nature of the proposals by identifying three contradictory strands of thought in the socialists’ approach to cultural policy. One has to do with Mitterrand’s own personal cultural preferences, which tended to be closer to traditional conceptions of culture. He could not accept that art should be mobilized in the service of a political cause. Another strand of thinking is the post-1968 utopianism of which certain interests and commitments survived: inclination towards new forms and styles; commitment to internationalism rather than nationalism; and the belief in the relative autonomy of the cultural sphere. The last strand of thinking was a belief developed by municipal socialism that cultural policy was a means by which individuals might take control of their own lives - a step towards autogestion or self-managed socialism (Hauss, 1985). The practices of everyday life and the individual or collective choices made in it were put at the centre of attention. In fact, as it was argued in the RENCONTRES INTERNATIONALES DE LA CULTURE in 1975, it “would be pointless to distinguish a specific cultural sector”. Culture was defined as the “totality of collective representations made explicit by knowledge, justified and shaped by ideology and experienced through daily practices (quoted by Forbes, 1987, p. 137). The responsibility, thus, of a socialist government was to support not only artistic production but also the cultural practices of each one of its citizens. By rejecting the concept of culture that restricts its usage to literary, intellectual or artistic activities as elitist, the Socialists adopted a larger, anthropological concept of culture – incorporating the value systems, social rituals and general ways of life constructed by a group of people. Culture, thus, as it was stated in the PROJET SOCIALIST POUR LA FRANCE DES ANNÉES 80:

“is not limited to a market for privileged customers. For Socialists, all that concerns the human being is cultural, and from this point of view the entire Socialist plan is fundamentally a cultural project” (1980, p. 280).

The Socialists aspired to redefine the cultural domain by including in it activities familiar to and practised by the majority of French people, “révélatrices de l’existence d’un patrimoine et d’une spécificité française (idée de culture au quotidien)” (Ronflé-Nadaud, 1993, p. 45). It was within this spirit that the cuisine and couture française were elevated into an art form, not to mention graffiti and band dessinée. By bringing culture into the work place (art exhibitions in factories) and making it a form of cultural tourism - ideas initially developed by the Front Populaire - French people were invited to rediscover the richness of French culture (ibid). Jacques Attali, adviser of Mitterrand at the time, had said that “l’enjeu de la société n’est pas un enjeu économique ni même politique, mais fondamentalement culturel” (quoted in Ory, 1984, p. 78). This statement shows just how important culture was in the socialist rhetoric.

The cultural debate did not end with the elections. The Socialist government’s cultural policy attracted a lot of comments and at times fierce criticism that kept the debate on culture alive. Part

\(^59\) There was going to be a big shift in the attitude towards the cultural industries just a few years later. The socialist government could not ignore their increasing importance and they took a number of measures towards this direction.
of the problem was that the Socialist Party carried with it, when it came to power, a very heavy ideological luggage, not to forget the continuities and inheritances from its predecessors like the Front Populaire and Malraux. "Le socialisme est d'abord un projet culturel" according to Mitterrand (op.cit). Starting up with such a high profile, it made it more difficult for the new government to keep up with all their promises and ideological commitments.

* * *

Having analysed the pre-election's cultural agenda of the socialists, we can now examine how the cultural debate evolved during the 1980s and the first half of 1990s - the new priorities and trends caused by political and economic changes. Thus, in the last part of this chapter we will follow the development of cultural policy through the progress in the cultural debate.

Unquestionably, there were just two men that had the strongest impact in the shaping of French cultural policy during the 1980s: Mitterrand and Lang⁶⁰. Both men had strong positions over cultural matters, although it was Lang's name that became synonymous with cultural policy, both at national and international level. They, both, gave culture a place that it had never enjoyed before in French politics.

2.2.2 Jack Lang: the ‘Animateur d’Etat’

The Left came to power determined to impose its own cultural and intellectual symbols as a way of asserting its identity and mission for national cultural renewal. In reality, continuities and changes went hand in hand. As we have seen above, Malraux's conception of a high culture was above economic and sociological realities and that is where Lang found space to develop his own idea of a culture that would be reconciled with the economic and social forces of the country. The way to achieve this was to encourage creativity. Cultural creativity was to become the single panacea for the country's economic and social ills.

“A policy is not just the sum of technical measures, but first of all, it is an idea of man.... I want the ministry to expand, to abuse its own prestige. It should contaminate the state, and the entire nation” (Lang quoted in Watchtel, 1987, p. 38).

This is how Lang defined cultural policy in 1981. He wanted to give the Ministry of Culture a philosophy, an ‘état d’esprit’ which was much needed. As a result, the Ministry started getting a highly politicized character. Inspired by this new sense of mission, it brought in a lot of cultural activists and, all of a sudden, it was seen as an attractive destination by young politicians aspiring to climb up the political ladder. This was reinforced by the historic increase of the ministry’s budget, which aspired to reach 1% of the state budget⁶¹ (see table 2 and 2 (a) annex for chapter 2 for a more details)

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⁶⁰ Lang's long career as a socialist activist and elected official culminated in 1981 when he was named Minister-Delegate of Culture. He has been a Professor of International Law and Dean of the Faculty of Law and Economics at the University of Nancy. He was the founder and director of the World Theater Festival in Nancy and the artistic co-director of the Théâtre National Populaire in Paris. These three overlapping careers, political, academic and cultural gave him a very good background as a minister of culture (Hunter, 1990).

⁶¹ The budget was initially doubled from 2.96 billion francs or 0.47 per cent of the total state budget to 5.99 billion francs or 0.75 per cent. Areas less favored benefited most from this increase: i.e. funds for the acquisition of new works of art were increased by 185 per cent and the expenditure on cinema and the audiovisual went from 35.2 to the impressive sum of 120 million francs. Previously favored areas, like partimoine monumental and museums saw a smaller rise
The speech Lang gave to the National Assembly on 17 November 1981 to introduce his first full budget, was, as Loosely (1995) describes it, in itself the government's first theoretical treatment of cultural issues. Justifying the increase of the budget in times of economic austerity, he argued that economic recovery and cultural revival go hand in hand and that a nation, which does not pay as much attention to the art of living as to its standard of living, is condemned to fail (Lang, 1981). The speech's importance was in its bringing together under one single idea all the main lines of thought which had influenced the shaping of the socialist cultural policy since 1974: “the democratization advocated by the Popular Front and Malraux; the post-1968 preoccupation with pluralism, creativity and difference; and the Sixth Plan’s idea of an integrated global culture, with more stress now on the power of such a culture to reinvigorate the economy” (Loosely, p. 82). These influences were also apparent in the decree (10 May 1982) that stated the mission of the ministry, which was, in fact, an enlarged version of the mission Malraux had drawn up in 1959:

“permettre à tous les Français de cultiver leur capacité d'inventer et de créer, d'exprimer librement leurs talents et de recevoir la formation artistique de leur choix; de préserver le patrimoine culturel national, régional ou des divers groupes sociaux pour le profit commun de la collectivité tout entière; de favoriser la création des œuvres de l'art et de l'esprit et de leur donner la plus vaste audience; de contribuer au rayonnement de la culture et de l'art français dans le libre dialogue des cultures du monde” (Journal Officiel, 1 May 1982, p. 1.346).

Lang described himself as belonging to a generation for whom the “state was the enemy of culture - not only the political enemy, but the intellectual enemy” (quoted in Marmer, 1982, p. 118) and he set himself the task to create a new image of France, where the government considers ‘art and culture to be its allies’ (ibid.). The Interim plan (1982-1983), that replaced the 8th plan drawn up by the previous government, came to support this by declaring straight off that “economic progress must not come before culture and culture must be recognised as a source of development and progress” (Council of Europe, 1991, p. 36).

The commercial sector was not left out and the plan stressed the need to subordinate its development to national development objectives and check for any harmful effects of profit seeking. But above all, the main objective was to reduce cultural inequalities. It was realized that cultural behaviour patterns are determined mainly by social factors, therefore, they cannot be changed by simply reducing prices of tickets or providing free access to cultural activities as Malraux had thought in the past. This created the need for the development of a new approach in the democratization of culture.

In a later report, ‘L'imperatif culturel’ (1983), cultural democratization was reassessed in an effort to distinguish between the myth and the reality. The myth of cultural democratization was based on the existence of ‘a public homogène réceptif à une culture elle-même supposée universelle, et susceptible de s’élargir indéfiniment pour peu que les facilités matérielles de se ‘cultiver’ lui fussent données’ (ibid., p. 79). This was considered an illusion, as the majority of the population was ignoring the culture cultivée represented by the cultural institutions. National culture, therefore, was reappraised:

“... nous devons admettre que la culture nationale, en perpétuelle mutation, est le fruit d’apports divers, parmi lesquels la culture cultivée mérite une attention particulière et des

(Loosely 1995, p. 81). By the 1986 general elections, the budget had almost reached the famous 1% and after a cut imposed by the Chirac government, the budget reached the 0.95 % in 1991 (Loosley, 1994, p. 122). See figures.
interventions spécifiques, main ne bénéficie a priori d’aucun privilège. Elle est certes le dénominateur commun des catégories sociales les plus favorisées. Elle ne doit pas avoir le prétention d’être seule à laisser des traces dans le mémoire collectif. Il faut s’habituer à l’idée que des affluents divers, d’importance inégale mais également dignes d’intérêt, contribuent à former cet ensemble hétérogène que constitue la culture française” (l’impératif culturel, 1983, p. 80).

Decentralization was also employed in the effort to establish a cultural equality and regionalism became an important factor:

“Cultural action in regional and local life must help local communities and social groups to retrace their roots and repossess their history and their heritage, and thus recover their identity and be prepared to face the future on a strong, autonomous footing” (ibid., p. 37).

This was a very important statement, taking into account that state intervention in suppressing regional cultural identities in favour of the Parisian elitist version of French culture was a traditional practice. It was therefore a big step towards the recognition of the variations in cultural expression. As Lang said later in an interview: “In saying to each other and every French citizen, ‘culture is yours’, we have decided to give back to the people control of their collective cultural lives and of their individual cultures” (Hauss, 1985, p. 218). This was part of the autogestion policy, which partly inspired the decentralisation project.

Lang did not share Malraux’s unitarian view of national culture. His wish was to free the regions to develop their own identities and to allow the individuals their own cultural preferences. He motivated the local authorities, through the conventions scheme, to contribute to their budget by increasing the local investment. This, however, did not mean that the ministry stopped altogether from interfering in the affairs of the local and regional authorities. When, it came to practice, the central state was still reluctant to fully trust the local authorities, and it continued thus, despite all the rhetoric, the “Gaullist concern with culture as an affirmation of nationhood” (Loosely, 1991, p. 116). But apart from the limitations caused by old traditions - the constitution itself stressed the indivisibility of the Republic - there were new ones as well. As European integration was advancing and the use of the English language was becoming internationalized, the policy makers started questioning how far they should go with a regionalist policy. Regional languages like Breton and Occitan, related to cultures identified with the past, made a regionalist policy look archaic at a time of accelerated globalization (ibid. p. 118). So the dilemma was which direction to take, towards the regions or towards the outside world. The lack of a real consensus within the Socialist Party created confusion on the policy level, so the struggle between regional cultures and central culture remained.

The second objective was to encourage creation. According to the Interim Plan, the state should stand as a guarantor for artistic freedom, intervene in the cultural industries when its feels that they go against creative initiative and protect the national market from imported products. Creation became the new motto and new ways of seeing it were employed: “rehabilitation of all forms of beauty in everyday life: singing, variety entertainment, jazz, fashion, comic albums, the circus” (Lang quoted in Council of Europe, 1991, p. 37). The government promised that it would not make aesthetic choices, favouring one particular type of art over another. However, it was feared that all these plans to encourage creativity would inevitably lead to government interference. Paul Guimard, cultural counsellor of Mitterrand at the time, said in defence of the socialist government:

“The socialists are often accused of creating a state culture ... We are trying not to establish
a Socialist cultural doctrine... What we want to do is to support the artist as strongly as possible and to leave him free” (quoted in Marmer, 1982, p. 187).

Lang, too, supported this by declaring: “No prescribed art: neither by the State nor by fashion. Free rein to all forms and in all places. To each his own choice: learned art or popular, new art or traditional art” (ibid.). Some responded to this position by saying that it is the result of confusing old bourgeois liberal ideas of enlightened humanism combined with ‘undigested morsels of Marxist thought’. And as an artist said: “there is no one discourse at the ministry and therefore all discourses are present. Official thought is not very clear – it’s flou “ (ibid.). The government did intervene at the end with protectionist measures taken in the name of promoting creation and protecting the national culture – “… the ultimate goal is to recover creativity while preserving national identity in the cultural world” (Hauss, 1985, p. 220). Much later, when Lang was asked, during an interview, whether the State should be so involved in the cultural activities of the nation, his answer was somewhat contradictory62. Although, he denounced the ‘violence of state culture’63 and mentioned that “creation takes place outside of institutions, even in spite of them”, he supported that:

“... collective arts like theatre would inevitably run at a loss if they were not subsidised. Without public support, group creative efforts would rest solely on commercial constraints. The State can play the role of a counter institution by struggling against the abuses and the hegemonies of the market place ... The presence of the state must be limited and must, indeed, limit itself. But it must always be there and it must always be vital” 64 (ibid p. 222).

Decentralization was a priority but within certain limits as the Rapporteur of the National Assembly Cultural Affairs Committee indicated: “I am firmly convinced that the corollary of any real decentralization effort is a strong central government policy to uphold the coherency of our national identity, cement solidarity between the regions and guarantee pluralism” (Council of Europe, 1991, p. 297). State intervention has had a long tradition in France that has survived socialist and liberal governments. A strong national cultural policy seems to go hand in hand with State interventionism which does not necessarily have negative connotations, at least not as the Lang sees it.

The third priority, outlined by the Interim Plan, was to reinforce the cultural position of France in the world. As it was felt that the anglo-saxon cultures were becoming increasingly dominant, it proposed to invest more in the cultural industries and increase thus the programme production, for ‘the new cultural policy aims to cross national boundaries’. Thus, co-operation with the Ministry of Communication was considered crucial to encourage the active participation of the media in promoting cultural policy objectives. Lang stressed, very early, that he would make no distinction between the ‘clean’ culture of the public sector and ‘dirty’ culture of the private cultural industries. He was willing to offer support not only to the traditional subsidised sector but also to the private sector cultural activities such as records, films, publishing, and industrial creation. Some of them, he argued, also needed protection from market forces, like the film industry and French music

62 The exact question was: “There have been criticisms of the ministry including the accusation that the State cannot intervene in cultural life without an ‘Orwellian’ influence on the content of what is produced. What do you think of that?” (Hauss, 1985, p. 221).
63 This refers to totalitarian regimes.
64 Lang revived the tradition of state commissions (commandes) which caused some controversy as to what criteria should be used in the selection of artists and how can the state avoid developing an ‘official art’ by imposing its own state (Mollard quoted in Loosely, 1995, p. 101).
which was threatened by US and UK competition (Hauss, 1985; Loosely, 1994; Council of Europe, 1991). This opened the way for change in attitude towards the media later on when it was realised that the cultural industries were not only powerful cultural disseminators but also crucial to the national economy.

However, the imminent threat of mass culture imposed by the multinational cultural industries was kept as the main theme in the speeches Lang gave during the first two years in the office. He inaugurated his position as a Minister of Culture by making strong statements and starting a campaign at an international level against cultural exploitation, meaning capitalism, multinationals and Americans. He refused to attend the American film festival in Deauville by saying provocatively that it would be an ‘anomaly’ for him to do so as:

“Un ministre doit choisir entre les exploitants et les exploités. Le rôle d’un ministre n’est pas de participer à des réception mondaines financées au demeurant par des compagnies américaines, mais d’être où est la vie” (quoted in Loosely, 1995, p. 77).

Lang seemed happier developing his cultural discourse around some of the ‘grandes antinomies mondiales’. He hoped to replace the old geopolitical polarity of East-West by a more harmonious North-South, itself supported by a European unification, the idea of ‘latinité’ and the vision of a ‘civilization méditerranéenne’ (Motor-Sir, 1984, p. 275). The speeches he gave first at the conference of Francophone Culture in Cotonou and then at the Unesco conference in Mexico City in 1982 stated his objection to inauthentic ‘multinational cultures’ and criticized the multinational financial domination that saturates national cultures with standardized programmes. When he said that “certaines de ces nations puissantes n’ont d’autre morale que celle du profit et cherchent à imposer une culture uniformisée à la planète entiere”, he rather openly referred to the United States 65. The same year, at the International Cultural Symposium in Vienna, he proposed the initiation of a ‘European audiovisual space’ as a way to combat the American cultural invasion. This idea of a European audiovisual space was to become part of the European Audiovisual Policy that backfired at Lang when it came to the quotas regulation, causing a lot of animosity between France and EU. This tendency, however, of Lang to expand his cultural discourse outside France was perhaps part of his desire to increase France’s role not only at a European but international level as well.

As a result, Lang’s comments on cultural issues did make an impact nationally and internationally, but were also criticised as being:

“populist, fervently generous-minded, and full of an untroubled, inflationary enthusiasm. Neither intellectual, nor especially original, nor amazingly radical, they reflect both a more gaudy and celebration notion of culture than the earnest between colourful brackets” (Marmer, 1982, p. 118).

Behind all the political rhetoric, though, Marmer argues, Lang’s early discourse presupposes a model of history characterized by discontinuities and a present very different from the past. However, his cultural policy reflected elements of continuity, passed on by his predecessors. Ory supports this idea of continuity: ‘la politique culturelle..... , apparaît comme riche, .. d’héritage multiples’ (1984, p. 77). He argues that Lang’s policy is in fact a policy of continuity, ‘un approfondissement des intuitions initiales de Malraux’ (ibid, p. 78). His policy updated old goals of the Front Populaire that were also central to Malraux’s Gaullist ministry - decentralization and democratization - and incorporated post-May 1968 notions of cultural animation (Marmer, 1982; Ory, 1984).

65 International cultural policy and anti-Americanism will be the subject of analysis of chapter 5 and 6. In this part of chapter 3, the attention is more on the overall cultural policy.
However, it was not only the political and ideological predecessors that exercised an influence in Lang’s policy. There were two other important influences: Mitterrand’s foreign policy and his own vision of the function and uses of the ‘interior’ cultural market and of France’s cultural industries (Marmer, 1982, p. 118). Lang’s eager interest in strengthening France’s cultural ties with other ‘Latin’ nations and rebalancing the world historic axis from East-West to North-South - emphasizing the importance of improving the relationships between the North (industrialized) and the South (underdeveloped) -, was not only just an expression of old leftist sympathies but also part of Mitterrand’s foreign policy which put emphasis on France’s connection’s with these countries, i.e. African (ibid, p. 120).

All these influences were pivotal in the shaping of Lang’s early policy. This first part, just after the elections up until 1983, was mainly characterized by a highly rhetorical political discourse, experimentation and expansion. However, as reality slowly took its place in the government, the attitude started changing. The continuity tradition had to make space for changes imposed by economic forces. Despite the traditionally negative attitude towards capitalism and its effect on culture, the socialists did find it difficult to deal with the economic realities of the marketplace as they related to culture. This became apparent in the report ‘L’imperatif Culturel’ (1983), in which attention was drawn to cultural development as a factor of economic and social development. The expansion of the concept of culture served as a link between the human and material benefits that can come from cultural activity, as it was believed that an increase in activity and consumption would have a direct economic pay-off in terms of job creation, productivity and consumer spending.

The material benefits started attracting more attention as the government had to face new financial difficulties. Another evidence for this change in attitude comes from the International Colloquium on ‘ Création et Développement’, held at the Sorbonne in February 1983. Participants from a range of fields were asked to reflect on how creation and creativity can help in improving the world’s social and economic ills. Mitterrand’s speech summarized this new spirit in the government by pointing out that “creativity is becoming a development factor, and cultural activities are establishing themselves among the expanding sectors around which the future is being organized... the cultural industries are the industries of the future ... investing in culture is investing in the economy”. The importance of this speech lies not so much in the acceptance of the cultural industries’ significant role which was any way a fact, but in the transformation Socialist Party’s cultural ideology had undergone, especially since they came on power (Loosely, 1995, p. 88).

The proof of this new attitude was the creation of different official bodies responsible for the development of the cultural industries, i.e. the IFCIC (Institut pour le Financement du Cinema et des Industries Culturelles), the Agence pour la culture par les nouvelles technologies de communication, the development of joint projects with the Ministry of Industry etc (Miége, 1989, p. 39). Although the good intentions for these projects were not a guarantee for their success, their initiation was an indication of the accelerating cultural industrialization that was taking place in France during the 1980s. This situation was used as a justification by different official bodies for a cultural policy which favored the industrial sector as being in better position than public or semi-public institutions to increase benefits for all social classes.

This change in the socialist cultural ideology was accompanied by a change in the public image of Lang who toned down significantly his provocative and highly rhetorical ways. "Economie et culture, le
mème combat’ became his new motto: “we have added a new imperative - economic recovery - since we think that cultural development is a response to the economic crisis. The originality of the Socialist program lies in the juxtaposition of culture and economies” (in Hauss, 1985, p. 219). Marc Fumaroli wrote that from then on, “... no cathedral, no stately home, no heritage site could escape a ‘rethink’, a cultural shape-up and, even worse, requests to provide evidence of commercial profitability” (1991, p. 16). Lang also tried to distance himself from the anti-American label that was attached to him. He did not, though, abandon it completely, only that now he moved the campaign against American domination at a European level and in a more conciliatory tone. He even put the blame on the European countries for allowing the Americans to dominate their markets. He caused even more surprise when he declared: “let’s imitate America’s spirit of enterprise, its spirit of adventure and the conquest of new intellectual frontiers”! (Loosely, 1995, p. 159). A few years before, nobody would have believed this was coming from Lang. Ideological beliefs in direct clash with economic interests was the cause of this change.

However, despite the new stress on industry, protectionism did not stop. This was particularly evident in television which the government tried to keep under regulation. In many cases, though, what was perceived as traditional French chauvinism in protecting their national culture was in fact a political effort to build up new industries and jobs in France. Lang claimed that his support to the cultural industries was not only because of their financial benefits but mainly because of their impact on the very nature and boundaries of artistic creation. He insisted that because they involved high-risk economies, they were fragile and needed a special type of help combining free-market principles with regulation against unfair competition. The emphasis on ‘economy and culture’ while appearing contradictory to socialist philosophy, was vital to the success of the 1980s cultural policy. In fact, by including the cultural industries in the wider concept of culture, the socialists did partially succeed in breaking up the elitist attitude on culture and bringing thus to it forms of expression up to then excluded.

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The cultural debate kept on not only within the socialist government but also by the opposition, as well as by independent commentators. The cultural policy implemented from 1981 to 1986 provoked fierce criticism from the opposition. The Union pour la Democratie Française (UDF) and the Rassemblement pour la République (RPR), made up the main opposition body, which formed a government in the 1986 elections and stayed in power until 1988. They prepared a counter policy in which they argued that culture cannot come from the state; the government cannot exert any political hold over the creator; it must simply support culture, trust the individual initiative, encourage it, welcome it and help it, but in an indirect fashion. The State must also encourage patronage or sponsorship, not just through tax relief but also by recognizing it as a normal social responsibility. Regarding decentralization, they supported that local communities must be free to choose the cultural initiatives they wish to support under their own responsibility. But the area that the new government brought more radical changes was the audiovisual sector. They initiated a large-scale liberalization by abolishing the monopolies, which they argued would free the sector from state intervention (Report on French cultural policy, 1991). And finally, Communication joined again the Ministry of Culture. The Audiovisual policy became the focus point of the new ministry as the liberalization of the sector became a priority. The audio-visual media continued since then to provide the major battlefield, the arena of open conflict between a certain idea of

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66 Regulation of the media had in fact little effect as rampant competition for advertising revenue lowered the standards after privatization. Lang, though, managed to introduce a fixed quota on European and French productions in their schedules, after a long dispute with EU.
French national culture and the financial and technological imperatives that have taken place in the course of the last two decades.

Certain themes, much supported by the Socialist government, were not included in the new government’s plans: reducing social inequalities in access to culture, criticism of the passive consumption of foreign products, ‘cultures in the plural’ and ‘cultures at the everyday level’. The essential objectives of cultural policy - education, conserving the cultural heritage, creation and dissemination - were kept but in the light of a more liberal spirit. François Léotard, the new minister of culture, was the opposite of Jack Lang, depicted as a moderate and pro-American advocate of ‘libertarian liberalism’. However, he found it very difficult to be Lang’s successor. Aware of the popularity Lang still had, he was careful to stress that he had no intention of being a ‘destructeur’. ‘Nous garderons une acception large de la culture’ Léotard declared but a line was drawn as he added: ‘mais nous pensons que tout si est culturel, tout n’est pas ministériel’ (Loosely, 1995, p. 169).

Between 1985 and 1988 both left and right were busy reshaping their image, which was accompanied by a shift in cultural policy and debate. The socialists were trying to distance themselves from an outdated leftism, while the right too was trying to get rid of its technocratic indifference to culture as Leotard was in a number of ways continuing where his predecessor had left off. Despite Lang’s initial attempts to turn culture into a battlefield the reality was the two opposing sides were getting closer.

When Lang came back in the ministry in 1988, he just took from where he had left in 1986. He did benefit, though, from the Leotard interval by keeping the communication portfolio he always wanted. Communication got its own delegate minister, although, culture was still far from a unified administrative sphere. This happened in 1992 when Lang finally combined in the ministry culture, education and communication and the budget finally reached the long ago promised 1 percent in 1993.

The element of continuity in Lang and Léotard’s policies was most evident in the area of national heritage. Patrimoine was one of the neglected areas during Lang’s first period in the office as he was busy experimenting with new concepts of activités culturels. So, when he came back he devoted more of his attention into this area. In fact, the patrimoine was too important for any French government to ignore. By the late 1980s it was clear that monuments and museums were in high demand, proving that culture has economic benefits. In addition, although many of the visitors were foreign tourists, the growing popularity of these places among the French too, renewed the heritage’s role as a lingua franca, bringing the nation together in a shared past (Loosely, 1995). Many priorities of traditional cultural policy were, thus, kept or revived, as their role in reinforcing the image of the nation could not be ignored.

Lang’s cultural revolution lasted until 1993. His cultural policy opened a new era in the national cultural discourse. Its controversial elements attracted a lot of attention and provoked a lot of criticism, which kept the debate on culture more intense than ever. Among his policies and aspirations, the ‘tout culturel’ and the support for cultural industries were Lang’s most distinctive and controversial initiatives and attracted, thus, the most criticism. Although, both Mitterrand and Lang were acutely aware of the impact the leisure industries and the media had on culture and cultural habits, this preoccupation did not translate into an effective and coherent policy. This was more evident in the government’s approach to television, the subject of extensive analysis of the following chapter.
Malraux’s concept of a *culture cultivée* that represents the whole nation, was replaced by a totally elastic view of culture, as Gildea (1997) describes it, according to which every profession, social group or community had its culture and Benetton was as good as Beethoven or as was put caustically by Finkielkraut: ‘*une paire de bottes vaut mieux que Shakespeare*’ (1987, p. 135). This thinking was believed to have caused a confusion in France regarding cultural values, that government had given approval, through cultural policy, to a trend towards an aesthetic relativism, set in train by the social sciences, structuralism and post-modernism, as argued by Alain Finkielkraut, one of the fiercest critics of the socialist cultural policy.

Was there a *socialism culturel* or a *culture de gauche*? According to Rigaud, Lang was a continuator more than a real innovator. Despite his *gestes spectaculaires*, controversial at times, the majority of Lang’s initiatives were based in the tradition of continuity. And despite the emphasis put on the decentralization policy, his actions did affirm the cultural policy of the State. Perhaps, the real question would be to what extent any of these policies, socialist or not, influenced the cultural habits of the French. Surveys carried out by the ministry showed little change in the cultural practices of the French as the number of people having access to high culture had a minimal increase: 3 per cent average. The following figures show in detail how the majority of the French people were not users of culture: 82 per cent had never been to the opera, 76 per cent to the ballet, 71 per cent to a classic concert, 62 per cent to an art gallery and 55 per cent to a theatre (*Les pratiques culturelles des Français*, 1990). Although, the Socialists were good at increasing the facilities available, they did not manage to make a shift in the allocation of resources form the culturally rich to the culturally poor. An early comparison of audiences and levels of subsidy shows the areas subsidized most were those with the smallest percentage (see annex for chap. 3, table 3 (a) & (b)). They clearly show that democratization of culture was still following Malraux’s conception of a culture associated to the traditional arts. Although, these were early figures, the trend in the cultural practices of the French did not change much, despite the heavy subsidization of many cultural sectors, even cinema, which saw an increase in state help but a dramatic decrease in audience. In addition, although the ministry of culture increased the support to different regions by 60% to 120%, the gap between the funds allocated to Paris and the provinces was in fact widened (see annex for chap. 3, table 4), continuing thus the tradition of Parisian dominance.

The huge sums of money that the socialists spent on culture did not finally succeed to establish new definitions of culture. It put instead “a populist gloss on traditional budget items or consecrated as ‘art’ activities which had a traditional popular appeal” (Forbes & Kelly, 1996, p. 260). Although the share of cultural expenditure when compared to the total public expenditure increased substantially within one decade (from 1.95 in 1980 to 2.38 in 1990), the level of ‘high culture’ participation remains average in France when it is compared to the level of ‘commercial’ cultural consumption (see annex for bloke 3 table 5).

Lang was not, though the only one to make cultural policy. Equally distinctive and possibly more controversial was the programme of the *grants projets culturels* initiated not by the ministry of culture but by the President himself. Following the Jacobin tradition, Mitterrand succumbed ‘à la tentation du centralisme’ and took decisions that were not approved by everybody. We can trace in his policy the elements of continuity that took over from his predecessors. ‘*La continuité dans le changement*’ was an expression often used to describe the socialists’ politics and that applied to Mitterrand himself. Ronflé-Nadaud (1991) distinguishes three main lines in the continuity tradition: interventionism, centralization and prestige nationale.
The tradition of state interventionism was too long and too strong in France to be easily bypassed. From one side, Mitterrand’s policies enlarged substantially the field of cultural action, but on the other, he reinforced interventionism. Jack Lang’s speech in the National Assembly reflects this tendency in the President’s policy: “L’Etat doit plus que jamais encourager les expériences, les innovations, les recherches (...) favoriser les projets novateurs plus encore que les institutions établies” (Ronflé-Nadaud, 1991, p. 31). The State intervened on a number of occasions in order to either increase the financial assistance to the already heavily subsidised sector or in the construction of new cultural venues.

Centralism was also continued and reinforced by Mitterrand who in an effort to promote the prestige nationale, another old tradition, he initiated a programme of grants projects culturels that mainly took place in Paris. He was even criticized to be suffering from the complexe quatorzième (Collard, 1992, p. 130). This refers particularly to his programmes of Grants Travaux, the prestigious monuments such as in the Louvre and the Opera Bastille, cultural expenditures that would be inconceivable in other European countries, especially in Britain with a more laissez-faire tradition. Mitterrand’s personal cultural preferences tended towards the fine arts traditionally conceived and that was reflected in his cultural policy choices. He did play an influential role in the decision of cultural policy matters and he did use culture to his advantage and the socialist party’s advantage, as culture is a concept appealing to most people. He thus integrated culture in his electoral strategy in order to give his campaign an ideological backing and used it on many occasions as an instrument médiatique. Despite the strong criticism of the media, the socialists could not ignore their power to give culture a higher public profile. Lang was proved to be an excellent media manipulator and he used the media to transform the ministry’s image and also to increase his own popularity.

Conclusions

The socialist cultural debate and with it the socialist policies too, were, in a way, forced to divert from their initial ideological direction by the rapid technological, economic and sociological changes. The socialist policy could not but respond to these changes. New technologies had changed the relationship between artistic production and the means of its dissemination, introducing commercial and industrial interests. This had as a result the abolition of the boundaries between the concepts of ‘work of art’ and ‘cultural product’.

If we follow Donnat’s approach (see scheme 1), we can see Lang’s policy as the result of a voluntarism to slow down the drift of the axe esthetique-éducatif, by trying to take advantage of the new dynamic axe économeo-ludique. The legitimation of the cultural industries, the recognition of the possible benefits from a more entrepreneurial approach in the subsidized sector, and at the same time, the effort to prevent entrepreneurialism from obliterating all aesthetic values, show the ambition of the Socialists to bring together the economic and aesthetic poles of the cultural domain.

67 Examples of this policy were the construction of a new Opéra populaire in Bastille with which he hoped to demystify the lyric art - example of its own of a continuation in the traditional concept of high culture - and in the initiation of a creation fund for the Rock music groups through the Fonds d’intervention Culturelle - example of the desire to expand the field of cultural action (ibid, p. 32).
Despite the criticism, the Socialists did succeed in bringing culture right into the centre of French politics and attracted more public attention in the cultural debate. Culture acquired new dimensions and in a way it forced the French to re-examine their national identity, a process that is still going on as the debate on ‘cultural exception’ and the constant cultural negotiations with the European Union have indicated.

Having established the background for the case study by examining the main actors and influential traditions that have shaped the development of modern French cultural policy, we can now proceed to the main part of this thesis which will bring culture and communication together and examine them on the policy level. The emphasis now will be placed on the cultural industries and television in particular, examining the relation of cultural policy with audiovisual policy.
CHAPTER 4:

Television, Politics and Culture:
Ruptures and Continuities in the Evolution of the French Audiovisual Policy

“And so, to sum up, we are left with this curious situation where television remains much the weakest link in the entire French cultural apparatus... And more than in most major European countries, the French are meagrely fed by that small screen: it is a curious failure for a nation that takes its cultural image so seriously” (Ardagh, 1990, p 569-70).

“... supporters of culture in France rarely looked to Television for guidance before 1981, and it is an open question whether they will in the future” (Watchtel, 1987, p 69).

It is interesting that France, which as a nation takes culture so seriously, has failed to take full advantage of television’s potential as a powerful vehicle for culture. In the years following the Socialists’ coming to power in 1981, many things have changed in the cultural and audiovisual scene of the country. Television, however, has remained the weakest part of the French cultural apparatus - despite its growing importance. It has been considered more as part of the political apparatus, as many would argue, continuing the traditional line of political interference. However, a variety of factors have affected the broadcasting media and in particular television during the course of the last two decades which have brought a re-assessment of the role of television in cultural policy. This chapter will deal with the problem of implementing a deregulation policy and cultural policy together in relation to audiovisual field, having as a main argument the interference of politics.

Audiovisual policy has been one of the main national issues for most Western European governments in the last two decades, but only for few of them has it been so contentious, tantalizing and frustrating as it has been for France. What makes each country’s case distinct from the other European countries is the way they have handled the deregulation process. In the French case, this reform was characterized by its highly controversial and politicized nature, by an excessive number of legislative reforms and a dramatic shift from the public sector to the private. France was the only country in Western Europe to privatize, that is to sell off, a public service channel, TF1. Many of these changes were motivated by the efforts of successive French governments to keep up with the technological advances being made in the audiovisual field and to compete with the Americans and Japanese. The cultural issues stemming out of these challenges were equally important, as France had to prove that it could not only protect but also promote its cinematographic and audiovisual production industries and resist the Americanization of its culture. In France – as opposed to many other European nations – cultural autonomy was thus inextricably linked with media policy from the very beginning of the audiovisual revolution.
How different French governments have dealt with these issues and the results of their actions during this critical period since 1981 will be the focus of this chapter. It is an attempt to examine the changes in the processes of the audiovisual policy making and the content of policy and their effect on the function of French television. This is done by examining the main factors and issues involved in the policymaking process, highlighting the importance of internal factors, mainly the political/ideological (political expediencies, state intervention, socialist and liberal ideologies) and their relation and impact on culture and television. This is a policy analysis orientated chapter with additional emphasis on the cultural discourse and how it evolved in France.68

In order to understand the development of policy since 1981 it is important to have some overview of the dynamics and structures of the media in France and how communication is organized in this country. This will help to see media policy not only in terms of ruptures and changes, which are represented by the introduction of new technologies, and the policies of de-regulation but also in terms of continuities where past traditions still persist and contribute in the process of policy-making.

1. An Overview of the Function of French Media and their Development

1.1 The Function of the Media in France

Media have certain functions within the society where they operate. They provide information, entertainment, continuity of the predominant culture and values, a means of socialization as well as indicators of the current relations of power and so on. These functions differ in their priority according to the specific needs and structure of the society where they operate. Mediated communication69 and its functions in France should be approached in a rather special way and that is because of the distinctiveness of the French media, which has its origins in the country’s history. According to Lamizet,

“France is a country whose existence as a community rests on the fundamental roles played within it by political and institutional forms. The sense of social cohesion, the sense of belonging, together constitute a political experience derived from the citizen’s contact with national institutions such as among others the school, local government, public health, the law and the communications services (from the roads and railways to telecommunications)” (1996, p 76).

The role of the French media in the process of development of social cohesion and group

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68 Methodologically, it does this by examining primary sources (official documents, like legislation, government commissioned reports and reports from the Senate) and relevant literature. While the former sources highlight the policy processes, the latter give a rich insight in the development of the French debate over broadcast media and culture by simply following the arguments as they were expressed by French specialists who have a unique way to get engaged in public debates. In addition to these sources, the author benefited greatly from her field work in CRESEC and INA where the discussions she hold with academics and specialists helped her to understand better the issues presented in this chapter (especially legislation).

69 Term used by Bernard Lamizet (1996, p 76-8).
membership at a national level is central to the French nation-state. Media perhaps form a more integral part of the political, economic and social life of contemporary France than they do in other western European societies. Although, the functions of the media often overlap with each other in practice and although in some cases, they seem to be in direct contradiction with one another, it is possible to risk some generalization in order to identify some of the most important of them. This will help to further our understanding of the policy-making processes around the media and culture in France. To start with, a very important function media perform in France is the creation and sustenance of a common culture (i.e. a common cultural response to events). The dissemination of information is essential not only in the formation of public opinion but also in the process of cultural development. This tradition is today expressed through a whole range of supplementary information provided through a range of media forms and programs that may be called, according to Lamizet, a ‘documentary consistency of discourse’ (ibid, p 78). For example, many public service radio and television channels transmit magazine programs with educative as well as entertainment objectives.

The entertainment/cultural/informative aspects of the contemporary French media sometimes clash, as there is a struggle between ‘high’ and popular culture. Following old traditions, the media should act as a vehicle for the popular dissemination of ‘high culture’. During de Gaulle’s and Malraux’s days, French television tried to promote a cultural tone and as there was no competition, at the time, with commercial TV, the proportion of serious or cultural programming was considerable. Television, as Ardagh described it, was didactic in the French pedagogic manner (1990, p 558), and acted as a means of spreading the French cultural canon throughout society. For the first two decades of its existence French TV was seen as a ‘window on the world’ and a ‘means of popular acculturation’ (Forbes, 1996, p 232). French television tried to create a national cultural community by transmitting documentaries and dramas based on the classics of French and world literature. It provided, thus, the cultural ‘others’ of the French nation and at the same time it contributed to the creation of a ‘national cultural image’. Television has never fully recaptured this sense of cultural mission, although efforts have been made through the cultural channels of the ‘80s and ‘90s.

Since De Gaulle and Malraux much of the modern broadcast media play an increasing role in the shaping and dissemination of popular culture. Soap operas and game shows make a large part of their programming. The cultural role and impact of the French broadcast media is a matter of open debate within the French society that has developed a love-hate relationship with its television. While the French audiovisual industry is a vibrant sector of the French economy and society, it is also seen as the ‘agent’ used by America to destroy French culture. As Forbes accurately comments, the issue of television’s role in France:

“crystallizes much of the discourse about cultural integrity and national identity, the dialectic France entertains with its cultural ‘Others’ America and Japan, and adds to the

70 This tradition was first initiated by the school under the Ancient Régime and strengthened by the policies of Jules Ferry, during the Third Republic. During this period, the growing literacy rates and the spread of education led to a greater demand for information. Also, political developments contributed by helping to bring a regulatory framework that allowed the expansion of the press (Kuhn, 1995, p 18, 20).

71 Documentaries like Thalassa on France 3 and Ushuaia on TF1, ‘magazines d’information’ like Envoyé Spécial on France 2 and La Marche du siècle on France 3 and ‘émissions littéraires’ like the famous Apostrophe on Antenne 2 have been part of this tradition of educating, informing and entertaining the public.
confusion of thinking about mass and popular culture” (ibid, p 235).

Another important function the media perform in France is that of a ‘symbolic mirror in which the French can observe themselves and their behavior against the backdrop of national life’ (Lamizet, p 77). The public gets, in this sense, a double image of itself: first, as actors occupying a political space and second, as users of information systems. This has contributed to the creation of a very strong tradition of political and social commitment or engagement, as it is known in France. An example of this engagement is that on French television current-affairs programs are often turned from a factual or neutral presentation into a debate with journalists getting personally involved in the interpretation of news. Programs, like L’heure de la vérité where journalists closely question leading politicians, are very popular as a kind of ‘intellectual bull-fight’ (Ardagh, p 564). But as Lamizet points out, engagement can also lead journalists to defend government policy. This characteristic of political and social commitment explains the centrality of public service broadcasting in France.

National Television tends to unite the nation with the national coverage of political or athletic events that address the nation in a collective ritualistic fashion. This nation-building function, which is more a feature of developing countries, can be found in postwar France where a centralized state control of television was used as a way to reinforce the legitimacy of the Republic as the ‘embodiment of the national will’ (Kuhn, 1995; Lamizet, op. cit). Although television is not any more the monopoly of the State, old habits die hard. As France remains a centralized State, it can still exercise its influence on the function of the media, via regulation.

One more characteristic of the French media, particularly the audiovisual sector, is their emerging economic significance. Communications, in the wider context, are developing into a new culture of post-industrial modernity. This is the result of two factors at play, according to Lamizet (ibid, p 78). One of them is commercial and it has to do with the opening of the sector to private forces, both internally and externally. The second one is the initiative taken by the state to modernize the infrastructure of French communications, focusing mainly on telecommunications. The economic potential of the media and communications, in general, has made them an attractive source for investment, something that has had an impact on the policy level, as will be explained later.

The French media have several functions that are crucial in the development of audiovisual and cultural policy – sustaining a common culture, acting as an economic force, national building and developing political and social commitment. Of course, no one media necessarily performs all these functions and often they operate in a complex and contradictory way. A public service television channel, a regional newspaper, a private radio-station and a subscription channel have different

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72 The relationship between the French media and their audience is one of constant criticism. What makes this relationship more complex is the role of the government and its own relationship with the media. This together with the existing sensitivity towards each other gives sometimes the impression of a double crisis that appears deeper that in other democratic countries: of credibility and legitimacy at the same time (Balle, 1986, p 61).

73 The Droit de réponse on TF1 and the 7 sur 7, are some other examples of the débats politique on French television providing a space for socio-political debates. The former ceased to exist when TF1 was privatized, leaving the public service channels to continue the tradition of engagement.
financial resources, target a different audience, operate under different professional norms and within different regulatory frameworks which shape their ability to perform these functions. However, these functions are important in helping us in unraveling the policy making process. Before we move to the analysis of the factors and issues involved in the policy making, it will be useful to give a brief account of the development of the audiovisual media in France, especially television.


Between the end of the Second World War and the victory of the French socialist party in the 1981 elections, French television and radio were organized around the concept of public service, as in most Western European countries. Public service broadcasting was justified by technological, democratic and cultural imperatives. The orientation towards a system of monopoly was not an exception at the time as most European countries followed the same way. The reconstruction of a postwar country demanded, in the name of the general interest, a certain supervision from the government, not so much regarding the content of the media but their development and functioning. The monopoly, created in 1945, was supposed to be a guarantee for the pluralism of opinion by supervising the adoption of technical norms and the contribution of the French industry in the production of enough television sets. The ordonnance of 4 February 1959 shows this by transforming the RTF into an “établissement public à caractère industriel et commercial” (EPIC) and by introducing the license fee (redevance). The financing of the public service by its users and other independent economic actors, was supposed to guarantee a safe distance from the direct control of the state (Bessis, 1994).

However, the concept of public service became very soon synonymous with a concept of state monopoly that was expressed in the following two ways: a political control exercised by the government and the existence of a public sector, omnipotent and solely responsible for the production and transmission of audiovisual messages (Queyranne, 1985, p 127). The public service concept was, therefore, fused with that of the public sector. The juridical content of state monopoly was expressed in the form of transmission, programming, production and reception. According the law of 1972, article 2, the national public service of French radiodiffusion-télévision was the monopoly of the State and it had as objective to define all the programs destined to be transmitted to the French public74 (see annex for the text of the Law). The monopoly on programming was abolished in 1982 while the monopoly on transmission was kept until 1986. Those two were the strongholds of the state monopoly and the hardest to let go. The contribution of private companies to the production of audiovisual products started earlier on, although the SFP (Société Française de Production) continued to maintain a sort of monopoly through the system of ‘commandes obligatoires’ until 1986 (see Delcross, 1990 and Mousseau, 1987 for the state monopolies).

74 Also, ‘d’organiser, de constituer, d’exploiter et d’entretenir les réseaux et installations qui assurent cette diffusion. Le monopole se compose donc du monopole de la programmation, de celui de la diffusion et de la mise en place des infrastructures’. 

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This close relationship of the media and the French state became the subject of intense controversy throughout the post-war period. The particularities of the French political culture and the political potential of television were fully responsible for the creation of a public broadcasting that was seen as not only the ‘voice of France’ but also the voice of the political party in power. This was also the result of the ‘étatist’ tradition, which, as it was seen in the previous chapter, was “providing a bureaucratic antidote to the centrifugal social and political forces that historically had often seemed to threaten the country with instability” (Humphreys, 1996, p 147). Television remained under the authority of the Ministry of Information until 1964, a period which was characterized by heavy political control. De Gaulle used the medium purely to his political advantage and was, himself, a brilliant screen performer. He justified his control over television by arguing that his opposition was supported by the press. Therefore, according to him it was “tout à fait normal que le gouvernement dispose d’un instrument de diffusion de ses idées: ... la télévision” (quoted in Daniels, 1989, p 191). The strong support for the opposition by the press appeared to compensate somehow for the tight control of TV by the government.

The excesses of the state monopoly during the early years of the Fifth Republic were so obvious that a reform was demanded which led to the organizational reform of RTF by Alain Peyrefitte, the Minister of Information at the time. ORTF (Office de Radio Télévision Française) was thus created in 1964. According to the relevant law of 27/6/1964, the RTF was established as an Office in order to mark in an unquestionable way its specificity as an autonomous public enterprise (see annex for the text of the law). Under the new regime, the Ministry of Information had to share the ‘supervision’ of television with the Treasury and Parliament. The aim was to limit the power of the Ministry and theoretically speaking it did so. However, in practice, control was retained. Despite the relative autonomy of the Office, financial management was under the control of a director general who was nominated by the government (art. 6) and could be dismissed at any moment. Very little autonomy was also left to the Conseil d’Administration whose creation was supposed to be a guarantee of pluralism. As half of its members were still representing the state, with the other half representing the viewers, journalists and qualified individuals, the presence of the government was overwhelming (art 4). The state could still intervene in case of disagreement and censorship was still applied. The dissatisfaction regarding the lack of neutral information became bigger during the events of May ‘68 when a large section of the ORTF journalists went on strike in protest. This did not change the government’s attitude and the response was to fire those journalists.

The demand for more impartial information did not stop and in the end the liberal-minded Prime Minister, Jacques Chaban-Delmas managed to introduce some changes by creating two autonomous channels with some form of competition between them. There were more changes until 1974 when under the government of Giscard-d'Estaing the ORTF was finally dismantled by the Law of 7 August 1974. Giscard-d'Estaing had in mind to create a new independent channel.

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75 This phrase was attributed to Georges Pompidou who succeeded de Gaulle. In July 1970 Pompidou was recorded to say in a press conference that “Être journaliste à l’O.R.T.F, ça n’est pas le même chose que d’être journaliste ailleurs. L’O.R.T.F, qu’on le veuille ou non, c’est la voix de France. Elle est considérée comme telle à l’étranger et considérée telle par le public... (quoted in Daniels, 1989, p 192). Television was thus condemned to be the porte-parole of the French government.

76 An example of how television was used as an instrument for the continuation of the centralized state comes from a Gaullist regional TV director who was quoted to say in the typical Gaullist paternalist way: “with only fifteen minutes of local TV news a day, do we have time to air local criticisms of official policy? We, the Government, are doing all we can to promote regional progress. The time is not ripe to let Bretons criticize us too openly on the screen, just when we are really helping them. They’re too immature” (Quoted in Ardagh, 1990, p 557).
together with a number of other much needed reforms but in the end he had to compromise as he knew that his Gaullist allies and the anti-capitalist Left would strongly oppose to it. His new statute, therefore, focused on abolishing ORTF and creating seven smaller separate companies. Of those, three were television channels: TF1, Antenne 2 and FR3 (a regional channel).77

Giscard’s reform intended to reduce the old bureaucracy and to stimulate creativity by pushing the channels into real competition with each other. Despite, though, the relative autonomy of the new ORTF and the fact that the state could not interfere directly in the affairs of the organization, the government retained its control by appointing each company’s chairman. The difference with the direct control of the Gaullist period was that ‘controls were largely internalized within the television companies, with self-censorship making censorship quasi-redundant’ (Kuhn, 1995, p 159). The government did not need to interfere or censor in the sense that those appointed, directors and senior journalists, were politically affiliated to the party in power and their work was, therefore, biased.

Another weakness of the new system was that the new rival companies were not allowed adequate funding which affected the quality of their programming. Although, the intention was to motivate creativity with the introduction of competition, the fragmentation had as effect the increase of expenditure, as each channel had its own publicity service and separate studios abroad.78 The result was the rise of administrative costs (80 per cent), which dramatically increased their deficit. As Antenne 2 and TF1 were not allowed to draw more than 25 per cent of their income from advertising, they had to rely on the governmental grants that derived from the license fee. These grants were distributed by an independent jury on a basis of merit but also of popularity. The result was the pursuit of high-ratings at the expense of quality productions and programs for minority audiences.

Overall, Gisgard’s reforms led to the creation of a mixed system but ‘its main shortcoming has been the attempt to graft a private enterprise philosophy onto a huge public service bureaucracy’ (quoted in Ardagh, p 563). Although the government tried to ensure that the channels would follow their public service obligations by imposing a number of programming norms through a framework of statutory regulations, such as a minimum quota of French produced programs, competition and lack of adequate financing affected the quality of the channels. This had an effect on the French audiovisual production, which was soon dependent on imported material and feature films and cheap game shows.

The accent on culture, diminishing since the departure of Malraux, became less and less. Despite the successive reforms of the organization - the introduction of new channels, advertisement and

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77 The rest were one production company: the SFP (société française de production), one transmission company: the TDF, an institute in charge of public radio: Radio-France and an institute in charge of archives and research: the INA. The television channels drew their finance partly from government grants and partly from their advertising revenue, apart from FR3.

78 Antenne 2 and TF1, for instance, maintained separate, rival offices in London, which they could hardly afford (the much bigger BBC had, in comparison, one office in Paris) (Ardagh, 1990, p 562).
internal competition - television remained under the control of the State. The reforms Giscard’s government introduced, however, were the beginning of a long line of reforms that left the sector with a lack of direction. Since then, ‘French television has been torn apart by the difficulty of reconciling technological innovation and financial viability and by debates about the role of a public service in maintaining national cultural integrity’ (Forbes, 1996, p 233).

The audiovisual media has become since the 1980s an arena of open conflict between a certain idea of French culture and identity and the financial and technological imperatives of the eighties and nineties. The following section analyzes the changes in the audiovisual sector since 1981, continuing on the line of stages of development. A significant part will be devoted to the political/ideological influences as they have contributed significantly in the shaping of French audiovisual policy.

2. The Factors and Issues Involved in the Formulation and Implementation of the French Audiovisual Policy since 1981

The structure and the operation of the media in France is affected by a number of factors of which many are interrelated. However, for the sake of analysis, they can be distinguished into the different groups of political, economic/technological and cultural/social factors. The main argument in this analysis is that politics continues playing a decisive role in the development of modern French media. Culture comes very close to politics in shaping audiovisual policy. Issues of language and cultural identity have dominated public debate over the impact of the audiovisual media since 1981. Regulation has struggled with the free market economy to provide a balance that will protect the cultural specificity of the nation. The economic and technological developments have added more pressure on the emerging media system.

2.1 Politics and Television: the Interference of the State

“L’évolution récente de l’audiovisuel français est une des plus chaotiques du monde industrialisé: inflation législative (16 lois depuis 1981), surcharge réglementaire, refontes successives de l’instance de régulation, valse des dirigeants dans les chaînes publiques, attribution de réseaux nationaux à des groupes privés (Canal+, cinquième et sixième réseau), re-attribution des mêmes réseaux à des nouveaux opérateurs, privatisation de la première chaîne publique, création de nouvelles chaîne publiques (ARTE et future chaîne éducative)... (Bessis, 1994, p 28).

Bessis clearly describes the problematic situation of the French audiovisual system, which is two-dimensional. The first is stemming from the ‘singularité française’, which has caused a ‘sur-politization’ of the audiovisual sector that, in its turn, has led to the excesses in the regulation and management of French television79. The second is attributed to the appearance of private interests that have led

79 The legislative instability has been very characteristic of the French audiovisual sector. “...dans le domaine de l’audiovisuel, la France n’a jamais voulu... prendre de voies de l’efficacité. Ses gouvernements successifs ont cédé: ...à l’effervescence réglementaire, puis aux excès de la déréglementation” (Rapport Général, No 101, p 340). The audiovisual regulations have been modified over sixteen
to the emergence of commercial television, the disassociation of the ‘Etat opérateur’ from the ‘Etat régulateur’ and the passage from the politico-étatiste hegemony to the hegemony of the commercial forces - a situation known as the ‘banalization française’ (ibid, p 29). How successive French governments responded to the arrival of these new actors and the extent to which they then relinquished their power over the media is a crucial question.

2.1.1 Political Ideologies

The way the different governments have constructed, since 1981, their audiovisual policies has also been influenced by an ‘idéologisme de droite et de gauche’, a neologism Clouzel uses to draw attention to the party ideologies that dominated the policy-making process:

“L’idéologie, même si l’on en a une approche péjorative aujourd’hui, est légitime. Elle fonde la politique qui ne serait sans elle que question de l’instantané. L’idéologisme est donc une déviation de l’idéologie qui n’a pas épargné, bien au contraire, l’audiovisuel “ (Rapport d’Information, No 384, p. 20).

The ‘idéologisme de gauche’ is more complicated than that of the ‘droite’, mainly because of the big contradictions that characterize it. On the one hand, we have ‘une politique de protectionnisme’ (quotas are one expression of it) and on the other, an expansionist policy and ‘ambitionnée’ which has led to the explosion of the French audiovisual sector. Traditionally, the French Left had a negative attitude towards capitalism and was particularly suspicious when it came to media and culture. The French left had long stressed the importance of the educational role of the media and supported the freedom of expression. Ideologically, the socialist party’s rhetoric in the 1980s was inspired by Léon Blum’s position on public service, according to which “the state should guarantee and set the moral tone for the conditions of existence and debate on the press, without taking over the instruments of communication” (Miége, 1989, p 119). The hostility towards the advertising-funded private radio stations - expressed by Pierre Mauroy in the early 1980s - and towards the formation of multimedia conglomerates during the period between 1981 and 1986 had its roots in the denunciation of the press, back in the 1930s, as a tool of the ‘grand capital’ and ‘oligarchie financière’ that manipulated public opinion (Palmer, 1987, p 131).

The other major influence was Lenin’s political doctrine on the press. These two major influences were diametrically opposed which also reflects the ideological confusion of the socialist party. The press cannot be reduced, as Miége argues, to being an instrument of orientation of what is conventionally referred to as public opinion and the fact that Lenin’s concept focused on the role of the press in class struggle does not mean that it can explain the different functions fulfilled by the contemporary media in a parliamentary democracy. Léon Blum’s conception had its limitations too. How could the “state apparatus, while increasing its strength to become essential to the social domination of monopoly capitalism at the same time ensure the existence of an independent and honest press guaranteeing freedom and peace?” (Miége, 1989, p119). The temptation to control times since the law of 29 July 1982 and more that 300 decrees have been introduced. Also, none of the six big reforms that have been put in action since 1959 has ever been applied completely.

80 The official reporter of the ‘Rapports d’Information’ and ‘Rapports General’ of Sénat on Communication and Culture.
81 According to Blum, “l’intervention de la puissance publique se justifie par la nature même des intérêts liés à l’organisation de la presse, pourriraient-il plus loin. La liberté politique, la paix supposent une presse indépendante et sincère. N’est-on pas le devoir de l’État de garantir la liberté et la paix?” (de la Haye, 1984, p 105).
Having suffered from lack of access to television while in opposition, the socialists had promised in their pre-election campaign to end the abuses of state control of television and create a new ‘espace de liberté’ which would encourage self-expression: “our new charter for the media will be not just the umpteenth post-war reshuffle but a definitive liberalization” (quoted in Ardgah, p 563). Liberalization was not what the thinkers of the left had in mind. Their analysis of the role and place of the media in society had been shaped by Gramsci, Bourdieu and Habermas not to mention Lenin and Marx. Their position was bound to clash with those media professionals who followed the liberal ethos.

Once in power, the socialists found great difficulty dealing with the economic realities of the market place as they related to media and culture. The growth of foreign, mostly American, multinationals and their influence on French culture is still a topic of great dispute. One of the main intentions of the socialists was to preserve the role of French broadcasting as a disseminator of the national culture. However, this good intention did not last for long. In the early period of their administration, they accepted the need for change in the French audiovisual system and admitted that France could not stay away from the major developments that were taking place in the wider audiovisual world. The abandonment of the state monopoly in broadcasting, in 1982, was the first step towards the adoption of the new conditions in this sector. The ideological compromise was great. What was left of it was an idéologisme de gauche which retained a leftist rhetoric that kept circulating the debate over culture and media and what measures should be taken to protect the cultural specificity of French audiovisual products.

The idéologisme de droite, in its turn, characterized by an extreme liberalism that led to the privatization of TF1, is less complicated than the idéologisme de gauche. What we notice, though, is a complete detour of the French Right regarding the role of the state. It was the French Right that had used and abused the concept of ‘tout-Etat’ in regard to television during their long stay in power. However, the new Right that came to power in 1986 was fully committed to the liberal doctrine of the free transfer of information across national boundaries, more sympathetic to the commercial media owners and more trusting in the market mechanism to balance out audience demand and program supply. Any help from the State was suspicious and one could say that this was because of the negative experience from the past when television was a political instrument of the State. It could also be said that it was also a way to disengage the state from an expensive contribution of the public finance to public broadcasting. This negative predisposition towards the State and the idéologisme de droite have affected severely the sector, with the most important effect the loss of identity of Public Sector (which ceased to be a Public Service a long time ago).

The alternations of political parties in the government, since the beginning of the 1980s created a
situation of uncertainty, policy paralysis and changes of direction, especially before and after elections. In general, the cultural and communication policies of the French governments since 1981 have received a lot of criticism, mainly because of their controversial character regarding the audiovisual media. Although diametrically opposed regarding their ideological background, the audiovisual policies of both left and right governments had the same effect on the French audiovisual system: excessive liberalization, lack of clarity regarding policy processes, legislative inability and lack of balance between the private and public sector. It is interesting to note here that ‘liberalization’ as a concept has been of a rather ambiguous nature for the French political parties. For the socialists, it meant the freeing of television from government control while for the conservatives it was related to economic liberalism, the doctrine of free market economy. Both parties, especially the Right, exploited this ambiguity in their reforms which were conducted in the name of political liberalization but it fact were influenced by the political ideology of economic liberalization\textsuperscript{82} (Perry, 1997).

The next two sections examine how these ideological dispositions have impacted since 1981 on the function and development of French television. The response to the deregulation process as well as the impact of deregulation on the state itself, the attempts to re-regulate and the political motivation behind the creation of new channels will be included in this examination.

\subsection*{2.1.2 ‘Déréglementation à la Française’: the State and the Role of Regulation}

The decision of the socialist government, in 1981, to cut the umbilical cord between the state and French television coincided with and indeed was partly caused by the process of deregulation, which had become a major cross-national trend by the beginning of 1980s. “The lifting or abolishing of government regulations on a range of economic activities in order to allow markets to work more freely” (Cerny, 1991, p 173), deregulation will be translated, in the French case, into a ‘regulation indépendante’ (Cohen-Taguni, 1991). This was an effort to build a regulatory body that would be used as a buffer to government control. Known as ‘controlled deregulation’ (la maîtrisée) (Mousso, 1989; Palmer, 1987), a term often used at the time by the policy-makers in the communication sector, it had as its main objective to limit the direct role of the state in television and promote competition between public and private sector channels in the name of pluralism, while ensuring that public service broadcasting was well placed regarding programming and advertising.

The ‘déréglementation à la française’ has had three main acts so far. The first act starts in 1982 with the relevant Law of July 23 ‘Sur la communication Audiovisuelle’ which abolishes the monopoly of the State (article 1: ‘La communication audiovisuelle est libre’; article 2: ‘les citoyens ont droit à une communication audiovisuelle libre et pluraliste’) and creates HACA (Haute Autorité de la création Audiovisuelle) - an independent regulatory body. The second act in 1986, a date related to the relevant Law of

\textsuperscript{82} Cluzel gives his explanation of liberalisation: ‘Si la libéralisme s’est imposé dans le droit de l’audiovisuel... c’est aussi par la nécessité de désengager l’Etat d’une intervention coûteuse pour les finances publiques...’ (Rapport Général, No 93, p 101).

\textsuperscript{83} In fact, the abolition of the monopoly was partial regarding only the ‘monopole de program’ while the ‘monopole de diffusion’ was maintained.
September 30 on ‘La liberté de Communication’ (article 1: l’établissement et l’emploi des installations de télécommunication, l’exploitation et l’utilisation des services de télécommunication sont libres) replaced HACA with the CNCL (Commission Nationale de la Communication et des libertés) and initiated the second stage of deregulation with the privatization of the main public service channel TF1. The 1981-1986 period is considered as the transition phase from the monopoly of public service model to the mixed model, but it was in the period between 1986-1989 the main act of the ‘play’ as advanced the liberalization of the audiovisual sector and the establishment of the private forces. The third act started with the returning of the socialist party in power in 1989 and the introduction of a new regulatory authority, the CSA (Conseil Supérieur de l’Audiovisuel).

I. ‘Discours’

In France, deregulation of communication reveals both the emergence of a new political economy of the sector and a new political symbolism affected by the actors involved in this process, i.e. the state, the financial groups and the authorities of regulation. The political symbolism of deregulation deserves more attention in the French case, as it is what distinguishes it from other cases. While in the United States, where the phenomenon was born, deregulation meant the reduction of the regulating role of public authorities, in France it meant the necessity of their existence in the form of independent authorities, in the sense that the state will not interfere but it would make sure that regulation would still be exercised.

In the appearance of the market forces, competition and private interests, France - a country in which issues of public interest have been historically placed under the direct control of public administration - felt the need for some form of regulation, for it was believed that even an efficient market needs to be correctly regulated (Cohen-Taguni, 1990, p 28). Efficient market is indeed a good reason for regulation but the fact is that the French state could not easily relinquish its control over communication. As the demand for ‘moins d’Etat’ increased, the state needed to show its willingness to withdraw and deregulation gave it the opportunity to make its retreat or its self-limitation visible to the public.

Deregulation in France encompassed neo-liberal and neo-socialist visions, as Pierre Musso calls them (1989, p 45), which were brought together under a common critical position regarding the role of the state and politics in the communication sector. Thus, both the 1982 law of the socialist government and the 1986 law of the conservative government liberated the communications sector under a new regulatory framework but for different reasons. In definition, the concept of deregulation neutralises the political power and indicates that the regulatory space is vacant. That is why, the French authorities believed, it must create an independent regulatory authority to fill this empty space. We have therefore a consensus to liberate communication and at the same time to install and ‘instance de régulation’ which for many may seen a contradiction. Not for

84 The notion of public service almost disappears from the text of the law.
85 Article 2 explains the meaning of telecommunications in the law: “on entend par télécommunication toute transmission, émission ou réception de signes, de signaux, d’écrits, d’images, de son ou de renseignements de toute nature, par fil, optique, radio-électricité ou autres systèmes électromagnétiques”. It also explains, in the same article, what audiovisual communication is in relation to telecommunications (see annex for the text of the law 30 September 1986).
86 The neo-liberal position insisted on a self-regulation style while the neo-socialist one preferred seeing deregulation as a transition between the state and the market: a mixed system. ‘Dérégulation sauvage’ for the first and ‘dérégulation maîtrisée’ for the second.
the French who on both the left and right believed that to be liberated, communication needed to be regulated. Deregulation in the French case does not mean complete absence or decrease of rules but a rearrangement of the existing processes of regulation and the framework within they worked. It created a ‘visual effect’ regarding the visibility of state control by a double displacement: on one hand, intra-institutional, by masking the function of surveillance and on the other, by the passage from a state-culture to the culture of private enterprise (ibid, p 47). Deregulation à la française also means a deregulation internal to the state apparatus. The optic illusion thus created is what is called the ‘invisibilization du politique’. Facing a political crisis, deregulation gave the chance to the state to renew its identity and redefine its role in the communication sector.

Musso and Pineau (1989, p 127) suggest another term, instead of deregulation, which seems more applicable in the French case – trans-regulation. They argue that there is transition and not rupture, just a replacement or displacement of the main actors and strategies:

“il s’agit de la transition, opérée par ajustements successifs entre acteurs, d’un système régulé par un monopole de droit (supprimé ou éclaté) à un nouveau mode de régulation dans lequel l’entreprise est hégémonique” (Musso et Pineau, 1989, p. 129).

With this transition, the state does not appear any more to have the exclusivity in the design of policy in the sector of communication. The substitution for the term deregulation with that of trans-regulation comes of the following definition. This transformation is explained by the crisis of legitimacy of the state especially that of the politico-cultural monopoly on television and by the need to make the role of the state less visible. The commercial political economy is constructed on the insufficiencies and abuses of the public sector under the state control. Deregulation as a transitory period takes the form of a war, ’la de la communication’ (Musso, 1987, p 8), or ‘la guerre des images’ (Frèches, 1986) where each is called to take sides, either on the side of the state and the public monopoly or on the side of the market. Socialist visions from the past of a public service with a cultural, educative function, or neo-liberal visions for a self-regulated sector. Frèches in his book, ’La guerre des images’ (op.cit), argued that they must organize the retreat of the state from the sector of communication, which must be replaced by the enterprise where this is possible, and eventually privatize two of the tree public service channels. The war of images is part of an economic war where:

“Le marché doit être le seul mode de régulation des images. La guerre des images n’est que le son stéréo et l’image couleur appliquée à la guerre économique... le retrait de l’ Etat de la communication devrait logiquement inciter les entreprises privées à y entrer davantage” (Frèches, 1986, p 123).

The response, a ‘third way’, to this ‘déréglementation sauvage’, proposed by the neo-liberals, comes from the neo-socialist’s compromise between a new public service and a regulated private sector, other wise known as the ‘maîtrisé’. The choice was between a public, private or mixed system. The last was to win in this war of communication. The state retreated but not completely. Its invisibility was partial, as the interference in the function of the independent regulatory authorities will prove in the following section.
Deregulation brought the need for an institutional/cultural reform, which did not prove easy, despite the initial promises by the pre-election socialist party. Even the promises, though, contained in the ‘charte de la communication’ of the socialist party were not very precise, apart from one, which appeared in the campaign of François Mitterrand. It had to do with the creation of an ‘organisme national qui aurait une autorité morale suffisante et une indépendance pour trancher les problèmes’, an organization in which the government would be represented in a ‘façon minoritaire’. The objectives were to ‘rompre entre le pouvoir politique et les directeurs de chaîne les liens de dépendance institués par la loi de 1974’ and ‘répondre au défi des techniques nouvelles de communication’ by defining a communication policy ‘digne d’un grands pays démocratique’ (quoted in Bourdon, 1994, p 246). The break up of the state monopoly, however, was not clearly addressed.

After his election, Mitterrand commissioned a report, the Rapport Moinot to make proposals on media reform. The only innovation of this report was the recommendation of an independent authority of audiovisual communication “chargée d’assurer l’unité du service public et de garantir son indépendance, son bon fonctionnement et son avenir” (Moinot, 1981, p 21). Apart from this, the report refrained from making any specific suggestion for the reorganization of public service broadcasting. References to private and local initiatives and the new technologies were made but in a general manner. Many accused the report to be rather too étatiste, as the socialist government wanted to keep a parliamentary control on the proposed independent authority: “elle doit notamment être associée par le Gouvernement à la définition des orientation générales de la politique de l’Etat dans la mesure où elles influent sur l’audiovisuel” (ibid). The first reforms Mitterrand finally introduced in the sector were the breaking up of the state monopoly by allowing the creation of private channel and the creation of an independent regulatory body, the Haute Autorité de la Communication Audiovisuel 87. The Law of 29 July 1982 on the ‘Communication Audiovisuelle’ was voted only by the Socialist party of the Assemblée Nationale, despite the proposed modifications by the SENAT 88 (Bourdon, 1994, p 249).

The new Law declared that the ‘Communication Audiovisuelle est libre’ (see annex for the text of the law) but there were limits. The opening of the sector to private forces was strictly framed within an attempt to rehabilitate the concept of public service. French television retained its status as a public service 89. French television retained its status as a public service which was required to ensure pluralism and independence in news coverage (art. 2), to give access to cultural, social, professional, 87 Decentralization was also part of this reform, which was presented as one of the main objectives. In order to guarantee a more authentic pluralism in the managing of the audiovisual sector, it was necessary to make sure that the “diffusion publique reflète plus exactement la diversité des composantes de la nation”. Regarding television, decentralization was to be under the aegis of FR3. In 1983, FR3 approved the creation of the first three regional companies (the overall number of them was twelve). However, only one of them (Nord-Pas-de-Calais/Picardie) achieved a legal status, which was never put into practice. The reason for the failure of the decentralization of television was, according to Cousin & Delcross (1990, p 158) purely political: “l’élan réformateur de 1982 s’est apaisé alors que dans un contexte d’élections successives défavorables à la gauche la question de l’information régionale télévisée a constitué un champ particulièrement sensible sur lequel on redoutait la pression des pouvoirs locaux”.
88 In the upper house, SENAT, the Right and Center retained control throughout the 1981-6 period, and opposed many aspects of the government’s media policy. The senator, Clouzel was from the conservative party, which also explains his hard criticism of the socialist policies.
89 The new law established also three new public audiovisual companies: Radio France Internationale, the Société de Radiodiffusion et de Télévision pour l’outre Mer and the France Médias International which lasted until 1986.
spiritual and philosophical groups (art. 4), to protect the French language and promote regional languages (art. 8), to help spread French culture and to increase the knowledge and develop the initiative of the citizenry (art. 9 & 10). The public service remained the privileged guardian of free audiovisual expression. The ending of the monopoly was accompanied by the re-assertion of the public service as the best guarantor of pluralism (Chevalier, 1990). The state monopoly also retained its monopoly of transmission. Both public and private broadcasters therefore had to depend for the transmission facilities on TDF (Tele Diffusion Francaise), which was still under the technical control of the Post and Telecommunications Ministry, which had the overall responsibility for the frequency allocation. Permission to private initiatives to either produce programs or create channels was granted on the basis of very strict conditions. The government, therefore, retained substantial power over the audiovisual sector. Interestingly enough, the socialist government allowed the introduction of advertising in the regional television companies, something that was against their initial pre-election manifesto. The acceptance of advertising as a source of finance for state television was an indication of how far the socialists had moved from their initial policy on television. “Advertising was not longer regarded as the capitalist Trojan horse inside state broadcasting, but as an essential means of funding...” (Kuhn, 1995, p 173).

Overall, the reform appeared as a compromise, pushed by the pressure of circumstances and tending to adopt the traditional model of public service to the new socio-cultural and technological demands (Chevalier, 1990, p 15). The new law’s most worthy achievement was the creation of the independent regulatory authority, HACA, whose detailed structure appears in the table below.
### Broadcasting Regulatory Bodies in France

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<th>HACA</th>
<th>CNCL</th>
<th>CSA</th>
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<td><strong>Dates</strong></td>
<td>1982-6</td>
<td>1986-9</td>
<td>1989 to date</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Parliamentary majority</strong></td>
<td>Left</td>
<td>Right</td>
<td>Left 1988-93 Right 1993</td>
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<td><strong>Members</strong></td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td><strong>Mandate</strong></td>
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<td>1 Conseil d’Etat</td>
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<td>1 member of Académie Française, chosen by 3 professionals</td>
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**Table 1**

The main aims of this body were to guarantee the freedom of audiovisual communication and the independence of the public sector, as well as to monitor the implementation of the *Cahiers de Charges* of both the public and private channels. It had the power to award broadcasting licenses, monitor programs, to guarantee political pluralism and to appoint managers. The HACA, though, attracted a lot of criticism. The main problem had mainly to do with its internal organization (Rollet, 1997, p 38). The appointments procedure and composition of the HACA became subjects of fierce political controversy. Two thirds of the Authority’s members were nominated by left-wing politicians, despite the recommendations of the Moinot committee, which had suggested that only three of the nine all together members should be political appointments, made by the President. From a political point of view, the way HACA’s members were selected was seen as an illustration of the lack of political impartiality. Another indication of the lack of impartiality was the award of la Cinq and TV6 to personalities linked to the socialist party. In this case, the HACA was not even consulted before taking the decision to set up the new commercial channels (Kuhn, 1995, p 177). It did, though, express its fears that the development of private television was occurring in conditions unfair to the public service sector. The introduction of competition between the different channels accentuated what already was obvious at the time of the ORTF: the massive imports of foreign programs, the lack of finance for French audiovisual production and the increase of running costs. The High Authority, alarmed by this situation suggested the concentration of the production resources of all three public channels (Palmer, 1987).
In addition, many of the elements proposed by the new Law were at times impossible to implement, as the sanctions available to the High Authority were extremely limited. The authority was responsible for the drawing, every year, of the *cahiers des charges* for the program making companies but its composition of members closely related to the socialist party, gave the government the power to interfere in the programming of the channels. The HACA was not the only body involved in the policy making. There were other agencies that continued playing an important role - the Secretary of the State for Communication and its legal office (*service juridique et techniques de l’information*), the Minister of Culture and the Ministry of the PTT, not to mention the President himself (Guéhenno, 1987, p 279). All of them retained essential responsibilities in the policy making process.

Yet, one needs to recognize the fact that no previous attempt to reform the French audiovisual system went so far in limiting the direct control of the state as the socialists did. The actions of the socialist party in power (1981-1986) proved that it was very difficult to break away from the tradition of political interference and expedience. The state managed, despite the substantial changes, to maintain much of its power over television. This was more visible in the public service, as Cousin⁹⁰, accusing the socialist government’s policy, argued:


The issue of politics and its role in broadcasting did not get clearer with the change of government in 1986. In the elections of that year, the socialist party lost and France started its first political cohabitation with a conservative prime minister and a socialist president. Jacques Chirac had a clear philosophy when it came to the audiovisual sector. His reform was part of a radical New Right agenda in which privatization was to play a key role. Exploiting the weakness and failures of the HACA, soon after their coming to power, the Chirac government dissolved the High Authority and replaced it with **CNCL** (*Commission Nationale de la Communication et des Libertés*) in accordance with the new Law of Sept 30 1986, otherwise known as the ‘*Loi Léotard*’ from the name of the new Minister of Culture and Communication.

Apart from the institutional change that brought culture and communication back under the same ministry⁹¹ and the creation of a new regulatory authority, the new government’s other aims were, first, to reduce the level of state ownership in the French media by privatizing one or two of the public service channels and second, to make the system more competitive and less restricted by regulation (Kuhn, 1995, p 188). In fact, Chirac’s government continued with the changes

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⁹⁰ Bertrand Cousin was advocating, as a true neo-liberal, that “*l’État doit être garant et non un gérant. Il doit garantir l’exercice de la liberté: il ne doit pas gérer le système de communication de notre pays*” (ibid).

⁹¹ As it is seen in the previous chapter, the socialists had separated the two as a way to show the new emphasis on culture.
introduced by the socialists only increased their pace. For the neo-liberals, the reform of 1986 was the real liberalization of communication but it only could happen in a climate of 'concurrence et de pluralisme'. The precondition for this to happen was the definitive abandonment of the state monopoly, which had survived the 1982 reform. This meant not only the end of the monopoly on 'l'établissement et l'emploi des installations' but also on the exploitation and use of the telecommunication services (Chevalier, 1990, p 17). The opening to a free communication system had implications for the existence of public service television, which had to exist within the frame of a system that was obeying the rules of the market. The new Law makes provisions for this new situation by eradicating the concept of public service from the text of the law. The section III of the 1982 Law entitled: “Le service public de la radiodiffusion sonore et de la télévision” became in the 1986 Law: ‘Du secteur public de la communication’. As the concept of 'public sector' was not defined legally like the public service was before, it was instantly paired with that of private sector between which the policy-makers wanted to install a 'logique de concurrence' (Cousin & Delcross, 1990, p 165).

Nevertheless, the rupture from the public service logic was not complete as the mere existence of public sector was still based on the old need to protect and promote the national culture. Even the private channels were required, in the name of pluralism, to respect a number of obligations monitored by the independent authority. These obligations showed that the installation of a liberal mixed system, in the audiovisual sector, was still restricted by the traditional obligations of public service. In a new set up, both private and public sector were seen as functioning in a market system with obligations to respect (Chevalier, 1990). Despite the appearances, the public sector was not at all in the same position as the private sector. In the rush to liberalize the audiovisual sector, the restructured public sector lacked a clear direction and mission, pushed to either obey the market conditions under which the private sector was functioning, or risk becoming a 'ghetto culturel', marginalized in the periphery of the audiovisual system\textsuperscript{92}.

The liberalization of the sector did not by any means indicate the end of state interference. The state continued to play a major regulatory role not only in setting out the different normative frameworks for public and private television but also in maintaining control of the appointments to the new regulatory authority, CNCL. To provide an independent regulatory authority, with a wide range of responsibilities in the running and future development of the audiovisual sector, the neo-liberal government did not need to replace the HACA. It could simply increased its power and financial means and maintain thus a certain regulatory stability in the sector. However, to quote Tuppen, 'such action would have been to recognize implicitly the soundness of this socialist creation; ministers were not prepared to countenance such an idea' (1991, p 192). Instead, CNCL was created (see table 1 for its composing structure) with aims and objectives very similar to the previous authority as far the freedom of communication was concerned. It had more power in sanctioning the private sector as it could suspend or withdraw the license of the channel that did not respect the rules or send it to court if necessary. Despite the increased powers, which the previous regulatory body lacked, the CNCL as its predecessor lacked credibility and independence from the political establishment\textsuperscript{93}. The reform was to increase the media independence but, in fact, right wing sympathies among the CNCL's members made sure that the government's wishes were respected. In addition, the managers of the public service channels were replaced by those close to Chirac government. In addition, all the licenses granted by HACA for radio libres (independent

\textsuperscript{92} The project for the decentralization of television of the previous government was also abandoned.

\textsuperscript{93} As it can be seen in table 1 on the structure of CNCL, L'Académie Française chose one of the members. Someone would expect, therefore, a nominee with more cultural than political affiliations. Even the Academy, though, chose as a candidate a journalist "marqué à droite", Michel Droi (Bourdon, 1994, p 275).
local radio stations) were cancelled and even before the new law was passed, Chirac asked the Council of State to nullify the concessions of La Cinq and TV6. The Right had never accepted the way in which the franchises of these two stations had been assigned by the socialist government. The re-allocation of the franchises was, naturally, given to groups whose political affinities were acceptable by the CNCL and, thus, by the government (Rollet, 1997, p 39; Tuppen, 1991, p 192). Once more a, supposedly, independent authority, gave in to the pressure from those in power. The CNCL was also charged with organizing the sale of TF1, the single most liberal act of the conservative government that was to turn up side down the French audiovisual system, as will be seen in the next section.

The result of this reform, introduced by the Law of 30 September 1986, appeared to be the product of a combination of circumstances and did not produce a coherent structure built to last for a very long time. Tarlé argues that the circumstances under which the law was formed were related more to the need of the conservatives to take control of the audiovisual media before the presidential elections of 1988 and also to satisfy the demand of the neo-liberal section of the conservative party for a strong privatization policy (1987, p 42). The best way to sum up the achievements of this reform is by quoting the Senator Jean Cluzel who in his annual report on French television said that ‘French TV’s sixth audiovisual reform hasn’t succeeded any more than the previous five’ and, as Michaud adds, may very well, if one reads between the lines, necessitate a seventh reform! (1988, p 23). And that’s exactly what the Socialists produced when they came back to power.

At the presidential elections of 1988, the socialist party regained power and the new government hoping to avoid previous mistakes decided not to change completely the 1986 law, perhaps because it was convenient for the socialists to keep up with the liberal policies of the previous government. The CNCL was, nevertheless, replaced by a new regulatory authority, CSA (Conseil Supérieur de l’Audiovisuel). Mitterrand had criticized CNCL during the cohabitation period and had promised in his Lettre à tous les Français, during his presidential elections that the new independent authority would become part of the Constitution, the only way, according to his argument, to secure its independence from the government (Bourdon, 1994, p 283). Everyone agreed that the audiovisual sector was ‘malade de ses réformes’, as Catherine Tasca\textsuperscript{94} had declared that year and together with Jack Lang announced the plans for a new Law, that of 17 January 1989 which was to reinforce the powers of CSA (ibid).

The tasks of the CSA were not very different to those of the previous authorities. Many articles of the Loi Léotard were retained but in most cases, the field of action was widened and some regulations were tightened (especially those concerning the quotas on Francophone and European programs). The new aspect and strongest one of CSA was the responsibility to negotiate a contract with the private channels and the reinforcement of its powers to punish those channels, which did not meet their contractual obligations\textsuperscript{95}. The new law allowed the CSA not only to reduce the

\textsuperscript{94} Tasca was the new minister ‘délégué à la communication’ next to Jack Lang, Minister of Culture.

\textsuperscript{95} This contract covered the amount of time devoted to French programs, the amount of turnover invested in the buying of broadcast rights for French-language feature films, the transmission of educative and cultural programs, the
authorized time of broadcasting and suspend the offending channels but also impose financial sanctions (Rollet, 1997, p 40; Delivet, 1989, p 10-11).

A new division of responsibilities was introduced between the government and the regulatory body. The government retained responsibility for defining the general rules applicable to both public and private companies, especially in the areas of programs sponsoring, advertising, and screening of feature films (Delivet, 1989, p 7). This shows that the government was not ready to let CSA play its role of regulator. Above all, the main aim of the CSA and the government was to save the public sector, which had experienced a serious loss of its audience in the battle with the private channels, (the guerre de l'audimat - rating war - as it was called)96. The survival of the public sector was seen as a priority and several initiatives were launched as part of a conscious attempt to remedy some of the more serious problems in the functioning of the French audiovisual system:


In August 1989, a single director was elected by the CSA with the power to appoint the managing directors of both channels97. After the excesses of liberalization in the field of communication, not only by the conservatives but by the socialists too, the rehabilitation of the concept of public service after 1988 revealed ‘une prise de conscience plus claire de l’impossibilité de laisser jouer seulement les lois du marché’ (Chevalier, 1990, p 18). Regulatory instability, though, continued to sabotage the sporadic attempts to balance a mixed system that struggled between the ‘logique politique’ and the ‘logique marchande’.

When the Right returned to power in 1993, the CSA was not replaced, perhaps due to reform fatigue. Its continued existence helped it to gradually gain authority and certain independence, at least in principle. Edouard Balladur, the new prime minister, had announced before the elections that ‘il ne faut rien changer au PAF’ but this promise did not last long. Alain Carignon, the new Minister of Communication, came up with a new reform. The Loi Carignon, 1 février 1994, based on the Cambet Report was supposed to modify the 1986 law, although, at the end it had very little to do with it. Called, pejoratively, ‘une véritable auberge espagnole’ (Le Dantec & Sangenac, 1994, p 2) because of the diversity and combination of the proposed reforms, the new law did not introduce, in the end, any major changes in the audiovisual system.

maximum time allocated to advertising and measures of support for the French film and television production industries (Kuhn, 1995, p 197).
96 Between 1987 and 1989, both public channels, Antenne 2 and FR 3 had lost almost 30 per cent of the market share.
97 In the effort to assert its independence, the CSA appointed Philippe Guilhaume as the chairman of France-Télévision in 1989, although he was not a government supporter. However, under government pressure, he was forced to resign and was replaced by someone more sympathetic to the party on power, Hervé Bourges (who was in his turn replaced by Jean-Pierre Elkabbach when the right returned to power in 1993) (Perry, 1997, p 120). Independence, therefore, from the government was rather relative.
The main objectives were the reinforcement of the public sector by introducing a new chaîne éducative and by applying the same sanctions to public channels as those on the private ones; and the protection of French cinematographic production as well as the French language and songs (an imposition of a 40 per cent transmission time of French songs). At the same time though, it introduced measures like the modification of the anti-concentration law (one shareholder can hold up to 49 per cent of the private channel’s capital) and the development of the private sector (the private channels could benefit from a second renewal of their licenses, ‘présomption de renouvellement’) that indicated other objectives too. In fact, the main objective, Rony argues (1994), was to reinforce the private sector. The pressure from the internationalization of communication appears frequently in the debate around the new law:

“L’adaptation du secteur audiovisuel à l’internationalisation rapide et à la concentration croissante des industries de communication - ce qui nécessite la défense des exceptions culturelles européennes et française - impose en effet le développement de groupe audiovisuels dynamiques, qu’ils soient publics ou privé, devant être placés à armes égales avec leurs concurrences européennes et internationaux” (Dutaret & Gumery, 1994, p 3).

If there is something interesting in this new law and the conditions under which it was formed, this is the debate over the GATT agreement that was taking place at the same time and affected, to a certain extent, the shaping of the new ‘reform’. The audiovisual took a symbolic meaning in a debate in which the government had national approval: ‘contre la volonté américaine’, the French authorities fight for their television and cinema to be excluded from the negotiation on the liberalization of world trade (Bourdon, 1994). The defense of the ‘exception culturelle’ took very quickly the meaning of a national crusade from which the government did benefit in the sense that it appeared to be the leading force behind the protection to the French culture, as we will see in chapter 6. There was, however, a struggle in government, between the defence of the public sector as the representative of the French culture and their ideological commitment to liberalization of the audiovisual sector. At the same time, the argument was made that a strong private sector can boost the financing of the French audiovisual production and resist thus the forces of internationalization. Matters of culture appeared to be at the center of the debate for a strong private sector that could resist Americanization: “Il s’agit là du volet offensif du maintien d’une identité française de la communication face à la liberalization des échanges internationaux dans un domaine économiquement prometteur” (Dutaret, 1994, p 3). Creating another public service channel with an educational purpose was another example of the guilty consciousness of French governments for liberalizing the sector without taking care of the implications on the public sector. As it will be seen in the last section of this chapter, the creation of cultural channels as balancing acts have been a frequent phenomenon in the recent history of the audiovisual sector.

The state does not withdraw, therefore, from the French audiovisual sector. On the contrary, the GATT issue gave it the opportunity to have a tour de force by claiming to be its protector. In addition, the new law gave the government the right to interfere, ‘discreetly’, in the modification of the distribution of the frequencies, something that was under the jurisdiction of CSA. However, giving this right to the government was to deny the principle of the 1er article of the law, according to which “la communication audiovisuelle est libre et l’exercice de cette liberté est garantie par le C.S.A, autorité indépendante” (Le Dantec & Sangenac, 1994, p 4). It seems that old habits die hard.
The 1994 reform was not the last. The French politicians have made it a custom to introduce reforms, sometimes for the sake of doing so. The issue of public service reappears every so often, as the bad conscience of the French government. One of the last proposed reforms was by Catherine Trautmann, the socialist Minister of culture and communication, who in 1989 proposed a new law in the audiovisual sector that focused on the public service: “Il s’agit de promouvoir une télévision publique forte et ambitieuse, garante du pluralisme, indépendante des pouvoirs économiques et politiques et fondamentalement au service des citoyens” (Agence Press Française, 10 Nov 1998). According to Lionel Jospin, the socialist prime minister, the new law, concerning the public service, must ‘servir le public’.

We have, therefore, a return to the old concept of public service, which should be protected from competition and is financed by the license fee and the government. The proposed reform entailed a regrouping of the public channels under one company, called France Télévision (with a director elected for five years by the CSA) and the reduction from 12 to 5 minutes per hour of advertising in France 2 and 3. Trautmann suggested the financial support of the government, as a supplement to the lost revenue from advertising: “il ne s’agit pas de faire payer aux Français la décision politique qui fait baisser les crédits publicitaires, il s’agit que ce qui est apporté par les Français serve aux résultats à l’écran” (Boulard, 1998). The reaction from the opposition criticized this reform, arguing that the proposed structure of public sector reminds the old ORTF with the risk of going back to the political control of the public service and its further weakening (Reuters, 10 nov. 1998).

Overviewing this section and especially the efforts to build an independent regulatory authority, one could say that the French state has come a long distance in the last two decades regarding its involvement in the function of television. The recognition that interference should stop was a big step forward as the regulatory efforts towards this direction show. However, the state finds it difficult to relinquish powers that it had been cherishing for so long. Observing table (1) carefully, what comes out as a striking fact is that neither of the first two regulatory authorities survived a government change, despite the fact that, in both cases, the members had been, on purpose, appointed for a longer period that members of parliament or even the president. The initial aim to break away from the traditional pattern in which parliamentary or presidential changes have been accompanied by changes in the media sector, seems that it failed. If a government did not like the political affiliations of the previous government’s regulatory body, it would introduce a new legislation to initiate a new one, as it had no legal right to replace its members. Even CNCL, which had the lowest proportion of members chosen by politicians, did not escape the criticism for being the least independent (Perry, 1987, p 119-20). Covered interference and many regulatory reforms were the two main ways the French state responded with to the deregulation process. As Clouzel noted in 1988 none of these reforms contributed to a much needed stability:

“Six réformes en profondeur en vingt-huit ans: mais aucune ne fut appliquée complètement. Par contre, les bouleversements qu’elles introduisirent empêchèrent les entreprises du secteur de la communication de se développer dans le climat de stabilité juridique et politiques dont elles ont besoin et de préparer dans le sérénité qui s’impose les réponses aux défis économiques et technologiques qui s’annoncent” (Cluzel, 1988, p 66).

The purpose of this section was to see what impact deregulation had on the state itself and the efforts of the state to re-regulate. Political factors have remained always in the front line of this process, at times leading and at others being led. In the next section, the focus point will be on how

98 The proposed reform has two parts, with the first focusing on the redefinition of public sector and the second on the development and regulation of the audiovisual services.
deregulation affected the shaping of the audiovisual sector with the introduction of private/commercial channels and the privatization of TF1. Although inevitable, deregulation was also, in the French case, the result of unsuccessful efforts to regulate the sector.

2.1.3 The Introduction of Commercial Channels and the Privatization of TF1: the Explosion of the ‘Paysage Audiovisuel Français’

By the end of the 1980s, the French audiovisual sector was one of the most deregulated and commercial systems in Western Europe. This might seem to be in direct contradiction with what was presented in the previous section, that deregulation in France took the form of controlled deregulation and even a re-regulation of the sector by an interfering state. However, contradictory they might seem to be, they are actually parts of the same story. The French governments’ response to deregulation was mixed, not to say confused. On the one hand, they tried to liberalize the sector and on the other, they tried to re-regulate it, in their effort to maintain some control over it. The result is very interesting, as we have at once a deregulated sector with the introduction of commercial channels and the unique act of privatizing the first public channel TF1 and new regulations, in the form of independent regulatory authorities. As was seen above, though, these authorities have not proved very efficient and despite the appearance of a certain form of regulation, in fact the sector was left open to market forces not so much out of inevitability but out of political expediencies and mistakes. As will be argued in this section, the new commercial channels (La Cinq and TV6) as well as the privatization of TF1 were not the result of careful planning. As it was in the case of regulation, the creation of new channels was affected by politics.

When the socialists came to power in 1981, although they were aware of the changes much needed in the sector, they were also aware that an accelerated political and economic liberalization was not free of risks. Their commitment to a strong cultural policy would not allow them to disregard the cultural danger that new television channels might entail with a predominately foreign programming, meaning mainly American. American cultural imperialism had been demonized by many French socialists at the time, with Jack Lang leading the attack. Even if his comments were at times, as Kuhn puts it, ‘nothing more than chauvinistic rhetorical posturing’, they were, nevertheless, an indication of a genuine concern that the nation’s cultural identity might be threatened, if the television system expanded too quickly leaving the French audiovisual industry unable to fill its programming needs (1994, p 167).

The socialists, also, wanted to avoid the anarchy of the Italian experience in television and their aim was a controlled deregulation/liberalization of the French television system. This aim was an essential element in the socialist policy on media, which intended to pursue several goals simultaneously. One was to introduce more pluralistic control of television and wider access to the

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99 See table 1, annex for chap 4 for the expansion of the French television channels. The list in this table would be even longer if one includes the channels sourced in other countries and also add RFO (Radio-Télévision Française d’Outre-mer, 1982) and TV5 Europe (1983).

100 The Reform Law on Audiovisual Communication of July 1982, although it was designed to ‘liberate’ the media from the state control and to establish a legislative framework for mixed economy initiative, it also aimed to discourage diversification (see Dysom & Humphreys, 1986)
medium. Another one was to stimulate the domestic program production industry and to ensure that France continued to be among the first industrialized nations developing new communications technology\textsuperscript{101}. The Italian model was not compatible with those goals as it was accompanied by a number of disadvantages: the enormous increase in foreign program imports; the destabilization of the Italian film industry, the press and the RAI (Radio Televisione Italiana), the public sector; the impact on quality; the failure to be associated with any technological development in the communications infrastructure; and the anarchy over the airwaves on which the emergent Berlusconi empire imposed its dominance (Kuhn, 1994). The socialists had, therefore, the Italian model of unrestricted deregulation as an example to avoid.

Thus, having in mind all the possible risks, the socialist government wished to open the sector to market forces gradually and in an organized manner. Canal Plus, the fourth channel introduced before La Cinq and TV6, did not escape from state interference. Although it was run by the multimedia conglomerate HAVAS whose interests were commercial, it was also in close relation with the authorities: “La présence d’Havas, bras séculier de l’Etat dans l’audiovisuel...” (Pastiaux, 1989, p 110). The state owned over half if its shares and could control the company’s policy through its control of the directors’ appointments. André Rousselet, the chairman of Havas and Canal Plus, was a close associate of Mitterrand. The government had, therefore, a vested interest in facilitating the entry of the new channel into the market. Despite the fact that the new channel was not part of the state monopoly, Mitterrand was very keen in seeing this initiative succeed. According to Pastiaux, “Canal Plus illustre plus un nouveau mode d’intervention de l’Etat, plus indirect, que son véritable désengagement” (ibid). It was an attempt by the state to promote a controlled deregulation. Canal Plus, therefore, enjoyed privileges that the other channels did not. Compared to the public service channels, the new pay TV did not have to obey the same strict obligations. Its cahier des charges were containing 26 articles compared to 155 of Antenne 2 (ibid). The initial plan did not contain advertising as part of the new channel’s revenue but it was finally allowed to show advertising, as subscription was not enough to sustain the channel’s finance. The programming schedule of the channel, though, based mainly on feature films caused a big controversy as the French film industry was not happy with the possible impact this channel might have over attendance at cinemas. In the end, an agreement was reached and Canal Plus was allowed to show films closer to their release date as a well as at any time during the week, favorable conditions compared to the public channels, but in return it should invest 25 per cent of budget in the production of French feature films (Kuhn, 1995, p 180). The channel had better chances to survive than any new channel in the market. There were, though, problems at the beginning not only with the decoding equipment and the reluctance of the audience to watch a new channel but also with the opening of the sector to more new commercial channels. Just after the beginning of its transmission, Mitterrand announced the creation of two commercial channels, a rather bad policy movement as this had an impact on the audience, which preferred to see what the free channels had to offer instead of pay subscription to Canal Plus. Nevertheless, pay TV did manage to overcome its problems and became a very successful company that expanded in other European countries too. However, not all new ventures of the government in the audiovisual sector were to enjoy the same privileged conditions as Canal Plus and in the case of the fifth and sixth channels the interference of the government and lack of careful planning led to the destruction of the sector.

\textsuperscript{101} The socialist government invested a lot on the cable plan which was regarded as of vital importance for the French economy (Bertand in Negrine, 1985)
A committee was set up to prepare a report, known as the Rapport Bredin, which was to examine the possibility and the consequences of expanding the audiovisual sector by introducing private channels. The committee proposed the creation of two national channels:

“La mission a choisi la voie d’une ouverture réelle, donnant aux télévisions privées les meilleures chances d’exister, mais une ouverture ordonnée... Ce choix assume l’inconvénient de paraître aux uns trop libéral, aux autres trop directif, et sans doute d’encourir les reproches de deux mythologies contraires... Dans quatre ou cinq ans le paysage audiovisuel sera beaucoup transformé. Il conviendra alors de faire... la réforme” (Bredin, 1985, p 258-9).

Despite, though, this opening to private forces, the report devoted a large section on the protection of the public sector and it talked a lot about the safeguarding of national culture\(^1\), while calling for a controlled deregulation:

“En l’absence de règles, la libération des télévisions fait courir le risque d’une médiocrité agressive et progressive, chacun entraînant l’autre dans la compétition vers le pire. Les industries du cinéma et les industries de la création ne sont pas les seules menacées: c’est toute la culture d’un peuple, sa langue,... qui peuvent être les victimes de l’apparente liberté qu’engendrerait une dérégulation complète” (ibid., p 11).

While, therefore, the state would abandon its monopoly on television, it would not let go of its regulatory power which it needed in order to achieve its policy goals regarding technological development and cultural protectionism as well as protection of the public sector from market forces. “Je suis pour la liberté d’informer. La question ne se pose pas d’être pour ou contre. On ne peut pas être contre. Les moyens de diffuser les images vont se multiplier: le problème est de savoir comment organiser cette liberté” : those were the words of Mitterrand on the 4 January 1984 when he signed the act for the birth of private channels (Lacan, 1989, p 17). Mitterrand was proved right; the problem was that they did not know how to organize this liberalization of the sector. Although, the socialists were in power, they were by no means, as Kuhn argues, in total control of the policy-making environment in the audiovisual field.

Following the publication of the Rapport Bredin, the government rushed to make the necessary technical and administrative arrangements so that the two proposed private channels could be in operation before the elections. The conditions under which the first two private channels (La Cinq and TV6) were created highlighted the fact that political expediency was still the prime instigator of any changes in the sector. The left, as was seen above, was very reluctant to see the introduction of private channels. Yet, just before the elections of 1986, Mitterrand launched, almost in a rush, two commercial channels. Knowing that if the Right won the elections they would open, themselves, the sector to private channels and thus have the opportunity to allocate the franchises to their supporters and claim the credit for extending viewer choice, Mitterrand decided to claim the innovation in order not only to win back support by adopting a popular measure but also have a say in the allocation of those two channels (Perry, 1997; Lacan, 1989). The creation of private

\(^1\) Referring to the role of public sector channels, Bredin, adds that they contribute in the reinforcement and "rayonnement du patrimoine culturel national". Further down, he claims that "notre service public est un des meilleurs du monde" (ibid, p 13). The report is full of similar references to public sector which shows a big preoccupation for its future and a reluctant, almost, agreement to the introduction of private channels as a result of the pressure from both government and market forces.
channels offered also the opportunity to the socialists to show the party’s shift from socialism to modernization, a forward looking pragmatic force which could give realization to consumer demands for greater choice (Kuhn 1995, p 183). So far, there was nothing unusual, as the sector was used to such political interferences. What, though, caused shock was not the fact that the government chose to whom the channels should be allocated but the fact that it chose Berlusconi, the anathema of the socialists in the early 1980s. It was interesting, thus, to see them defending the attribution of the franchise of La Cinq to a Franco-Italian consortium in which Berlusconi was to play the dominant programming role (Palmer, 1987, p 136). Berlusconi’s Fininvest company was already very successful in Italy where it controlled a big part of the private sector. His friendship with the Italian socialist party leader Bettino Craxi and his success had appeared very attractive to Mitterrand who was seduced by Berlusconi’s idea to “faire un pôle TV de l’Europe du Sud, sociale-démocrate, contre celui de l’Europe du Nord, plutôt démocrate-chrétienn et conservatrice” (Bourdon, 1994, p 267). Despite Lang’s uncertainty about the impact of private channels, Mitterrand insisted on it, arguing that “si vous ne le faites pas, d'autres le feront... nous sommes obligés de tenir compte du pouvoir de l’argent” (ibid).

La Cinq was a general entertainment channel whose schedule included a mix of game shows, cheap programs from Western Europe and America and old feature films. Its quotas obligations with regard to programming were considerably lighter than those applied to the state channels. To facilitate the start of its operation, the quotas obligations were, initially, virtually non-existent. The channel could, also, interrupt its programs by advertisements that were not allowed before (Bourdon, 1994, p 269; Kuhn, 1995, p 182). A sixth channel, TV6, was created soon after the La Cinq whose franchises were allocated to the advertising group Publicis and the film distribution company Gaumont. Financed by advertising, TV6 was primarily a music channel aimed specifically at the youth market and its primary sources of programming were video-clips produced by the music industry (Kuhn, op.cit). According to Bessis, the new music channel was also in accordance with Jack Lang’s efforts to renovate the whole concept of cultural policy in France, part of which was the recognition of modern forms of music, like rock. Through the music channel, the Left tried to approach the young population of the country (Bessis, 1994, p 33, 1er partie).

Despite Mitterrand’s rush to establish the new commercial channels in order to secure their allocation to groups friendly to the Left, both La Cinq and TV6 were re-located by the right government in 1987. The first went to a consortium headed by Hersant and Berlusconi and the second to Métrople TV, a company backed principally by the Compagnie Luxembourgeoise de Télédiffusion and the French group Lyonnaise des Eaux headed by a friend of Chirac. The previous consortium of La Cinq claimed damages in the court and in the end, a compromise was reached with Berlusconi keeping 25 percent, but Seydoux, a left wing industrialist and the main actionnaire saw his share to fall from 62 to 10 percent 103(Kuhn, 1995, p 188; Typpen, 1991, p 193).

Within the frame of ‘mieux-disant culturel’, a rather strange and untranslatable expression, the new government invited the new candidates to outline their plan regarding production and their self-discipline in regard to advertising. The main idea behind this was to favor free enterprise and to introduce free market conditions within the audiovisual sector (Lacan, 1989; Rollet, 1997). The

103 See table 2, annex for chap 4, for more details on the distribution of ownership.
results, according to Lacan, were disastrous in the sense that the new owners could not keep up with the promises they had made regarding the voluntary transmission of a certain percentage of cultural programs and French fiction. To make things only worse when the socialists came back they introduced even heavier obligations and limited to one the interruption of programs by advertising. This had a serious effect on the income of these channels, which depended entirely on advertising (ibid, p 23). Both Right and Left, although they were willing to let the market play its role, they were at the same time restricted by a cultural impetus that they had created themselves in their effort to maintain the distinctiveness of the nation and thus their control over it.

The collapse of the fifth channel in April 1992 was mainly due to the escalating cost of advertising following the privatization of TF1. Although La Cinq initially benefited from the liberalization of the audiovisual sector, it could not compete against its main rival TF1 since they offered similar kinds of programs. The frequent changes of its program schedule were also a contributing factor. The several attempts by Hachete and Berlusconi to rescue the channel after the media tycoon Hersant gave up in autumn 1990 failed as losses rose too high. As Kuhn puts it, ‘La Cinq became the main victim of the liberal, market-oriented television system established in the late 1980s’ (ibid, p 201). It was an indication that economics was becoming increasingly important, together with politics, in determining the development of French television. Its frequencies were given to ARTE, a cultural and European channel, as a last effort to maintain some quality in a commercial system. As it will be seen in greater detail in the last section of this chapter, the cultural issue is used and abused by politicians according to the circumstances.

Compared to the dreary fate of La Cinq, the M6 (ex-TV6) had better luck. As the French clips were considered French audiovisual products, they counted towards the channel’s quota obligations, which certainly helped to avoid sanctions. Also its strategy to transmit a program different from that shown on the other channels, known as counter-programming, contributed to giving the channel a distinctive character (Dagnaud, 1990; Kuhn, 1995).

However, the main act and the most dramatic of the deregulation process was the privatization of the first public channel, TF1. The reallocation of the two channels in 1987 was just a ‘sideshow’ to the main part of the 1986 reform. Initially, the question was which of the public channels was or were to be privatized. Antenne 2 and France 3 were the first options. The decision to privatize one or more channels was party related to the neo-liberal ideology as it has been seen further above and partly to the ambition to open the French audiovisual creation to private groups with the possibility to expand internationally (Azibert, 1987, p 33). Arguing that the sector could not afford to have more new commercial channels, the obvious solution would be to privatize one or two of the public service channels. However, privatizing two of them would have as a consequence not only to destabilize the sector altogether but also let the remaining one to play the role of ‘France-Culture’, fighting against the commercial forces (Queyranne, 1986, p 84). In the end, the concern whether the advertising market would be able to cope with too many private channels, and the willingness to maintain some balance between public and private, inspired by the British model, led to the decision to privatize only one channel. As FR3 was ruled out as an option because of its complicated regional structure, TF1 appeared to be the only option (Azibert, op.cit). Tarlé argues that the privatization of TF1 was a compromise between those within the conservative party that
did not want to break the public sector and those ultra neo-liberals who wanted to privatize two of the three public channels (Tarlé, 1987, p 43). Privatizing an important television channel was a ‘first’ in the world and makes one wonder what was the legitimacy behind this kind of privatization. Few supported the idea of letting TF1 go private, the economic arguments were not convincing as the channel’s financial situation, and audience rates showed that it was doing rather well. TF1 was an asset to the public sector, why let it go then? It seems that the ideological argument - ‘a desire to set an example of the application of Liberal principles in a sector which was crucial for the population’ - was stronger than the economic as Cayrol argues (1991, p 200). There were those, like Mousso, who argued that the privatization of TF1 was justified as it was the only one of the public channels with a more commercial programming, unlike Antenne 2’s more cultural profile with programs like ‘Apostrophes’ (Mousseau, 1986, p 117). The choice, therefore, of TF1 was seen as a logical extension of a commercial policy that had already been adopted by the first channel. What is interesting in Mousseau’s argument over the choice of TF1 is the hope for creating a strong private sector that can not only defend the national audiovisual production from the internationalization of communication but also play a role in this process, a desire to stand among the big television program makers in the world:

“No nous sommes privés... Il y a des choses que nous ne souhaitons pas faire, par exemple du culturel, du politique et des émissions éducatives. Je suis condamné à faire de l’audience, de l’audience... Pendant le temps qu’il faudra, je mettrai du film bien français, bien franchouillard, du feuilleton, de la variété” (quoted in Bourdon, 1994, p 281).

By 1994, TF1 had managed to acquire 40 per cent of the French audience and 55 per cent of the advertising expenditure. Concerns were expressed over its aggressive programming that threatened to destroy all other commercial channels not to mention the impact on the public sector
The privatization of TF1 had disastrous effects on the whole sector. TF1’s main commercial competitor, La Cinq, could not endure the uneven competition and closed down in 1992. The consequence of this was that TF1 became the dominant force in the mainstream broadcasting market. The promised pluralism vanished very quickly. Antenne 2 and FR3 suffered badly by loosing money and audience share. The falling advertising revenue was not compensated by an increase in their license fee income (redevance) and this had as a result budget cuts that further inhibited their competitiveness. The cultural channels introduced during this period of increased deregulation failed to become mainstream and compensate, thus, for the loss in cultural programming. The only successful case was the Canal Plus.

The French case is a good example of a very ill judged and mismanaged marketization of the sector. The French experience indicates the need for some sort of regulation, if the market is to grow in a balanced way. The lessons drawn from the deregulation experience in France are many. Despite the increased advertising on French channels (almost doubled between 1986 and 1992) the advertising revenue did not, at the end, increase enough to cover all commercial channels and as the broadcasting costs also increased, the financial viability of the whole sector was substantially weakened. Increased advertising spending, therefore, does not guarantee more money for all. TF1 was the only to profit from the advertising increase, as it was able to offer lower advertising rates compared to its newly established competitors who did not enjoy TF1’s inherited resource advantages (i.e. experience in programming, program stocks). It should have, also, been anticipated that competition for programs, sports events, popular films and media stars in the free market would increase certain strategic costs. These costs reached excessive dimensions, which made the functioning of the less strong French channels more difficult. The knock on effect was the search for compensatory cost savings which meant cutting on production resources and relying more on buying cheaper programs, something very much in use in France (Humphreys, 1996). Since almost all the new channels as well as those of the public sector were of ‘general interest’ and since they all relied on advertising for financing, the expected response was that all were going to have the same type of programming. The result has been that all channels have focused on ‘popular’ TV type of programming in order to catch the large audience (Cayrol, 1991, p 201). The balanced programming of the early 1980s was replaced very soon by another one, which focused more on entertainment and foreign fiction (see table 3, annex for chap 4, for more details of the structure of programming).

The hopes, therefore, that privatization would stimulate the industry proved false. The real loser in this battle of programming was the French television production industry. Suffocated by the

108 L’exonération de redevance is another example of how television has been used to serve the political expediencies of the socialist governments. Within the frame of a ‘politique sociale généreuse’, a substantial number of TV holders were exempted from paying television license fees, without anticipating reimbursing this money to the Public Sector. Public service television was the victim of this ‘générosité sociale’. Cluzel prefers to call it ‘démagogie’. ‘...Dans le domaine de l’audiovisuel la France n’a jamais voulu entendre les voix de la raison, ni prendre les voix de l’efficacité. Ses gouvernements successifs ont cédé à la démagogie (plus de 4 million de foyers exonérés de paiement de redevance...’ (Rapport Général, no 101, p 340).
growing volume of foreign imports, especially American, it was in danger of becoming increasingly uncompetitive due to its high costs. The reaction from the French governments, especially the socialist ones, was not to reverse the accelerated deregulation (reverse, for instance, the privatization of TF1), but to turn to protectionism as a policy measure. From the above analysis, one could see that the opening of the audiovisual sector to the private forces became itself a political game. The impact of the political factor on the deregulation process was much stronger than the economic and technological pressures.

2.2 Technological and Economic Imperatives

As the whole sector of communication began changing and expanding, a further tension was added to the early socialist government’s preoccupations over its communications policy. What should be the role of the state towards both the traditional mass media and the new media with all the technological and economic imperatives associated with them? As it was seen above, the state decided to withdraw its direct control from the first by letting the private forces play a role. Where new media were concerned, though, the state was to take the lead as it was argued that satellite and cable communication required investment by the state (Palmer, 1987, p 132). Unlike the establishment of the new terrestrial channels, which was politically motivated, the state’s promotion of the new media of cable and satellite was technologically, economically and to a certain extend also culturally driven, at least in principle. At the beginning of the 1980s, France was significantly behind other European counties in the field of communications. This led to ambitious plans for the modernization of both the audiovisual and communications sectors. Mitterrand wanted to make France a modern, technological nation; a major exporting power in the world and investing in the new broadcasting technology was part of this plan (see Lamizet, 1996; Perry, 1997; Kuhn, 1995). The ‘discours techniciste’ was very strong at the time, highlighting the need for the rapid development of the communication technologies whose multiplication and diversification were presented as the way to a ‘société de communication’ (Musso & Pineau, 1989, p 124). Mitterrand’s speech to the summit of the industrialized countries in 1982, on ‘Technology, Employment and Growth’ highlighted the need for advanced communication technologies that promised to ‘usher in a new form of civilization’ (Palmer, p 148). The expansion of terrestrial television in the 1980s was, thus, accompanied by ambitious projects, that were state led, in the new media of cable and satellite.

2.2.1 Cable and Satellite: Technological Ambition

In 1982, the ‘Plan Câble’ was launched by the newly elected socialist government launched with the main aim of was linking up to 1.5 million households to a fiber-optic cable system by 1986 that would carry up to thirty channels, including local productions, video library and videotext as well as a wide range of interactive telematic developments. This plan was conceived as an ‘issue of national proportion and importance’ undertaken at a national level, involving the ‘direct participation of national and institutional policy decision-makers’, meaning government and telecommunication companies (Lamizet, 1996, p 110). The cable plan was to be an important contributor towards the modernization of the country. By choosing fiber optic technology, it was hoped to involve a great number of operators in the process of modernization and the increase in the demand for the hardware meant that the French manufacturers would have to produce good quality receiving equipment and satellite dishes in large quantities (ibid). The plan, therefore, aspired to involve
many sectors of the French industry.

There was the unquestionable assumption that it should be a state administration, the DGT that should execute such plans. It was the DGT division of the PTT that was considered to have the technical expertise to create the modern communication infrastructure. One could say that this decision was one more indication of continued state interventionism. The nationalization policy that the socialists adopted at the beginning was part of an overall economic strategy to use the public sector to boost domestic demand and encourage economic growth. The nationalization of companies like Thomson and Alcatel was specifically intended to help the government’s plans in the communications sector (Kuhn, 1995; Palmer, 1987). State intervention in technological development is to be expected. According to Green:

‘French governments have traditionally adopted a non-market approach to technological development...: [it] determines the technology, selects or creates the firms suited to its development, creates guaranteed demand for the product and/or assumes a significant share of the financial burden... in a initially protected market, then supports the firm by ‘economic diplomacy’ in the international market’ (Green, 1988, p 126)

The cable plan was typical of this approach, ‘in line with the tradition of launching grand programs involving a partnership between the state... and industry’ in order ‘to accelerate the development of a technology and/or industry deemed to be of national interest’ (ibid, p 130). Compared to the aggressive privatization policy of Thatcher in Britain, the socialist government in France, like those in Greece and Spain, opted for the nationalization policy, which was part of their party’s ideology. Although, Green and Kuhn's argument that this was part of a state intervention tradition that was simply continued is right, one could also see that political (socialist) ideology did play an equal role.

It is not surprising that the cultural debate over the protection of French culture by the invasion of foreign films was more intense during the early 1980s. The anti-American feeling was part of the socialist ideology. Unlike satellite transmission, cable was not a threat to national sovereignty. As Harrison puts it, since its content was entirely under domestic control, it was seen by some as a ‘cultural Maginot Line preventing alien invasion of French television screens and it offered hopes of decentralization and participation in tune with the new governments aspirations’ (Harrison, 1990, p 249). The hope was that the cable would help the development of the French program production and at the same time protect French culture from the invasion of satellite television by giving the chance to French program makers that were not mainstream to show their work. They hoped to promoted the production of ‘high’ and middlebrow’ programs as a way to resist the deterioration of French production which has been unable to compete the popular foreign material was loosing in popularity. The cabling of France was expected to play a multiple role. Apart from the promotion of French production, there was also a strong political factor involved in the cable plan as the socialist government saw it as a excellent opportunity to promote decentralization by involving the local authorities in its development and running (Kuhn, 1995; Palmer, 1987).

109 This economic protectionism was often used by the socialist government, examples of which have been the quotas placed on the import or showing of foreign films and telefilms; the high tax imposed on Japanese video cassette recorders in order to reduce their imports as well as the delaying tactics that would benefit the development and production of French recorders (Palmer, 1987, p 149).
The cable plan was started with high hopes but soon ran into difficulties. Hopes that cable would combine all at once the industrial dimension of fiber-optic development, the democratic dimension of decentralization and the cultural dimension of interactivity and spreading of national and local culture faded very quickly. Despite the electoral attractions of cable, the local politicians found the installation costs much higher than the initial estimates because of the high cost of the advanced fiber-optic cable. Progress was very slow, partly caused by the unforeseen high-cost of the new technology and partly by the split in interests of the different groups involved. The PTT and Communication ministries had perceived the cable plan within different contexts, with the first concerned more with the telecommunications side of the technology and the second with its implications for broadcasting. DGT focused on the hardware side while the cable operators were more concerned with the marketing aspects and thus more interested in the software. The different interests, the high costs and the announcement for the creation of private channels, as well as the simultaneous pursue for direct broadcasting by satellite did have serious implications on the development of cable. When the Right came to power, it announced that private and public sectors companies could compete against the DGT in getting the contracts to equip the municipalities and that the expensive fiber-optic technology could be partially replaced by the less expensive coaxial cable. They also relaxed the requirements for French and local programming. Even so, France remains one of the least cabled countries in Europe (see Kuhn; Harrison; op.cit).

The cabling of France took place at the same time as another big project, the development of satellite communication. Here again techno-industrial goals met with cultural objectives. DBS (Direct Broadcasting Satellite) was seen as a guarantee for France’s position at the forefront of the audiovisual technology revolution as a major export power in a promising global satellite market. It was also seen as a great vehicle for French programming, a brilliant way to promote French culture abroad (Kuhn, 1995, p 221). High hopes that were shadowed very quickly by industrial considerations and bureaucratic rivalries at the top of the French state apparatus involving different ministries and administrative agencies. The dispute over which type of satellite would be best, high-powered broadcasting satellite versus lower-powered telecommunications satellites reflected the antagonism between PTT and TDF. Since the powerful PTT was involved in the cable project and the low-power satellites, TDF wanted to assert its independence from it by launching a high-powered direct broadcasting satellite (Guéhenno, 1987, p 281). PTT argued that low-powered telecommunications satellites would be less expensive and technically complicated and could also be complementary to the cable as they could transmit programs to headends from which programs could be transmitted to subscribers via the cable networks. In addition, cable could retransmit programs from different satellites, which meant that consumers did not have to buy separate dishes and decoders. TDF, though, resisted in its effort to maintain its control over the broadcasting sector against the PTT whose position was more future orientated in the sense that saw telecommunications and broadcasting convergence as in evitable. In the end, the French government not wanting to be further involved in this intra-governmental conflict, decided to adopt both types of satellite. Télécom 1 and TDF1 embarked on bitter competition. TDF1 was not lucky from the start and it had to face many delays one of which was caused by the failing of its West German sister to deploy (France and Germany had a common agreement in the construction and operation of this project).
At the same time, Luxembourg whose satellite activities were vexing the French government, announced that it had plans to embark on a similar project. This did not make the French authorities very happy as it meant more competition with Luxembourg’s satellite footprint covering a large area of France. In the end, the French government managed to dissuade Luxembourg from joining the Americans to cover France from its own Lux-Sat and showing any French speaking programs. The socialists, anxious to preserve and reinforce the role of television as a disseminator of French culture, were strongly opposed to the idea of a satellite broadcasting that would lead to European broadcast outlets being used as channels for the transmission of low-quality programs, especially from north America. TDF1 was finally launched in 1988 at the same time as Luxembourg’s lighter and cheaper Astra (Harrison, op.cit; Kuhn, 1995 p 224; Dyson, 1990). The regulatory provisions covered also the screening of French and European Union feature films, which showed the French government’s persistence in maintaining the cultural imperative. An example of this position was the creation of a cultural channel, La Sept, transmitted via satellite “added a cultural and political dimension to the DBS project, symbolizing the Left government’s desire to foster greater European identity and create a ‘global village’ - a unifying link between the many local communities” (Guéhenno, 1987, p 282). Despite the ambitious plans, the satellite project did not succeed and satellite television has managed to make a big impact on the French broadcasting system. The cost of the satellite dish and the competing offer from the terrestrial channels and Canal Plus put off the French viewers from turning to satellite television. These reasons, together with the technical problems and political/administrative rivalries that show the limitations of technocracy in controlling the policy environment, contributed in the failing of the one more ambitious project (Kuhn, 1995, p 228).

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Overall, one could say that the French governments since 1981 have found it very difficult to pursue many goals at the same time. A policy which has to reconcile tensions between national and international pressures and techno-industrial demands and broadcasting-cultural considerations requires to be carefully planned, in order to keep the balance between these opposing forces. The socialists were criticized as unable to keep a coherent policy for communication (Dyson & Humphreys, 1986; 1992). Their regulatory policy was characterized by retreat. Although they intended to introduce very strict measures in order to protect and promote French culture and French cultural production (i.e. quotas on the amount of foreign programming) they were forced to become more flexible. In order to promote rapid and profitable developments of the new media, both socialist and neo-liberal governments, sacrificed cultural considerations, to a certain extent, to economic expediency, which called for a liberal regulatory regime that would allow demand to develop freely and attract investment. ‘Economy and culture’ came to be added next to the old ‘politics and culture’:

“‘Economie et culture, même combat’ lancé par Jack Lang a Mexico en 1982 a établi à l’encontre des industries culturelles américains un signe d’égalité entre deux termes jusqu’ici antinomiques pour les politiques culturelles françaises” (Urfalino, 1993 p 285).

Urfalino argues that the legitimation of culture by the economy forced the dissolution of cultural policy in France. Although political factors were of major importance in the evolution of the French audiovisual system, technical and economic factors did play their role as well. French governments have always been aware of their presence and pressure,
despite their inability to evaluate properly their importance and incorporate them efficiently in their audiovisual policy. In fact, their attitude towards the economic aspect of the audiovisual sector has always been fluctuating between their desire to open the sector to competition and their concern to organize it in such a way that it could justify the needs of an ambitious cultural and industrial policy. Their weakest point has always been their inability to keep to a specific agenda regarding audiovisual policy. Their tendency to launch many different projects at the same time without setting an order of priorities in advance and their inability to apply long term uninterrupted plans, reinforced by a legislative instability, have been the main reasons for the disorder that characterizes the French audiovisual sector.

To sum up, it seems that French governments have constantly overestimated their abilities and the capacities of the French economy and the market. During the decade of the 1980s, they launched many ambitious projects without any priority order. This ‘politique horizontale’ had mostly negative results. The ‘recettes commerciales’ were not sufficient to permit the survival and healthy function of the existing TV channels whose dramatically augmented number has increased the competition, mostly at the expense of public television. Millions of francs were invested for the development of cable and satellite projects for a very poor result. Instead, some of this money could have been used to reinforce the function of Public Service Broadcasting. Culture appears to be an influential factor as both political and techno-industrial aspirations have shown. The question, though, whether culture per se is a/the main motivator behind audiovisual policy or a useful weapon deployed by the state to justify its interference in not only the cultural but also economic life of the country remains to be answered. As the construction of national identity is a constant process upon which the political elites build and justify their role, policy measures like cultural protectionism and cultural exemption appear to be essential for the survival of the nation-state. The following section will be focusing on the cultural factor. It is an attempt to examine the main issues around culture within the frame of audiovisual policy and open the way to a further analysis of this factor in the next two chapters.

2.3 Culture and Television: Sensitive Issues at Stake


110 Cluzel accuses the French presumption as the main responsible for this overestimation of abilities. ‘C’est un triât typiquement français que celui de prendre savoir faire mieux que les autres... tous nous paraît toujours possible en même temps car nous sommes les meilleurs’ (Rapport d’Information, No 384, p 17). Cluzel’s attitude towards his compatriots and representatives of state is very critical and very often cynical. Following his arguments, throughout these reports, it seems that internal factors are the main responsible for the weak position of the audiovisual sector, which, consequently, has permitted external factors to exercise easier their influence.

111 “[les] gouvernements successifs ont cédé... à l’ivresse technologique (une quarantaine de milliards de francs enterrés avec le cable, plus de trois milliards dilapidés dans le ciel avec deux satellites calamiteux) et les corporatismes poussant à la rue...’ (Rapport General, No 101, p 340)
2.3.1 Television and the Cultural Debate in France

Culture, television and the French state form, indeed, a peculiar triangle in which the state appears to play the dominant role. State promotion of the cultural role of television has a tradition that goes back to the Malraux and de Gaulle years where television was perceived as a manifestation of the nation’s cultural identity. Public service television was an instrument of the government’s policy to expose the French people to the civilizing benefits of the nation’s cultural heritage. The didactic role of television was to the fore. The state’s control over television was not only expressed in the form of political interference regarding the content of news but also in the form of the promotion of high culture. The idea that French culture was synonymous with high culture was very much influenced by the ‘mission civilizatrice’ as we saw in chapter 3. However, television’s cultural role, although important, was overshadowed by its political role for many years. The various French governments focused their attention more ‘sur la politique de l’information’. As television entered the liberalization era, cultural preoccupations increased and debates on the cultural role of television have provoked a lot of controversy among the policy-makers:

“In France, there is, both in the left and right, between the politicians and the press, a real obsession for the cultural level of television. There are not enough words when it comes to denouncing, criticizing and resisting the American or Italian television. There are synonymous to humiliation, acculturation, homogenization or reduction. If television is not the devil, it has at least the potential of putting into danger the soul of the nation” (Gheude, 1992, p 31).

When the socialists came to power in 1981, they intended to control the deregulation of the media and protect the cultural identity of the nation. Surprisingly enough, television did not come under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture during the socialists’ first period in power, despite television’s great potential as a cultural disseminator. One needs to understand, though, the conditions under which this decision was taken. The socialists had put a lot of emphasis on culture and creating thus a separate ministry was a way to show their commitment to it. Also, the justification behind the creation of a separate Minister of Communication came from the need to show that communication was taken seriously and an indication that the state was willing to cut the umbilical cord that was connecting television with political expedience. Jack Lang brought culture into the limelight but his influence on audiovisual policy was rather marginal. Television and culture did overlap in many areas and the impact of the cultural project was apparent in the requirements for cultural programming (cahiers des charges) in both public and private channels (Watchtel, 1987, p 63). In general, though, little effort was put to bring the two areas together, despite the fact that the government’s policy in both areas was highly interventionist.

The multiplication of broadcasting channels exceeded the capacity of the French cultural industries

112 “Existe en Francia, tanto en la izquierda como en la derecha, entre los políticos como en la prensa, una verdadera obsesión por el nivel cultural de la televisión. No se encuentran nunca las palabras suficientes cuando se trata de denunciar, criticar, rechazar la televisión americana o la televisión italiana. Son sinónimos de envejecimiento, aculturación, homogenización o reducción. Quizás la televisión no sea el diablo, pero si uno se descuida, bien podría correr peligro el alma de la nación”

113 “La politique culturelle de l’Etat dans l’audiovisuel consiste: * à assumer un certain nombre de missions d’intérêt général qui est le seul à pouvoir prendre en charge (par exemple, présence à l’étranger); * à soutenir des secteurs en difficulté ou en émergence...” (Rapport d’Information, No 340, p 153) “les fonds de création audiovisuelle [aide] la promotion de la création audiovisuelle française ainsi que les productions liées aux priorités de la politique culturelle” (Rapport Général, p 67, p 126)
to respond to the demand for programs with the dire consequence of having to increase the imports of foreign programs, mostly Americans. By 1989 France was Europe’s biggest purchaser of US television programs (Collins, 1994, p 90). This is only one of the big controversies that characterize the socialist policy. Despite being much against the Americanization of the French television, their policy was not efficient enough to the flow of imported material onto French television. Only when the debate over private television began did cultural considerations became major issues. Until then, most of the cultural leaders rarely took television seriously (Watchtel, 1987). Even Lang failed to appreciate the cultural aspects of television until the threat of serious deterioration in program quality became apparent. In fact, Lang had seen television as a way to promote the French cinematographic industry and most of his interventions in the sector were in favor of the latter. In fact, television was held responsible for the crisis of cinema: "Le crise du cinema? C’est la television, bien sur", even if a third of the French films were co-financed by the main three public service channels, even if many policy measures were taken to promote cinema in each of the channels (Bourges, 1987, p 65).

One cannot help but wonder why a nation like France whose cultural identity appears to be very strong to the outside world needs a protectionist policy. Protectionism has been expressed in a number of areas and has covered many issues, such as the preservation of the French language through legislation that prohibits the use of English words in the media; the protection of the French audiovisual industry and cinematographic production through the quotas policy and the financial aid mechanisms; the general ideological battle over the Americanization of national culture; efforts for the creation/protection of a European culture that can be used as a shield against the influence of a mass culture, mainly American; the long debates over the role of public service television; the creation of cultural channels and the argument over cultural exemption during the GATT negotiations. This protectionist tendency also reflects the main trends in the cultural debate regarding television in France the last two decades. The Americanization of French culture appears to be the recurring theme in this debate and the dominant one. The role of public service broadcasting and the crisis in its identity is the other main theme followed by the debate over the cultural role of television provoked by the creation of cultural channels.

2.3.2 The crisis of Public Service Television

114 This refers to the Loi Toubon, the most recent linguistic law which provoked a heated debated over the justification for adopting a defensive attitude towards the use of English words in advertising and the media. The debate raised the question of the freedom of the individual vis-à-vis the state. Has the state the right to impose on private individuals the official neologisms created and published by governmental organizations? This makes references to the old Jacobin motto of one ‘nation one language’ and proves that the state fears the breaking up of its own product: the artificial imposition of one national language (Brulard, 1997, p 195).

115 Jack Lang fought for the introduction of national quotas of 60 per cent of programs made in Europe of which 40 per cent had to be of French origin. Measures also were taken regarding the regulation of broadcasting feature films which introduced a minimum time before a film could shown on television (36 months after its release, 12 months for pay-television) as well as restriction of their transmission to certain days that would not affect the cinema admissions. Recognizing the importance of the cultural industries, a number of official bodies were created responsible for the development of the cultural industries, i.e. the IFCIC (Institut pour le financement de Programme); the Agence pour la Culture par les nouvelles technologies de communication; the Fonds des soutien aux Industries des programmes, the development of joint intentions with the Ministry of industry (Miége, 1989, p 38-9).

116 It seems that a European culture would stand above the mass culture that America represents, a French desire to transplant their conception of high culture as a characteristic of European superior national cultures. The French government promoted the adoption by the European Union of protectionist ‘Euro-quotas’. Because of the French insistence, the EU trade commissioner defended, within the GATT negotiations of 1994, the right of Europeans to subsidize their audiovisual industry.
Dominique Wolton (1992) argues that the gradual abandonment of the values of public television in France is the result not so much of economic and technological causes but of a political and ideological movement that is linked to the internal collapse of the public television service. The discovery of the market came only afterward. In French society, the logic of politics tends to dichotomize all problems including those of broadcasting. However, there is another set of variables that goes beyond opposing political ideologies which affects the performance of public television: centralization, linguistic and cultural unity, an attraction to market economy and commercial television and a certain nostalgia for the virtues of the traditional public television. The function of public television has been conditioned so that it contributes to the maintenance of a centralized state and the promotion of a linguistic and cultural unity. The appearance of the market economy in the sector of television contributed to bringing the already unstable identity of the public sector into a bigger crisis and crystallized the audiovisual debate around the concept of public service: how to outline the missions of public service beyond the traditional triptych of 'informer, éduquer, distraire' (Bessis, 1994).

The truth is that the French public television does not have a long tradition as such. What was considered a public service television was a highly politicized system that passed to a mixed system, allowing revenue from advertising. There has never been a golden period in the history of public television in France, which also explains the identity crisis that it started facing even before the introduction of commercial channels. In France like the rest of Europe, public television had started losing the battle since the 1970s in the sense that it struggled to retain a traditional role refusing to see the forthcoming changes. The internal collapse of French public television was caused by a number of factors: a long hostility towards private television; financial problems that were not faced in time neither in the right way; complicated bureaucratic structures; a strong politicization, and no clear program strategy (Wolton, 1989). These reasons and the fact that public television never had time to establish itself as an independent body and develop a strong identity of its own, passing straightforward from the state to a mixed system, contributed to a confusion that became worse with the introduction of private television and later the cultural channels. These last two developments in the audiovisual sector left the public sector deprived of a clear role. If public television is to retain its generalist role then what does distinguish it from the generalist private television? If it is to become specialized then its public identity is under question. Retaining a cultural profile was an option but this role was taken by the cultural channels.

―Faut-il, comme le suggèrent certains, admettre que la télévision de service public doit abandonner les audiences de masse aux chaînes privées et se contenter d’un public minoritaire? Doit-elle, au contraire, copier servilement les recettes des chaînes commerciales et s’engager dans une course à l’audience à tout prix?” (Torracinta, 1990, p 91)

What role, then, public service television? This question has provoked a big debate in France and has attracted reactions from both policy-makers in parliamentary debates as well as members of the artists’ world and the public117. By 1990 the consensus was that there should be two spheres, one commercial and subject to market forces and one public, protected and subsidized like any other

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117 Examples of this has been the open debate on ‘Télévision de service public: Quel contenu?’ initiated by Le Débat, no 61, 1990 that invited people from the media world to examine the future identity of public television. A strong reaction has also come from the group that promoted a ’Charte de l’audiovisuel’ in the late 1980s with the main objective to defend the right to public communication (Ralite, 1987)
cultural activity which meant no revenue from advertising. Following this debate, one does not only get an insight into the actual crisis of public service but also an insight into the crisis that the French state and society has been facing for the last two decades. The debate over the cultural role of public communication has multiple facets.

As has been seen throughout this chapter, the concept of Public television has taken different dimensions during its history, and these also affect the changes in the debate over its role. These changes from the initial cultural conception to the political one that brings the focus on to respect for free expression and pluralism and from there to the juridique concept, and finally to techno-economic considerations (Mehl, 1990). It seems that the debate since the 1980s is mixed with all these conceptions. From debate to debate through out the years, the public service has lost its central place until it was even eliminated by legislation in 1986. Since then, the concept of public service keeps reoccurring to haunt political discussions. Following parliamentary debates, the early 1980s could be described as the period of the big ideological battles. The socialists flirting with the market forces still fervently supported the notion of public television. They tried to reinforce its function and maintain its cultural role by arguing that since the liberalization of the audiovisual sector was inevitable, the best way to maintain a balance was to keep a strong public television. Diversity and pluralism were thought to be best guaranteed by the introduction of a mixed system: “C’est au contraire, à travers la concurrence public-privé que les imperatifs de qualité et de diversité programmes peuvent le mieux être atteints” (Queyranne, 1985, p 130). The neoliberals, like Alain Madelin, at the same time, were arguing that there is no single public but many and that only the private enterprise can guarantee their satisfaction. According to the neoliberal doctrine, communication is not a public service but a “liberté publique” and the state should be less involved in it (Madelin, 1986, p 68). At this stage, though, culture had not disappeared altogether as it was thought that it could still be protected in a liberal economy:

“Nous voulons créer la cadre de liberté qui permettra à toutes les forces de création culturelle et d’une économie de liberté de se mobiliser. La France est capable de se doter d’une industrie audiovisuelle à la mesure de sa culture, de ses valeurs, de sa technologie et de son rôle dans le monde” (ibid., p 69).

“Si l’idéologie dominante du service public, à force d’obésité, a démontré toutes ses inutilisables, il reste qu’en la matière les pouvoirs publics ont... à développer un secteur public d’autant mieux affermi qu’il sera rassemblé sur l’essentiel...Je veux dire...l’obligation de porter au plus loin et au plus large la voix de France. Je veux dire, aussi, l’obligation de valoriser cet immense patrimoine intellectuel que constitue notre production audiovisuelle: c’est là un impératif évident, c’est là un impératif de culture” (Fiterman, 1986, p 81).

By 1986, though, the concept of public service disappears from the text of the law and is replaced by this of public sector. Culture is replaced by techno-economic necessities and what remains of the cultural debate is on the level of battling between terminologies. When the socialists came back in 1989, they maintained the mixed competitive system. The notion of intérêt général replaces this of public service and it is applicable to all channels, both public and private. With little differences, the objectives assigned to each channel by the new law are the same with those of the previous government. They must function within an open competitive market; they can not be elitist and like their private competitors they are defined by the their audience. It seems the appeal to the public service notion had more symbolic than real meaning. For the socialists it has been part of an
ideology, for some of them a belief in its values and some others a symbolic delineation of their political space. Only the communists maintained the debate by defending the cultural mission of public television (Mehl, 1990).

The big cultural missions have disappeared and the public sector is considered as a supplementary space devoted to ‘formation des esprits’, pluralism and the ‘à l’accueil des créateurs’ (ibid). The respect for diversity and the promotion of audiovisual creation form now its main missions: “Les responsabilités de l’audiovisuel public servir la démocratie [donc du pluralisme]; Favoriser la création française; offrir une rielle diversité des programmes” (Rapport du Gouvernement au Parlement, 1989, p 31-34). There are those who denounce the mediocrity of both private and public channels but the references to public service have started taking a moral nuance, the ethical resistance to ‘money’. The debate on public television shows also the crisis the État providence is in and together with it the public service, which has always lacked a clear identity. As all parliamentary debates on the audiovisual policy have been fought between the right and left, the main theme has been around the issues of the legitimacy of the state intervention which had as a result the displacement of culture, once the central theme on the debates around public television. The cultural mission, in the liberal era of television, is a voluntary act, part of the ‘mieux disant culturel’ approach. Perhaps, as Mehl suggests, the crisis of the public service is the crisis in its cultural mission (ibid, p 12). How do you define public television vis-à-vis its commercial opponents, if not by its cultural role? Moreover, given that this role has been almost taken away, what is the justification of its existence?

The cultural preoccupations have continued as pair of the debate from the parliament to those in the media world and the public who searched to renew the identity of public television. Trying to find a new identity for it, some argue that public television should get rid of its revenue from advertising, as this is what has caused the crisis in the first place (Martin, 1989; Le Débat, 1990). The abolition of the advertising revenue, it was argued, would liberate the public service from the constrains of audience rates imposed by the competition for more advertising and enable it to focus on the production of quality programs. The specificity of the public service, Max Gallo supports, is not based on its audience but on the principle that the state provides through it a public space, an ‘espace de liberté’, that is not controlled by the logic of profit (1990, p 78-79). It is here that the crisis of the sector comes from. As Jullian argues, this crisis comes from a public service ‘qu’il se demande si les autorités qui l’ont crée s’intéressent encore à lui’ (1990, p 84). Is the state sure of its role regarding public communication? What is interesting is the fact that the state supports the access of its citizens to culture, meaning theatre, museums, music etc. but not television. There

118 The biggest contradiction in the French audiovisual and cultural policy lies in the decision to create cultural and educational channels. Suddenly, the two public channels, Antenne 2 and France 3, found themselves under the danger to lose the reason of their existence. Their role to inform, entertain and cultivate was under attack. Efforts to keep the balance between the commercial and quality television drove to extreme solutions. The educational-cultural side of their role was given to the new cultural and educational channels while their entertainment role became less attractive to the French audience, which turned its attention to the new private channels whose financial sources permit them to produce and purchase programs that are more attractive.

119 As an alternative it was proposed the creation of a tax parafiscale, called a ‘contribution culture et communication’ which would be financed by the whole of the advertising market (Casta, p 68).

120 According to Wolton, public television should maintain its program diversity without feeling obliged to justify its function by a large audience. The consequence of relying on its audience would be the reduction of specialized programs that are not attractive to large numbers. The principle of public television should be the satisfaction of all its publics, which also reflects its cultural mission (1989, p 92-93).
is no such a thing as a ‘citoyen téléspectateur’ for the state, as Boutang argues, which has produced as a result a cultural ghetto in which the cultural mission of television is limited to a cultured few, as the creation of cultural channels proves (1990, p 62). This crisis is about the mission of public service but also about the responsibility the state holds in a society where the market plays an important role. It consists of the necessity to reflect, as Clément puts it, upon the evolution of French democracy in which lies the fundamental question of the role of the state and public service in a society dominated by the law of the market. Public television, Clement argues, is necessary for the democratic life of the country, for the cultural creation, for the education of the citizens not only about their cultural heritage but also that of Europe and the world (1999). Preserving the public service’s cultural mission is preserving pluralism, indispensable for the maintenance of the nation’s cultural identity as the movement defending public television supported:

“La télévision est constitutive de l’identité culturelle d’un peuple, sans laquelle il n’y a pas de nation, ni de rayonnement de cette nation dans le monde... Seule une responsabilité publique et nationale peut garantir le droit effectif des citoyens à la communication... Le secteur public de la communication doit être défendu et rénové” (Ralite, 1987, p 68).

The same movement opposing the marchandisation of communication argued that it should be part of the public and national responsibility as opposed to the irresponsabilité privée internationale, calling thus the state to act as a guarantor of the space public television holds (Pineu, 1988, p 87). The debate, therefore, on public television is interconnected with a number of other issues that present a more complex image of the state’s relationship with television and culture. The cultural debate continues up to now even if it has not been proved to have any positive impact on the rescuing of public television which shows that the crisis is not over and it is deeper, reflecting the crisis which the French state and society have been facing the last two decades. The last section of this chapter will be devoted to the experiments of the French governments with the cultural channels. In a way, they are an indication of how the French state responded to the above crisis. The following analysis is a continuation of the cultural debate and a policy approach.

2.3.3 Cultural Television

The way the French governments found to counterbalance the commercialization of French television was to establish a number of new public sector services. The antidote to a deregulated sector was believed to be the creation of specialized cultural channels. Within the frame of ‘idéologisme de gauche’, we can place the tendency to overemphasize the cultural obligations of the audiovisual policy with a rather unorthodox way. On the one hand, public service television had the role to represent national culture and language, at a national and international level (as an expression of the cultural side of its identity) and on the other hand, it was forced to enter the open market and compete with private channels, under unequal conditions. The above situation does not differ much, one would say, from what happened to other public service channels in many European countries. However, in France, the situation was exacerbated by the application of a very contradictory policy, which was characterized by an ideological confusion regarding the cultural role of television. The cultural channels La Sept and ARTE have been created and promoted as compensation for the deregulation and privatization and as a way to promote the French culture (reviving accusations against French official culture of metropolitan elitism) (Emanuel, 1993).
**TV5.** The first step in the expansion of public sector services and the beginning of several ambitious cultural projects in the audiovisual sector was the launch in the early 1980s of a francophone cultural channel, TV5. The channel was the result of a cooperative venture between the public channels of France, Belgium, Switzerland and Canada using a Eutelsat telecommunications satellite for program delivery. The main aim of this French-language channel was to diffuse Francophone culture abroad and give people a Francophone perspective (Kuhn, 1995, p. 266; Humphreys, 1996, p. 253). The project of TV5 had been the conception of the direction of the Cultural Affairs of the Ministry of External Relations and the main idea was the following: since France cannot sell its television programs abroad, why not promote them free to the European public (Gaillard, 1991). This shows that the old attitude towards the protection and promotion of the French culture through the media has not changed a lot throughout the years. The channel failed to attract its European audience because it was too culturally specific.

**La SEPT/ARTE.** In the late 1980s, the French socialist government established another public channel, La Sept that was the product of cultural voluntarism (to remedy a deterioration in the audiovisual landscape) and a technological gamble (a chance to follow the developments in the telecommunications sector, as seen in section 2.2.1). It was, characteristically, called the 'bad conscience' of the socialist's deregulatory policies (Emanuel, 1992, p. 297). The channel was an initiative taken in 1986 by the socialist government of Laurent Fabius and the intention was to be broadcast on satellite and cable, although from 1989 the channel's programs were shown every Saturday on FR3. Like the other two public channels, la Sept was a limited company whose capital was divided between the state (25%), Radio-France (15%), INA (15%) and France 3 (45%) (Bessis, 1994, p. 16). Since 1993, La Sept has owned 50% of the capital of the Franco-German channel ARTE owned by ARTE Deutschland TV, La SEPT-ARTE. ARTE the first Franco-German channel was given frequency vacated by la Cinq after its collapse in 1992. ARTE was created with the aim of promoting the creation, realization and broadcasting of programs of a cultural nature in order to promote understanding and closeness between European countries, a tool for building Europe (Rollet, 1997, p. 42). Initially intended as an industrial gamble in the new communication technologies, it finally became a diplomatic tool of the Paris-Bonn axis (Emanuel, 1993). It is broadcast from 17.00 on cable and from 19.00 until 1.00 am on the terrestrial channel.

**La Cinquieme.** The need for an educational channel has been a recurring theme in the debate on education. Initially a project launched by the socialist Minister of Culture Lang at the beginning of 1990, La Cinquieme was to be the new educational channel and planned to fill the gap vacated by La Cinq broadcasting before the Arte’s broadcasting time. What is interesting in this case, from the policy perspective, is that for the first time a public channel could have private shareholders. The paradox as Bessis puts is that the “l’introduction de l’économie mixte est érigée par le législateur en vecteur d’extension du secteur public” (op.cit. p 20). What is also interesting with both LA SEPT/ARTE and La Cinquieme is the fact that their presidents were not nominated by the CSA but by their administrative council. The idea of an educational channel generated some hostility as many felt that television was trespassing a territory previously exclusive domain of the Ministry of Education (Rollet, op.cit). The fact that the channel’s priority was to cater to the young and the excluded

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121 TV5 will be examined further in the last chapter of the thesis, within the frame of international cultural policy.
122 The issues around the creation of ARTE regarding its European context will be analyzed in chapter 5. In this section, it will be examined within the frame of the cultural debate.
(Jeanniot, 1994, p 13) was controversial and contributed in the debate over the educational and cultural role of other public channels of a generalist character. Should public television fragment its audiences or retain its principle of broadcasting for the big audience and keep therefore providing the arena for public discourse?

The problems and issues arising from the creation of the above channels are a mix of policy and discourse, as in the case of deregulation. The government took the decision to create the cultural channels of La Sept/ARTE against the general disapproval of many specialists of the sector (from CSA, SENAT, Assemblée National and the industry). They had many reasons to believe that their creation was unnecessary: “Raison stratégique car le législateur a prévu le resserrement du secteur public antenne 2 et France 3. Or celle décision n’est pas une décision de resserrement, main au contraire d’éclatement”. This shows how incoherent was their audiovisual policy (Rapport No 384, p 310); ‘Raison financière’: the government dispersed its financial sources to the detriment of public sector’s efficacy with direct implications on the quality of programs produced by public service television; ‘Raison culturelle’: the creation of these cultural channels initiated a big debate over the cultural role of television. ‘Il s’agit en fait d’un contresens culturel car le gouvernement commet une erreur d’appréciation sur le rôle et la fonction de la télévision’ (Rapport No 86, p 223).

Despite the arguments against, French governments went ahead with their plans. It will be interesting to know where this attitude to culture as mediated by the audiovisual comes from. Emanuel believes this is attributable to a consensus about the antagonism between culture and communication, which goes across political and intellectual divisions (1994, p 140). There is, in France, a deep suspicion of mass culture and a strong belief that state television can be used to promote the patrimoine. The debate over the cultural role of television did not start with the cultural channels. Long before that, the projection of culture on television had negative connotations, like elitism and metropolitanism, intellectualism. The separation of culture and communication in the form of the audiovisual had as a result the abandonment of ‘cultural television to a traditional aesthetic ideology which valorized authorship, the artisanal and bourgeois values of distinction’ (Emanuel, 1992, p 283). The division of television into a version of mass culture and an elitist one has pushed in the direction of a cultural policy that reflects the fear of possible deterioration in the national culture as a result of low level television. The cultural and political elites have found themselves caught between a cultural nationalism as it is reflected by the protectionist policies and a consumer culture with all its vulgar connotations. For some, the way to reconcile culture and communication is through the creation of cultural channels:

“Parmi ces chaînes, l’une doit être ‘culturelle”, c'est-à-dire diffusant ce qui relève de la culture, au sens étroit, présentant du théâtre, de la danse, de la musique, promenant le téléspectateur dans les expositions, les musées, lui révélant les progrès de la connaissance, choisisissant pour lui les meilleurs films, lui racontant des histoires de qualité. Le devoir de l’Etat n’est-il pas de fournir aux citoyens de moyen d’élever leur esprit et d’affiner leur sens esthétique? (Duby, 1990, p 74-5).

However, not everybody agreed that the paternalistic state is responsible for the cultural elevation of its citizens and this elitist version of culture. There have been strong reactions by some intellectuals who supported that television has no pedagogic role, that cultural television is a ghetto, that La Sept is too up-market and that television is too nationalistic (Emanuel, 1994, p 143).
Dominique Wolton who in his book ‘Eloge du Grand Public’ (1990) attacked the idea of cultural channels is leading the criticism. The main argument against the cultural channels was that television permits ‘l’œil à la culture’ but it is not ‘en soit culturelle’. It is made, by its nature, to be used by mass audiences and its way of communication is such as to be addressed to everyone and not only to a specific audience. By creating, thus, cultural channels we create ‘ghetto culturel’.

“In addition, the world ‘culturelle’ has an elitist connotation for the mass audience, which instinctively would reject these channels. Only the public service channels can fulfill this role ‘d’œil à la culture’ and by creating cultural channels we deprive, first, the public service television from one of its primary roles with the consequence to weaken its identity and second, as a subsequent result, the mass audience from having the possibility to have an access to more quality programs without being repulsed by the word ‘cultural’. Wolton does ask the question of why we should be so preoccupied by a culture minoritaire when there is so much to do for the culture grand public. Is not there the real problem, that public television must above all include the culture pour tous? (Wolton, 1993, p 40). This indicates in its turn the main issue in this cultural debate, which is the gap between official culture, its values and heritage and the daily realities of the majority of the population. The cultural debate does problematize the politics of entertainment as Emanuel (1994) argues, the role of television within the everyday life, or how to improve the quality of popular programs. Instead, the tendency is towards a cultural nationalism that centers around the legitimacy of the state intervention and the creative freedom of the artist. Jack Lang expressed this very clearly when asked about the role of state in the audiovisual communication and the cultural life of the nation:

“... on sait bien que si l’Etat n’était pas là, tout simplement un certain nombre de choses se feraient pas: qui entretiendrait les règles indispensables au fonctionnement de ces marchés si particuliers de la culture, qui assurerait aux artistes une rémunération équitable pour l’usage que l’on fait de leurs œuvres, qui encouragerait le lecture publique ou la pratique musicale, qui ferait vivre les grandes institutions que sont les musées, les théâtres ou les orchestres nationaux?” (Lang, 1987, p 45).

The constant preoccupation about the survival of national culture indicates a fear that has led the French state to take a defensive position that has a certain ‘symbolic quality’, as Humphreys argues (1996, p 259). This comes from the inability to disguise the fact that since the beginning of the 1980s French national policies had themselves contributed to the ‘Americanization’ of the

123 ‘...cette seule dénomination [culturelle] ayant un relent d’élitisme qui joue un rôle de repousser sur le grand public’ (Rapport d’information, No 86, p 223), ‘Culturel c’est un mot qui fait fuir’ (Wolton quoted in Rapport Général, No 101, p 227)
Country’s broadcasting system. In spite of the protectionist measures\textsuperscript{124}, it still tends to drift in the direction of Americanization. As has been seen in the section of politics and television, the French governments have committed many policy mistakes and in most cases, they were led by political expediencies. The cultural channels are examples of these mistakes on the policy level. The result was that these channels never managed to attract the attention of the big audience. All these unsuccessful efforts have proved the inefficiency of the French cultural and audiovisual policy makers to set specific and realistic goals. Although their first target was the promotion of French culture, they tried to fit together other economic or technological objectives. The main weakness of the French cultural and audiovisual policy has been the coexistence of several strategies and a lack of coherence. Different technological, political and economic logics asserted themselves in both policies. The above examples indicate the degree of interactivity and interference of the political and/ideological and cultural factors in the formulation and implementation of audiovisual policy in France. The audiovisual sector has been the victim of political expediencies and instabilities, as well as cultural and ideological confusions related to the cultural obligations of audiovisual policy.

Conclusions

“Qui est responsable du marasme de l’audiovisuel Français? ... plusieurs gouvernements depuis des années et plusieurs ministres depuis des années, en raison des mesures législatives incohérentes et inadaptées. Qui est responsable du manque d’argent pour la création française? ...plusieurs gouvernements... et... ministres par une générosité sociale mise à la charge du secteur public. Nous avons dénoncé ces défauts {incohérence législative, mauvaise gestion des fonds publics, l’envahissement de nos écrans par les séries américains}... Monsieur le Ministre [Jack Lange] vous les avez dénoncé vous-mêmes... Or, vous avez été Ministre pendant huit ans! Qui est responsable? C’est celui qui a la charge des affaires du pays... ” Jean Cluzel answers to Jack Lange, 14 November (Rapport General, no 92, p 151)

Overall, it can be argued that France has not been able to balanced or successfully blend the political, economic and cultural elements in audiovisual policy making. In the effort to liberate television from the grip of state monopoly, not enough attention was paid to the dangers of economic freedom and the government attempts to regulate a mainly commercial system have been largely motivated by the old habit of keeping political control of the sector.

In this chapter, we have observed a certain evolution of the way of thinking about the role of the State in relation to media. At the end of the 1980s, we notice a gradual abandonment of the notion of the State as an operator and its replacement by a State-regulator. However, despite this shift in roles and the increased power of private forces, the State is called many a times to exercise "une politique de protectionism"\textsuperscript{125} when it is believed that the cultural identity of the nation is under threat. This concern has been magnified under the increased pressure coming from factors external to the French nation-state. Television has played an important role in the increase of this concern. The

\textsuperscript{124} Much of CSA work has been the sanctioning of television channels, which have failed to respect the quotas system either by imposing a fine or by withdrawing the broadcasting license (Perry, 1997, p 126).

\textsuperscript{125} "Une intervention indispensable de l’Etat" whose first objective consists ‘à dresser des barriers de nature protectionniste’ (Rapport Général, No 67).
difficulties of the French audiovisual industry to meet the increased demand for programs caused by the appearance of private channels which has inevitably led to the importing of foreign products, have reinforced the fears about a cultural invasion from abroad which would lead to the gradual loss or weakness of French cultural identity. In the face of this national problem, the government, representing the State, is called to provide its assistance either as a negotiator with these external forces or more directly, by supporting financially the audiovisual industry.

Audiovisual policy has come to assist cultural policy and vice-versa. Despite the increased financial needs that have undermined the cultural aspect of the audiovisual industry, the long tradition that related in the past cultural and audiovisual policy in France has left a strong impact on the way of thinking and deciding about cultural and audiovisual issues. This interference has caused certain confusion about the function of television (the creation of cultural channels is the result of an unsuccessful interference of cultural policy in the audiovisual field). The French are not only concerned about the protection of their culture at a national level but also its promotion abroad. Convinced of the superiority of their culture and its mission to civilize and pushed by external forces to expand into international markets, they have lanced many projects, most of them with a very strong cultural character and ‘des ambition ... un peu irrealistes’ as Senator Cluzel points out (Rapport General, no 67, p 375).

An interesting observation is the fact that the preoccupations that have been feeding the cultural debate over the years appear to be led by a mixture of ideological impulses and ‘cultural guilt’ together with a strong rhetorical tendency: “Chez nous, la culture se trouve en pleine coeur du débat d’idees. Ses promoteurs ont volontiers une démarche prosélyte. Et parfois sectaire...” (Bourges, 1991, p 6). One would dare to think that the fear of losing their national cultural distinctiveness is partly the product of the French state that has invested a lot in its centralized structure that in its turn helped creating an (artificially?) homogeneous culture that would represent better the new identity of the nation-state.

The crisis of the nation-state is also coming from the collapse of the ‘grand narratives’ as Lyotard argues. And France is not left unaffected by this process, which is accompanied by a loss of the state’s power and influence. Privatization and decentralization have not only economic but cultural consequences as well. The state has to compete with the private forces and increase its efficiency if it is to survive. This poses a cultural dilemma for the modern French state, which is forced to implement its own criterion of ‘maximum operational performance’, which at the same time causes it to invest in the means rather than the ends and to lose its own centralizing power.

“Les anciens pôles d’attraction formées par les Etats-Nations, les partis, les professions, les institutions historiques, perdent leur attrait... les identifications à des grands noms, à des Héros de l’ Histoire présente se font plus difficiles... Dans la société et la culture contemporaines, société post-industrielle, culture postmoderne, la question de la légitimation du savoir se pose en d’autres termes. Le grand récit a perdu sa crédibilité, quel que soit le mode d’unification qui lui est assigné” (Lyotard in Forbes, p 259, 1996).

126 ‘Cette situation est potentiellement très grave, en termes d’identité culturelle et d’indépendance nationale...’ (Rapport Général, No 101, p 570): ‘Pour pouvoir alimenter ces pléiades de nouvelles chaînes..., la capacité a produire de nouveaux programmes va devenir l’enjeu fondamental de tout pays voulant être fidèle à sa vocation culturelle; ce qui a l’évidence est le cas de la France...’ (p 18)

127 ‘... ces Fonds [the money for the cultural channel ARTE] pourrait, en renforçant les efforts de production du secteur public audiovisuel, constituer la première étape d’un plan de soutien et de développement de l’industrie des programmes audiovisuels, aujourd’hui, indispensable pour le maintien de notre identité culturelle’ (Rapport Général, No 101,p 21).
The French nation-state has been trying very hard to hold on to these grand narratives that have been providing an essential unifying element. At the same time not wanting to be left out from the internal and external processes of modernization, it throws itself in a rather desperate act of disassociating itself with the old *Etat providence*. The political/ideological factor plays an important role in this process, as it was seen in the case of deregulation and privatization. The progressive passage from a *rationalité politique* to a *rationalité économique* has not excluded movements towards the opposing direction (Chevalier, 1990, p27). Despite the ruptures in the state policies regarding the audiovisual sector, one can observe also a continuity, which has different facets. One is continuity with past traditions in the policy making that keep the state in the central position and the other is continuity in the form of resistance to internal and external pressures. From the beginning of the 1980s, new actors have appeared in the scene, which have given new dimensions in this field.

Although the national actors (government, national broadcasting organizations and regulatory authority) are still very influential, the new transnational and supra-national actors (i.e. EU and multimedia transnational commercial enterprises) are challenging their previous dominant position in policy making for culture and media. As Kuhn argues the interdependence and frequent tension between the national and international dimensions helps us to understand better the French government policy on broadcasting and the new audiovisual media during the 1980s (in Negrine, 1988, p 191). The next two chapters will focus on the external factors and extend the cultural debate outside the internal context of nation-state.
Part Three: Case Study/
External Factors
“Nations are not something eternal. They have begun, they will end. They will be replaced, in all probability, by a European confederation” (Renan in Hutchinson & Smith, p 18, 1994).

“Un jour viendra où vous... toutes nations du continent, sans perde vos qualités distinctes et votre glorieuse individualité, vous vous fondrez étroitement dans une unité supérieure et vous constituerez la fraternité européenne (Victor Hugo au Congrès de la paix Paris, Août 1849, in Thomas, 1997).

French intellectuals such as Renan and Hugo seem to have foreseen a European Union a long time ago. More than a hundred years after their comments, ‘Europe’ is a reality, currently seeking to develop a more shared identity in order to justify further integration. The existence of a European cultural policy, despite its disputable character, presupposes the existence or the possibility of a European culture. The European Union has made attempts to define this shared European identity or culture, reflecting a growing awareness that European integration is more than just an economic space shared by its members. The projection of this pan-European space as a space of culture and identity has been supported and promoted by the European Commission: ‘the creation of a large market establishes a European area based on common cultural roots as well as social and economic realities’ (Commission of the European Communities, 1987, p 3). The importance of common cultural roots was identified by the EU’s founding father Jean Monnet who said that ‘if we were beginning the European Community all over again, we should begin with culture’ (Commission of the European Communities, 1984, p 10).

The media and particularly television have been given a key role to play in creating and unifying a European identity. It is believed they will ‘help to develop a people’s Europe through reinforcing the sense of belonging to a Community composed of countries which are different yet partake of a deep solidarity’ (Commission of the European Communities, 4/88, 1998, p 4). What such a ‘people’s Europe’ might be is another question but television is seen as a vital instrument of integration. The Commission maintains that:

“Television will play an important part in the developing and nurturing awareness of the rich variety of Europe’s common cultural and historical heritage. The dissemination of information across national borders can do much to help the people of Europe to recognize the common destiny they share in many areas” (Commission of the European Communities, Television Without Frontiers. 1984, p 28).

This controversial use of television has provoked a debate among policy makers and scholars, reflecting, to a certain extent, the tensions between the national and the supranational institutions. At the heart of this debate are questions about whether this
much talked European cultural identity exists and whether intervention is a legitimate and necessary way to develop it. ‘Is it possible to translate’, as Kevin Robins asks, ‘a multinational administrative unity into a meaningful identity and solidarity’? (Robins, 1989, p 154). The factors needed to promote European integration, cultural and political, are many. What we must also recognize, here, is that there are forces working against cultural unification or uniformity. In the context of centripetal tendencies brought about by the globalization of communications, there are also centrifugal tendencies ‘to protect and preserve native languages and cultures’ (Gifreu quoted in Robins, ibid). The reactions, from the member-states, for an even closer union are mixed. France is an example of a European nation-state split between national interests and an active participation in European integration.

France is probably the only member of the European Union with a very strong national position on cultural and audiovisual issues, not only at a national and European level but global too, as the GATT case proved. Yet, France has been a major force in the construction and integration of Europe. These opposing tendencies within French politics indicate a clash between national interests and the desire to play a leading role in the European and international political and economic arena. The Maastricht referendum, in 1992, where nearly half (49%) of the French population, voted ‘Non’, was a clear manifestation of these divisions. If France and Europe were imagined as two players on a cultural football ground, the media would be the ball they play with. Except that, in this game, there is more than one ball and often the players get confused as to which ball to kick. There are cultures to protect as well as economic and political interests to safeguard.

This chapter focuses on a limited but crucial aspect of European development that may be called the ‘cultural dimension’ and, in particular, the role of the media in it. The aim is to follow the evolution of audiovisual and cultural policy in the EU and France’s role in this process, through a combination of conceptual and policy analysis. France serves as an example of the national vs. the European - indicating the complexity of policy-making at a national and European level and the delicate politics of identity, which have become more complicated as new actors, external to the French nation add their pressure. It will be argued that when it comes to media and cultural issues, France is considered a very influential power within EU. The European audiovisual policy is French inspired and it bears the stamp of France’s preoccupation with the role of state intervention in shaping the national culture. The chapter will be divided into two main sections, the European policies and the identification of the problematic areas and France’s position and responses128. But, before starting the discussion and policy analysis at both levels, a brief analysis on France’s role in the construction of Europe will be a good starting point to discuss French attitudes and European cultural and audiovisual policy.

128 The sources for this chapter have been a combination of official EU documents and reports and related literature. The content of this chapter has also been shaped by the author’s fieldwork research in the EU (Commission, DG X), the Council of Europe (through an internship) and the European Institute of the Media (archives work and participation in a summer course on Europe and the information society). An early draft of this chapter was presented at the ECSA conference in Pittsburgh, USA, June 1999 where recommendations and suggestions shaped the present version.
1. Europe in the Image of France

“Notre politique... c’est de réaliser l’union de l’Europe... Si j’ai tenu à réconcilier la France et l’Allemagne, c’est pour une raison toute pratique: c’est parce que cette réconciliation est le fondement de toute politique européenne. Mais quelle Europe? If faut que soit véritablement européenne.

…ce sont les Américains qui en profiteront pour imposer leur hégémonie. L’Europe doit être in-dé-pen-dante. C’est ma politique...

Ce que veulent les Anglo-Saxons, c’est une Europe sans rivages, une Europe qui n’aurait plus l’ambition d’être elle-même. L’Europe sans frontières à l’Anglaise… C’est en réalité l’Europe des Américains. L’Europe des multinationales. …

Il se trouve que la France est seule à vouloir une Europe qui en soit une, à pouvoir la vouloir... Le drame de l’Europe, c’est qu’à part nous, il n’y a personne qui ait l’ambition d’être vraiment Européen‖ (de Gaulle quoted in Thomas, 1991, p 207).

Europe, for de Gaulle, was more than Franco-German reconciliation and resistance to the Anglo-Saxon hegemony. He saw Europe above all in the image of France, as he argued to bring about the European ideal France should play the leading role. Since 1958, the French Foreign Affairs has attempted to balance the affirmation of national independence, on the one hand and the construction of Europe, on the other. National independence was fuelled by a desire to have the voice of France heard by the international community129 and the refusal to see France integrated in an Atlantic bloc dominated militarily and culturally by the United States.

The construction of Europe has been seen by most French governments as both an ideal in its own right and as an instrument for achieving other political objectives. The ideal is the building of a peaceful, prosperous, liberal and democratic Europe, based on mutual tolerance, co-existence and co-operation. At the level of political objectives, Europe was seen initially as a way of neutralizing Germany’s power and as the means to retain a role of international leadership after the French empire had lost its past glory (Guyomarch et al, 1998) and, rather crucially, a united Europe provided the opportunity of pursuing the French desire to resist the two superpowers, America and the Soviet Union. ‘L’Europe de l’idéal’ was part of the rhetoric used by the national elite for the construction of Europe. A Europe of diversity that shares a deep solidarity, a Europe in which France can prosper and find a new place in the world130. ‘L’Europe de l’idéal’ was compatible with the French tendency to promote ambitious projects: ‘notre politique ne souffre pas la trivialité, la grandeur est son oxygène’ (Cohen, 1988, p 49). It was ‘l’Europe de la nécessité’, though, that had the heaviest influence131. The economic crisis and the industrial pressures, persuaded the individual member

129 De Gaulle laid down the foundation for this policy when he declared in 1966 that France’s policy is to maintain its independence as a nation: ‘Pourquoi? Pour qu’elle joue son rôle à elle dans le monde... l’indépendance signifie que nous décidions nous-mêmes de ce que nous avons à faire et avec qui, sans que cela nous soit imposé par aucun autre Etat et par aucune collectivité’ (Conférence de presse 28 oct. 1966, Discours et messages).
130 ‘L’Europe de l’idéal’ becomes also ‘L’Europe de l’Ambition’ as ‘le rapprochement entre Européens a souvent été considéré comme le moyen par excellence d’exercer une influence internationale accrue’ (Secrétariat d’Etat au Plan, 1993, p 188).
131 ‘... la nouvelle dynamique européenne a constamment oscillé entre la nécessité et l’ambition... L’Europe de la nécessité, c’est celle qui progresse dans la voie d’une certaine unité en misant pour ce faire sur la prise de conscience des contraintes extérieures que fait peser la
states that only a strong united Europe can help them to fight competition from the other side of the Atlantic. The impact of globalization on individual economies and cultures was felt very strongly by France, initially rather slow in catching up with the process. Europe, thus, became for the French, besides a grand project in which they could take part, a necessity to push them into 'modernization'.  

‘L’Europe de la nécessité’ was seen as a way of making France and French society face up to hard economic and industrial realities. Europe offered France a way to come out of crisis and the opportunity of participating in the global economy through modernization and changing social and legislative regimes.

As a result, France’s participation in the European Union has not always been very easy. For most of the time, French governments have attempted to achieve national objectives within Europe by trying to ensure that European policy and institutional developments are in accordance with French priorities. As much as de Gaulle wanted a strong Europe, he also saw it as a threat to French sovereignty and identity. He would never accept a Europe that could put into question France as a centralized, sovereign state. But he could not resist, either, the idea of seeing France playing a leading role in Europe. ‘The precondition, of course,’ as Gildea puts it, ‘was that France should preserve its hegemony in Europe and that Europe should be constructed in the image of France’ (Gildea, 1997, p 210).

The fear that Europe could deprive the nation-states of their autonomy in decision-making at a national level was felt in France as everywhere in Europe. Further unification was seen as more of a threat to France as the French state is organized as a highly centralized collectivity compared to the German federal system of the länder which has given more power to the regions (Secrétariat d’Etat au Plan, 1993). France has had a highly developed fear of losing its autonomy and especially its cultural identity and has fought at all levels to retain a sense of national unity and cultural independence. Europe is, thus, seen at once as an ally and as a possible threat. Mitterrand drew attention to the acute dilemma felt by France, the unity versus diversity contradiction at the center of the European ideal:

“... develop a European culture through the audiovisual media...We have satellites that will cover all of Europe. [But] First, we must learn to be European, to say what is specific to us and second, to protect the diversity among Europeans. Take the Gaelic language. Who will save it if Europeans don’t? And Flemish. Hungarian. Finnish. The first important language that would be threatened is German, then French.... All this is liable to be lost with total saturation by American films and Japanese technology‖ (Mitterrand, interview by W. Garrett, 1989).

Mitterrand’s remarks raise questions about how to create a European culture, whether such a
culture is unitary or pluralistic, whether such a culture can co-exist with national cultures and what is the best way for people in Europe to learn to be Europeans? And most importantly, can the media play this crucial role that has been assigned to them: the construction of a European culture? These are the crucial questions behind France’s interaction with European cultural and audiovisual policy. But behind these questions is the contradiction between the need to defend the integrity of the French state and the need to build up European unity to promote France’s role in the world and resist the development of American power. Therefore, ‘unity in the diversity’ has become the magic formula that accommodates these antithetic positions. The element of contradiction is found in the way in which the role and practice of the media is conceptualized and used in the cultural policy.

Having established what Europe means to France, EU’s policies on media and the problematic issues that surround them need in their turn to be clarified and analyzed. If the nation-state fears that forces outside it will render it obsolete and new forms of culture and identities might take over, it is necessary to see the extent to which these fears are valid and whether new forms of identity formation are plausible within the EU.

2. Culture, Policy and the Media in Europe

The preservation of cultural identity has been an issue in media debates within different European countries for a long time. This tendency to relate media with culture often focuses on television, which is seen as an agent of social transformation. The capacity of ‘information’ to forge feelings of belonging has been constantly reinvented over the last few years in Europe and television appears as a solution to many cultural policy problems (Bourdon, 1992). Preserving national cultures through the media has not been an easy task. This is due to forces both internal and external, which confront national broadcasting companies in their efforts to use television content as a tool for preserving national cultures and identities. Certain countries, such as France, and organizations such as the European Union, the Council of Europe and UNESCO have been actively involved in the protection of ‘cultural rights’, each from a different perspective.

A key concept in the analysis of the cultural aspects of media development in Europe is control: control of content and control of communication networks (McQuail and Siune, 1986). One way of attempting to ensure that a country’s cultural values are presented in TV programs is to have national control over program production. This in turn, raises the question of the amount of home

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134 The history of Europe is dominated by a contradiction, as Delmas argues (1979). From one hand, we accept the existence of a European civilization, as Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie supported so fervently with his article: ‘L’Europe est d’abord une culture’ (1979). On the other hand, this common civilization has been shared by people whose relations have been characterized by a lot of violence. The history of Europe, according to Delmas, is its intellectual community and at the same time its disastrous wars, products of the division into nation-states, nationalism and economic interests. The birth of the European Union was based on this very conflictual character of European history, the result of a war that forced its participants to seek ‘unity in diversity’.

135 The reinforcement of national identity through television is still an issue as Michèle Pappalardo, general director of France 2, stated recently in defining the channel’s role: ‘La stratégie de l’antenne de France 2 se construit autour d’une double mission de renforcement de la cohésion sociale et d’enrichissement de l’identité culturelle commune’ (Pappalardo, 1997, p 1).
production (which is an economic, as well as a cultural issue) and closely related to the dynamics of international program production. Technological developments, making easier the transmission of television programs across national borders, and economic and commercial needs, motivating media hardware and software operators to expand their markets, have raised concerns over the fate of national media and their role in the preservation and strengthening of national cultures (De Bens et al, 1992; we have already seen a more detailed account of these changes in chapter 2). At the same time, though, most governments, not wanting to be left out from the developments in the new media technologies, embraced, willingly or not, policies to open up new commercial broadcasting markets. Most European countries experienced an increased deregulation in the media field, with the privatization of national channels, as we saw in the case of TF1 in France (chap.3) and a dramatic increase in the number of commercial stations, as in Italy. These deregulatory policies, so vigorously pursued at a national level across Europe up until the 80s, led inevitably towards the internationalization of the new commercial market (Humphreys, 1996).

The commercialization of culture on an international scale not only poses a threat to cultural identity but, also to the stability of political institutions and systems (nation-state), which are assumed to rest on it. Television has become a battlefield in Europe and a complex play of different strategies on different levels is taking place. The media are implicated at the level of trade, of national and global pressures, of perceived threats (often expressed in historical terms) and within the framework of law and rights. Audiovisual and cultural policy has become, thus, a crucial issue in Europe, as broadcasting cannot be separated from questions of identity and culture.

It was not until the early 1980s that the EU began to seriously discuss audiovisual policy. One of the early attempts was the Hahn Report, which placed telecommunications in the context of European integration. It linked economic and cultural integration within the context of audiovisual policy and telecommunications trade and the joint regulation of European broadcasting at the supra-national level was considered as necessary in achieving those goals.

The need for a supranational, pan-European regulatory authority became more evident towards the end of the eighties, when national-policy makers realized that the deregulation process was proved too difficult to be handled at a national level. As the regulatory capacity of European countries declined, the European Community became an obvious institutional focus for re-regulation. This first tendency towards a European-level audiovisual policy was an optimistic expectation, from certain member-states, that it would serve to protect national cultures. At the same time, it was thought that a transfrontier broadcasting might help stimulate the process of European cultural and political integration. It could, also, be argued that this policy has been the result of maneuvering by European producer-interests and cultural elites, as their assured markets and hegemony have been under threat by migration of European television audiences to competing television programming originating from exogenous suppliers.

It was towards the end of the 1980s that the idea of a ‘European Audiovisual Policy’ started to make sense and to give way to concrete common projects. The 80s stimulated a number of initiatives: Television without Frontiers {TWF} (1984; 1989), MEDIA (1986; 1990), Eureka
At the same time, the idea of a single broadcasting system, or a transnational television was coming out. Early efforts on the level of pan-European broadcasting led to the creation of Eurikon (1982), Europa TV (1985), Eurosport (1989) and Euronews (1993) (Coleman & Rollet, 1997). Before the adoption and implementation of the TWF, there was substantial legal uncertainty regarding the different national laws, regulations and administrative measures in the field of television broadcasting within the EU. The Directive was meant to harmonize national requirements by introducing quotas, including cultural ones through the addition of the content quotas. These quotas represented protection of cultural programming. TWF’s quota system that demanded the transmission of a certain percentage of national and European productions was also meant to reduce the number of non-European, meaning American, audiovisual products shown on European screens with the aim to boost European production by simply increasing the demand. It also made provisions for co-productions between European companies in an effort to increase the chances for a wider audience within Europe.

TWF was partly seen as an attempt to counter “the concern succinctly articulated by Jack Lang that ‘cola-cola satellites are attacking our artistic and cultural integrity’” (Lang quoted in Collins, 1991). The fact that TWF was developed as a cultural remedy suggests certainly a tendency to politicise culture within the EU. One sees attempts to keep ‘polity and culture’ congruent (Collins, 1990). As we saw in chapter 1, the nationalist theory sees culture as vital in the sustenance of political units. The more Europe advances towards a political and economic integration, the more it requires a cultural dimension to go with its increasingly prevalent description of itself as a ever closer Union, aspiring to move away from the simple collaboration of sovereign states in a pragmatic economic association to something that resembles more the sovereign state. Cultural unities, Collins says, are required to fit the new political unities. As we will see below, EU documents indicate two concerns that are not necessarily compatible: the creation of an internal market in media production and the protection of European culture. Will the EU seek to re-affirm the role of its member-states and their separate national identities in the regulatory sphere, or will it seek to create a European cultural space? But can a European culture, whatever that might be, sustain a pan-European political institution and vice-versa? Can the national cultures and national institutions see this European culture as anything other than a possible competitor and threat, even, to their survival and sovereignty? While the EU defends TWF measures as necessary for the promotion/preservation of European culture, it is not clear what is meant by European culture. Does it refer to the cultural heritage of individual member states, or to thematically common aspects of their diverse cultures? This is a rather unpredictable case, although we can still study the trends and draw some initial conclusions from the actions (and reactions) taken during the 80s and 90s, on national and European level.

The following section focuses on the identification of the problematic areas in the field of European policies. This is considered as an essential step towards our understanding of national-supranational tensions and the extent to which French fears on safeguarding their national culture within the EU are well funded or not. It brings the discourse on nation-state and culture to the fore and links it to policy.

136 These aspects of TWF and related issues will be under examination through this chapter.
2.1 Cultural Differences and Harmonization of Policies

European audiovisual and cultural policy revolves around four central themes: culture, legislation, economy and technology, with each one of them having its own problematic areas as a result of the cultural particularities of the European audiovisual space and the market forces. Linguistic and socio-cultural differences are the first of these problematic areas, followed by the issue of harmonization and the opposing forces of protectionism and neo-liberalism.

2.1.1 Linguistic and Socio-cultural Differences

Despite all policy efforts to break the audiovisual barriers away, caused by the cultural diversity of European audiences, the European television program industry still suffers from a low rate of cross border distribution and circulation of films and television programs. The hope of European policy-makers was that by distributing the same cultural products would eventually lead to an ‘identity of interpretation on the part of those who consumed it’. This, known as the ‘fallacy of distribution’, seems rather unlikely to take place in Europe (Schlesinger, 1993) as policy-makers have not taken into account the context of reception of culture. For them, the linguistic and cultural diversity is nothing more than a formidable obstacle to wider intra-European circulation of media products:

“Besides the obvious structural defects in the European audiovisual industry, observers over the last 30 years have generally pointed to the linguistic and cultural diversity of Europe to explain or justify its permanent state of crisis and underdevelopment. (...) New technical possibilities must be used to the full in order to remove partitions between national markets and enable programmes to cross borders (...) If the industry is to benefit from the European market, investment in dubbing and subtitling is a priority requirements” (European Commission, 1994, p 20).

They tend to disregard the fact that nationality and national culture play an important role in the process of production and reception. Television programs and films produced in one particular European country tend to be so nationally specific that audiences elsewhere in the continent find it difficult to identify with them. The linguistic diversity that makes trans-frontier circulation difficult seems most likely to persist. As Schlesinger points out, the development of official languages in Europe has been closely associated with the creation of state-supported media of linguistic communication - i.e. ‘linguistic competence is largely coterminous with citizenship’ (1994, p 34). Taking this into consideration, we can understand why it is so difficult to have a single European audiovisual market. This market is, in fact, ‘merely a collection of distinct domestic markets’ and major European producers are more concerned with strengthening their positions within their national markets (Silj, 1992). As Ambram de Swaan (1991, p 321) has observed, a further political integration is not likely to be accompanied by language unification, as national characteristics seem to persist.

The assumption that there is a strong, homogenizing causal connection between media

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137 This refers to the directive ‘Television without Frontiers’ (Council, 1989) as a general framework for a free movement of television broadcasting services and to several other projects mentioned above, such as the MEDIA program (Commission, 1990) promoting the creation and the distribution of European programs.
consumption and collective identity formation, is evident in several official documents regarding European unification. There is also the belief that ‘Europeaness’ can be achieved through a better informing system, in which media can play a decisive role. The European Commission’s Green Paper, ‘Television without Frontiers’, states:

“Information is a decisive, perhaps the only decisive factor in European unification... European unification will only be achieved if Europeans want it. Europeans will only want it if there is such a thing as European identity. A European identity will only develop if Europeans are adequately informed. At present, information via the mass media is controlled at national level” (European Commission, 1984).

It is rather naive to believe that information through the media at a European level can construct a European collective identity. The national level of media production and distribution is seen as an obstacle to further unification. This is rather ironic, as Schlesinger rightly points out, that, in order to ‘legitimize the project of forging a supranational identity’, European policy-makers have chosen the national model of media whose political prospects have been seriously challenged by the deregulation process, imposing an ‘individualizing economic conception of audiences’ (1994, p 30). So, the project for the construction of a European culture through television was simply extended from one political level to another without taking into account that moving from a national community, (defined by the boundaries of a single state), to an international community, (defined by integrationist political economics), might have serious implications - such as clashing identities.

2.1.2 Harmonizing Policies

Another problematic area is the harmonization of policies among the member-states. This has not been easy and that refers largely to France, as the quotas case will show further down. As national media systems are seen more as an obstacle to further integration, one solution has been found in the harmonization of legislation. National audiovisual policies must fit the European constitutional framework: national media law measures must not contradict Community law provisions.

The ‘Television without Frontiers’ Directive stipulates that ‘where practicable’ member states should ensure that broadcasters reserve for European works ... a majority proportion of their transmission time, excluding the time appointed to news, games, advertising and teletext services (Council, 1989, art 4). Evidence shows, though, that the implementation of the Directive has met with resistance from the national broadcasters, suggesting that they are not willing or ready to follow European regulation (Biltereyst, 1995; for more details on the compliance of European Stations see table 1, annex for chap.5)). The report by a group of European audiovisual professionals, commissioned by the European Union (Think-Tank, 1994) and the Green Paper on the ‘Audiovisual Policy of the European Union’ openly indicated that despite the existence of a European audiovisual and cultural policy there are still major problems to overcome, such as the absence of convergence.
between the different support mechanisms on a regional, national and supranational level (ibid, p 27-28; European Commission 1994, p 11).

Harmonization of support mechanisms and legislation in general cannot be achieved very easily, as the cultural diversity among European countries is reflected in the national cultural policies. There are generally two kinds of legal approach in European counties reflecting two diametrically opposed notions of culture. In some European countries, the programming of culture in television focuses more on the social role of television (e.g. Germany, United Kingdom, Sweden). There is no distinction between the so-called ‘cultural’ programs and others. Culture as a social phenomenon is an idea which gives priority to general-interest programs. The cultural mission is mostly found in the determination to maintain social cohesion (Robilliard & Machet, 1997). In other counties, it refers to national identity (France, Belgium) and focuses on programs related to what is singular and specific in a society. There is the tendency to reduce the debate on culture to a political objective: the protection of the nation’s cultural identity, or to a scheduling objective that favors certain categories of program. This second approach to audiovisual and cultural policy leads to government intervention and to the adoption of quantitative measures such as production and broadcast quotas.

How can one harmonize policies that are so diametrically opposed? The existence of various levels of political responsibility for the audiovisual media makes the process of harmonization more complex. These different strata are superimposed on one another in a way which sometimes produces conflict between the regional and the national level (as in the case of Germany during the vote on the Television without Frontiers Directive); the national and the European level (in the case of Belgium and Netherlands, concerned about the protection of their cultural identity in the face of the treat from the internal market); and the national/European level and the international level (as the case of France and the European Union showed in the GATT negotiations on the cultural exemption of audiovisual products). Can the assertion of a genuine European cultural policy at a national, European and international level, provide a solution to these conflicts? Or, is it going to accentuate them even more? How plausible is such a cultural policy anyway? The way the issue of culture has been treated up to now by the European Union, shows how problematic this area is. However, it is not only the cultural value of audiovisual products that causes troubles in Europe. It is rather the combination of cultural and economic interests that has divided European policy-makers and the member-states, as the following section will argue. France has acted as one of the main protagonists in this division of policy interests.

Djian identifies four major types of national cultural policies in Europe, according to the type of administration of the member-states: a) this of the Federal states like Germany and Belgium; b) the cultural policy of states with a centralized structure, like Spain and Italy; c) the countries where cultural policy is exercised by quasi autonomous councils, like Britain and Ireland and to a lesser extent, Denmark, Netherlands, Sweden and Finland; d) the type of centralized states, like Luxembourg, Greece, Portugal and France (1996, p 226-229).

Germany has a federal system of *länder* that maintain authority over regulation at a local level. Harmonizing Germany’s policy with that of the EU means a harmonization of regional policies first which makes matters more complicated.

These clarifications were given by Machet to the author of this thesis during a EIM seminar.
3. Neo-liberal and Protectionist Forces: Contradictions at the Heart of European Policy

Audiovisual products have become a crucial economic battlefield. Besides cultural arguments, which are often used in a rhetorical way, the European policy-makers frequently use economic arguments in order to indicate the importance of fiction and drama as the main strategic domain of potential industrial growth.

The controversial nature of European policy is based on the argument around the cultural specificity of audiovisual products in conjunction to its economic side. To start with, the hope that a united Europe can take a positive action towards the protection of national cultures has been based on a rather disputable motivation from the side of the European policy-makers. The interest shown by European institutions in specifying and implementing a common policy has been more the result of outside pressure, a reaction to American and Japanese domination in programming and hard-ware, as Delors so clearly declared in his definition of EU audiovisual policy: “il s’agit d’éviter une situation où des spectateurs Européens passeront leurs temps à voir des films américains dans des appareils japonais”. The global politics of communication centers around the international ‘war of images’, the struggle between ‘image superpowers’. Europe is clearly concerned about the power of these images: ‘Where will these pictures come from? Who will capture the market - and the employment - for producing and transmitting them?’ (Commission of the European Communities, 1986, p 3). The creation of a pan-European media industry is imperative, if American dominance is to be challenged: ‘the day of purely national audiences, markets and channels is gone’ and the logic of development must be towards a ‘European audiovisual area’ (ibid).

There are two main approaches within the European audiovisual policy, reflecting the opposing tendencies between market forces and cultural interests. One is the neo-liberal/market oriented approach, the other, the protectionist/interventionist approach, contributing to the creation of a contradictory policy (Collins, 1994; Harrison and Wood, 2000). Although, the protectionists managed to keep the debate on culture at the center of policy, it is the liberals who have been exercising the most influence. The fusion of these two tendencies has given shape to the aim of creating a strong pan-European audiovisual sector that ‘can compete on world markets and help European culture to flourish and create jobs’. Unity therefore became the main motto for both

141 It is important to stress that the neo-liberal model has crucially shaped and framed the policy initiatives of the EC in the communications and cultural sphere since the mid-1980s. The tendencies in the political economy in the 1980s had placed the emphasis on the benefits of the market forces and increased competition in all sectors of the economy and society. Part of these shifts was the tendency to downplay the role of the state or public sector and a denial of the notion of public service broadcasting as well as a refusal to recognize the specificity of a ‘public sphere’ - both in terms of its political or cultural forms (Preston, 1994).

142 Examples of this tendency were the following EU documents: the White Paper on ‘Growth, Competitiveness and Employment: The Challenges and Ways Forward into the 21st Century’ (CEC, 1994) and the Green Paper on ‘Strategy Options to Strengthen the European Program Industry in the context of Audiovisual Policy of the European Union’ (CEC, 1994). According to the latter, the ‘foundamental requirements’ for the future audiovisual sector in Europe are defined as follows: a) ‘it must be competitive’, b) ‘it must be forward-looking and be involved in the development of the information society’, c) ‘it must illustrate the creative genius and the personality of the people of Europe’ and d) ‘it must be capable of transforming its growth into new jobs in Europe’ (p 1-2). The same document blamed the ‘lame-duck’ mentalities of many filmmakers who are ‘experts in milking’ public support mechanisms for domestic film production without a thought for potential audiences (p 7). Criticism indicates the failure of these two policy documents in relation to the social and cultural role of the audiovisual sector (see Preston, 1994).
groups, and the role of the audiovisual sector in fostering European unity was greatly emphasized.

The argument in favor of unity was given as a necessary condition for competitiveness (technological, economic, scientific, etc.) and therefore of hegemony. Unity became a meeting point of the cultural, industrial and economic interests of the various players (private and public) in the European states. The main idea was that only unity would enable them to defy the cultural influence of hegemony and the economic and technological influence (implying dependence and subordination) exerted by the great world powers in industry, technology and culture: the United states and Japan (de Moragas, 1995). In the argument for an economic union, as a condition for the survival of cultural diversity, lies the difficult balance between unity, diversity, culture and business, which the pro-European discourse has devised under the auspices of a common audiovisual policy. An example of this has been the Information Society project: ‘The information society has the potential to improve the quality of life of Europe’s citizens, the efficiency of our social and economic organization and to reinforce cohesion’ (European Council, 1994, p 6). It seems to assume that the information society can perform miracles for Europe. However, this unity together with the much-wanted cohesion is, in fact, counterbalanced by cultural diversity.

‘Culture’ does appear in many documents and the need to recognize the special cultural and political characteristics of the audiovisual products which in most cases are regarded as specific to each nation and thus integral to its identity is often mentioned. Delor’s speech, for instance, at the Assises de l’Audiovisuel serves as an example of the usual cultural rhetoric used here to highlight not only the cultural imperative but also the necessary intervention of Europe143:

“I would simply like to pose a question to our American friends: do we have the right to exist? Have we the right to preserve our traditions, our heritage, our languages? How will a country of ten million inhabitants be able to maintain its language - the very linchpin of culture - faced with the universality which satellites offer? Doesn’t the defense of freedom, elsewhere so loftily proclaimed, include the effort of each country, or each ensemble of countries, to use the audiovisual sphere to ensure the protection of their identity?” (Delors, 1989, p 23).

If this perspective is to be carried through to its logical conclusion, as Preston (1994) points out, then it serves to limit and reduce the accelerating trends in market oriented policies. It is exactly at this point, where one can detect a dilemma or even schizophrenia at the heart of audiovisual and cultural policy. Is this claim about the need to recognize the special nature of audiovisual services as the prime carrier of culture in relation to national specificity to be taken at its face value? Or is it to be taken as a “self-interested legitimating devise for a very partial application within the context of a ‘fortress Europe’ approach” according to which the European audiovisual industry should compete with and even replace Hollywood’s dominance of global audiovisual services and markets144? (ibid, p 20). The neo-liberal logic seems to overtake the argument on cultural

143 The role of the media in constructing a European identity has been officially defined by counter position to a cultural invasive other, the United States.

144 This contradiction was evident in the presentation of Vincenzo Cardarelli from DGX during a EIM seminar in Brussels (15 Aug. 1997) who talked about Europe developing a Hollywood culture. He argued that Europe had the potential for creating a strong audiovisual industry, although he maintained a pragmatic view. In a question by the author
specificity\textsuperscript{145}. In the Green paper on strengthening the audiovisual industry, programming ‘diversity’ is mainly discussed in terms of the new European market scales associated with the proliferation of channels and the new media (EU, 1994, p 19-20). The ‘success and profitability of the European market’ and film industry will somehow magically ‘open the door to new markets ... where producers of different countries and languages, big and small will find a natural outlet’ (ibid, p 45). This is the way the European Union plans to protect those countries with low audiovisual production or capacity, by simply creating a European market. But it seems they forget the inherent characteristics, which lead to concentration and monopolist structures in this sector.

The clash between unity and diversity, liberals and protectionists has not ceased. The issue of culture has remained unchanged mainly because of the lack of clarity, conceptual and policy wise, of its position in Europe. European audiovisual and cultural policy has evolved within the framework established by the major European Treaties and declarations (Treaty of Rome and Convention on Human Rights\textsuperscript{146}). The legal framework, though, has not proved sufficient to support the extensive initiatives in the cultural field. Although the Treaty of Rome preamble has long given prominence to the process of ‘creating an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe’, there was practically no mention of culture in it. This lack of competence in culture created a ‘gray zone’ by invoking economic reasons for achieving cultural ends and while there was no intention to legislate, cultural matters came up as part of more general policies (e.g. free circulation of goods, competition) or under the influence of court cases (e.g. free circulation of television signals, copyright)\textsuperscript{147}. As a consequence, institutions within the European Union and some member-states have sought cultural power first by revision of the Treaty of Rome and later by the inclusion of a culture article in the Maastricht treaty.

However, these efforts to bring a more active cultural policy within the European Union have been opposed by certain member-states. The revision of the Rome Treaty, for instance, was opposed, by Denmark and UK, on the grounds that ‘cultural policy should remain an exclusive national competence’ (European Parliament, 1989, p 14). The unwillingness of these countries to accept the cultural policy initiatives prevailed, as article 235 of the Treaty provides that Community action on matters not explicitly mentioned in the Treaty (and that includes culture too), requires a unanimous vote in the Council of Ministers. The UK and German efforts to ensure that Community spending on culture does not increase, in combination with the Danish concern to ensure that Community powers do not interfere with areas considered of national interest and responsibility, has resulted in limited Community initiatives in the media and cultural sectors\textsuperscript{148}. The only way left to deal with

\textsuperscript{145} Certain cultural specificities such as the language diversity, for instance, is perceived as a problematic issue, that of ‘language barriers’ which can be solved technically by developing an efficient subtitling and dubbing system.

\textsuperscript{146} According to the Convention’s article 10: “everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authorities and regardless of frontiers”. Although, the convention was negotiated in the framework of the Council of Europe, it has been signed by all members of the EU (Van Loon, 1993, p 17).

\textsuperscript{147} An exception was the MEDIA program, adopted in 1990, with the aim of assisting the film and television industries of the member-states to overcome cultural and linguistic barriers to co-operation. The financial provision though was not substantial enough to make the program successful.

\textsuperscript{148} Gaston Thorn, the president of the Commission at the time, in his introduction on the proposals for the ‘The reinforcement of the Community action in the audiovisual sector’ (1982) made clear that this initiative does not imply a
this sector was through economic measures, like the ‘Television without Frontiers’ policy - partly the result of liberal attempts to create a single audiovisual market. The process that has led to the adoption of the Directive brought out all the internal oppositions, polarized between DG III, more interested in establishing the free circulation of services, and DG X, more attentive to the specificities of the cultural sector\textsuperscript{149}. The latter has found itself regularly in a weaker position, because of a lack of a clear definition of its mission.

Interventionist policies have reflected this lack of a clear direction. At the beginning, intervention was promoted in order to rectify the perceived failure of the European audiovisual market and to foster a single European culture. Unity was still the main argument as only a united Europe could help national production. Later, though, the interventionists changed their argument focusing on diversity rather than unity, as they sought to compensate for what they felt was to be an undesirable reduction in diversity, too much unity, as Collins says (1994). Some of the fundamental propositions in which interventionist Community policies have been based are, according to Maggiore, the following: the Community should develop political and cultural dimensions; the creation of a single Community television market has seriously damaged the Community’s ability to shape its own economic and cultural destiny; audiovisual policy embraces cultural as well as economic considerations; national policies are simply incompetent to deal with the problems facing the Community and that insistence on national prerogatives seriously inhibits the Community’s response to the challenges it faces (quoted in Collins, 1994, p 143). The MEDIA program and the inclusion of European content quotas in the broadcasting Directive were part of the interventionist measures in the production and distribution of audiovisual programs. ‘Unity in diversity’ has become the new goal. The section below will bring France’s role as the leading force of the protectionists group into sharp focus and present the quota’s dispute in a more analytic way.

3.1 France in the Lead of the Protectionists

“Au tournant de ce siècle, l’Europe devra décider si elle veut ou non se doter d’une politique commune de la culture. Et, si oui, laquelle. Une longue et épuisante bataille se prépare pour convaincre les dirigeants de l’Union de l’importance du problème, mais il faut savoir que toute solution, même très partielle, sera contraire à la philosophie du marché sur laquelle la construction communautaire a été bâtie. Qui d’autre que la France pourrait, et devrait, prendre la tête d’une telle entreprise?” (Liehm, 1997, p 27).

Compared with Britain’s hands off and market-oriented approach, France gives a strong centralized support to culture. The reluctance of the former to participate actively in European ventures and policy formulation has led, as a consequence, to a Community policy that reflects to a large extent more the interests of France, which, unlike Britain, has been consistently involved in Community cultural position, as such position would involve ideological and aesthetic choices that the Community should prohibit (Lange, 1993, p 86).

\textsuperscript{149} There are more actors in this game of policy-formulation and implementation, each having its own interests to safeguard. Apart from DG III and DG X and their opposing interests, there is DG XIII which focuses on the promotion of new technologies (i.e. high definition TV), the European Parliament which is devoted in the promotion of the European integration with emphasis on cultural as well as the market aspects and also the Court of Justice whose job is to safeguard the EC Treaty’s commitment to free exchange of goods and services (Humphreys, 1996, p 261).
audiovisual policy-making\textsuperscript{150}. The impetus to come to a EU consensus on cultural objectives has come from France which has the clearest state policy on the question of cultural defense in Europe and not coincidentally the greatest resistance to US domination of the national box office\textsuperscript{151}.

France has always seen European cultural policy as an extension of its own national policy and wished to transfer anxieties about their cultural identity and their national obsession regarding the Americanization of their culture, to a European level. As Riest\textsuperscript{152} stated: “the French are the most concerned with national cultural identity - in that sense they are very European in their thinking” (in Collins, 1994, p 132). When the discussion surrounding the renewal of the directive TWF started in 1995, Alain Juppé, the French Foreign Minister then, saw it as ‘an occasion for France to justify its reputation as a fierce defender of European culture’ (Thierry, 1995, 5). The French position highlighted the questions that still remain untackled within the TWF, turning them from what constituted a ‘European culture’ to whose European culture. Lionel Jospin went even further during his campaign for prime minister in 1995, by saying that he would fight for French identity on the pan-European level:

“If we are not careful, the globalization of broadcasting, brought about by the rapid growth and standardization of the communications technologies with the help of the powerful American television industry, may lead to resignation or decline. \emph{the TWF can help Europeans} implement a much more offensive policy that has been pursued to date” (Thierry, 1995, p.5)

France’s persistence on culture had an influence on the first Commission Report. Despite the feeling of general success in the economic aspects of the directive TWF, the language insisting on the importance of culture became stronger. The EU regulatory framework “might contribute more effectively to promoting the program industry” since the Maastricht Treaty “requires the Union to take cultural aspects into account”. Further more, “measures relating to the content of audiovisual services must take into account their cultural and sociological impact regardless of their more of transmission” (European Commission, 1995, p. 6-8)

Cultural identity is a major issue for France and the scale of American imports of television programs and films has been a cause of official concern. The popularity of these products has been represented as a danger and American popular culture has been seen in official circles and by cultural elites as constituting a threat to the national culture. This argument has been most articulated by the French who also believe that American popular culture has played an important role in the global clash between la francophonie and the Anglo-Saxons. France felt she was on the offensive. Television appeared “comme un moyen privilégié de maintenir, voire de renforcer les positions de la francophonie en Europe et au-delà, à condition que les professionnels de l’audiovisuel jouent le jeu...” (Bahu-Leyser, 1994, p 214). This belief was articulated very clearly by Alain Decaux, the Minister of La Francophonie at the time, in a report where he stated that:

\textsuperscript{150} The importance of the French government in the development of the European audiovisual-policy was acknowledged at the Rhodes Council meeting of Ministers of culture in 1988 - which has been considered as the official birth of the Community’s audiovisual policy.

\textsuperscript{151} US films for instance had a 93 percent share of the British box office in 1992, whereas in France it had 58 percent. In Germany it had more than 80 percent and in Italy 68 percent (Film and Television Handbook 1994, p 44, table 16).

\textsuperscript{152} The Executive Secretary of Eurimages, an initiative taken by France in establishing a co-production support scheme.
“il faudrait que, dès maintenant, tous les ministères concernés commencent à travailler ... sur une des plus considérables remises en cause culturelles qu’un pays aura su générer: une offensive mondiale de l’audiovisuel français” (Decaux, 1989, p 7).

It is not unusual to encounter military metaphors in this context. ‘La bataille mondiale des images’ mentioned in the same report (ibid, p 8), is a battle now transported to a supranational level, where Americanization, in the official thinking, is represented as a threat to European culture. This tendency to talk in terms of metaphors of cultural war represents Europe as though it has a national culture and identity. It is not surprising that the creation of a common European culture through audiovisual programs is conceived as a form of cultural defense, as Delors emphasized in his speech in the Assises de l’Audiovisuel. France managed very successfully to emphasize that both Europe and France faced the same problem of the ‘très forte prépondérance anglo-saxonne’, to which the solution was to Europeanize television production (ibid, p 23, 40). From this ‘culturalist’ perspective, the defense of ‘Europe’ has, therefore, taken the form of the defence of national cultures in the face of ‘perceived encroachments of the despised lowbrow global culture, linguistically Anglophone and culturally American’ (Richardson & Meinhof, 1999, p 75).

The initiative taken by France and Germany to create a European channel, ARTE, was an attempt to appropriate ‘highbrow’ culture as the creation and property of Europe and so distinguish itself from American mass culture. Jérôme Clément, the president of Arte, described this effort in the following way:

“C’est la caractéristique de l’Europe d’avoir fait de la culture une des ses priorités et cela la distingue du modèle américain. Bien attendu, ARTE ne prétend pas au monopole de la culture ni de l’Europe, mais, elle peut s’ériger de réintroduire le temps dans le regard humain, le temps de la personne, le temps de l’Histoire, le temps de l’être, valeurs de notre continent, pour offrir à chaque téléspectateur une possibilité de mieux comprendre le monde qui l’entoure” (Clément, 1994).

However, the idea that high culture is European - at least as it was perceived by France - as distinct from Western, is unfounded. The channel has not been very popular as its programming is perceived as rather ‘elitist’, focusing on opera, concert and ballet productions (forms with a history of trans-cultural success at least within the West). In addition, the different expectations and attitudes (influenced by national interests) towards the channel by the co-sponsors have created tensions, further indications of how difficult the project of a pan-European television can be. Alex Taylor, an ARTE producer and presenter, argued that there is very little European in this channel which he claims that is highly Franco-German and that despite appearances, French are not so much interested in Europe as much as they are interested in showing off their own culture.

153 Discussing ARTE with Natalie Kerp, researcher specialised on ARTE, it became evident that one of the main problems of the channel was the difficulty of cooperation. French attitudes on cultural programming differ from those of the German partners.

154 In his presentation on the Europeanization of French and British Television Broadcasting in a colloquium (French and British Television Broadcasting in the 1990s) at the university of London 15 March 1997.
3.2 Clashing Policies: ‘La Tumultueuse Saga des Quotas’

One of the crucial problems of the European audiovisual sector is that only 20 percent of its productions go beyond national borders. The consequences of this situation are many: one film in ten is profitable, two out of ten cover their costs of production and the rest generate a loss (Burgelman & Pauwels, 1992, p 177). An improvement in the distribution of audiovisual products was therefore seen as necessary. This was the objective of Television without Frontiers. Initially a Green Paper, the draft of the directive targeted ‘the opening up of intra-Community frontiers for national television programs’ (article 2 Commission, 1989). Its main goal was to ‘Ensure whenever practicable and by appropriate means that broadcasters reserve for European works the majority proportion of their transmission time, excluding the time appointed to news, sports, events, games, advertising and teletext services’ (article 4, Commission, 1997).

It has been argued that the directive of TWF had French origins and its purpose was to combat globalization, meaning the United States. The French believed that the United States should not dominate the world. The French position, during the formulation stage of the Directive, became pivotally important. Although enthusiastic about the creation of an internal market, the French position was at the same time in favor of adopting protectionist measures. The radical national policies of liberalization had forced the French broadcasting system to rely heavily on imported popular entertainment programs, mainly from the USA. When the French Socialists returned to power in 1988, they were very eager, under the pressure of a very powerful film and television lobby, to persuade the Community to adopt a policy of external protectionism along the lines of their own domestic broadcasting laws. To protect the cultural and linguistic heritage and the European television industry, France proposed a quotas system, requiring European broadcasters to dedicate 60 percent of their programs to European creations. France, which had already established a system of quotas at the national level, hoped by this measure to find new markets in Europe for its own productions (Burgulman et al, 1992; Humphreys, 1998).

However, the idea of such a tight quota was met with resistance by the liberals and was finally abandoned under pressure from Britain’s lobbyists, who feared that such protectionist measures would provoke reprisals from countries outside the Community. The controversy related to quotas went beyond the European Union’s borders. The USA was hostile to what was perceived as European protectionism: ‘It means that EC citizens will not be free to choose what they want to see or not to see on their TV sets. While these citizens are given the power to select their parliamentary leaders, EC officials obviously do not trust them to select TV programs’ (Valenti quoted in Brown, 1991, p 4). However, the real argument was an economic one, as the quotas proposals were seen as an attempt to exclude US motion picture and television exporters from a growing market:

155 The directive, submitted to the Commission on 30 April 1986, was meant to extend the Treaty of Rome regarding the free exchange and flow of European audiovisual products.
156 Jack Valenti was the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA).
“The cold war is over … whether we like it or not, we are now in World War of Trade… There is little doubt as to the long-term goal of the European Community. It is to squeeze American movies and TV programs, to put so many restrictive hedgerows in our path, they will make it too difficult and tormenting for our movies and TV programs to compete openly and freely for the favor of their citizens. Slowly, remorsefully, but surely, the EC will force us by these trade barrier intimidations to produce more and more of our movies in Europe” (Valenti quoted in Smiers, 1994, p 163)\(^1\).

The European position, therefore, on what was supposed to be an issue not of trade but of protecting indigenous cultures, was dismissed by the Americans as a justification of what otherwise would have been a clearly unacceptable restraint on free trade. For the American government, this protectionist measure ‘would infringe the principles of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)’ (Humphreys, 1996, p 273)\(^2\). This put an immense pressure on the European Union and as at the time the Commission needed the Americans in its battle against the Japanese concerning HDTV, it found it difficult to oppose their demands.

The French, though, did not leave the battlefield easily. Jack Lang objected to the ‘eurocompatibilité’ of the French legislation regarding the quotas, saying that:

“l'idée que l'on peut se faire de la construction de l'Europe audiovisuelle, laquelle est actuellement en bonne voie, ne consiste pas, pour notre pays, à se modeler sur des règles imposées par tel ou tel comité ou prises sous la pression d'une majorité d'Etats qui voudraient concevoir un système de télévision qui ne serait pas conforme à nos traditions nationales” (Assemblée Nationale, 1988, p 4).

It seems that France has been applying double standards when it comes to European media cultural policy. It is only when the latter reflects its national position on media that it is acceptable. The battle of the quotas is probably the best example of the opposition between France and the European Community regarding audiovisual issues. This part of the Directive provoked many reactions and underwent many modifications before its final adoption in 1992\(^3\). The French obsession\(^4\) over the Quotas nearly stopped the policy process and it was only at the last moment, and under the threat of a legal prosecution, that France agreed to put its legislation on quotas in accordance with the Directive. Turning now to the contents of the dispute, we can observe in detail how the process of European policy formulation is affected by objections from individual member-states.

\(^1\) Jack Valenti demanded later on from his government during the GATT negotiations to get a ban on those European quotas in the segment about the services. We will come back to the GATT dispute in the last chapter.

\(^2\) The issue became a very serious matter and a key topic during the GATT meeting in Geneva, in august 1990 and later during the GATT negotiations in 1994.

\(^3\) Regarding the quotas requirement, France was the leading figure in the group of opponents against the group of member-states with a more liberal policy (UK, Germany, Denmark, Ireland and Luxembourg) Rapport no 384.

\(^4\) As one Commission official put it: “Quotas are a French obsession, not a European one” (Financial Times, February 18, 1995).
3.2.1 The Quotas Battle: Policy Analysis

“For reasons that are by now well-documented, France’s reading of the TWF might be described, in theological terms, as more fundamentalist that, say the UK’s” (Beardmore, 1994, p 32).

i. The Problematic

The dispute over quotas started from the differences between national and European definitions on what is an 'œuvre audiovisuelle'. The directive imposed on national channels a 50 per cent quota of transmission of 'œuvre audiovisuelle européennes'. However, French and European definitions on 'œuvre audiovisuelle' did not coincide which caused the famous dispute.

The difference between these two definitions is that the Directive's definition is larger than the French, including except fiction, animation and documentaries, the 'emissions des plateau' (i.e. talk and variety shows), which are rejected by the French legislation. The Directive permits each member-state to establish its national quotas based, though, only on cultural criteria, like the language of filming. According to the Directive, France had to modify its definition regarding national quotas, by replacing economic criteria (a minimum of investment in France and French financing) with cultural criteria. This meant that France had to soften its protectionist regime of quotas that had applied, up to then, for the benefit of its directors, actors and all those involved in the audiovisual production.

ii. Analysis of the Regulation

A new definition of 'œuvre audiovisuelle' was introduced by the decree of 17 January 1990 after long negotiations between broadcasters who wanted a definition that could include as many categories as possible, so they could most easily dilute their obligations161 and government that wanted to keep a more restrictive definition whose final version was closer to the definition of the Directive, yet not identical. According to this definition:

“Constituent des œuvres audiovisuelles les émissions ne relevant pas d’un des genres suivant: œuvres cinématographiques, journaux et émissions d’information; variétés, jeux; émissions autres que de fictions majoritairement réalisées en plateau; retransmissions sportives; messages publicitaires, téléachat; auto-promotion; services de télétexte” (article 4)162.

Following this definition, the Conseil Supérieur de l’Audiovisuelle defined the different categories included in the definition of 'œuvre audiovisuelle' which are fictions, animations, documentaries, ‘vidéomusiques scenarisées’, live shows and ‘programmes de recherche et de création’.

161 According to the official French argument, a broader definition of 'œuvre audiovisuelle' does not guarantee a better future for the 'création française' since broadcasters can always modify the denominator (by replacing, for example, the fictions with shows) and the numerator (by multiplying the rediffusions). This was actually, what happened by the end (Rapport pour la “jeunesse” and ‘adaptations de spectacles théâtraux, lyriques et chorégraphique” Rapport General, no 92, p 35).
162 Regarding the types of fiction, they included the telefilms, series, serials, animation, 'emissions scenarisées'
Although the new definition was broader, it did not include the ‘émissons réalisées en plateau’, like talk shows, included in the Directive. The new definition of the ‘œuvre d’expression originale française’ adopted by the same decree, followed the way of the compromise by keeping only the linguistic criterion, on which the directive’s definition is based, in opposition to the previous definition based on two types of criteria (linguistic and economic).

More analytically, according to the new definition:

“constituent des œuvres audiovisuelles d’expression originale française, outre les œuvres audiovisuelles réalisées intégralement en version originale en langue française, celles qui sont principalement en version originale en langue française des lors que le scénario originale et le texte des dialogues ont été rédigés en langue française” (article 4).\(^{163}\)

In the same decree, we find for the first time a more specific definition of the ‘œuvre audiovisuelles originaires de la Communauté Européenne’. Before the introduction of this decree, there was not any specific definition of the ‘œuvre européenne’ given by the CNCL. An audiovisual product qualified as ‘d’expression originale française’ and financed by 25 per cent from a French participant was considered as ‘œuvres européennes’. The new definition fixed the European participation at 50 per cent and considers an audiovisual product as European if:

- Produced by a company based in one of the member states and its president, director and the majority of personnel are from one of these member-states
- Financed with the participation of at least 50 per cent of their final cost by persons under the jurisdiction of the member-states or companies based in one of the states
- At least 2/3 of its final cost is spent within the EU
- Realized with the participation of actors, directors, scriptwriters and musicians, in their majority residents of one of the member-states and finally,
- Realized in its 2/3 in studios based in the EU.

The Directive’s definition of ‘œuvre audiovisuelle européenne’ is more general and broader and not so restrictive as the French definition\(^{164}\). According to article 4 of the Directive, the member-states are responsible for making sure their broadcasting organizations reserve a big part of their transmission time for national or European audiovisual works. France imposed a 50 percent

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163 The ‘principalement réalisées en langue française’ could correspond to a relative majority between the different co-producers and not to an absolute majority.

164 According to article 5 of the Directive ‘les œuvres européennes’ are:
- les œuvres originaires d’État membres de la communauté
- les œuvres originaires d’État tiers européens parties à la convention européenne sur la télévision transfrontière du conseil de l’Europe
- les œuvres originaires d’autres États tiers européen

Also these audiovisual works that:
- sont réalisées par un ou des producteurs établis dans un ou plusieurs de ces États
- la production de ces œuvres est supervisée et effectivement contrôlée par un ou plusieurs producteurs établis dans un ou plusieurs de ces États. La contribution des producteurs de ces États est majoritaires dans le court de la production, et celle-ci n’est pas contrôlée par un ou plusieurs producteurs établis en dehors de ces États (Rapport General, No 92, p 84-85).
transmission quota of ‘œuvres originales d’expression francaise’ and 60 percent of programs of EU origins. These quotas had to be applied during prime time.

Moreover, there were not enough French productions to fill the quotas of 50 per cent. The French were afraid that by adopting the Directive’s definition which included light entertainment (variety and talk shows) would lower French production standards by pushing broadcasters to transmit more of this category of audiovisual products in order to fill the quota requirement.

France argued that the strict application of the linguistic criteria would upset the whole French audiovisual industry, affecting in particular fiction, documentaries and animation. Documentaries would particularly be affected by the application of the linguistic criterion, according to which a documentary could not be characterized of French origins, if it was not made in French, even if it was made in France, by a French director and financed entirely by a French producer. In fact, the only obligation (according to French arguments) with a positive effect on ‘creation francaise’ was the obligation to invest 15 per cent of their annual ‘chiffre d’affaires’ in the pre-financement of French audiovisual and cinematographic production.

iii. The Opposition Between the French Government and the EU

The ‘débat polemique’ on quotas led to a legal dispute between the EC and France. The Commission of European Communities found itself ‘en pre-contentieux’ with France. The decree of 17 January 1990 was judged as opposing to the Community law and to the Directive ‘Television without Frontiers’.

First, concerning the definition of ‘œuvres d’expression originale francaise’, the Commission criticized the French demand to write the script and dialogue in the French language. It considered that France exceeded the linguistic criterion adopted by the directive and that this position constituted a discrimination against foreign script and screenwriters.

Second, regarding how to calculate the channels’ investment in cinematographic co-productions, the Commission estimated that the method of accounting the expenses for international co-productions was unfavorable to them and in favor of French productions. Third, the Commission was opposed to the obligation to transmit 120 hours of French audiovisual works during prime-time hours. Estimating this arrangement was limiting the possibilities of ‘intra-communautaire’ exchange of serious fiction.

165 The Decree of 1990 demanded from the channels either to devote a 15 per cent of their annual ‘chiffre d’affaires’ to the purchase of French audiovisual productions and broadcast at least 120 hours of them or devote 20 per cent to the purchase of European audiovisual production and at least 15 per cent of that same ‘chiffre d’affaires’ to the purchase of French audiovisual products (Rapport d’Information, no 384, p 96).
Fourth, the Commission condemned the French definition of 'oeuvre audiovisuelle'. It found it more restrictive that the Directive’s definition which, in combination with the 50 per cent quota of transmission of French audiovisual products, did not give enough space for other European audiovisual productions. For the Commission the principle of proportional division between the decree’s requirement on linguistic quota and the objective of free circulation was not protected.

iv. The Compromise

Following long negotiations, the Minister of Culture and Communication and the delegate Minister of EC arrived at an agreement in 31 July 1991 putting an end to the legal dispute. The French government promised to:

- Modify its definition of 'oeuvre d’expression française' by deleting part of Article 5 related to script and dialogues.

- Arrange the way of calculating the channels investment in cinematographic co-productions by deleting that part of Article 6 refering to: 'ou la moitié de la part française dans le financement des œuvres de coproduction international'.

- Assimilate the 'œuvre européenne' with the 'œuvre d'expression originale française' when it refers to the obligation of certain channels to transmit 120 hours of French productions during prime time hours.

- Fix a 40 per cent linguistic quota of transmission of French production (Rapports d’ Information, no 384, no 86).

The Commission, in its turn, recognized the validity of the decree’s Article 4 regarding the definition of 'oeuvre audiovisuelle'. At a later stage of the negotiations, the Commission decided to withdraw its demand to edit in the French language the original script and text of dialogues for these productions not integrally made in French.

Since then, more modifications have been introduced, probably changing some of the figures in the percentage of quotas requirement. However, what is interesting about quotas is not so much the final result but the whole process (initial positions, negotiation-modifications, final agreement), which indicates the degree of interaction between national and international levels. Even if the dilution of the quota measures, as France initially proposed them, marked a retreat by the French and a disappointment for the protectionist league in the European Parliament, the French did not lose altogether. There was a trade-off for their compromise, as many French-inspired projects in the audiovisual sector were financially supported by the Commission (Humphreys, 1996; discussions with Commission members).

Two years after the implementation of the Directive, the banning of the Turner Broadcasting’s TNT/Cartoon Network from the cable networks of Belgium and France underlined some of the flaws in trying to establish minimum common guidelines for cross-border satellite broadcasting in Europe. According to these two countries, the network failed to comply with the TWF’s minimum
50 percent European programming quotas even though the network was awarded a non-domestic satellite license by the Independent television in the UK. France and the UK’s disagreement over this issue was because of their different interpretations of the article 4 clause allowing programs to ‘work towards’ the quotas, implementing them ‘only where practicable’, namely when their economic status enables them to do so. While the Network’s pledge to increase the amount of its European programming over time was accepted by the UK’s ITC, France expected an immediate comply and refused to consider the channel on French networks until it meets the quota requirement (Beardmore, 1994, p 32). France and Britain are seen as the extreme points of the spectrum of policies adopted by EU member-states. France is characterized by maximalism on audiovisual policy while UK is characterized by a minimalism.

Criticism of the Quotas system has continued over the years. The last Green paper on the revision of ‘Television without Frontiers’ Directive concluded that ‘there is an urgent need to restructure an industry which must in the long-term survive without protectionism and subsidies’ (Fuller, 8.04.94). It is argued that quotas encourage a dependency culture, yet it is feared that immediate withdrawal would leave Europe exposed to colonization by its US competitors. Jacques Santer, the president at the time of the European Commission, even argued that the quotas are not the issue. What is important is the promotion of the European audiovisual industry and the correction of the global imbalance that exists in favor of the US: “it is not right that only 1 percent of European audiovisual productions are disseminated in the United States, whereas 80 percent of American films are shown here”167. If the European audiovisual industry does not move from quotas it will never become fully competitive, yet if it moves too quickly it will be crippled (O’Sullivan, 11.03.94).

The dilemma is still there and as long as the protectionist forces persist in Europe, the audiovisual sector will retain its dependency on protectionist measures such as the quotas system. The issue here remains a cultural one, making the decision to choose between the market and the state-support system very difficult. It is a cultural issue because it involves the role of broadcasting in a democratic society. Allowing the media to function entirely under market forces, which naturally seek to maximize their audiences and thus their profit, implies a form of cultural imperialism whose significance is not diminished by the presence of national programming. The strong position of American products in the global ‘image’ market does not leave much choice to national broadcasters. It is, thus, a cultural and democratic issue because it involves choice. Can the market provide that choice? Or does the state need to intervene to ensure that its citizens have all the possible options, including those of not profitable nature? Can the market and the State-support mechanisms co-exist, each catering for different needs? This dilemma, on a European level, was clearly expressed by Jacques Santer:

“Europe must create the conditions for a competitive audiovisual industry that will, in the medium term, be self-sustaining. Europe can learn from Hollywood, but should above all build on its own special strengths. Broadcasters and the film industry are the driving force of audiovisual production. But behind this common reality, there is a high degree of diversity in practices in the various Member States. European audiovisual policy must recognize this diversity. As such it should not seek to ‘solve all the problems’ but act in a complementary way to national policies (...) It should help to disseminate and raise the profile of European cultures in all their diversity (...) (The European Commission, 1998, p 6).

166 Comment by Richard Collins during his presentation on Franco-British Conflicts over Television Broadcasting in the EU at the Colloquium on French and British Television Broadcasting in the 1990s, 15 March 1997, London.
167 On a television interview with Roberto Denis on Brussels RTBF-1 Television Network, 8 April 1995.
It seems that Europe has chosen the mixed-system not so much out of choice but out of need, as culture plays too important a role in European politics to be left out. France, on the protectionist side, counterbalances the market forces within the EU. The French follow "une politique de résistance" that means that in negotiations they keep their initial position until the end. In many cases, this tactic has managed to block or postpone final agreements at an international level, as in the case of GATT negotiations. It is a remarkable effort from the point that it succeeded in making France’s position the official position of the EU in the GATT negotiations. The Report of the High Level Group on Audiovisual Policy follows the French line by recommending that at a ‘global level, it is essential that the specificity of the sector continues to be recognized and that the principle of the “cultural exception” be applied in the international trade negotiations’ (European Commission, 1998, p 4). Cultural identity still prevails in Community policy.

4. French ‘Variable Geometry’

When France can not achieve its aims directly within the Community, she either seeks the support of institutions outside the European Union, like the Council of Europe for instance, as in the case of Eurimages, or simply takes the initiative of sponsoring events involving other Community members, such as the Paris ‘Symposium International sur l’Identité Culturelle Européenne’ and the ‘Assises de l’Audiovisuel’. French audiovisual and cultural policy provides a ‘text book example’ of the way ‘variable geometry’ has been used to achieve European policy goals.

4.1. Eureka Audiovisuel

When the MEDIA program was introduced in 1986, the aim was to encourage the development of the European audiovisual industries. However, it soon became clear that its budget was insufficient for such an ambitious project. The French attempts, later on, to increase it failed. The need, therefore, for further action was felt by the French government which suggested another audiovisual program, complementary to the MEDIA, in the European Council meeting that took place in Rhodes in December 1988. To launch this project, the French government, then holding the EC presidency, organized a major conference in Paris in October 1989, called “Les Assises de l’audiovisuel”. The new program aimed to boost the supply of European-made programs in order to counter the trade imbalance with the United States. It intended to stimulate the production, co-production and co-distribution of programs across Europe and to do more than compensate for the negative effects of the EC’s single market. Many countries feared that, in the absence of compensating action, the single audiovisual market would actually increase Europe’s exposure to American cultural penetration. America was not the only threat to diversity, though, as countries with small media industries were unlikely to benefit from the single market as much as neighboring

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168 ‘European variable geometry’, as Richard Collins has described it, is the use of European institutions outside the European Community by a Member State of the Community, to achieve goals unachievable through the institutions of the Community. The Council of Europe has provided a forum for developing such initiatives (Collins, 1994, p 133, 135).

169 The MEDIA program (Measures pour l’Encouragement et le Développement de l’Industrie Audiovisuelle) was initially launched by the European Commission in 1986 and agreed by its ministers in 1990. According to the proposal submitted to the Commission on 4 May 1990, it ‘sets out to improve the environment of audiovisual businesses without directly intervening in production’. It is meant to ‘strengthen ... the national industries through the distribution of their products on a community scale to a potential audience of 320 million people [and to] establish ... arrangements for cooperation between these industries based on increased production and distribution capacities on the international market’ (Commission, 1990, p 73).
European countries with larger and more competitive ones. The Community was expected, therefore, to take compensatory action to help these countries maintain their cultural industries (Burgelman and Pauwels, 1992). France was in the lead for an active interventionist cultural policy in the audiovisual sector but the liberals put up obstacles. The French, not to be discouraged, simply went outside the aegis of the Community to pursue their goal. It is also interesting to note here that Eureka Audiovisuel happened at the same time as the difficult negotiations on the Directive of Television without Frontiers and the battle over quotas, fought by France.

Collins sees the support the project received from both the Commission and the Council of Ministers, despite its not being an official EC program, as a sign of ‘the strength of the commitment of major sections of the European Community to a dirigiste policy and program for the European audiovisual sector’ (1994, p 136). It was an indication that there was a tendency within the Community for a more active European media policy. From the French point, it was a very clever move. By opening the Eureka Audiovisuel to countries outside the EC, they managed to overcome the reservations of some member-states about the Community’s involvement in cultural affairs. But the project was not based on cultural criteria only. It also aimed to stimulate the production of the programs needed to feed the envisioned European HDTV system and, thus, help the latter to become a market success. Cultural and industrial policy merged under the same project170 (Humphreys, 1996).

France saw this project through her own lenses, focusing on safeguarding their national culture and market and also their own conception of what Europe and European culture is, as Mitterrand’s speech in the Assises points out:

“...L’Europe d’il y a cinq siècles était plus avancée dans l’échange de ses cultures qu’aujourd’hui. La culture circulait, la culture française a connu des heures de gloire. A tour de rôle, nous sommes propriétaire, possesseurs, inventeur d’un patrimoine qui nous est commun, qui inspire d’autres continents. Des centaines de millions d’hommes, des milliards à travers la terre, sont formés par notre culture, sont sensibles à notre culture... faut-il que nous soyons capables de protéger pour la développer l’identité dont nous sommes les héritiers et que nous avons pour charge de transmettre dans la vocation universelle qui est la nôtre” (Mitterrand, 1989, p 22).

This vocation universelle of the French culture has, according to Boudieu, an imperialistic character. He explains that the fact France has a national culture of a universalist character, gives the French the feeling of an authority (at least until the Second World War) “à une forme d’imperialism cultural qui revêt l’apparence d’un prosélitism légitime de l’universel”. This imperialism de l’universel is perceived as an imperialism libérateur, which means that there is nothing better than, be colonized by France (Bourdieu, 1992, p 149). It is exactly this attitude that has driven the French to believe that the European audiovisual policy should be based on their national model of cultural policy making. French cultural universalism is a strong element in the French elite discourse about the nation, the future of which is a reoccurring source of anxiety for both politicians and intellectuals whose fear of cultural decline has fuelled nationalist reactions. The result of this national obsession is the continuation of a strong foreign and national cultural policy. In fact, the French never stopped

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170 Eureka Audiovisuel was modelled on the technological Eureka, as earlier project established by France as a Europe wide industrial research and development initiative.
trying to restate the greatness of their national character and the European Union provides a new opportunity for them.

4.2. Eurimages

Eurimages was another example of ‘variable geometry’. France, again, was the principal driving force behind this project, its most active participant, the principal contributor of funds and the main beneficiary. France tried to initiate a film and television subsidy program and to encourage pan-European co-productions. These aspirations were blocked by other Community members using the blocking powers they possessed in respect of initiatives developed under Article 235 of the Treaty of Rome. France, then, turned to the Council of Europe, which provided a forum for developing this initiative and securing the eventual adherence of all members of the Community to Eurimages.

The establishment of Eurimages followed a succession of Council Resolutions, which affirmed the importance of the audiovisual sector in nurturing and promoting European culture and identity. The aim of one these resolutions, as it was described by the Council, was to achieve:

“... a genuine and diversified European audio-visual production capable of meeting the needs of television viewers and of encouraging closer unity between peoples as well as the mutual enrichment of cultures... Without increased and competitive audiovisual production, there is a real risk that the new channels will be fed by re-broadcasts of existing programs or extra-European programmes (Council of Europe).

Eurimages had a triple mission. Apart from developing the program industries, it intended to ‘take advantage of the new communication techniques and meet the cultural and economic challenges arising from their development’ and promote European cultural identity (ibid). Once again, economic interests are involved in cultural policy planning. Sometimes, it is not clear which one comes first. Although France appears to have culture as a priority, one cannot help but noticing economic and industrial aspirations, as many projects initiated by France have shown (the Satellite initiatives of TDF1&2, the involvement of the French group Thompson in the development of a European HDTV industry etc) (Bahu-Leyser, 1994).

The initiatives taken by the European Union and France have had a certain impact in the audiovisual sector but not the one expected. A comparison between earlier documents on the state of the European audiovisual sector and recent ones shows that the issues remain always the same: create a genuine European audio-visual area and make it work and implement a strategy for

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171 Eurimages was established at the end of 1988. By 1991, France had participated in 59 Eurimages projects, in 23 of which she was the dominant partner. Comparing France’s figures with Germany’s participation in 28 projects, Switzerland in 21, Spain in 20, and Belgium in 17, one can easily conclude that France was the principal recipient of Eurimages (Collins, 1994, p 133)

172 In an interview with the director of Eurimages, Jean Claude Lazaro, in the Council of Europe (May 2000), it was stated that France, the main funds contributor, is reluctant to put more money into the program as it feels that not many films are attributed to her compared to the money that it gives. It is felt that the money put into the program can be diverted entirely to French productions instead of having to share it with others. European ideals therefore on promoting European productions clashes with national interests.
strengthening European audio-visual production industries\textsuperscript{173}. Recent research shows that the hope for a successful, integrated audiovisual production and distribution industry has not yet been realized (European Commission, 1998). The EU/US trade deficit is growing at a faster pace, from 11% increase in 1995 to an 18% in 1996 (ibid, p 3). There has been an increase of imports from major exporting counties (including the big European production states) but the proportion or the share of non-national European imports seems to be decreasing slightly. Imports from the US continue to dominate the flow of images in Europe. Research (see Biltereyst, 1995) shows that the cross-border dissemination of European audiovisual productions is characterized by a declining trend. The rule on the majority proportion of European works has not been followed by most stations in the European member-states, especially when it comes to the drama and fiction category of programs (ibid, p 20). A major conclusion from the research in this field, illustrating the disputable effectiveness of the European media cultural policy, highlights the fact that the increasing competitive sphere in most countries seems to push the channels to a retreat to national strategies and to a stable dependency on American products (see table 2, annex for chap.5). It is noticed ‘a net tendency of growing (bi-) polarization into domestic and US programming’.

Recent trends in Community policy show recognition of the importance of the national regulatory authorities. Marcelino Oreja, a European Commissioner, recognized that although a central regulatory authority is necessary for issues like convergence for instance, content could not and should not be standardized or controlled at central level, as it has specific ethical, cultural, linguistic, social and economic characteristics:

“I am not therefore a believer in the American ‘one regulator’ model embodied by the Federal Communications Commission, at least not for Europe. Our institutions are different. Our cultures and language are diverse. Our democracies are pluralistic. The EU Treaty recognizes this. I believe that in relation to content, our regulatory framework should be based on common principles at European level - free movement, open competition, certain essential quality standards - but that the details should be dealt with as close to the people as possible. How could a supra-national regulator ensure, for example, that the various political parties involved in regional or national elections get a fair share of air time? The market won’t do it. A supranational regulator can’t do it” (European Commission, 1997, p 2)

The question, however, is how to harmonize open competition and free movement with content issues and quality programming. These two appear to not be easily compatible and the Commission might have a difficulty in defining what is cultural and therefore national and what is European and therefore under the EU regulation. In the remaining part of the chapter, the analysis will focus on how the French and European cultural discourse has evolved since, and as affected by, the Maastricht treaty.

5. Culture after the Maastricht Treaty

\textsuperscript{173} At the same time the weaknesses of the European market persist: 1) fragmentation into national markets; producers are too small to compete on European and world markets; 2) low rate of cross border program distribution and circulation; 3) inability to attract enough resources (European Commission, 1998, p 6).
The Maastricht Treaty renewed the opposition between interventionists and liberals, as the former wanted to incorporate culture into the Treaty in order to allow wider Community action while the latter tried to set limits to its application. The UK (the ‘ultra liberal’ member-state par excellence) firmly opposed Article 128 on culture believing it was not necessary, as effective cultural cooperation already existed and that the addition of a cultural article extending the Community’s competence would mean increased Community expenditure (Collins, 1998, p 231). In the end, the UK did not succeed in excluding the Culture Article from the Treaty but did succeed in limiting its scope.

The Maastricht Treaty permits a more coherent Community approach to culture and more powerful interventionist initiatives by the Commission in the audiovisual sector. But, it does not exempt culture from the EU competence, although initially, some of the member states proposed and supported exemption. Article 128 recognizes that the major responsibility for cultural action lies with the member-states. There is no Community cultural policy, but Community encouragement of action among member-states, supporting and supplementing their action ‘if necessary’ (the principle of subsidiarity). ‘Any harmonization of the laws and regulations of the Member States’ is excluded. If culture was exempted, it was argued, it would have led to many problems. Certain countries, like Germany and Belgium, for instance, both Federations, have many difficulties with the division of competences since they both leave cultural policies to the central government and economic policies to the Federation (Van Loon, 1993, p 21). If the exemption approach were adopted, someone would have to decide which issues would be exempted from the Community competence because of their cultural nature. And as culture means different things to different people, it would have made this process rather difficult. Therefore, culture’s inclusion in the Treaty is less substantial and more symbolic. Moreover, the Article demands that decisions in cultural matters should be taken unanimously, rather than by majority voting, which makes decision-making more difficult. In addition, rather than opening the whole sector to Community intervention, the article confines the Community’s competence in the audiovisual to ‘artistic and literary creation, including in the audiovisual area’. This means that the audiovisual sector is not seen as an authentic locus of artistic and literacy creation. The liberals thus managed to substantially limit the power of culture in the Treaty.

However, the important observation in the Article is the effort to balance national and regional diversity with the common heritage, by carefully avoiding the previously used formula of a ‘European culture’. Paragraph one of the Article reads: “The Community shall contribute to the flowering of the culture of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore”. This provision itself is not entirely ambiguous as it has two aims: respecting the identities of the member states while trying to forge a pan-European identity. National diversity and common heritage come together, hoping for a happy co-existence. In the effort to resist fragmentation, adversity and even doubt in Europe, the emphasis has been put on a common European heritage. At the same time, cultural diversity is too important to be ignored. The question is whether the European Union can accommodate either levels, or even three, if we include the regional one. Perhaps lessons can be

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174 See full text of the Article 128 in annex for chap 5.
175 The stress on diversity in contemporary community policy also reflects the failure of transnational broadcasting by satellite in the 1980s and the consequential recognition that Europe was culturally and linguistically diverse.
learned from the actions taken up to now on audiovisual and cultural policy. As we have seen in the above analysis, the Community’s policy on this field is not the product of a single and unified vision, but rather, the result of the interaction of differing priorities and perspectives of several distinct power centers. These power centers include the member-states whose cultural diversity is reflected in policy-making. The Amsterdam Treaty amended Article 128 slightly: the EU is still under the obligation to consider cultural concerns in its action within other policy areas within the Treaty but it is now required specifically, ‘to respect and to promote the diversity of its cultures (new Art.151 (4) EC). This shows some recognition of the problematic created with the previous treaty and the move towards respecting individual member states’ cultures within the audio-visual policy.

The struggle over a common cultural policy is part of the bigger struggle to maintain and safeguard national interests. France is a striking example of this struggle, split between national interests and a position in Europe and the world. Having discussed how the Maastricht treaty affected the cultural discourse in Europe, let us now turn to consider its impact on the French discourse on culture, nation-state and national identity.

5.1 The Theme of Culture in the French Debate on European Integration

One would expect the French government to react strongly to Article 128, since it was touching the very sensitive issue of the French conception of the nation. However, the political analysis of the implications this article might have was limited within the Ministry of Culture. This lack of an official reaction in combination with the strong support of the French intellectuals and artists for the Maastricht Treaty shows opposing tendencies. The pre-occupation about the position of national cultures in the Union is mainly coming from the political elites who fear for the loss of national sovereignty. The French politicians, though, had to persuade the French public to vote for the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty and, could not, thus, afford to bring the sensitive issue of cultural identity to the debate. Mitterrand’s speech to the French on the Maastricht referendum did not make a single reference to culture. Instead, he talked about the political and economic imperatives that call for a unified Europe:

“Je remarquerai seulement qu’ une Europe unie, comme vous le propose le traité que je vous demande d’adopter, sera en mesure, avec une monnaie, une banque centrale et un marché unique, de faire front devant la puissance économique que représentent des pays extérieurs à notre continent, comme les États-Unis d’ Amérique et le Japon” (Mitterrand, message télévisé, 1er juillet 1992, in Thomas, 1997, p 208).

The United States is seen to pose a multiple threat, economic and cultural, to France as it is seen by the political and intellectual elites who feel that only through a united Europe can they can fight back. It is not easy, though, to keep the balance between cultural and economic priorities and national and European interests, particularly when it comes to cultural policy and the audiovisual industries. The way the theme of culture has been used in the French debate on European integration is an indication itself of the existing tensions within the nation. The issue of a further
unification under the Maastricht Treaty devided the French political parties, some fearing Europe was now dominated by Germany and that France risked losing its autonomy and identity in a united Europe. A leading Gaullist, Philippe Séguin, addressing the National Assembly in May 1992 said:

“The nation must become again what it was: our founding principle. That implies the restoration of the State and the rehabilitation of the Republic. Nation, State and Republic, those are the means to build a Europe compatible with the idea that France has always had of itself” (Séguin addressing the Assembly, 5-6 May 1992, quoted in Gildea, 1997, p 214).

Seguin was concerned about what he thought was a threat to the national sovereignty. The issue of culture in Article 128 escaped heavy criticism, although, Séguin himself had commented earlier about the possibility of a European culture in which he argued: “La culture: c’est elle qui fonde l’attachement national, mais c’est aussi parce que les Européens partagent un fond commun de culture que l’Europe pourra se construire” (1991, p 200). It seems that a European culture is not a problem to the nation, as long as it does not pose a threat to national sovereignty, which comes first. Séguin explains that if a nation is deprived of its sovereignty then all that is left is its national identity, which as a concept, is rather imprecise. Therefore, his whole argument is based on the fact that Article 128 refers only to national identity, which seems to have replaced the nation in the European cultural policy.

The issue of culture was addressed strongly by another Gaullist, Gilbert Pérol, who, in his book ‘La grandeur de la France’ accuses European policy makers of having deliberately sacrificed national cultures, by trying to create a culturally homogenized Europe. He fervently refuses to accept a European culture, which he says is impossible anyway as culture, means difference and Europe is full of different national cultures. He sees the efforts to create a pan-European audiovisual space (les télévisions dites ‘européennes’) as a way to destroy this cultural diversity (Perol, 1992, p 200).

Jean-Pierre Chevènement and Max Gallo, representing the neo-jacobins of the left, opposed further the European integration and its cultural dimension. Gallo (1992), for instance, criticized European audiovisual policy (especially its earlier expressions based on the Treaty of Rome and the Single Act), arguing that it is treating cultural creations the same way as commercial and industrial products. His criticism is based on the French myth that national culture should be free of material constrains which can kill creativity. He demanded the return of culture to the national space. Gallo, though, seems to overlook the fact that the European Union and its policies or lack of them are not fully responsible for the commercialization of culture. This has been part of the development of capitalism at the national and international level, which commodifies culture. Nevertheless, his argument does agree with the French protectionist tendency.

The reference to cultural and national identity are common to all those who opposed European

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176 On the one hand, the Communists and the Front National were firmly opposed to it. On the other hand, other political parties remained divided (The Socialists, UDF, RPR and the Greens). The Jacobin Jean-Pierre Chevènement, the Vendean Philippe de Villiers, the Bonapartist Philippe Séguin were among those who led the opposition to Europe among their parties (Gildea, 1997, p 214).
integration and its culturalistic and media dimension. The Gaullists preferred to refer to national identity as it has more institutional connotations but, in the end, the argument has been the same: protect national cultural space and sovereignty. However, there are those who did not see Europe as a threat and those who proposed alternative of seeing Europe. One, Edgar Morin (1987) argued that the construction of Europe politically, economically and culturally rests on the fact that there is no conflict anymore between the national identity of a European and his European identity. By denouncing, the illusion that identity is one and inseparable, Morin allows space for the creation of an identity that is built on different layers. Thus, the identity of a European person can be simultaneously national and European. Jean-Marc Ferry proposes the opposite, in the sense that political unity does not have to be followed by a cultural unity, either on a national level or on a European one. By separating the cultural from the political, Ferry proposes the constitution of a ‘culture de la citoyenneté européenne’ which allows the possibility of a ‘culture politique communautaire pluraliste’ made possible in its turn by the post-national principle, developed by Habermas. According to Ferry, the use of this principle does not affirm the presence of a supra-national power and it does not pose a threat to the survival of cultural identities either. By separating the cultural unity from the political, it provides a solution to the problems posed by nationalism, and proposes the alternative of a ‘cosmopolitisme politique’ (Ferry in Lange, 1993, p 109-111). Ferry, therefore, proposes an alternative to a European unity which can be based on political ground and which allows space for cultural identities to exist too. This principle, albeit good in theory, does have problems in practice as efforts to keep culture and polity congruent still prevail in Europe. One can see, therefore, tension within the French debate on European integration, caused mainly by the issue of culture at both the national and European levels. To sum up the main point here, it could be argued that that the connection between cultural identity and national sovereignty is still very strong.

On a final note, attention will be turned to the European level in order to contest Europe’s ambiguous cultural space. With this, it is hoped to close the argument opened at the beginning of this chapter on whether Europe can sustain a culture on its own and maintain the cultural diversity of its members at the same time. France seems to be caught in the middle of this argument struggling to maintain its cultural distinctiveness and at the same time not to be left out of what is called the construction of Europe. Whether it will succeed in maintaining a balance between the two might depend on whether Europe can have a cultural identity on its own.

5.2. Europe’s Ambiguous Cultural Space

As has been seen from the above policy analysis, there are many opposing and contradicting forces within the EU, not only at the level of national versus European but also within the nation itself, showing the difficulty of constructing a shared cultural identity or space. There is a conflict between those who view Europe as a Europe of nation states linked together in a convenient free trade area and those who envisage a Europe moving towards a ‘European consciousness’. But what would that be and how can it be developed? Although the concepts of a common European culture and shared European identity are often used in official European documents, there is no clear definition of what this identity might consist of. The European Parliament, in its Resolution on the European Community’s Information Policy of 1986, defined the ‘basic values of European
culture’ as ‘peace, social solidarity, freedom and rule of law’ (European Parliament, 1987, p 112). These values, though, are universal and can hardly be called the exclusive property of Europe.

Defining Europe is not an easy task. One can look at Europe from three different perspectives: geographical, political and cultural. All pose difficulties in terms of definition. A geographical Europe can be identified by drawing lines on a map but the problem is where to draw these lines. How far to the east, should it go for example? A political Europe describes a structured entity or series of entities. It can be divided into different allegiances with a common economic or political interest, an example of which is the European Union that forms the core of modern Europe. The definition, however, of a cultural Europe is inevitably more subjective. It could be argued that Europe as a whole has certain common cultural characteristics, ‘patterns of European culture’ as Smith has called them (1991, p 174), but they are more pronounced as Europe is divided into regions. These patterns of European culture, according to Smith, include ‘the heritage of Roman Law, Judeo-Christian ethics, Renaissance humanism and individualism, Enlightenment rationalism and science, artistic classicism and romanticism, and, above all, traditions of civil rights and democracy’. All these have contributed in the creation of a ‘common European cultural heritage... a unique culture area straddling national boundaries’ (ibid).

Although European countries do share much regarding history and values, their cultures are also characterized by a profound diversity of which the linguistic is the strongest one. If we follow Kedourie’s argument about the nature of the relationship posited by nationalism between language, culture and political identity, one can see clearly why a vision of a culturally unified Europe is so weak: ‘language is not only a vehicle for national propositions, it is the outer expression of the inner experience, the outcome of a particular history, the legacy of a distinctive tradition’ (Kedourie, 1966, p 62). Language is, therefore, part of culture and identity. A culturally unified Europe, therefore, requires not only a common culture but also a common language, if it is to survive, according to those who believe polity and culture must be congruent. But the problem is which European language should be the predominant one? English is the obvious choice, but one which would provoke fierce reactions from the French who are very protective of their national language. One can see, thus, a contradiction at the heart of the dominant cultural-political argument of those who support ‘unity in diversity’.

Dominique Wolton in his book L’Eloge du Grand Public (1990) argues that the existence of a political space does not guarantee the existence of a public space, necessary for the sustenance of collective identities. For the creation of this space there are certain preconditions: a community that is structured in a way that resembles a nation, a system of democratic decision-making, the sharing of a common history and values, the existence of an identity, the feeling of sharing the same interests, the existence of pluralistic media, a common tradition, an authority with the power to take political decisions and the mutual recognition and use of this space of expression (ibid). He argues there is no such a thing as a European cultural unity as there is no common language or even a common history apart from a Christian tradition, a Greco-Roman inheritance and thousands of years of conflict. Although some of these preconditions exist already in the European Union, the multiple existence of national public spaces within it makes difficult the creation of such a space at a European level. National media continue to play an important role in the continuation
of these separate public forums. This space, if it is to exist, it will take time and it up to the citizens of Europe to create it and not some Eurocrats imposing a common audiovisual space.

One needs to employ some imagination in order to conceive what a European culture might be. Is European culture unitary or pluralistic and contradictory? If the former, then one should employ the American model in as much as the ‘American identity’ has replaced or neutralized the ethnic and cultural background of its immigrants. In that sense, one might ask whether Europe must, to some extent, become ‘American’ in order to become more ‘European’. Could we have, in Europe, a new way of seeing ourselves; as an amalgamation with the removal of regional, national and supranational identities? ‘Is it conceivable that a model for a new, non-nationalistic identity through decentralized, autonomous and differentiated media communication, which are still easily accessible to all interested parties, can be found and strengthened?’ (Reljic, 1997, p 10) This seems most unlikely to happen, as past and present experience has shown. Burgess denies the power of culture to bind together political communities:

“If we wish to speak of a single European culture, we shall find it only in a tolerant liberalism which accepts those impulses which seem to be disruptive. National culture has nothing to do with political nationalism... We are making an error of logic if we think that political and economic unity automatically signifies cultural unity. Culture is somewhere else”. (in R. Collins, 1998, p 18)

If European culture is to be unitary, then from the point of view of nationalist theory, the super nation, Europe, is in trouble, for its polity and culture are not congruent. The European Commission’s audiovisual policy is based on nationalist assumptions that polity and culture should be congruent and that without such congruence the community cannot thrive. This contradicts, somehow, another position of the Commission revealed in the 1983 ‘Realities and Tendencies’ document, were cultural identity is conceived to be as non-exclusive and plural and European identity can, thus, be added to national identity without diminishing either (in Collins, 1997, p 43). A pluralistic European culture is thus implied and this is contradictory. If national cultures can non-exclusively co-exist with a European culture why can they not do so, as Collins rightly asks, with foreign cultures, such as the American for instance. Why is the presence of an exogenous, non-European, culture to be feared? Could it be that Europe still holds on to its cultural supremacy reinforced by its colonial past? France shares parts of this past and European cultural preoccupation are individual projections of some of its member-states.

The efforts of the European Union to create a transnational European culture have been seen as a defensive response to the transnational culture, which the television market place is creating. The attempts by Europe to cope with globalization and fragmentation (as is the case with regions like Scotland and Catalonia) can produce a political compromise whereby ‘national cultures are subsumed and preserved in a spurious, administrative bureaucratic internationalism’ (Robins, 1989, p 160). As this is defined against American and Japanese threats, can this reach a kind of supra-

177 “Globalization, … raises important questions on the future of every culture… Will it rob the individual cultures of their individuality, or expand the range of possibilities for cultural expression? … the European Union preserves the identities and the cultural rights of each community; the pubic need not consider the Union as something which dilutes their cultural identities, but rather as something which guarantees the existence and flowering of their cultures” (Culture 2000, EC in Eureka!Briefing no 15, july 1998).
nationalism or even super-nationalism? Does this mean that Europe will take the form of a super-nation? According to Smith, ‘whatever else European Pan-nationalism may help to create, it will not be a European super-nation, a nation like other nations but writ large’ (1991, p 174). And as Schlesinger notes: ‘within the EC, despite economic convergence, the basic rights and duties of citizenship remain within the purview of the nation-state...it is important not to underestimate the continuing weight of states as articulators of national culture (1991, p 187). This position is reinforced by the results of a Eurobarometer (1994) survey, which asked Europeans whether decisions should be taken by the European Union or by national government. The findings showed that, although, people preferred joint decision-making in areas where the problems transcend national borders, they still preferred their governments to take decisions on issues such as education and culture.

The above analysis reflecting the debates on European culture in the 80s and 90s shows that a European communicative space constituted by means of television and cinema is not so easily achievable. It is contradictory and defensive, being based on the opposition between European cultural identity and Americanization. In addition and most importantly, such an identity has to confront national resistances, as the French case shows. The national characteristics persist and there is little evidence that ‘a quick, technorationalistic fix’ as Schlesinger points out, ‘is available to solve the continental problem of cultural identity’ (1994, p 22). We cannot expect, either, too much of ‘the identity-conferring potential of audiovisual media in a transnational context’ (ibid). The construction of identities takes time and a sense of a common destiny in which the media may play a role, but not a decisive or an autonomous one. A viable European culture will require the active participation of all European citizens made aware of a common fate through extensive political democratization. Only under these conditions might a wider communicative space actually become meaningful.

Conclusions

This chapter opened the last part of this thesis, which seeks to understand the influence of factors external to the nation-state regarding policymaking in the field of media and culture. It placed France in a European context and introduced a new set of issues stemming from this situation. France, however, was not the only one under examination. Europe was also seen from a cultural perspective - an attempt to speculate on the possibility of a European culture and its impact on national cultures. Focusing on Europe, as a cultural entity, was a way of showing that there can be different levels of cultural expression, of which the national is one. The debate over a European culture is an indication of the dialogue that takes place at a national and supranational level in which France has taken an active role.

The conclusion reached at the end of this chapter is that there is a mutual interaction between the different factors, both internal (national political and cultural specificities) and external (European policies) to France in the sense that cultural and audiovisual policy making at a European level is the product of both national and European contributions. Taking into account the particularities of France as a nation, it can be argued that the EU is indispensable to France as it provides both a shield against outside forces, e.g. internationalization that affects its media/cultural space and a forum to express its anxieties about cultural identity and production. Although, the EU and its
policies are externally related to the French nation-state and do affect its national policies, they do not pose a direct threat to it. France needs Europe to protect her against the bigger threat that America and globalization pose to her. But Europe needs France too, in the sense that taking over France’s official worry about the ‘Americanization of culture’ gives Europe an excuse to impose protectionist policies that can hide economic worries. In addition, the fear of Americanization has an ideological function as it allows ‘Europeanization’ to be presented as a kind of antidote to an external threat. America here plays a complicated part in the constitution of European cultural identity. It is, as Morley and Robins (1989) argue, ‘anti-Europe, used as the land of the material not the cultural. It is also Europe’s alter ego, an exaggerated reflection of what Europe fears it will become. ‘The great satan of American anti-culture is counterposed to the confortable values and traditions by which Europeans have understood and identified themselves, not only as ‘Europeans’ but also as ‘cultured’ and civilised” (ibid, p 18). France and Europe share the same anxieties, each from a different perspective but both for the same reasons.

Europe does not pose a threat to France as a nation-state as long as it allows her to play an important role in European and international politics. Lebovics (1992) argues that the European Union in on its way to forging a European culture, (however uncertainly), of which France will not be the master, as in the Enlightenment, but an important part. France will have to learn how to accommodate her aspirations for the European Union and her role in it, with her need to maintain her national distinctiveness. The dialogue with Europe is not the only one France is involved with as a nation-state. The next chapter places France in an international context and expands on the impact of external factors affecting national policy-making.
CHAPTER 6:

From the Glorious ‘Francophonie’ to the ‘Exception Culturelle’: France’s Attempts to Reassert her Cultural Image in the World

“Perhaps in no other country are form and substance so divergent. Formal discourse is full of grand principles: equality, solidarity or, more recently, the iniquities of American-driven globalization. But the substance may have more to do with the defence of privilege or the concealment of pragmatic acts in the robes of idealism. [...] But the French reality is rather more complex. It has to do with the fact that change, adaptation and modernization must be masked because they have little to do with the country’s self-image. This image is attached to notions of equality, a strongly centralized Jacobin State and change, if at all, through revolution alone... As Pierre Birnbaum ... said, ‘We have not found the way to modernize while preserving our imagined community’ (Cohen, 1997, p. 1,6).

In the previous chapter, France was placed within a European context, so opening the last section of this thesis that seeks to understand the influence of the external on nation-state factors, regarding policy-making and discourse in the field of media and culture. In this last chapter, France will be placed within an international context, setting new parameters for examining the formulation and implementation of cultural and audiovisual policies and how they relate to France’s efforts to sustain a strong profile in the international politico-economic arena.

The new parameters and the main themes of this chapter will be international cultural discourse, Foreign Audiovisual Policy, anti-Americanism and cultural protectionism. The opening quotation from Cohen provides an indication of this chapter’s ideological framework. France’s tendency to promote itself as the proprietor of a universal, civilizing culture and a defender of grand principles such as cultural diversity and autonomy hides a tendency towards cultural imperialism which France applied only too well during her colonial years. This cultural imperialism goes hand in hand with an economic imperialism and has given France an excuse to maintain a place in the world’s politico-economic scene by maintaining a sphere of influence through Francophonie. It seems, though, that France’s cultural imperialism has not been replaced by equally dominant media imperialism. France’s lack of success in this field has been attributed to the dominant role of the United States and the increasing globalization of media markets. Anti-Americanism has become a major preoccupation of French cultural policy, to the extent that we could say America has become France’s ‘other’, a force shaping France’s modern national identity. Moreover, media and particularly television and cinema have been seen as an American ‘Trojan Horse’ threatening to take over French culture. The whole anti-American discourse is partly inspired by the grand ideals France has set herself not only to defend but also to extend her cultural ‘image’ (part of the ‘imagined community’s’ national profile) and partly by France’s frustration in trying to catch up with modernization and keep her place among the strongest states. This chapter will re-examine the cultural imperialism position and place it within the emerging new discourse of cultural
globalization showing how this relates to French foreign audiovisual policy and cultural protectionism. Within the main themes of this chapter, there will also be placed a number of related issues and case studies, like the crisis in the audiovisual industry, the case of the francophone channel TV5, the GATT negotiations and the debate on the ‘exception culturelle’. Through the examination of these topics and related issues, it is hoped to paint a profile of French national identity as it emerges from cultural politics and international/global pressures.

Methodologically, this chapter will follow the same approach as the preceding chapters. That is, it will be both a policy and discourse analysis, examining policy content and processes in connection to a cultural debate that has now shifted on an international level, involving more actors. The following section will focus on the first theme, foreign audiovisual policy. It is hoped to show that despite France’s lack of success in the international media market, its audiovisual and cultural policies abroad are still reflecting old tendencies towards cultural imperialism.

1. Foreign Policy and Culture

“La politique culturelle extérieure de la France ne saurait être dissociée de sa politique étrangère. Elle est en effet un élément essentiel de l'image que notre pays donne de lui-même sur la scène internationale et de la crédibilité de nos interventions” (Ministère des Relations Extérieures, 1984, p 12).

“Pays préoccupé par la perte de sa souveraineté et de son indépendance que pourrait signifier la transnationalization télématique sous bannière américaine ou japonaise, la France est aussi un pays qui appartient au club des nations hégémoniques” (Mattelart & Stourdizé, 1982, p 169).

The above quotations are chosen because they reflect the dual character of the French foreign cultural policy, which is expansionist and protectionist at the same time. France is in this peculiar position in which she is both the perpetrator and recipient of cultural hegemony. Although, France was used, for many years, to be in a dominant position, she now needs to defend what France has been promoting for so long, her national culture: “[...] un pays comme la France ou d'autres pays européens, centres traditionnels de rayonnement culturel, sont devenus des importateurs massif de produits culturels étrangers, tendance que l'internationalization de l'espace audiovisuel menace d'accélérer” (Ministère des Relations Extérieures, 1984, p 14). How has France been reacting to this new situation and how has it affected her confidence as a hegemonic nation? How have her cultural and audiovisual policies abroad been affected and how much of their expansionist character have they maintained? To find answers it will be useful first to give an account of the actors and issues involved in the shaping of these policies.

178 This chapter was particularly influenced by the numerous discussions the author had during her fieldwork in France and the Council of Europe with academics, policy makers and ordinary people. France’s cultural image and identity provoked strong reactions during these unofficial discussions showing how deeply the cultural discourse has penetrated French society. In particular, discussions held with Jean-Phillippe Gammel in the Council of Europe regarding French identity and the exception culturelle were thought provoking and helpful in clarifying concepts and ideas presented in this chapter. Additional research was carried out in the GATT headquarters in Geneva, Dec. 1994.
As we saw in the last chapter, the main characteristics of the post-war French foreign policy have been the construction of Europe and the affirmation of national independence. The latter was led by the ambition to maintain and reinforce France’s great-power status and the refusal to see France integrated in an Atlantic bloc dominated militarily and culturally by the United States. In addition to the political and military independence, the cultural independence of the nation has become a rather obsessive issue, both at the discourse and policy level. From de Gaulle until now, France has tried to maintain a privileged relationship with the other Francophone countries and preserve French culture and language from ‘Anglo-Saxone’ influence. France’s colonial past and highly centralized structure have taught her that it is the strongest that gets to impose its language and culture. By maintaining, thus, an international presence of its language and culture, France could also maintain its position, or an illusion of it, as one of the dominant countries.

Culture, since the time of Malraux, has been conceived as an agent of prestige, reputation, as well as an ideological weapon and an export. International cultural policy has been accompanied by a foreign policy, which sought in the past to preserve and extend French influence in its colonies and what was to become later the francophone world. France’s preoccupation with promoting herself as a country representing an alternative set of values, opposed to the capitalist, profit driven America, has been a persistent feature of French international cultural relations which have often been a justification and a camouflage for foreign and industrial relations. As Sean McBride once put it, ‘France is the only country which has realized how important moral and cultural values are at a time of economic crisis but she is also... the third largest arms exporter in the world’ (quoted in Forbes, 1987, p. 143).

To understand the ambiguities and contradictions that have characterized France’s foreign policy, we need to understand the ideological role of culture in it. The ambiguities that characterized, for many years, France’s relations with NATO were also translated into an ambiguous cultural rapport with the United States in which the role of culture was, as Forbes suggests, ‘to articulate an ideological opposition to what was in reality France’s foreign policy, namely support for the West and the Atlantic Alliance’ (Forbes, 1988, p. 58). This ideological opposition gave France the opportunity to take political actions that allowed a higher degree of self-interest to prevail in foreign policy (Forbes, 1987). Culture gave a justification to act independently while still part of the Western alliance.

179 L’image de la France dans le monde entier [...] est s’abord celle d’un pays de haute culture. [...] la France est classée au premier rang mondial dans ce domaine”. (Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, 1995, p 194). This concept of French culture has been constant from the days of de Gaulle to the present date. Policy related literature and documents refer to it, in one way or another, as a form of justification for France’s foreign cultural policy. It is as if the French state has a moral obligation towards the preservation and dissemination of its universal culture and with it its own position in the world: ‘La question est […] de savoir comment valoriser, au mieux, à l’étranger nos atouts culturels et scientifiques afin de maintenir la France à ce premier rang mondial qu’elle occupe aujourd’hui’ (ibid, p 196).

180 France was the first Western country to define a foreign cultural policy and attach its administration under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. ‘Cette diplomatie culturelle constitue aujourd’hui une dimension essentielle de la politique étrangère de notre pays et, d’une certaine manière, la marque de sa singularité” (ibid, p 196). This singularity, according to the same source, comes from the fact that among the countries that exercise real cultural diplomacy (USA, Britain, Germany), France comes first because of its seniority and the ‘densité et la qualité de son réseau à l'étranger’.
With the end of the Empire and de Gaulle’s era, France had to start coming to terms with her new status and by the mid 1970s, any serious attempt to recapture a pre-eminent position had effectively been abandoned. France had to learn how to manage in a subordinate role. In foreign policy, this implied a reconsideration of her relationship with the Atlantic alliance, which was reflected in Giscard d’Estaing’s presidency, after 1974. In cultural policy, this meant the beginning of a period in which the main challenge was how to ‘establish structures which would enable some vestiges of national specificity to be retained’ (Forbes, 1988, p. 64). The Rapport Rigaud to the ministry of Foreign Affairs clearly marked this passage in 1979 when it recognized that France needed to understand that the world had changed and that as a medium size power France should now learn how to play and interact with other cultural players. Co-operation and modernization of the cultural policy practices were high in the agenda. The economic and political dimensions of cultural relations were affirmed but seen from a different perspective: “Les relations culturelles ne sont pas le magasin d’accessoires de la diplomatie”. According to Rigaud, the necessary reconciliation between culture, politics and economy should be done within a “projet global de relations internationales où, à travers la culture, ce sont les hommes et les peuples qui sont pris en compte comme sujets et non plus comme objets de calculs politiques, stratégiques ou commerciaux” (1979, p 76). This report not only marked the beginning of an effort to modernize foreign cultural policy practices that were seen until then as an accessory to old fashion diplomacy and considered to be anachronistic, but also the beginning of a long struggle to protect France’s cultural identity. Rigaud recognized the need to open the concept of culture to new elements that would help France to build a new, strong and modernized identity while keeping at the same time her classical heritage. The report also brought attention to the communication industries, insisting that there was a need for a clearly defined policy that would help France to achieve a certain position in the international media system. This invokes questions that have tantalized France since then: will the policy favoring technological development, crucial to France’s re-industrialization as Mattelart (1984) argues, be able to accommodate a political goal that would seek to prevent the subjection of the cultural industries to a single influence, that of the market? Will this policy open the way to the creation of a national programming enterprise, one that would not respond to new technologies by simply copying the transnational production model that is provided by the US? Can a national product permit a particular collectivity to express and reappropriate its images and be at the same time compatible with the international market? (ibid, pg 430). The challenge has been how to modernize while preserving what has long been considered France’s universal culture, with all the high notions that accompany it, some of which are still preserving their patronizing and hegemonic nature. France’s national culture might be full of grand principles but it is also inextricably linked to hegemonic practices that make up its profile.

1.1 The Socialist International Cultural Discourse and the ‘Hégémonie Américaine’

The contradiction, between France’s great-power ambitions and the civilizing mission she has bestowed on herself in the name of its ‘universal culture’, never ceased to exist and by the 1980s, with the socialists in power, it was renewed. On the one hand, France has taken upon herself to

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181 Such as the “‘the commerce des livres et des films […] la diffusion des travaux scientifiques et des techniques nationales’” (Rigaud, 1980, p 34).
fight against the ‘le Grand Satan d’outre-Atlantique’ (Finkielkraut, quoted in Guerlain, 1993, p. 47) in the name of cultural diversity and national cultural sovereignty. On the other, France is known to have applied, herself, to policies that do not differ much from the cultural imperialism of which America has been accused, offering her language and culture as a way of cultural resistance against ‘un mode informisé de vie que l’on voudrait imposer à la planète entière’ (Lang, 1982). Lang, the socialist minister of culture, envisioned France as playing a leading role in combating the suggested uniformity that is closely related to American culture and believed that the French language and culture, with its strong ties to many Third World countries, could serve in this resistance. “Let us say”, Lang explained, “that, facing the great powers, French culture in these countries appears as a source of liberation, to act as a counterweight to the hegemonic influence of great powers” (Leif, 1982, p 6). One cannot help but to wonder why he left France out of those great powers. Perhaps because it was convenient for his argument at the time. This invokes another incident, just after the Second World War, when France justified its refusal to let go of its colonies by arguing that more liberty was not due until greater civilization had been achieved\(^{182}\). Did the French really believe that it was up to one nation to grant liberty and culture to others? The truth is that France used its colonial empire as a way to establish itself as a super-power, against its rival colonial power, Great Britain, and the dominant super-power, the United States. With its colonies belonging to the past, France had to find new ways to accommodate her expansionist tendencies that have always been identified with a ‘civilizing mission’. The affirmation of her culture’s universal vocation differs little from America’s alleged intentions to impose its mass culture on others, despite reassurances from France’s side:

> “La culture et la langue françaises ont toutefois été, à maintes périodes de l’histoire moderne, les véhicules des messages universel de liberté, même si, dans les mêmes temps et pour d’autres nations, elle a parfois été liée à une entreprise de domination. Culture partagée par des hommes de tous continents, culture qui ne saurait plus constituer une menace pour quiconque, elle peut retrouver ce rôle médiateur” (Ministère des Relations Extérieur, 1984, p 11).

Lang hoped that this rôle médiateur would renew France’s position in the world and he made an effort to update the international and geopolitical dimension of French cultural policy. Lang argued that the role of an active cultural policy was more needed now, at a time when recession had replaced expansion. Moreover, the rapid development of the media industries that had transformed the discourse on American and capitalist domination gave Lang one more reason to embark on an aggressive international policy which had, as a main aim, to place France at the center of the international attention.

Lang’s new program on international cultural relations was presented in a series of speeches that took place at the beginning of 1980s. As we saw in chapter 3, Lang was keen to develop his cultural discourse around some of the “grandes antinomies mondiales”, aiming to replace the geopolitical polarity between East/West and install a more harmonious relation between North/South. He envisioned the creation of a European and Latin space (latinité) and the promotion of a Mediterranean civilization (Motor-Sir, 1984). The emphasis was particularly on the ‘European dimension’ and the ‘North/South dimension’ with a very strong insinuated anti-American message.

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182 That was the message France passed to its colonies in the Brazzaville conference in January 1944 which concluded that “the goals of the work of civilization undertaken by France in the colonies exclude all idea of autonomy, all possibility of development outside the French bloc of the Empire...” (quoted in Gildea, 1997, p 17).
The former was inspired by a period when France was ideologically and politically strong: “We are building a movement which affirms the European conscience that was so strong in the 18th century” (quoted in Forbes, 1987, p. 143). The European audiovisual space France proposed at the International Cultural Symposium in Vienna was an expression of France’s desire to establish herself as a cultural leader of Europe and an effort to use Europe as a barrage against the American cultural invasion. As we saw in the last chapter, the best way to combat American domination was, and still is, by encouraging the development of the European cultural industries. Cultural protectionism is an expression of this policy, as will be seen later in the section on the GATT negotiations.

1.1.1 The North/South Dialogue and the Anti-American Discourse

The East/West and North/South discourse was ideologically heavily charged with anti-American messages and full of hopes for a restored French image. To understand this discourse better we need to go back to the 1970s when the new French Socialist Party had adopted a very strong anti-American stance based on United States domestic injustices (racism), capitalism and international imperialist role (the Vietnam war was at its height). Militantly Third-Worldist, the Socialists Party had ‘embodied a strong Jacobin heritage with a clearly defined interventionist mission premised on the universality of French culture’ (Pinto, 1987, p. 218). Imposing its own cultural and intellectual symbols was, for the French Left, a way of asserting its ‘lofty identity and sense of universal mission’. The invitation, therefore, of foreign writers and intellectuals in the presidential inauguration, was symbolic of France’s desire to ‘export her intellectual/political symbiosis to countries whose cultures were stymied or repressed by the two superpowers’ (ibid. p. 220). By transcending the east/west divide, France aspired to embrace the cause of the south and thus put herself in the leading position in those countries that had been ‘repressed’ by superpower collusion. The socialists attached a cultural meaning to all policy spheres in the sense that the cultural was seen as ‘political’.

However, France’s interpretation of the United States as translated in French foreign and cultural policy was not very clear as it stressed different priorities at different times. Mitterrand, having four communist ministers in his cabinet, felt he had to reassure the United States on foreign policy and France’s commitment to the Western Alliance. At the same time, though, Lang’s open position against United States was displaying a certain ambiguity regarding foreign policy. Lang accused the United States of cultural imperialism and the threat posed by its popular culture to countries that cannot defend their national cultural identities against the invasion of cheap commercialism. However, not only cultural imperialism was high on the agenda. Economic imperialism was also part of it, even if it was not always clearly expressed as such:

“Face à l'international des groups financiers, le moment n'est-il pas venu de constituer, non pas seulement l'internationale socialiste,..., mais l'international des hommes de culture, l'internationale des peuples libres... 2/3 des émissions diffusées à la télévision espagnole”

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183 The 18th century was the century of France’s imperial power when she ruled the world politically, militarily and ideologically. A period that marked French history and attitude towards the rest of the world.

184 Part of this symbolism was the socialists’ granting of French nationality to two distinguished exiled writers, Julio Cortazar from Argentina and Milan Kuntera from Czechoslovakia.
sont d’origine américaine! ... un peu moins forts en France, mais le mouvement est là, si j’ose dire. Il faut l’endiguer...” (Jack Lang, discours, Symposium International de la Culture à Vienne, 18 juin 1982).

This "international des groupes financiers" refers to the big multinational/ transnational companies that are, in most cases, based in the United States and control not only the communication technologies but also the production and distribution of television programs. The multinationals of communication and culture are simply diversifications of the big financial and industrial groups whose interests cover a whole range of activities. Lang denounced the danger of allowing the international economic powers to control cultures and opposed a ‘culturalist’ thinking to an ‘économisme’ represented by an industrial civilization. Lang appears here like the David culturel, as Guerlain puts it, fighting against the Goliath bancaire (1983-84, p. 274). Acknowledging the economic side of this cultural imperialism, of which the United States is accused, seems to reinforce the culturalist approach of the French Socialists in the early 1980s. Mitterrand, following the same culturalist spirit, did not omit to make reference to this economic imperialism in a speech he gave in 1982:

“Déjà, les deux premières banques d’image aliment la quasi-totalité des stations de télévision dans le monde, plus des trois quarts des informations de presse émanent de cinq agences. Généralisée, cette tendance naturelle conduira, dès la fin de la décennie, au contrôle de l’industrie mondiale de la communication par une vingtaine de firmes. En coopérant, nous éviterons que l’information ne soit accumulée et traitée par un petit nombre de firmes et des nations disposant des systèmes de traitement et de stockage les plus rapidement mis au point. Plus généralement, la diffusion d’informations élaborées et contrôlées par quelques pays dominants pourrait faire perdre leur mémoire aux autres, remettant ainsi en cause les libertés de penser et de décider” (Mitterrand, discours, sommet des pays industrialisés, juin 1982, quoted in Mattelart & Stourdizé, 1982).

This unequal exchange, according to Mitterrand, is both economic and cultural. Cultural inequality is one manifestation of the political and economic inequality that dominates international relations and cultural sovereignty is the best way for development and independence. He proposed launching initiatives that would help the Southern countries to catch up with the new information technologies and so assist in the development of the New World Information Order that was much discussed at the time. According to the ‘Projet culturel extérieur’, the re-balancing of cultural, scientific and technical exchanges with the countries of the south should be one of the main priorities of French cultural policy (Ministère des Relations Extérieures, 1984). It seems, though, that France was struggling between her own needs for technological modernization and keeping up with a culturalist discourse that seemed to be closer to her traditional cultural values of universalism and equality. France’s fierce support for the less fortunate countries was perhaps a

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For instance, in 1981, three of the principal cinematographic production companies, Paramount Pictures, United Artists and Columbia, were respectively subsidiaries of the Gulf Western, a company with its main interests in the insurance sector, the Transamerica Corporation in the banking and transportation sector and the Coca-Cola Company. The activities of the multinational companies are very diverse like the ITT, which financed the educational TV series ‘Blue Marble’ that was received in fifty countries (Reiffers et al, 1981).

projection of her own fear of losing not only her cultural superiority but also her political and economic power too, if she was not quick enough to catch up with the new technologies. As Mattelart and Stourdé (1982) commented in their official report, France could not ignore the imperative in conquering the foreign markets with communication technologies produced by French companies. But they were aware at the same time that this could be contradicting their Third-Worldist policies and risk being accused of neo-colonialism. This conflict between modernization and traditional cultural values has been a constant theme in the Socialist international cultural discourse. The north/south dialogue reflected not only the need to protect her own culture through the protection of the world’s cultural diversity but also the need to create some space away from the East/West axis within which France would be the leading figure.

When Lang chose to boycott the 1981 Dauville film festival stressing that it was not his job to help American media penetrate French culture, he provoked a long lasting debate that reflects French sensitivities on issues of national identity:

“Ne comptez pas sur moi pour la promotion du cinéma américain! Nous ne sommes pas anti-américains à tout crin, mais il faut bien reconnaître que le cinéma américain s’appuie sur un réseau mondial de distribution puissant” (Lang quoted in Hunter, 1990)

While his gesture was criticized by some who thought that he was promoting a cultural nationalism, many supported him, like the ‘Comité pour l’identité Nationale’ which published a manifesto supporting his crusade against cultural imperialism: “La colonización cultural de la France par le cinéma américain... porte atteinte à l’identité nationale, dont l’abandon à des intérêts étrangers entraîne inévitablement une certaine déculturation...” (quoted in Hunter, 1990). Lang was not only taking a stance against the big American majors, like Warner Brothers and MGM which, he argued, were trying through the Motion Picture Export Association to destroy European cinema production. His gesture was also part of the government’s foreign policy, which was promoting a dialogue between the prosperous North and the underprivileged South (Loosely, 1995). France was putting up a fight for all those who needed protection against the big enemy, the United States. The North/South dialogue was serving its purpose in different ways.

The UNESCO conference in Mexico in 1982 marked the socialist cultural discourse, giving Lang the opportunity to present France’s new international cultural relations policy and to launch the North/South dimension. Taking place just after Lang’s visit in Cuba, it was also his strongest accusation against America and an invitation to encourage other countries to fight American imperialism:

“La culture est universelle, oui, mais nous veillons à ne pas mettre tout sur le même plan... Nous savons bien aujourd’hui que la culture du monde n’est pas une... Le premier des droits à la culture c’est le droit des peuples de disposer d’eux-mêmes... Tous nos pays acceptent passivement, trop passivement, une certaine invasion, une certaine submersion d’images fabriquées à l’extérieur et de musiques standardisées, stéréotypées qui, naturellement, rabotent les cultures nationales et véhiculent un mode uniforme de vie...

187 “Ce déséquilibres traduisent non seulement des rapports hégémoniques entre pays du Nord et du Sud, mais aussi entre les pays industrialisés eux-mêmes!”. France was included in those industrialised countries that were seeing an alarming increase in imported cultural products that the internationalization of the audiovisual space was menacing to accelerate, according to a French official rapport (Ministère des Relations Extérieures, 1984, p 14).

Culture is employed here at all levels. The distinction between culture, as a universal concept, culture as related to a specific nation and culture as the outcome of the globalization process is carefully used to support the main argument: the right of cultural self-determination that Lang considers as indispensable to national sovereignty which, in its turn, implies an appeal to the modern nation-state for intervention. He called for a cultural ‘decolonization’ and asked for the airwaves to be ‘decolonized’ by greater diversity in television programming and greater collaboration in cultural production between ‘pays de culture voisine’ and ‘alliés immédiatement naturels’ (ibid). By these, he meant the Latin based cultures, the Mediterranean cultures and the francophone countries. Initiatives on these collaborations were already taking place with the organization of the ‘Rencontres méditerranéennes’ in Hydra in May 1982, which intended to bring together in a cultural dialogue all the Mediterranean countries. There was also another gathering organized the same month in Paris, on the Latin based cultures. The purpose was to define a common policy that would reinforce the ‘solidarités inter-latines’ in a number of domains, like the protection of heritage, the promotion of the Latin-American languages and literature, the exchanges of creators and intellectuals and the development of the international communication (Ministére de la Culture, 1984, p 11). Before those events, there was also the meeting of Francophone Ministers of Culture in Cotonou, capital of the Marxist republic of Benin, in September 1981, where Lang gave a speech on the French language as a shield against the penetration of the multinationals and American mass culture. All these events built up a rather intense atmosphere that exploded in the Mexico conference.

Lang’s speech caused uproar, especially among the American delegates at the conference who forcefully argued against restricting cultural interchange or attempting to set international norms in such matters. America’s priority was to protect its major interests in the film and television industry and Lang’s demands were not well received. The US ambassador to Unesco, Jean Gerard, said that his country deplored ideologically motivated polemics and ‘shopworn, mindless clichés’ (Pfaff, 1982, p 4). Americans could not agree with Lang’s cultural intervention as they have always looked upon culture as a spontaneous expression of forces within society, including commercial forces, and have been hostile to the notion of governmental cultural policies or cultural direction. The neo-liberal discourse, with its support for free exchange of cultural products that the Americans have adopted hides, for the French, power mechanisms that create tensions in international relations. For French governments film and television have had an important role to play not only in maintaining a national identity but also on establishing a strong international identity for economic survival to be assured. Building a strong media industry would give France a weapon with which to challenge American imperialism whose cultural expression is mainly through cinema. Governmental assistance was, therefore, indispensable. As Forbes puts it, ‘in terms of French cultural policy, the media are American; the point, however, is to render them French’ (1988, p 63).

188 He asked, for instance, that copies of American films to be distributed in France be developed by French companies and that American film distributors reinvest a portion of their profits in French film production. He was also involved in an agreement between the French film company Gaumont and Columbia Pictures for the distribution of French films in America (Lief, 1982).
This was not the first or the last time ‘France and US reached for their guns over culture’, as an American newspaper article was titled at the time (op.cit). As we will see later, the GATT negotiations provided another opportunity for such animosity.

The speech inspired a polemic in the French press\(^{189}\), which invited the French to voice their support of or indignation against the chauvinist isolation into which Lang was leading them. For example, the writer Alain Finkielkraut who while acknowledging the problematic situation Lang had raised, felt he was using America as a scapegoat for the mediocrity of France’s own mass culture (Loosely, p 78). Lang tried to defend himself by insisting that in no instance did he advocate cultural protectionism: “We are the least protectionist country in the world. Our protection is our will for development, the will to develop ourselves. We want there to be a cultural vitality in our country, and a very strong artistic vitality” (Lief, 1982, p 6). It was the expression of an intention to make French industries more competitive, win back domestic markets and put an end to the trade deficit. However, the ‘vocabulary of ideological warfare’ he had used so far in his speeches indicated the hidden political expediency, as Loosely points out. The creation of the Institut du Monde Arabe, the expansion of the activities of the Maison d’Amérique Latine and the creation of the Association Dialogue entre les Cultures, showed that socialist policy was concentrating in those areas, such Latin America or of the Arab States, where some counter-American impact might be felt (Forbes, 1987). instigate

There was indeed a weak point in Lang’s argument, which appeared in all his speeches. He objected to multinational cultures and the fake internationalism they promoted because they were not the natural expression of organic communities and distinct from the genuine exchanges between ‘natural cultural allies’. One could question the idea of France as ‘a natural cultural ally’ of an African or South American developing country simply because it is based on the ambiguous ideas of latinité and francophonie. Latin culture in South America was the expression of Spanish and Portuguese colonialism that destroyed indigenous cultures and languages. As to Francophonie, it was also the expression of French colonialism. Can one see a symposium proposed within the collaboration of Latin based cultures on the ‘littérature africaine d’expression latine’ (Ministére de la Culture, 1984) other than as a neo-colonialism? What is so natural about an African country expressing itself in the language of others? France seems to construct ideas that are seen through the eyes of a hegemonic nation with a paternalistic attitude.

Lang’s position against American culture was also attacked by the writer Guy Konopnicki (1982) who argued that France’s failure to make her cultural products successful was not down to the American export machinery supremacy but because American mass culture was more relevant to the new urbanized lifestyle of most French people. Further, the cosmopolitanism of that culture made it more exportable: “…si les Américains ont excellé dans les produits culturels populaires, c’est avant tout parce que les États-Unis étaient cosmopolites dans leur essence” (ibid p 2). The invasion of the American culture, deplored by Lang, was not, according to Konopnicki, new but part of the natural evolution

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\(^{189}\) The French press plays a unique role in public debates, especially those that focus on national culture and identity. It does not only provide a forum for such debates to take place but it participates too by instigating cultural polemics, provoking the public opinion and undertaking crusades in the name of the nation, as it happened during the GATT negotiations.
of advanced capitalist societies towards a universal culture which has now outgrown the limitations of national identities:

“Il est fort douteux que le ‘peuple français’ revienne à son ancienne culture, ou se contente de celle que lui ont transmise les institutions pédagogiques laïques et républicaines. La consommation de masse ne pourra plus se satisfaire du cadre étroit de la nation... En matière culturelle la reconquête du marché intérieur n’est pas affaire de mythologie mais de ‘bizness’” (ibid).

Konopnicki’s argument here is important, as it expresses the inevitable end of the nation-state and national identities. He even doubted if French cultural identity existed “au-delà de la langue et d’un rapport mythologique à l’histoire”. Even Marx, he argued, announced the disappearance of the old modes of representation. It seems that Konopnicki advised the French socialists to come to terms with reality instead of playing with old-fashion third-wordlism that is so inappropriate to modern France. Instead, he suggested fighting the Americans by developing their own cinema industry and giving back Paris its cosmopolitan character. Cultural protectionism is what the French governments have chosen instead, struggling to keep a balance between a cultural discourse, with all its associations to traditional modes of representation and a modernist discourse with all its aspirations for a strong economic and political position.

Modernization was a central preoccupation of post-war France and would again become so in the 1980s. The discourse of modernization and economy was not completely absent from the socialists’ overall discourse. It evolved rapidly during their first years in power indicating a dramatic change in socialist cultural ideology. At the beginning, Lang had argued that the economic crisis was a cultural, the result of a deeper spiritual loss of direction in post-Christian societies (Looseley, 1995). He suggested that a way to overcome this crisis could be by offering culture as an alternative form of transcendence in contemporary civilization. This idealist solution had echoes of Malraux’s ideas about the spiritual nature of culture. There was also another effort to approach the economic crisis, which was presented in L’Impératif Culturel (Ministère du Plan et de l’Aménagement du Territoire, 1983). According to this, the new crisis was linked with a loss of faith in the economic values of industrial capitalism and a way of releasing creativity would be by allowing people to appropriate their own cultures. Both approaches reflected the concern of post-war humanism with the ‘modern world’ and the consequences of the industrial rebuilding of France, as well as the concern of Catholics about the effect of modern culture on the spiritual and cultural traditions of the French nation. Those concerns were combined in the figure of America, with the ‘potent but repugnant Taylorism and Forbism of its industrial mass production... and the seductive but corrosive cultural values which accompanied it’ (Kelly et al, 1996, p 140).190

It was Lang’s ‘économie et culture, même combat’ that offered a more utilitarian interpretation of the crisis (Loosely, 1995). By launching this slogan in Mexico, Lang tried to put together two terms until then ‘antinomiques’ for French cultural policy (Urfalino, 1993). The action of the State in favor of culture had, until then, an objective to fight the effects of economic forces. Lang, however, realized...

190 Depardieu, the French actor, was quoted saying during the GATT negotiations that his battle is not anti-American but ‘plutot un engagement anti-industriel’ (in Peclet, 1993). In fact, the two signified the same thing, industrialization/ mass production and American hegemony.
very quickly that culture had become part of the growing leisure industry and an important economic resource with significant impact on employment, investment and the balance of trade. He recognized that improving the export of France’s cultural and information products, it would have a direct impact on the overseas sales of other products. With traditional industries, like steel, in decline, Lang argued that France could use its culture as a source of new jobs in areas like publishing, filmmaking, recording etc. (Watchtel, 1987). In Lang’s view, the American example, despite its negative associations, showed very clearly, that a country’s intellectual and cultural independence is closely related to its ability to remain economically competitive in world markets, since an industrially dominant nation will end up exporting its entire lifestyle. It is interesting seeing here how the economic/cultural discourse takes different meanings at the same time, providing a convenient and flexible formula which has allowed French governments to appear consistent with the humanist dimension, providing an ideologically acceptable front for making the leisure and communication industries a priority of cultural policy (Loosely, op.cit). And since there was no question anymore of condemning the contamination of culture by economy, “il fallait condamner sa monopolization par une seule nation”, as Urfalino puts it (1993, p 825). This allowed the French socialists to promote their economic discourse and justify, at the same time, their anti-American stance.

Urfalino argued that the culture/economy discourse of Mexico served as a “matrice de transformation d’un adversaire écrivain en un dissolvant, à l’usage interne, d’une opposition idéologique” (op.cit). The representation of a external adversary, he continued, served to lift the burden of a ‘épouvantail interne’ - culture subjected to economic and industrial imperatives -, that had obstructed, till then, the readjustment of the forms of legitimacy of cultural policy. The discourse of Mexico and its slogan ‘economy and culture: the same battle’ justified the public expenditure in favor of a professional sector in the name of its direct and indirect impact in the French economy. Cinema, records and books become industries and their state support gets a political and industrial economy dimension. A socio/psychological dimension also justifies culture as an arm économique because it can change mentalities and because the crisis is as much economic as a ‘crise des esprits’ (Urfalino, 1995, p 847). Culture and economy not only replaced the old culture and politics, Urfalino argued, but also led to the dissolution of cultural policy via its legitimation by the economy. Watchtel (1987), though, believes that although the emphasis on economy and culture, appears contradictory to socialist ideology, it was essential to the success of the cultural project in the 1980s. The Socialists wanted to change the old perceptions of culture and equating videos with opera was part of it. It is interesting to note here that efforts to build up strong cultural industries led to the opening of the sector to corporate patronage, so breaking a long tradition when the state had been the sole sponsor of culture. Surprisingly, though, the lead in corporate sponsorship was taken by the subsidiaries of American companies such as IBM, singer and Kodak.

The transformation of the socialist cultural discourse within a few years is rather dramatic. From 1981 to 1983 the entire balance of culture and economy argument had shifted and the cultural industries become the focus point as Mitterrand’s speech also indicates:

“Après les saisons du dogme et de la répétition revient le temps de l’invention; la réside l’ambition du projet français: investir dans la formation technologique et investir dans la formation artistique et intellectuelle...Les industries de la culture sont les industries de l’avenir, industries de la communication ou industries de loisir, nous pensons, j’y insiste, qu’investir dans la culture, c’est investir dans l’économie, que c’est du même coup dégager
It seems that the French Left decided to sign a peace treaty with the market place. Interestingly, though, this colloquium was a gathering of well-known intellectuals that invited to discuss cultural solutions to the world economic crisis. It was an attempt to bring culture and economy under the same discourse and an effort to maintain a ideological profile of the socialist party that was against the market forces. They hoped, perhaps, that by bringing the intellectuals into the modernization discourse, it could render the market forces more compatible with their ideology. International cultural policy, as it was defined in Mexico and Paris, was linked essentially to mass communications and the new media technologies. However, even if peace was signed with the market place, there was still not much trust in it and far from adopting a liberal policy the socialist government bought key industries, including the electronics group Thompson, into public ownership in order to prevent them becoming internationalized, i.e. part of the American owned multinational corporations, as Forbes puts it (1987).

According to the importance placed on the cultural industries, one should judge the socialists international cultural and media policies by their degree of success in the communication field. Part of the evaluation of these policies has already been done in the previous chapter, focusing mainly on Europe. This chapter continues this evaluation including the role of francophonie in these policies. The following section will conclude the analysis and evaluation of the early socialist cultural discourse, although many of the issues discussed until now will emerge in the policy analysis as well. The anti-American discourse, for instance, has penetrated the cultural discourse and policy to the extent that it appears to be one of the main components.

1.2 ‘Francophonie’, Language and Identity

“La Francophonie est une entreprise culturelle de type néo-colonialiste” (L’Humanité Nouvelle, 1968).

“La Francophonie est en passe de devenir une chance pour la France” (Albert Memmi, Tunisie, 1986).

“C’est un lobby..., le grand fou qui cache des idées généreuses et des arrière-pensées suspectes” (C. Humblot, 1980).

“La francophonie repose sur la volonté d’une parfaite intégration de la communauté francophone au monde de demain” (Xavier Deniau, France, 1968).


Although, the Gaullist dream of creating a France that would act as a ‘third force’ between the two superpowers was subsequently abandoned, it remained an aspiration or fantasy that surfaced from time to time (Forbes & Kelly, 1996). As was discussed above, France had to reconsider its geopolitical relationships in ‘north-south’ and ‘east-west’ terms. This was done partly by forging new cultural and economic alliances with her former colonies, through which she created ‘la
The above quotations express different positions on the role of *francophonie*, ranging from cultural neo-colonialism to cultural voluntarism. *Francophonie* is, above all, identified with the French language, its promotion and protection. Central to the French cultural system, the French language is vital to the survival of French national identity. *Francophonie* expresses a number of interests both for France and the other participant countries. In the first place, it is the gathering of those nations using French as their first language, as a vehicle of international communication or as an expression of their attachment to French culture (Mousseau & Brochand, 1987). Despite its sounding as an exercise in cultural contacts, *francophonie* has other more important functions. Although, at least initially, it was seen, by the newly independent African states, as an access to western modernity (Thomas, 1991), for the French, this type of cultural contact was a channel for aid and trade. These, in their turn, were means of expanding French influence beyond the historic empire. *Francophonie* has been associated with the defense of the French language, an attempt to meet the challenge of other languages, especially English but also Arabic and Creole and protect the political influence that has been associated with linguistic supremacy: “Face à son recul devant l’hégémonie croissante de l’anglais, il est apparu nécessaire de réagir et de donner corps à ce mouvement” (Mousseau, op.cit). Gildea argues that the key to *francophonie* has been the axis between France and Canada which, having a large French speaking population, could be a response both to American hegemony and to the British Commonwealth (1997, p 223).

*Francophonie* today is a movement with its organization (*le Conseil Permanent de la Francophonie*) and with structures well defined: political, with summits every two years; economic; and cultural, with a number of associations like the *Union internationale des journalistes et de la presse de langue française* and one related to sporting activities, like the *Jeux de la francophonie* (Thomas, 1997, p 211). Geographically it covers a population of about 131 millions and 47 countries. It has three main operators: the *Agence de Cooperation Culturelle and Technique* (ACCT), *l’Agence francophone pour l’enseignement supérieur et la recherche* (AUPELF-UREF) and the francophone channel TV5 (*Ministere des Affairs Etrangères*, 2000; Cassen, 1995).

The French language has played a very important role in the construction and maintenance of French national identity. Central in a cultural system that sought to unify the nation is the feeling of being under attack by the emerging dominance of English. Considered of major importance for the cultural, economic and social development of the country, it forms also an important aspect of international policy: “La langue française est au cœur de notre culture et de notre patrimoine, un patrimoine, que nous partageons avec l’ensemble de la communauté francophone, qui attend de nous une politique linguistique dynamique et inventive” (Délégation Générale à la Langue Française, 1998). The new technologies of information and communication are thought to have a considerable impact on the survival of French as an international language. Aware that those who control the new technologies and media would also impose their language, the French decided that *Francophonie* could play a role in resisting this linguistic invasion (Gas, 1995). Issues of communication and new technologies have frequently occupied the agenda of francophone meetings, like the one organized by ACCT in 1995, *Forum Francophone des Télécommunications et des Technologies de l’Information*, an attempt to discuss how
to improve the francophone presence in the world communications system. In the audiovisual sector, France has also taken a number of initiatives, creating francophone channels and promoting its programs to the other francophone members. The next section will be devoted to the policy analysis of these efforts.

Francophonie has been promoted as an alternative to cultural uniformization and an opportunity for the countries of the south to access modern technologies: “La promotion de notre langue n’est pas repli sur soi ou volonté de puissance. Dans un monde qui s’internationalise de plus en plus, elle s’inscrit dans la même logique que la demande de l’exception culturelle, celle du ‘refus de l’uniformisation’” (La Délégation Générale à la Langue Française, 1996). According to the French, it represents solidarity between France that wants to preserve its language and those francophone countries wanting to preserve their culture and identity (Renard, 1987). It is not surprising that France choose to turn for help to other countries at a time of an identity crisis. She does this in an interesting way, not asking for help as such but offering her help to assist others to maintain their culture. It is out of this tendency towards grandeur that makes France turn an internal crisis to an international one so she can profit by appearing to offer help while it is France that needs it. Reading the main aims of the linguistic policy as it was set by the Délégation Générale à la Langue Française, one cannot help by noticing a certain arrogance: “Le français est une grande langue de communication. Le maintien de son status international est un des objectifs de la politique actuelle de notre pays et de la communauté francophone” (op.cit). If one takes out the few countries where French is the native language, most Francophone countries are ex-colonies whose native language is not French. Preserving, therefore, cultural diversity as the French advocate, means preserving the hegemonic status of the French language and nation. One is not opposing the principle of cultural diversity here, but the motivation behind it. France seems to refuse to be treated by the United States or the ‘Anglo-Saxons’ as she treats Morocco or Algeria, even if she is trying to reassure us that Francophonie “ne saurait en conséquence apparaître comme une entreprise de domination culturelle: elle est au contraire un espace ouvert d’échanges et de discussion où pays du Sud et pays du Nord peuvent dialoguer...” (quoted in Guerlain, 1993, p 55). The francophone countries of Africa could easily use the same argument that France makes against the United States. Transmitting Dallas in French, in Morocco, is a double blasphemy to those people who seem to be punished twice by two competing hegemonic powers. It seems that the French, “surtout les responsables politiques ou culturelles, ont parfois tendance à diaboliser les américains ou les ‘anglo-saxons’ pour exprimer leur frustration concernant la position de la France dans le système economical-economique mondial” (ibid, p 51). As Gurlain suggests, a linguistic ‘kulturkampf’ appears to be always accompanied by the rise and fall of great powers.

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It is indisputable, as Motor-Sir argues, that international cultural policy ‘aspire à l’écoute mondiale’. There is in it, he continues, a militaristic proselytism. It goes towards the world and invites the world towards her, although one could say that the second is more the case. Socialist cultural policy wished to become the ‘écho sonore des cultures mondiales’ (Motor-Sir, 1984, p 286). From this perspective, one can understand better the efforts to change the history of the world and reverse the East-West to a North-South, the European audio-visual space and the Latin and Mediterranean space. This tendency to expand the cultural discourse outside France is part of France’s desire to increase her role not only at a European level but at an international level as well. Lang’s international crusade in the end backfired, as he had not officially, at the time, any authority in
foreign affairs. The intellectual community did not go along with his anti-Americanism and the government eventually found Lang’s anti American messages to be embarrassing, considering the fact France was also trying to reevaluate her position in the Atlantic alliance (Wathchel, 1987). Nevertheless, Lang did succeed in projecting a new image of France as an independent-minded cultural leader.

The international cultural discourse has been through different phases, all closely related to the issues of modernity, anti-Americanism and the protection and promotion of French culture inside and outside France. Anti-Americanism itself has been through different phases, political, cultural and moral. America as a metaphor of capitalism was opposed by left-wingers and the cultural elites ridiculed the American dream of materialism despite the attraction it had for the masses. Since France is politically closer to the USA now, her Anti-Americanism has survived more in the field of culture, as the GATT case will show. According to Winock (in Guerlain, 1992), anti-Americanism is basically a rejection of modernity and France has yet to find a way to modernize while preserving her imagined community. In post-war France, modernity à l’américain became a focus for the opposition of many groups who wished to defend France’s traditional identities. In the post-1968 era, with the old cultural and ideological models compromised, France had to come to terms with modernization and accept many of its manifestations, especially the rise of mass entertainment. At the same time, concerns about cultural specificity and cultural integrity have increased considerably and have dominated the cultural debate in the last two decades (Kelly &Forbes, 1996).

Audiovisual policy in France is closely related to cultural policy, which in its turn is strongly influenced by foreign policy. The following section will focus on how media and culture go hand in hand with a cultural expansionism and evaluate its aims, mechanisms and success. We will move, therefore, from discourse to policy analysis, although the two are often difficult to separate. Linguistic protectionism is linked to cultural expansionism regarding the case of France, as it consists of reasserting the cultural image of the country abroad, as the following analysis will show by focusing of television.

2. International Audiovisual Policy and Cultural Expansionism

“La France est attendue dans le monde, sa langue, sa culture, sa vision des choses en font un partenaire recherché des puissances petites ou moyennes, face à l’omnipotence des impérialistes anglo-américaines. Et dès lors qu’elle est attendue, la France, puissance moyenne à vocation universelle, doit proposer ses images en tout point du monde. [...] La télévision peut être le soutien efficace d’une politique extérieure conquérante pour développer une logique culturelle tentant à l’universel...‖ (Mauriat, 1987, p 13, 14).

“La politique audiovisuelle extérieur doit désormais être mise en oeuvre à travers une stratégie globale à la fois offensive et défensive: il ne s’agit plus seulement de diffuser l’extérieur son message sur soi-même et sa vision du monde, il faut aussi éviter d’être submergé et finalement détruit par le flot des messages des autres. La France est, à ce titre,

The above quotations mark quite distinctively the state of the French international audiovisual policy, which seems to move, interchangeably, from expansionism to retreat and defense. Expansionism comes from a period when France was still a strong hegemonic nation, which has shaped attitudes that last to the present date. Facing, though, the emergence of new hegemonic powers, like the United States, France has also adopted a defensive position in order to protect her cultural distinctiveness. How is France handling the two opposing tendencies within international audiovisual policy? A brief presentation of past practices might help to understand better the present situation.

Tunstall (1977) gives a good account of these past practices, arguing that France could be seen as a better case of media imperialism than Britain or America as many of her ex-colonies have maintained a closer relationship with French culture and media, compared to the ex-British colonies. Seen from this point of view, one could agree with Tunstall’s position, although, when it comes to comparison with America’s present media domination, France is a relatively milder case of media imperialism. Regarding the past, the golden age for the French media was the period around the beginning of the century. Paris, at the time, had one of the largest newspaper circulations and French culture and language, supported by Havas news, had a strong presence in Europe and around the Mediterranean. French cinema was also at its height and its film industry colonized the entire world, even the United States for a brief period. The golden age was, though, somewhat illusory, as Tunstall argues. The dominance of French culture and media was, in fact, more prominent in small southern European countries. The French popular press was not commercially well founded, compared to the British or American. Also, Havas dominant position in the French media was assisted by its closeness to the government and its dependence on commercial monopoly. In addition, the film industry was too centralized and too closely associated to Parisian high culture to survive serious commercially based competition. Government involvement was primarily responsible for the pursuit of cultural objectives in the media policy as well as a lack of commercial goals. As often happens with official media and cultural policy, no single agency in the French government was responsible and media policy was made by several governmental agencies and commercial companies whose common goal was a strong French culture and media, independent of Germany, Britain and America. The result was that the French media were inclined to become advocates of an official French culture which consisted of the great tradition of French literature and a desire to make the world speak French and if not the world, at least the diplomats or the elites of their colonies. The legacy of those past strengths and weaknesses, like centralization, governmental involvement, commercial monopolies and lack of market strength, together with the ‘pursuit of some ill-defined cultural glory’ (op.cit) has survived and is still affecting policy practices.

French media dominance was also artificial to a certain extent. A very large proportion, for instance, of Algeria’s imported programming was in French. Although, this may sound an indication of French media dominance, in fact less than half of the French language imports were French made, the other half being American or British dubbed into French (ibid, p 260). It seems that French dominance of its ex-colonies remained strong on a cultural level, involving mainly
French language and education but less so at the media level. Cultural imperialism in this case was not replaced by equally dominant media imperialism. This, however, does not mean that France has given up the effort or the desire to promote her language and culture via the media. The question at this level is not how successfully France applies policies that might help maintain her hegemonic position in the world but if her policies or some of the actions she takes can be seen through the prism of cultural or media hegemony. The discourse analysis showed how vigorously France tried at the beginning of the 1980s to embrace the cause of the less developed countries and their cultures. How, though, does this discourse translate to policy? Hegemonic tendencies were already highly visible in the discourse itself, despite France’s awareness that help to those countries could be seen as patronizing and neo-colonialist. France would not help those countries to build their audiovisual infrastructure without a return. Providing technical material or advice is often accompanied by software, in this case programs and films, as most of those countries would not be able to produce enough to cover their needs, at least initially. Later, we examine if or why those policies have been successful. At this stage, we need to understand the aims of these policies and the way they operate.

2.1 Structure and Aims

International audiovisual policy can be divided in two sections, one deals with the structure and aims and the other the mechanisms through which this policy is expressed or implemented. In the first case, we can distinguish between program and information diffusion. The first comprises commercial diffusion where the production companies and the public channels commercialize their products in order to sell abroad; cultural diffusion or diffusion institutionelle which consists mainly of the free supply, of audiovisual material, films, documentaries etc. to countries that cannot afford to pay the market prices; and international exchanges like the in the case of Eurovision. (Baudart, 1982). Both program and information diffusion follows the policies of commercialization and cultural dissemination. The first deals mainly with countries that can afford to buy audiovisual material at the market prices and is an activity of the East/West type. The second, financed by government through different ministries and agencies, is sending material to the traditional zones of French influence, and is an activity of the North/South type (ibid, p 10). There is also the policy of commercial assisté, which provides material at a lower price than its market value, with the difference reimbursed by the state (Pericard, 1987). According to the audiovisual law of 30 September 1986, the cahiers des charges of the public sector production companies impose on them an obligation to provide material free of charge to the agencies responsible for the promotion of cultural diffusion. Even the private channels were asked to contribute with a certain amount of hours. The countries that ‘benefit’, according to Rapport Decaux (1989), are mainly those of Africa, Maghreb and Middle-East, countries that belong to the traditional zone of French influence.

The importance of commercial diffusion is significant as an indication of how successful French programs are abroad. However, the commercial aspect has been suffering as the cultural diffusion, a practice with a long tradition\(^\text{191}\), has been dominating the circulation of French programs abroad. The gain is thought to be cultural, linguistic and political, and seen as a long-term investment, vital

\(^{191}\) It also supplies cultural material to cultural or educational institutions abroad, like films, journals, and television programmes.
for the international presence of francophone countries. Cultural superiority is an essential ingredient of this cultural or institutional transmission, as it is evident in the following: “Cette présence institutionnelle est souvent la seule possible dans les pays où l’association systématique de la liberté et de la francophonie est un capital précieux de prestige et de popularité, qu’il importe de ne pas gaspiller” (Haut Conseil de la Francophonie, 1986, p 178). We find a similar attitude in the Rapport Decaux (1989), which argues that the reinforcement of the international audiovisual action is a necessity as it can help other nations in their struggle for democracy, (for instance Romania at the time), as France is an example of the universal values of liberté and Droits de l’Homme. By promoting the establishment of media pluralism they not only help those countries to re-establish democracy but also give France the chance to establish herself “un niveau du savoir et de la technologie comme de la culture and de la langue” (Est-Medias, 1991). It is seen as an investment for future cultural and industrial relations.

Regarding aims, the cultural imperative is still very strong, despite increased economic pressure. One of the main aims of the international action has been the ‘insertion volontaire dans les circuits mondiaux de circulation de biens culturels, et notamment, bien sur, dans l’économie de la communication’ (Caron, 1989, p 42). Industrial and cultural development appears to become the main preoccupation since the 1980s when France realized that unless she increases her presence in the international media production and distribution system, not only her culture but also her economy will suffer. Public and private interests argue that France needs a foreign audiovisual policy for an number of reasons: it can help preserve France’s role in the international diplomacy, assist the sale of industrial products abroad and maintain a privileged place for the dissemination of French language (Gerzaguet, 1991).

However, international audiovisual policy is still heavily influenced by cultural policy, as the case of diffusion culturelle by radio and television programs shows. The examination of a number of official and other documents192, from the early 1980s to the present date, shows that the international action on media policy still faces the same issue, how to increase the penetration of French audiovisual products in foreign markets, especially francophone ones:

“Symétriquement, l’ouverture de nos médias à l’ensemble des autres cultures est un moyen de restreindre l’hégémonie des produits commerciaux américains en France même, mais aussi à l’étranger. De la diffusion commerciale et culturelle de nos produits audiovisuels, de la diversification de nos sources d’acquisition en programmes étrangers, de notre faculté à engager des actions de coproduction internationales dépendent la survie économique et l’épanouissement de notre production, le rayonnement et la force de notre présence dans le monde” (Ministère des Relations Extérieures, 1984, p 22).

The hégémonie américain and anglo-saxonne appears very often in policy documents, often used as an example to follow and more often as a justification for a reinforcement of France’s presence abroad. Following the way policy has developed over the years, one can observe continuity in what concerns the aims, even if the structures and mechanisms change. Speculation and proposals on how to increase the audience of French television programs abroad, were having as an objective, among others, the affirmation of the role of France in the international television system (Baudart, 1982). Francophonie was seen as positive asset, as co-productions between francophone countries

192 Like the Baudart Rapport in the early 1980s, the Decaux and Pericard Rapports in the late 1980s and an evaluation work from the Minister des Affaires Etrangères on the history of Cultural Diplomacy, in the 1990s.
could increase the output of French language programs. It also meant that the francophone audience had the potential to absorb more French produced programs. Help to developing countries was also seen as a way of affirming France’s position, with respect always to their cultural identities, as the author of a report felt necessary to add (op.cit). The cultural importance attached to the media is very significant

“Il est aujourd’hui possible d’affirmer qu’une défense efficace de la langue française dans le monde passe d’abord par la promotion de l’audiovisuel français” (Ministère des Relations Extérieures, 1984, p 22). The proposed solution is, therefore, to flood the francophone countries with French audiovisual products, in the hope that not only the world will maintain its cultural diversity but also that France will get to maintain her hegemonic position in the world:

“Si nous voulons que les francophones continuent à parler français, il faut les doter sans délai et abondamment de télévision en langue française... il faut littéralement inonder les pays francophones d’images, de chansons, d’informations, de fictions en français et le faire par l’intermédiaire de la télévision” (Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, 1995, p 138).

The question, though, is what difference does it make to an African country if its people watch films in English or French. Since both are in languages other than their native ones, would one not assume that France stands in the same position as America regarding media imperialism? France’s answer is that her culture is superior to the American mass-culture, carrying higher values and quality that can be transferred by her audiovisual and cinematographic products. And if that is not enough as an explanation, there is more justification for the audiovisual presence of France in other countries: ‘il existe dans chaque pays étranger une élite francophile et des jeunes gens enseignés en langue française qui recherchent des images culturelles ‘haut de gamme’ (Decaux, 1989, p 35). This francophone elite justifies, therefore, actions like the creation of francophone channels like TV5 and European like the SEPT/ARTE.

As France realizes that her ‘pouvoir d’attraction international’ is not what it used to be, she accepts she has to change the methods used until now to capture foreign audiences: “Même les espaces où demeurent des relations privilégiées (francophonie, Afrique) n’échappent pas à la règle de la compétition. L’action audiovisuelle ne peut donc plus se fonder sur ‘une clientèle captive’. Les comportements, les méthodes doivent s’adapter. Il faut vendre, même gratuitement” (Rapport du Gouvernement au Parlement, 1989, p 232). This is an interesting solution. How does one sell free of charge? It seems that French products are not selling well abroad, even when they are circulated free of charge. The reasons why are many and will be explained later. The French need to maintain their audiovisual presence, même gratuitement. The following section will focus on the mechanisms of the international audiovisual policy, which will give further evidence of a hegemonic tendency.

2.2 Mechanisms

The main mechanism and administrative tool of the French international audiovisual policy is the CAEF, Conseil de l’audiovisuel extérieur de la France. Created in 1989 after the proposals of the Rapport

193 How important the communication sector has become to the international cultural policy, can be observed by the distribution of the budget of the Relations Culturelles Extérieures. From 1991 to 1993 the money allocated to communication was doubled (from 478 to 960 MF), compared, for instance to the other traditional sectors of cultural exchanges and francophonie. (Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, 1995, p 163).
Decaux, it was a response to the need of tackling the administrative dispersal of international audiovisual action. Until then, there were a number of ministries and agencies involved in policy making and implementation, like the Ministries of Culture, Communication, Foreign Affairs, Co-operation and Development, European Affairs and Francophonie, each acting independently. This lack of co-ordination had as a result the absence of a coherent audiovisual policy abroad and it was felt that the re-grouping of the involved parties under the Direction of Communication of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was the best way to tackle the decreasing presence of French media in foreign markets. The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs after the Juppée reform in 1994, is responsible for defining international cultural and audiovisual policy, as well as all aspects of co-operation and development (Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, 1995). This is an indication of how issues of national image and prestige are still very important for French governments.

The French audiovisual presence abroad has expanded considerably during the last two decades. The mechanisms or tools of its expression include a variety of channels that cover information, entertainment (like music and films), culture and education. Some focus on a European level, like Euronews and La Sept-Arte, while others are truly international like Canal France International and TV5. This audiovisual expansion is significant as it comes at a period where the internationalization of the communication sector has become more evident. This expansion is an indication of France’s attempts not only to reassert her image abroad but also to catch up with the developments in the international communication field.

Satellimages-TV5 SA: TV5 is the first channel in French with an international dimension. Since 1984, transmits via cable and six satellites a collection of francophone channels. Ambitious as it sounds, TV5 is a channel with a problematic nature. The main aim of TV5 is to promote francophone culture in the world. Moreover, the expression ‘culture francophone’ used but not defined by TV5 is ambiguous, having different interpretations. Officially, it is defined as ‘l’ensemble des cultures des pays ayant en commun l’usage du français’, referring to the 41 countries that took part in the sommet des pays francophone in Dakar in 1989. In practice, though, TV5 refers to no more than four countries, which happen to be the richest among them, all situated in Western Europe and North America. Consequently, the francophone culture promoted by TV5 is reflecting the cultures of industrialized countries of the North, leaving aside the cultures of the 37 remaining of the South. TV5 can, in this sense, be seen as an illustration of the dynamics within francophonie, the division between South and North.

The TV5 project started in 1983 by the Direction des Affaires Culturelles of the Ministère des Relations Extérieures. The main idea behind this project was the following: since France cannot sell her television programs abroad, why not promote them free to the European public. France decided that, since her audiovisual presence was not strong in the program schedules of the other European televisions, she should promote them on her own. TV5 today transmits national programs without a translation and in their original form to a European and international audience. Certain programs

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194 Belgian (RTBF), Canadian (CTQC), French (TF1, France 2 and FR3) and Suisse (SSR). Today there is a TV5 - Europe (1984), TV5 Quebec-Canada (1988), TV5 Afrique (1992), TV5 Asie (1997), TV5 Amerique Latine & Caraibes (1992) and the latest TV5 USA (1998) (TV5, 2000a).
are predominant, like information (national news bulletins)\textsuperscript{195}, culture and entertainment. Fiction and cinema are less used, mainly because their rights are difficult to obtain for the whole of Europe and indeed the world. The programming does not appear homogenous but more like a collage of different national programs. Even when there are non-French speaking interventions, they are doubted and not sub-titled which gives the impression the whole world speak French. The audience of TV5 needs to have a good command of French to be able to understand. And as the message transmitted to them is nationally specific, the audience also needs to have a good knowledge of the country’s history or current situation (Galliard, 1991). The image therefore of the channel as an international one can be questioned, as only a small percentage of the population, mainly the francophone elites of the countries it transmits to, can understand and be willing to watch. The success of TV5 is marginal as the audience in the francophone countries themselves is not more than 0.5 to 3 percent of the market and in the cases of a strong francophone minority between 5 and 10 percent (Achille, 1994, p 259).

TV5 is also an indication of the dynamics between the industrialized members from the North. The lack of balance, for instance, between France and the other three participant countries, in the way there are represented in the channel’s programming, is equally important. The French channels contribute nearly half of the programs and France’s contribution to the budget is the biggest one. The predominant cultural model is, therefore, French. This is mainly with TV5 Europe, as TV5 Quebec-Canada is controlled by a Canadian consortium and the scheduling is slightly different. Again, if the culture of the French language is evidently in a strong position in France, this is not the case in the other three countries where the French speaking part of the population has to compete with other languages. These countries have different perceptions of their cultures even if expressed through the same language. These differences are evident on TV5 and contribute to the lack of a clear profile (Galliard, op.cit).

France, however, is very keen on preserving this ‘international’ francophone channel, not only for cultural reasons but for political ones too. TV5 was also seen as an aid to the battle around the GATT: TV5 “est bien positionnée pour être un anciliaire dans la lutte concernant le GATT” (Imhaus quoted in Achille, p 259, 1994). Received by many countries around the world, TV5 marks the French presence and seen as a French initiative regarding the preservation of diversity in the world. TV5 USA is an interesting addition to this project, if it is seen not only as a cultural marker but also as a political one. According to the official web site, TV5 offers international news to Americans that their press largely ignores, like Africa and the European Union (TV5, 2000a). France has found it difficult to penetrate the American market. TV5 gave France the chance to mark a presence in the USA, hoping it would restore the lack of balance between the cultural exchanges of the two countries. This aspiration to penetrate the American market is not a new one as an official report noted in 1984: “Les échanges culturelles et scientifique avec les Etats-Unis sont, par ailleurs, un élément essentiel d’une restauration de notre image dans ce pays, image qui conditionne dans une large mesure, le rééquilibrage de nos relations politiques, économiques et commerciales” (Ministère des Relations Extérieures, 1984, p 97). TV5, therefore, in the United States is more of a political statement than cultural, if seen within the context of Franco-American relations. TV5 is not the only channel that aspires to international

\textsuperscript{195} A randomly chosen selection of programme schedules transmitted to South Europe, North Africa and the American continent, shows that information and general interest programmes are the main components of the channels.
status, or the only example of French cultural expansionism. CFI and RFO follow the same principle: ‘let the world speak French’.

**CFI (Canal France International)** transmits French programs to its professional partners via a system of six satellites covering 5 regions of the world and about 100 channels in 80 counties. These channels integrate those programs according to their needs, directly or recorded. CFI puts in place a transmission formula allowing the direct receiving of part of her programs, reserving to her partners the exclusivity of certain transmissions in Africa, Asia and Middle East. CFI, created in 1989, was conceived as a bank of French programs to feed foreign channels, mainly African initially. Other areas are now covered, like the Maghreb and the Middle East (end of 1989), the Eastern and Central Europe (1990) and Asia (1992). It is also been present in Haiti since 1997. This rapid expansion led to the regionalization of its programs since 1995. Six distinctive programs are transmitted from Paris using numerical technology that allows the selective transmission to different channels (CFI, 2000).

Additionally, *Canal France International* offers the francophone speakers of Africa a television channel, **CFI TV**. This channel is received by the whole of Africa and its aim according to the official web site is to promote a dialogue between France and Africa and also between the African countries themselves, by providing space for the transmission of African productions and news. Under this South-South exchange, a daily program of collected news from different African channels is transmitted for ten minutes by CFI. There are also a number of films and documentaries produced in Africa by Africans. In Asia, CFI is assisting television in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos to adopt French programs and transmit news in French. Similar actions are being taken in other countries where CFI is mainly used as a bank of audiovisual products.

What is the benefit for France? CFI according to its policy makers “joue un rôle essentiel dans l’exportation des productions françaises, en favorisant ainsi l’accès des producteurs français à de nouveaux marchés” (cfi, 2000). The objective is thus clear, open the market for French productions. In 1999, CFI was expected to transmit 6,000 hours of programs for the total of her 99 television partners. The biggest part of its program output is information and ‘magazine’ with sports and fiction coming second, as can be seen from the selected schedule for Africa (see annex).

It is interesting to note here that the CFI project was conceived as a bank of images “pour que les pays réceptionnant Canal France puissent utiliser à leur guise les informations et les productions reçues, ce qui évite d’avoir à répondre à l’accusation de ‘neocolonialism’” (Decaux, 1989, p 10). This shows the French are aware their international audiovisual projects might be seen as an expression of neo-colonialism and media imperialism. Creating an audiovisual bank does not mean, though, they can escape the accusations easily simply because they are proposing and not imposing their products. Africans accused the CFI of paying little for African productions, to which CFI answered they do not oblige anybody to sale them programs and that CFI cannot pay African films more than it pays for good French films (Dargnies & Gerzaguet, 1991, p 30). In fact, they treat African producers the way American producers treat the French. As American films are cheaper to buy than French ones because they have recovered their production costs in their national market, French films are in the
same situation regarding African films. It seems that there are different superimposed levels of media imperialism, with France both on the receiving and imposing end.

RFO (Société national de Radio-Télévision Française d’Outre-Mer) has as a mission to transmit, in all French ‘outre mer’ territories and departments (DOM-TOM), complete programs of radio and television. Created in 1982, it has a central office Paris and nine regional stations. FRO has two main television outlets, Canal 1 and 2 and nine radio stations. The Agence International d’Images de Télévision (AITV) is supplying RFO with television programs. According to an audience research carried out in 1999, the RFO channels are the most popular among the local, public, private and satellite channels. France’s presence in those territories is vital as they are considered clusters of French culture that need to be preserved. RFO is also an opportunity to promote French programs abroad via Canal2 (www.rfo.fr).

Apart from these three main international audiovisual mechanisms, there are others that also contribute to the French international audiovisual action, among which is MCM International. Created in 1993, it is the musical channel, with a programming that contains a minimum of 55 percent of francophone creations. Following its development in Europe, ‘MCM has become an invaluable aid to the exporting of the French artists’. Its impact is reinforced by the participation of the channel in the operations and events aspiring to the diffusion and rayonnement of francophonie in the world. Present in several satellites MCM is recaptured by a number of cable operators in Europe, Africa, Middle East and Asia. A musical channel is employed here to promote part of the French culture abroad (Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, 2000b).

The SEPT-ARTE and Euronews also contribute to the export of French culture, mainly at a European level. The first transmits its programs all over Europe, the Mediterranean area and the Middle East by EUTELSAT. Specific agreements with almost all the countries of Central and Eastern Europe favor the transmission of its programs and the realization of exchanges and co-operation. Euronews, a European channel of information, has been transmitting since 1993 in five languages for 24 hours on Eutelsat. Its transmissions can be received by the whole of Europe, North Africa and the Middle East by parabolic antennas and cable (Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, 2000, b).

LA CINQUIEME (La télévision du savoir, de la formation et de l’emploi), an educational channel, is also contributing to the international action. Since its creation 1994, it is searching to develop international cooperation within the frame of bilateral relations by creating an association mondiale of educational televisions. The demand for cooperation comes mainly from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Central and South America and some countries of Asia and also north-American universities. In Europe, the cooperation is mainly expressed through the realization of co-productions put together with Germany, Britain and Spain (ibid; lacinquiem, 2000).

196 Guadeloupe, Guyana, Martinique, Mayotte, Nouvelle-Calédonie, Polynesia francaise, Reunion, saint-Pierre-et-Michelon, Wallis-et-Futuna
197 The first has its regional stations, like Télé Martinique, Télé Guadeloupe, Télé Reunion and Télé Guyane. The second, named Tempo offers a selection of programs by the French public service channels, France 2 and 3, Cinquième and ARTE.
In addition, certain programs of France 2 and France 3 are given to TV5 while others are used by CFI in the majority of the francophone countries. France 2 is run directly by the second Tunisian channel and the Établissement de Radiodiffusion et télévision Tunisien (ERTT) via Telecom 2B. In addition, the news of 20h 00 of France 2 is recaptured by N.H.K. (Japanese public service television) and the K.B.S (Korean public service television) by their satellite channels. It is also transmitted to the United States with English subtitles by PBS and captured by cable in New York and other cities (ibid). Finally, CANAL+ Horizons is another contribution towards this international action. It transmits, since 1991, an encrypted program of 21 hours, directed towards Tunisia, the African and Maghreb countries and the Middle East by a ‘repeteur’ of Intelsat V1 satellite and Eutelsat 2F6 satellite (ibid).

Judging from the above, French audiovisual policy abroad is characterized by an expansionist tendency. The last two decades have seen an explosion of French audiovisual presence abroad, via a network of channels and agencies. Has this expansionist policy, though, guaranteed success for the French audiovisual products abroad? This section tried to show the expansionist character of the French international audiovisual policy. Certain aspects of it indicate an application of media imperialism or rather a tendency to maintain a hegemonic attitude towards other countries, in particular ex-colonies. A major concern of francophone countries other than France is cultural domination from Paris. As the wealthiest francophone market, France executes the language transfer for cultural products moving in and out of the international francophone market. France, thus, functions as an international producer, distributor and translator while smaller markets such as Quebec function more as national markets (see McAnany and Wilkinson, 1996, part four). Despite though France’s dominance in the francophone world, the U.S. maintains a stronger international presence. So, how does this France of hegemonic tendencies cope with contemporary fears on losing her cultural identity caused by internationalization and globalization of the audiovisual markets?

The following section is an attempt to examine the impact of internationalization on French television and cinema, the reasons why the French audiovisual products are not successful internationally, their particularities and weaknesses. This in its turn will lead us to the other side of the French audiovisual/cultural policy, protectionism, as it is expressed through different policy measures and the GATT negotiations.

3. Internationalization and French Audiovisual Products

The development of the post-war French media has been affected by a process of internationalization whereby the national media have become increasingly integrated within, first, a European media system and, second, a global one. As we saw above, the transnational transmission of television programs, a consequence of advances in media technology, has allowed France to be
audiovisually present not only in other European countries but well beyond them. Regarding media ownership, another aspect of internationalization, the French media have been opened up to outside investors, while at the same time, French companies have made attempts to build up their media holdings abroad. In chapter 3, we saw that the privatization and liberalization of the French audiovisual system in the 1980s and the growing European integration have accelerated this process, as the case of Berlusconi, Maxwell and the Luxembourg media group showed. Canal Plus has a stake in pay-television channels in various European and African countries and Hachette has important publishing and audiovisual interests in the USA and Spain, while the Chargeurs group is a shareholder in the satellite broadcaster BSkyB (Kuhn, 1995).

Internationalization is also present in media regulation, content and formats. The former is widely expressed within the EU, as seen in chapter 5, whose regulative initiatives mean that media policies no longer have a purely national agenda. Where, internationalization is felt more is in regards to media content and formats. While France imports a large amount of audiovisual products from abroad, especially American, French program exports are much more limited. Although steps have been taken to promote the sale of French television programs abroad, language and cultural specificities remain big obstacles outside francophone countries. The American market has been particularly difficult for the French to penetrate. For instance, in 1990 France imported 600 million francs worth of television programs from USA while exporting only 35 million francs worth (op.cit). France has adopted, regarding media formats, the soap opera format (i.e. Châteauvallon), game shows such as the Wheel of Fortune (La route de la fortune in France) and pop music video-clips.

One could say that the internationalization of technology, regulation, content and formats threatens to render the French media less French. The audiovisual and cinematographic industry is a very important aspect of French audiovisual policy, national and international, as it is seen both as a way to resist internationalization and Americanization, and to promote French culture abroad. Lang and his successors have run a dualistic policy divided between the promotion of cultural industries, such as film and the conservation of national heritage. The expansion of Lang’s portfolio responsibilities to include communication was recognition of television’s significance in both these areas. In the audiovisual field, he wanted to build French audiences for French films and to draw them from Hollywood. However, if we follow the statistics, not only the French audience but also the international ones have shown their preference to Hollywood products (see table 1&2, annex for chap 6). Despite France’s relatively strong presence internationally because of the francophone market, Hollywood still maintains the upper hand in the international market. The following section will focus on the reasons by examining the particularities and weaknesses of the French audiovisual products.

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199 France’s presence as a Pan-European broadcaster is shadowed by USA (see table 4, annex for chap 6). Although it has a stronger presence compared to other European broadcasters, the heavy American presence shows who dominates not only the European but the international market as well.
200 The source for this section is mostly from the Reports to the Government by the Senate on Culture and Communication. Using this source gives us the opportunity to have an official view of the industry’s problems, which is very critical. As most of the reports were prepared by Senator Clouzel who was a conservative, we can see his comments as criticism to the socialists’ policies.
3.1 The Crisis in the Audiovisual Industry

The development of ‘une veritable industrie de programme’ that could compete at a national and international level has been the main target of many audiovisual reforms and protecting measures by various governments. However, none of these reforms and aid measures has proven efficient enough to stop the crisis the French audiovisual industry has been passing through the last two decades. A crisis with various effects, including:

- Global financing of the sector that increases with a speed that cannot meet with the needs for programs
- National regulation system whose ‘mechanism de quotas’ has affected programming and created tensions
- Reduction in financing coming from distributors and
- A general crisis in the whole sector that has provoked a withdrawal of investors and capital (Rapport 86, p 151)

What has caused this crisis? The relations between distributor and producer and the dominant position of the former, the almost absent second market where French audiovisual products could amortize their costs, a heavy ‘regime des droit de diffusion’ that works against the purchase and diffusion of French products, a lack of sufficiency in the structures of commercialization, and the specific characteristics and particularities of French audiovisual products are to be blamed, according to senator Clouzel, for the ‘malheurs’ of the French audiovisual industry (Rapport No 59&86).

Despite the big increase in transmitted programs by French channels, French production has been developing very slowly, while a dramatic increase has been noticed in imported TV serials and films. Therefore, there is no lack in demand, which means either that French products are not competitive enough, or French production is not sufficient to cover the demand or both. Cluzel argues that the main reason for this absence of development and competitiveness in ‘creation audiovisuel francaise’ are high production costs caused by a process insufficiently industrialized (rapport no 67, p 113) as well as the strong ‘temperament individualiste du producteur francaise’ and ‘reference culturelle’ which reinforces a feeling of superiority of ‘production artisanal’ over industrialized production:

“or, il est de tradition, en France, d’opposer une industries de la production capable à attaquer la marché international et en respectant les norme avec l’artisanat suppose nécessaire à la réalisation d’une oeuvre. Le tempérament individualiste du Française et ses références culturelles, accroissent le sentiment du supériorité de l’artisan sur l’industriel‖ (Rapport No 340, p 143).

Because of the narrow internal market, the production process is highly ‘artisan’, which means that a film is produced on demand to fit the specific needs of a national channel. Therefore, the ‘societes

201 The aid to audiovisual creation saw an explosion in the 1980s, from 23 MF to 70 MF in 1986 (ministère de la culture, 1985, p7).
‘de productions’ have little power over production. The market is dominated by the distributors, who interfere in the production process, from conception to realization, which they finance largely. This explains the weakness of the French producers, especially at the level of conception. It also explains partly the absence of French products in the international market because they are made in order to satisfy the tastes of a national audience. The cost, therefore, cannot be amortized but in the national market. ‘D’un prix de reviens élevé les œuvres de création audiovisuelle ne sont pas automatiquement porteurs d’une audience maximale ce qui accroît le risque de l’acheteur’ (Rapport No 87, p 113). The consequence is the gradual withdrawal of distributors first, from financing production and second from buying it. This has made worse the already bad production conditions. However, although the interference of distributors had been seen as an obstacle to the development of French production, their financial contribution was a guarantee and secure source of money for producers. Nevertheless the new situation has not given more independence to producers as might be expected, since distributors still interfere by continuing to finance production but at a less cost now which has affected the quality. The quality that has characterized French production up to now has been seen as an obstacle, because it is culturally specific and attached to the French notion of cultural product:

“Caractère misérabiliste et intimiste des productions françaises, leur rythme lents, le manque d’action et de rebondissement, le souci privilégié d’exposer des états d’âmes plus que raconter une histoire et en permettre une lecture un premier degré...” (Rapport No 340, p 143).

In addition, there is a total absence of commercial preoccupation in the ways of exploitation of French audiovisual products, which is considered one of the major weaknesses. Many exports, especially to the third world countries are done within the frame of cultural cooperation or diffusion culturel and exchange, not on a commercial basis. The type of products produced by French channels are not adapted to the demand. They produce more produits de flux (émissions de plateaux, variétés, jeux) which are cheaper to produce but not exportable. Concerning French fiction and TV serials, they suffer from a negative image mainly because of:

• The very slow rhythm of their scenarios and lack of action
• Formats not adopted to international market needs (French fiction is very often made to last 90 minutes while the international market seeks formats of 52 minutes with several episodes) and
• Scenarios that express more psychological and cultural aspects, mainly national (Rapport 101, p 245; Neumann, 1993, p 22)

There is also the language problem. Apart from a few small European countries (Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland) and Canada, there are no other countries sharing the same language with France (there is Francophonie but it is not strong enough to sustain a French international distribution). This means that the exported products need to be subtitled which increases their already high price. It has been proposed to start producing in English (since the international market in audiovisual and cinematographic material is dominated by this language), which has provoked passionate debates over the protection of French language. There are those who believe that French culture cannot be threatened by another language since this can still be expressed through the scenarios, the presence of French talents etc. and that ‘il ne faut pas reduire une politique culturelles à une politique linguistique’ (Rapport No 340, p 148). However, culture and language are
strongly associated and audiovisual and cinematographic products are seen as ways of promoting the national culture and language: “en matière de télévision, dans ou hors de l’hexagone, l’objectif doit être le même: se faire comprendre et séduire les téléspectateurs... L’image de la France, sa culture, et donc sa place dans le monde seront confortées” (Rapport No 101, p 217).

The interference of cultural pursuits in the audiovisual sector has been so big that in many cases it has prohibited it from developing a more commercial profile, hence becoming more competitive. This interference has increased tensions in the French audiovisual industry, which is trying to catch up with her American competitor but without big success. That is not only because of the inherent weaknesses and particularities of the French audiovisual products in relation to the internationalization of the audiovisual markets but also because of the advantages of the American audiovisual products in their market and abroad. The following factors have been key to international dominance by the US: a ‘natural’ advantage in the domestic U.S. market deriving from the productions’ close cultural-linguistic fit with their domestic audience; high-quality production values which travel well; and a large and wealthy domestic market together with well-to-do, accessible English-language markets in Australia, Canada, the UK and New Zealand. Further more, a long history of pursuing audience maximization through efforts to create a single mass audience in a culturally diverse nation and a domestic market closed to film and television imports because of audiences’ supposed disinterest in such material for cultural and linguistic reasons have put the American products in more advantageous position (McAnany & Wilkinson, 1996).

How is France coping with this dominance? We have already seen the anti-American cultural discourse of the 1980s and the efforts to retaliate through an audiovisual expansion especially in francophone countries. The suggestion to create a ‘Latin audiovisual space’ among the Latin nations of Southern Europe and Latin America was seen as a way to deter U.S. dominance and cultural homogenization while stimulating production and exchange of audiovisual products and ‘developing an alternative form of universality’ based on shared cultural and linguistic traits (Mattelart, Delcourt & Mattelart, 1984). France, naturally, was expected to play the leading role by taking the initiative. It seems that the antidote to homogenization based on American popular culture is French cultural imperialism.

Protectionism has always been a strong characteristic of French audiovisual policy both at national and international level. This protectionism was strongly expressed within the EU with the quotas policy but it became more prominent and reached its strongest expression during the GATT negotiations that inflamed the cultural debate within France, which in its turn transcended the national borders to become international. The last section of this chapter will pay special attention to what in fact was a dispute between France and the US on audiovisual products, which also brings to a conclusion the long discussion this thesis has been involved in about the nation-state, identity and television.
4. From Cultural Expansionism to Cultural Protectionism: International Trade and the Cultural Industries

“La France est décidément un pays singulier. Elle fait du GATT bien plus qu’un défi commercial, une question culturelle, presque idéologique, en réinventant, à l’occasion, le spectre de l’impérialisme américain” (Hollande, 1993, p 2).

Since the end of the cold war, ideology has been replaced by trade that is now at the focus of global attention. With two major international and global trade agreements taking place in the 1990s, many argue that we have now entered the era of advanced capitalism of which globalization is a manifestation. In 1993, the North American countries, U.S., Canada and Mexico, ratified the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The same year, 115 nations finalized a seven-year-old debate on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Despite the emphasis on trade, cultural issues managed to attract the attention in both agreements and threatened to obstruct the free flow of products and services. In the former, there was a clear exception of the Canadian cultural industries from the terms of the treaty. In the latter, though, the final outcome was reached only after hard negotiations and much resistance from the EU which, after the increasing pressure from France refused, at the last minute, to include the audiovisual industries in the GATT (McAnany & Wilkinson, 1996). Negotiators felt the need for mechanisms that would maintain and develop a viable degree of domestic production to reflect local cultural forms of expression and avoid the standardization of tastes and behaviors (Unesco, 18/06/01).

The dispute over culture and free trade is better understood if seen through the two dominant positions on cultural industries. For the Americans, audiovisual trade is just a business whereas for the Europeans it is both business and a cultural matter. The U.S. does not have a cultural policy as such for the audiovisual industry. The cultural industries are linked to entertainment and commitment to free trade indicates a view that sees the trading of cultural goods as no different to any other form of trade. It has been part of a general policy to use its economic power and influence to force other countries to “accept the policies of liberal developmentalism: equal and open access for trade and investment and an emphasis on private rather public ownership” (Jarvis quoted in Schlesinger, 1994, p 14). In the US the rhetoric is that of market, business and the freedom to communicate as Mickey Kantor, the US negotiator during the GATT, let implied:

“We can best advance the interests of our artists, performers and producers – and the free flow of information around the world – by reserving all our legal rights to respond to policies that discriminate in these areas” (quoted in Schlesinger, 1994, p 5).

The possibility for a conflict stemming from the importance accorded to policy objectives that seek to foster or strengthen countries’ feelings of ‘national identity’ and cultural integrity was expected (see Peterson, 1989). European countries, represented by the EU, have a long tradition of protectionist policies in the audiovisual sector and many of them see audiovisual products as cultural products that represent the cultural creativity of the nation. Culture for Europeans plays an important role in social and political cohesion and

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202 The latter was succeeded in 1995 by the World Trade Organization (WTO), an agreement among 135 governments, which decide on the rules governing their trade relations and negotiations aiming at further opening up their markets (Kumar, 2000).
it is perceived as a vital element in the construction of collective identities. For the Americans, on the contrary, there is little official inclination to see mediated culture as an object of policy for reinforcing or creating national identity, as the ruling official conception of ‘Americanness’ is a juridico-political image of the collectivity, rather than a national cultural one (Schlesinger, 1994). The two approaches on national identity, the European one of the collectivity explicitly centered upon national culture and the US’s unstated constitutionalist conception of the polity, were bound to clash on such an important matter as the cultural industries and international trade.

The value position, stemming from the European position on culture, is whether culture is something that could be subject to free-trade principles in the same ways as textiles or agriculture. This becomes more complicated by the belief that the presence of foreign cultural products causes the erosion of cultural values and identities in the receiving societies. If a nation claims its right to restrict free trade in the cultural area by quotas, taxes or tariffs in order to protect its citizens and promote its own creative expression within its cultural industries, should this, as McAnany puts it, “be considered the same as other forms of trade protectionism, or should it be seen as a valid ‘cultural exception’, within the larger trade regime?” (ibid,p 4).

The practical reality shows that the products of the US cultural industries have an overwhelming presence in most European countries. The trade imbalance between the US and European countries on products of popular culture is on the increase which indicates an economic side to the argument as well as the cultural one. The European policy-makers want the promotion of free trade as well as some form of cultural protection. Is it possible to combine both? The GATT case will show that it is but with no guarantees for a permanent arrangement. The US enjoys a growing trade surplus in the cultural arena and is unlikely to make more concessions that would restrict its expansion. Further, the increasing concentration of transnational cultural industries, the world trend towards deregulation and privatization with the accompanied increase in the demand of audiovisual products, tends to favor the US, which has the capacity to satisfy this demand. What will the repercussions be for the cultural protectionists? Will free trade or cultural exception win? What we can expect is the continuing global flow of cultural products and a variety of cultural protests and efforts at protection - ‘short of open cultural warfare breaking out (ibid)- to continue in a variety of forms.

The following section is giving a detailed account of the GATT negotiations, as it is an example of France’s latest battle in safeguarding her cultural industries and her identity at the same time. At this stage, we see all actors at play, national and international, supranational and global. How does the nation-state interact with all these new actors?

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203 The impact of UNESCO’s early debates on issues regarding imbalances in the distribution of information and entertainment and their possible effects on the receiving cultures is still strong on current debates.

204 International audiovisual trade appears to be a one-way, involving American sellers and EU buyers. In 1990-91 the receipts of American audiovisual products in Europe were $ 3,782 billions while the European ones in the American market were $ 247 millions. The trade deficit was therefore of $ 3.5 billions. From the early 1980s to the early 1990s, the American products sold to European televisions increased dramatically from $ 39 to 277 millions. The French market experienced this increase more than any other country in Europe because of the deregulation and privatisation of the sector (Nouvelles de l’Uruguay Round, 1993, p 8-9).
4.1 The GATT Negotiations and the Debate over the ‘Exception Culturelle’

“Que serait-ce si nous acceptions le libre-échangisme, le libéralisme a tous crins en matière de cinéma et d’audiovisuel? La loi du plus fort serait forcément gagnante, le porte définitivement ouverte à l’américanisation de nos mœurs, de notre langue, de notre vision du monde et notre culture, l’abandon de notre génie particulier” (Baraduc, 1993, p 5).

4.1.1 The Negotiations

The tension created by the opposition between the USA and the EU was in fact spearheaded by France. The Americans wanted to include audiovisual products in the agreement, arguing that audiovisual products are like any other products and, as such, should enter the free global market. The US had already declared its disagreement over the EU’s audiovisual policy as expressed in the Directive ‘Television without Frontiers’, arguing that its protectionist measures were against the principles of GATT. Opposed to the United States were not only lobbies for the European cultural industries but a political movement in France that made concessions difficult.

For France and the EU it was a matter of culture, although they had a different way of supporting their position at the beginning. The EU was supporting the ‘spécificité culturelle’ which permitted the establishment of a special regime in the audiovisual sector, respecting national and European particularities. According to the EU, the function of audiovisual services is based on a double component. On the one hand, the transmission of broadcasting signals that constitute the ‘contenant’ of these services; on the other, the ‘programmation’ carried by these signals, which constitutes the ‘contenu’. The first component indicates the attachment of audiovisual services to the Telecommunication sector whose regulation follows a policy of liberalization in the Community. The second component, the ‘contenu’, transmitted by the broadcasting signals is under regulation, considering the role that broadcasting plays as medium of reflecting cultural identities (Rapport, No 384). This role indicates the cultural specificity of the sector, which is in opposition to the liberalization of transmission of broadcasting signals.

Following the above argument, the EU based its negotiations on the following point: that the ‘spécificité culturelle’ of the ‘contenu’ of broadcasting signals whose transmission became free of restrictions, should not be affected by this liberalization. This cultural specificity reveals the objectives of a cultural policy. First, because it responds to the preoccupations related to cultural

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205 French saw this position from their perspective, that the Americans wanted to “include la culture dans les accords du GATT” (Rapport, No 101, p 102)
206 The American President Bill Clinton, under pressure from the big American groups of communication, declared officially many times that the audiovisual sector must enter the global agreement on free trade, characterizing unacceptable the maintain of restrictions. Following his words as they were quoted in the Rapport Général, No101: “les États-Unis ne veulent aucune faveur spéciale pour les œuvres américaines, mais nous ne pouvons pas accepter que les produits audiovisuels soient l’objet de restriction incompatible... L’inclusion du secteur de l’audiovisuel dans un accord global sur le commerce mondial constitue pour l’Amérique une question vitale en matière d’emploi aussi bien qu’une question d’équipe” (p 102)
and linguistic identities, whose protection must be assured and second, because it makes part and guarantees a harmonious development of the big European market in the audiovisual sector. However, liberalization of audiovisual services remained as an EU objective, but only under condition that liberalization had no negative effects on the cultural identity of each State. France came to assist the EU’s position regarding audiovisual products by arguing that a film or a book cannot be regarded as products like the others, perceiving them as carriers of their national culture.

However, France did not support the cultural specificity proposed by the EU and defended by Sir Leon Brittan, who believed this was the best way to protect the sector. According to him, the audiovisual sector would be better protected if it enters GATT, arguing that bilateral negotiations can be dangerous. Yet, France was not convinced entirely about the efficiency of this solution. For the French negotiators the ‘spécificité culturelle’: ‘il s’agit d’une notion au contenu juridique flou. C’est une défense à géométrie variable qui peut aller en s’amenuisant au fur et à mesure de la négociation mais aussi de l’évolution des rapports de force entre États’ (Rapport, No 101, p 91) The cultural specificity was open to negotiations and thus to possible concessions. France was determined not to negotiate on culture. Following their well-known tactic of resistance, waiting until the end before deciding to make any compromise, they proposed a more radical solution, the ‘exception culturelle’, which, according to them, allowed no possibility of compromise. According to this solution:

‘Les biens et services culturels ne sont pas exclus de l’accord, mais aucune des exigences concernant l’accès aux marchés, le régime des subventions, la suppression des protections nationales ne pourront être applicables à ces biens et services (dont l’audiovisuel)’ (Rapport, No 101, p 91).

This proposal, after the French, permitted the maintenance of the actual systems of protection and support to audiovisual production, especially the 60 percent quota of European content imposed on films screened on television and the 13 percent tax on tickets sold at the box office used to subsidies innovative films, art-house cinemas and independent distributors to the value of 150 million a year (Ciment, 1993, p 5; Robinson, 1993, p 31). Although the French reaction came relatively late, they managed to push their case (‘rattraper le terrain perdu’), by following a very aggressive policy, which helped them, in a short period, to attract international attention and gain the support of other Francophone countries, as well as from EU members.

France, not able to participate directly in the GATT agreement as an autonomous country because of her membership to the EU that was acting as a negotiator and representative of all its members,

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207 The EU was in favour of a gradualist sector based approach which from the American point of view in combination with the cultural considerations underlying the treatment of audiovisual products could reduce the effectiveness of any final agreement on services. What they favoured was a generalist (global) approach that would play down differences between services by stressing the universal applicability of free trade principles and reducing thus the scope for national interests to be manifested as sectoral considerations (Peterson, 1989; Regourd, 1993). This approach was the dominant one during the negotiations.

208 There was also another solution, this of ‘exception culturelle’ which excludes the audiovisual products from the agreement and where each country protects its own culture, leaving the others free to hit back (the case of Canada in ALNEA). Although the French were clearly inspired by the Canadians and frequently used them in their argument (if the Canadians can, why not them?), they later saw that it was not the best situation, because by excluding a sector from the negotiations, it is abandoned to bilateral negotiations, which can be prove dangerous (in the case of weaker States). If Canada for instance decides to protect its television sector, the US can charge for the imports of Canadian timber (Verstappen, 1993; Gold and Leyton-Brown, 1988).
could not directly block the process. So, France, first, managed to divide EU into two groups, with her leading the group of six counties (Belgium, Italy, Greece, Spain and Ireland), supporting the ‘exception culturelle’ against the group supporting the ‘spécificité culturelle’ (Britain, Holland, Germany). This created tension between the member-states and put pressure on the EU to take a final decision. Although, the European Parliament had voted, in July 1993, for the cultural specificity, following the argument of Sir Leon Brittan, it changed its decision in September of the same year, in favor of the cultural exception declaring the ‘volonté de l’Europe de défendre et préserver l’identité culturelle’. This decision came a few days later, after the French government decided to react and defend its position in front of the European Parliament. At the same time, France mobilized a large number of famous personalities from the fields of television, cinema and art, to support its position. This change of decision was the first battle France had won in the case of cultural exception. They knew that it would be easier to impose their position if they had the support of the EU.

As a second step, at an international level, France gathered all the Francophone countries and made a common declaration against the entrance of cultural products in the GATT agreement. The main point of this declaration was the recognition of the role of the state, governments and ‘collectivités publiques et territoriales’ in the promotion and protection of the regional and national cultural industries at a national and international level (Sommet Francophone, 18 October 1993, L’Ile Maurice). In other words, France was fighting for the protection of the right of the modern nation-state to decide its national issues and react when it feels those interests are in danger. French strategy proved effective. Their ‘politique de résistance’, in combination with a very aggressive policy, at a later stage, which allows no space for negotiations, (and thus compromises), created a very strong nationalism, which permitted France most easily to impose its position.

But what is the actual meaning of the cultural exception in the GATT? As a doctrine, it does not have any legal status, nor does it exist as such in an agreement or treaty (Unesco, op.cit). In the article relating to general exceptions, it is foreseen the no application of the general agreements rules in those cases that one of the involved members invokes her need to safeguard certain national values209. According to this logic, the cultural exception means that culture is added to the list of exceptions of the agreement and the main GATT principles210 are generally applicable, unless the participant country argues that like in the case of the audiovisual services, there is cultural danger which leaves the whole issue open to interpretation (Regourd, 1993). The French, if had the chance to choose, they would have preferred a total exclusion from the agreement of the cultural products, as they argued that it would be the best way to safeguard the mechanisms of the national regulation of the audiovisual sector. However, considering the circumstances, the cultural exception was the best they could achieve and was to a certain extent a success, in the sense that they managed to block a process that involved high-ranking actors.

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209 Due to the sensitive nature and special characteristics of cultural industries, the EU refused to liberalize audiovisual services or services related to libraries and museums. While the national treatment and market access principles do not affect these services, they apply to other sectors for which liberalization commitments were adopted, like in publishing and shows. Only 14 countries out of the 45/50 negotiating nations of the WTO, the successor of the GATT, have made specific commitments in this sector. The exceptions to the most favored nation principle still allows the EU to develop public policies to support the audiovisual sector (Unesco, op.cit)

210 See annex of chap 6 for the principles (transparence, le statut de nation la plus favorisée and the traitement national) and the distinction between goods and services.
While the negotiations were interesting to follow from the policy perspective, the debate generated because of the GATT is more interesting, as it is at this level that the identity discourse reaches its apogee in France and brings to the fore all the anxieties of a nation that faces the forces of globalization or to put it differently, the hegemonic forces of a new dominant superpower.

4.1.2 The Debate on ‘Exception Culturelle’ and French Cultural Identity


‘Commando français contre meute américaine…’ (Boudier, 1993).

‘L’audiovisuel réduit à une simple marchandise’ (Regourd, 1995, p 11).


The national debate on the cultural exception has been one of the greatest debates in the contemporary history of France, mobilizing all levels of the society. First we have the politicians who turned this to a national issue, invoking images of a nation under threat, the right to express its cultural distinctiveness and open anti-American feelings: ‘si l’Europe cedait au chantage américain, elle vendait son âme au diable’.

Right and Left joined their efforts together, like the socialist ex-minister of culture Jack Lang and Jacques Toubon, the right government’s minister of culture who announced together in the declaration of Venice the creation of ‘Union mondiale des cinéastes’ and declared that ‘les œuvres de l’esprit ne sont pas des marchandises comme les autres’. Lang finished the declaration in his usual lyrical way asking ‘messieurs du Gatt, laissez respirer notre âme…’ (in Boudier, 1993). He saw the cultural exception as a victory for art and artists over the commercialization of culture which although he insisted it was not a victory of one country over another, it was very clear from his previous comments, that this commercialization was represented by the USA. His portrayal of American lifestyle and consumer habits implied that they could ruin not only the European film production and whole economy but also the European cultural distinctiveness. The language used by French politicians during the negotiations was highly provoking and openly polemic which gave shape to the national debate on GATT, as we will see with the speech of Mitterrand below.

211 These are some of the headlines of the French press during the GATT negotiations and after. See annex of chap 6 for the cartoons accompanying some of these headlines. The metaphor of aggression is very strong. Pictures from Hollywood characters are used in an allegorical way, implying the American invasion of France. The dinosaurs are used frequently, evoking images from the Jurassic Park which was out at the time. The film received a symbolic meaning during this period. The minister of culture, Toubon declared that he did not like it. He expressed his anxiety for the ‘menaces’ that these super productions represent for ‘notre identité culturelle’ (Marque, 1993, p 35).

212 Mitterrand’s leitmotiv during the GATT negotiations as it was expressed during his speech at the meeting of the Francophone countries (in Le Monde Radio-Television, dim 10 et lun 11 oct. 1993, p 34).
We, also have the intellectuals and artists who spoke on behalf of all those nations whose right to cultural expression was in danger unless they joined France in her battle to resist Hollywood. They formed a group in 1987 called Etats Généraux de la culture and recruited well-known artists from France and other countries. They organized meetings with officials in the EU, GATT and the French government where they gave their manifesto, a Declaration des droits de la culture of which an essential principle is “un peuple qui abandonne son imaginaire aux grandes affaires se condamne a des libertés précaires”. They argued that Americans have no right to accuse Europeans for protectionism when they apply it themselves by being hostile to foreign films. In their open letter to Prime Minister Balladur, they clarified that they do not act out of nationalism or protectionism, but “par attachement indefectible à la richesse de la diversité de la culture notamment européenne, au respect des différents peuples et de leurs desirs du divers”. In the meeting they had with Lord Brittain in the EU, they expressed their position, which stated that:

“La richesse culturelle du monde c’est son pluralisme qui est une valeur de civilisation. Il n’est pas admissible qu’elle soit fragilisée, voire supprimée. C’est ce que le GATT veut faire en faisant de la culture une marchandise. Respecter la culture c’est la laisser hors des compétences du GATT” (Etat Généraux de la Culture, 1994, p 87).

The mobilization of the artistic world was enormous. The French are very proud of their film industry and refer to it in nationalistic terms. The argument over the cultural exemption was based on the assumption that their films are outstanding and that maintaining the diversity of their films means maintaining their main wealth (Gosset, 1993, p 10). They see their films a testimony of their civilization and expression of their national soul. Jack Ralite, the initiator of the group, argued in his letter to Baladur that France has the right and the responsibility as the last real film producer in Europe to give the true picture of the GATT. This role of France was, he asserted, evoked by the Italian film maker Roselini who said to the French that the world would like France to play the role of ‘Noé du monde moderne’ when the moment comes. That moment was when “d’un bout du monde a l’autre sévira la même culture pré-cuisine a base de show business, de western, d’érotisme niais, de violence bestiales et de jeux télévisées” (Etats Généraux de la Culture, p 81). He warned them that they are not only in danger of loosing their cultural identity but possibly their ‘fidélité’. Whose fidelity that is? The world’s that expects France to play a leading role in fighting this ‘pre-cooked culture’? France is happy to play that role of Noah that would save the world’s cultural diversity. It is interesting to note here the cataclysmic metaphors which were accompanied by a terminology of warfare used by the French press, as will see below.

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214 These declarations were from the meeting they had in Geneva, 10 March 1993 with the General Direction of GATT (Etats Généraux de la Culture, 1993). Their declarations went even further when Bernard Tavernier, speaking on behalf of the group before the European Parliament, compared Valenti with Nazi propaganda chief Goebbels (Aherns, 1993, p 12). The explicitness in anti-American comments was so great that one could say that they French had lost their sang-froid in this case, moving to an extreme behaviour.

215 “Pas de nation sans cinéma. Pas de cinéma sans nation. Il existe une affinité de nature entre cinéma et nation, qui repose sur un mécanisme commun, qui les constitue l’un et l’autre: la projection. C’est en se projetant, en offrant une image reconnaissable et désirable, que s’institue la nation comme ‘forme’ supérieure à l’existence d’un territoire et d’un Etat… La nation est une image, une image ‘plus grande’ que la réalité dont est la représentation…Le cinéma joue un jeu étrange en France, il est l’outil parfait d’un petit pays qui se rêve en grande nation, et pourtant il projette très tôt l’image vaincue” (Frodon, 1998, p 1, 5).
Part of acting the role of leader and savior of cultural diversity was the francophone summit the French organized in the island of Mauritius in October 1993. They used it to mobilize the francophone countries in their battle against the inclusion of cultural products in the GATT. They signed a declaration and expressed their objections once more. Francophone countries included France’s ex-colonies, which in some bizarre manner were expected to agree to side with one hegemonic nation over another. France’s regret for losing her old hegemonic image was indicated in an article about Mitterrand’s visit in Sweden in September 1993 and a comment from the president himself. Mentioning the cultural relations of the two countries during the 18th century where French was the spoken language of the Swedish palace, the article proceeds in giving a comment from the Swedish president who said that even in the official Swedish palaces the box of matches given to visitors carry the label ‘Government of Sweden’ in English. To this comment, Mitterrand replied expressing his fear that one day the same might happen in his presidential palace (Le Monde Radio-Television, op.cit). This anecdote was seen as an indication of the president’s resistance to the American pressures on culture. One might question though what was the biggest regret in this case, the Swedish palace not using French any more or the possibility of having the box of matches carrying the label ‘Republic of France’ in English. Perhaps both. That the Swedish used French in their royal courts was not seen as a form of cultural hegemony but the use of the English language on a box of matches was, shows lack of impartiality not to mention hypocrisy.

Mitterrand’s participation in the debate is full of metaphors, allegories and direct accusations that show the complexity of the GATT debate. He expresses his anxiety about the time children consume in front of television. The representations of society are not, he fears, expressions of a distinctive culture but industrial and commercial products and then continues arguing that:

“Les créations de l’esprit ne sont pas des marchandises; les services de la culture ne sont pas de simples commerces. Défendre le pluralisme des œuvres et la liberté de choix du public est un devoir. Ce qui est en jeu, c’est l’identité culturelle de nos nations, c’est la liberté de créer et de choisir nos images”...

“une société qui abandonne à d’autres ses moyens de représentation, s’est à dire de se rendre présente a elle-même, est une société asservie” (Le monde Radio Télévision, op.cit).

Given, therefore, that national cultures are preferred as far as the use of cultural products and services is concerned because they reflect better the cultural identity of the nation, to what does he refer when he warns against the commercial and industrialised forms of culture that media represent? The parallelism is subtle but clear, the American, mass culture that is overtaking the national media and the French, high culture that best represents the cultural identity of the nation. The article in which part of his speech appeared compared Mitterrad with the an Indian chief, after a comment by French film maker Tavenier who argued that the secret objective of the American image makers was to treat the Europeans like they treated the ‘Peaux-Rouges’ (ibid). Following this argument, the French can relay on the President of the French Republic to take revenge in the battle for the cultural exception, by taking the role of the Indian chief and put his veto ‘jusqu’au boutiste aux pretentions des envihisseurs’. Here we have a metaphor of a tribe under threat by an invader. The reference to Indians brings in mind images of American films, Westerns, only that the bad here is the Anglo-Saxon invaders and the good ones are the Indians (read French). He speaks not only on behalf of the French society but of others nations too not mention Europe. France takes her role as a cultural crusader very seriously.

216 The headline of this article was ‘Le veto de Mitterrand l’Indien’.
The press provided the forum for the grand debate to take place and allowed all the anxieties felt by the nation regarding its identity to be expressed in the most vivid way, employing often metaphors that resemble to an ideological warfare, using terms that imply the nation is under siege, in a cultural war *contre les JR et autres Rambos* (Pascaud & Tignous, op.cit). Terms like *battaille, guerre* (la guerre du GATT, guerre de partisans), *combat, confrontations à armes inégales, commando, tuer, catastrophe, défendre*... *ligne maginot,* *position défensive, guérilla juridique, arsenal des sanctions commerciales* were frequently used during the negotiations by the French press indicating a fear deeply rooted in the nation's psyche, the invasion by foreign forces, the inevitable loss of their national identity and the need to put up a resistance that brings to mind the other great French resistance against the Germans during the 2nd World War.

Following the debate through the French press at the time, we can observe the following tendencies: first, we see France depicted as the lonely knight that has set to fight against the international forces, the idealist: *seule la France... tente de résister* (Pascaud & Tingous, op.cit), *la France, une fois encore, semble bien isolée pour défendre l'édifice* (Nora, op.cit), *France ... le porte-parole de l'Europe* (Marque, op.cit). France desires to lead and presenting herself as alone against the Goliaths of the international forces makes her battle more noble, as she fights for others too, some weaker that her.

With this representation of France comes the strong support of the press which gives space for those who fear for the loss of the nation's cultural identity evoking similar past experiences, like in 1948 when the Blum-Byrnes agreement gave the Americans open access to their films in France. Films celebrating freedom but circulating also *des manières d'être, des modes de consommation: les leurs, et bien not les notres. Par contagion* as Pascaud & Tingous argued (op.cit). Dufreigne in l'Express (1993) calls to the arms the camarades Minister Toubon, the French actors and intellectuals following the example of their predecessors in 1948 when they protested against the American invasion of films under the encouragement of Jouvet who argued that: *nos films sont le témoignage de notre civilisation, de notre culture. Fait avec vins de Bourgogne et de Bordeaux, nos estomacs devrons s'acoutumer au Coca-Cola. Cela revient à abdiquer sa qualité de Français*. The anti-American feelings have their roots in this post war agreement where the French weakened by the war were not able to resist the American negotiators. The aid of the Marshall Plan that helped rebuilt Europe did not come free. The Americans gave them food, they argued, but they did not loose the opportunity to promote their cinema.

Another observation is that there is little opposition to the exception culture in this debate. Most of these few opposing opinions expressed came from the cover of the foreign press by certain French magazines and newspapers, like the *Courrier International*. In one of the few French articles that dared to express a disagreement, the author wonders if he is less French because he does not drink Beaujolais nouveau and watched Jurassic Park. According to him, Carignon the *ministre auto-institué en gendarme de la vrais culture* would disqualify him. He argues that what their *‘gendarmes culturels’ call Americanization, is in fact, modernization. Modern culture is cosmopolitan by nature and that they are at the same time French and *‘mondialisés’* as they evolve simultaneously in two universes, the French and the Global. He dared to put into words the two French anathemas, modernization and globalization. But he could not refrain from being a good French, as he stated that the *‘rayonnement’* of the French culture is universal, thanks to its creators and because of an international ‘cultivated’
public that uses and demands an art and discourse that is western but not American, "c'est-à-dire souvent français" (L'evenment de Juedi, 1993, p 16). Because of its superiority, the French culture does not need special protectionist measures. There is someone who has confidence in the French culture, compared to those who think that it can easily be eradicated by American products. His confidence, though, is based on the arrogance French usually display about their culture. It is the elitist version of this culture with its universalistic appeal. Vincent opposes this culture élitaire in his argument against the cultural exception. It is not enough, as he puts it, to maintain alive and at any price an elitist culture that is separate from the every day life. What is needed is to make sure that there is space of this so-called culture-entertainment (1995). D'Ormesson (1993) joins those who disagree with the French anti-Americanism, declares his love for American films but he is at the same time against the 'rouleau compresseur' of the audiovisual hegemony. What he tries to say is that it is not the American films that are bad but the dominance of one country's cultural products. Le Gendre in Le Monde argues that the cultural exception makes sense to a certain extent. It lies within the capacity of France to affirm her cultural mastership. But not in developing a 'mentalité d'assiégé' (1993, p 1). The variations in the debate are subtle, even those who oppose the cultural exception and French protectionism do so but making sure they declare their allegiances to the French culture at the same time, so that it will not appear as a total betrayal.

Regarding the foreign press that received cover in France, mainly by the *Couriers International*, we cannot be sure of the effect it had on the overall debate, but it is interesting, nevertheless, in the sense that it indicates the trends in the international opinion about France’s position. Wall Street Journal accused France of loosing her sang-froid and renounced the propaganda of the French press that turned the GATT affair into a ideological fight by qualifying the GATT as the 'consignateur de la finance international' and the 'instrument of the American hegemony' (in Couriers International, 1993). France’s position was characterized as irrational and that it made no economic sense. An indication of the different attitudes towards audiovisual products. The Americans could not understand what the fuss was about and why the French, the fourth industrial and commercial power in the world, was ready to risk her exports of plains, trains of high speed and nuclear installations because of some protectionist measures. Question of mentality, one would argue. The Swiss journal l'Hebdo supported France in her battle against the cultural hegemony of the US but argued that this can be done better not by protectionism and special aid measures, but by producing better films than the Americans. Protectionism can help but it is the filmmakers that need to respond to the challenge (Peclet in Couriers International, 1993).

One of the strongest criticisms came from the Peruvian author Mario Vargas Liosa who in his article in the Spanish newspaper *El Pais*, wrote that France's attempts to maintain a 'culturally pure' France is itself a dinosaur. He argued that the truth behind those who come out waving French banners and speaking of Patriotism, Culture and Art, is the desire to defend a vested interest: the interest of a group of audiovisual impresarios who are shivering in panic at the idea of the French market being totally open to competition. He remarked that the most absurd aspect of the French campaign in favor of the cultural exception is that its adherents do not seem to have noticed that what they fear is already an irreversible reality. By that, he means the denationalization of the audiovisual industry. And he continues arguing that the internationalization of the world economy is unalterable; to resist it, in modern, advanced country, is a chimerial proposition. Only primitive, backward societies, as he strongly puts it, can withdraw or withdraw themselves from it, at the price of remaining in their present state forever. He concludes that it is not the dinosaurs of Jurassic
Park that threaten the cultural honor of the land that produced Lumiè re and Cézanne but rather the:

‘…band of petty demagogue and chauvinists who speak of French culture as if it were a mummy that cannot be brought out of its sealed chamber, because the open air would cause it to disintegrate’ (in Couriers International, 1993).

That such a strong criticism came from an artist and above all, a Hispanophone and thus member of the Latin world that France tried so hard to recruit in her camp against the American hegemonism, could be considered a double betrayal. The international commentary on France’s position seems to see France as a spoilt child that wants to have everything. What is it that the French elites are so afraid of? If their culture is strong because of its Universalist appeal, why are not they confident that it can survive?

One could say that the debate was provoked and fed by the political elites whose power was under threat by all the new actors in the international politico-economic arena and found the opportunity to express their frustration through the GATT. Vetoing for the cultural exception gave them the opportunity to show that their power represented by the nation-state is still strong. The GATT succeeded in reuniting the nation and the political parties, something that the French themselves said that had not happened since the battle in Verdun. And it was not only those responsible for the cultural affairs of the country that found themselves united under the same lábaro but also those responsible for the economic aspects of the cultural industries who joined the barricade because they knew that culture is only about a way of life but a profitable market too. Nevertheless, the united nation is still en position défensive as often the press referred to. And it will continue to be as the international forces increase their pressure for open market and free trade.

_The French believed they deserved the cultural exception _‘non par des refus érigés en doctrine, mais par la production de programmes audiovisuels français exportables’. _And this for two reasons_ : ‘parce que notre message humaniste est universel est parce que le marché francophone ne nous permet pas d’amortir de grand volumes de programmes de fiction’ (Rapport, No 101, p 89). One would argue that any nation-state has the right to defend its interests, especially when these are related to cultural issues, such as national culture and identity. France has no choice but to let audiovisual products enter the free global market. The question is not whether the French culture is under threat or not, but why the French fear so much the competition. Undoubtedly, no one can deny her the right to cultural self-determination and if we accept the French position about cultural and audiovisual products, then, we have to accept that these products need a certain protection in order to survive under the rules of the free market, for the sake of diversity. What we can learn from the debate on GATT is that the changes in the western capitalist nation-states have generated a fear of losing their power. That the debate turned into a cultural war was not surprising. Culture and identity are the main components of the nation-state.
Conclusions

“The world market, electronic technologies, instantaneous communications, e-mail, CNN - all undermine the nation-state and develop a world without frontiers. At the same time, these very internationalizing forces drive ordinary people to seek refuge from unrelenting global currents beyond their control and understanding. The more people feel themselves adrift in a vast, impersonal, anonymous sea, the more desperately they swim towards any familiar, intelligible, protective life raft: the more they crave a politics of identity: (Schlesinger quoted in Bland, 1999, p 7).

We have thus seen a battle between two hegemonic nations, USA and France, with the former fighting with the assertiveness of the one who is in a stronger position simply to expand its shares in the global market and the latter fighting for her life, to recapture the terrain perdu, struggling in the best of cases to maintain what it always thought it had, a strong national culture and identity that projects in the world its confidence as a nation, a strong geopolitical position and a share in the international market. Globalization is a new form of hegemony. A hegemony applied by the US who is the instigator of free trade.

There was a period in which French was imposed as the official language not only of the French colonies but also inside France in its regions that had their own language. France is not a colonial power any more and its position in the international politico-economic arena is not as strong as it used to be. It seems that it is now regressing into the position of its ancient colonies or even linguistic regions in which she has to accept the imposition of the new super-power’s culture. It is now the recipient of the cultural hegemony that was imposing to others only a few decades earlier. Should not we, therefore, support France in its cultural crusade/struggle against neo-cultural hegemonism? Yes in the name of all those other countries that are struggling to maintain their cultural distinction against globalization. No, if its motives are to only recover its position in the world, only to impose its culture and language afterwards on others.

Observations from this last chapter will be developed and expanded in the concluding part of this thesis. The issue of identity and culture as it was examined through the perspective of television will be reexamined now that we have put all the pieces of the picture together.
Conclusions
Conclusions

“Trade policy is, by definition, international. Cultural policy is, by definition, national. Traditional national cultural policy must now be complemented by international cultural policy thinking” (Council of Europe, 2000, p 16).

The aim of this concluding section is to draw together the common threads from the preceding analysis by summing up the key issues and to carry on and conclude the discussion that was developed throughout this thesis. It seems a logical step to take, in order to see how the issue of cultural identity and cultural exception have evolved by bringing them into the current discussion that has replaced the former with cultural diversity.

In this thesis, we have looked into the issues of identity, culture, nation-state, policy and mediated communication and explored the complex link between them. At this stage, we need to have an overview of the case study, a summing up of what the examination of French politics, policy and culture has to tell us. What can we learn from this process of empirical analysis? To remind again the way the thesis has been structured, we have placed the case study at different levels and frameworks, all contributing to the examination of different factors and issues. The role of the factors has been very determining as they provided the connecting threads between the different levels (national, international, global) and working frameworks (theoretical, policy).

In the analytical section of this research, we tracked down these developments that have shaped the relationship between identity politics, political/national aspirations and cultural production in France. Before though we move to this section, we need to reassess the first part of the thesis and how it helps us now evaluate the case study. In the theoretical and policy discussion part, we tried to establish the ambivalent relationship between nation, identity and culture. We established that certain notions of culture are more desirably associated with what the national elites want to perceive as national culture by attaching to it high cultural values. These have been accompanied by institutional support that uses cultural policy to construct, maintain and promote cultural identities that are attached to the concept of nationhood, arguing that the cultural expression of a national collectivity should be naturally granted the right to protect itself against foreign elements. The element of artificiality or imagination, as Anderson would put it, in the construction of nations is fundamental to our understanding of current fears regarding erosions of national culture and cultural identities by transnational and global media flows.

Since each chapter had its own concluding part, it would sound repetitive to go through them again. While there will be a reminder of each part’s main points, the aim is more to bring the above issues into a final discussion on identity and cultural production.

The author is particularly indebted to Jean-Philippe Gammel from the Council of Europe for his clarifications on these points and insights on French identity. In addition, special appreciation is expressed to E. Rohmer, adjointe au Chef du Services des Politiques et Actions Culturelle, and secrétaire du Comité de la Culture (CC-Cult) of the Council of Europe, for allowing my participation in the meeting of the Cultural Committee on cultural policy and international trade and the preparation of the draft declaration on cultural diversity (Strasbourg, 7 June 2000).
Why would we want to protect something that is strong? Only weaker structures or those that contain possible elements of destruction might feel the need for protection. It could be argued that even if national cultures are created and sustained by policies, they nevertheless become part of everyday life, a way of expression of the citizens of the nation-state. Culture and the different forms it takes (national or other) is by its nature a very creative force that enriches people's lives and contributes to the development of humankind. While one could rightly argue that cultural expression and production within a society is vital for its survival, what is contestable is attaching national values to them with the outer aim to produce or reinforce national identities that in their turn can sustain political systems like nation-states.

According to Mas-Colell (1999), there are two ways of defending national culture. One is by protecting the national cultural production and the other is by protecting the production of national culture. If we choose to favour the second, we must define with precision what is this national culture and above all what lies outside this culture. This choice leaves doors open to many interpretations. Who, for instance, can say that has the ability or the right to define what is a product of French content? The politicians? The policy makers? The intellectuals or an official body of artists? One could see that this can be very problematic. While some nation-states, like France, choose the second, most of the modern states have chosen to privilege national cultural production and protect their cultural industries expecting that they will in their turn help to create cultural contents of a national character. This can be contestable too as the products of the cultural industries turn to bear characteristics of a mass culture that has no particular national elements. What makes a badly made French soap opera so special that needs to be protected because it is labelled as a product of national culture? We are not contesting the right to cultural expression, quite on the contrary. As it will be argued in the last section of this concluding part, cultural expression should not be fought in the name of national cultural production or national identities but in the name of cultural diversity.

France’s cultural protectionism as it was expressed through cultural exception, for instance, disregarded the fact that the French society is a diverse one with different cultural elements that in their turn represent different cultural identities and not so much a single national one. The element of diversity was skipped in favour of a single, homogeneous national culture in the name of which cultural protectionism was used as a shield against an exogenous homogenizing culture (mass culture, popular culture, American culture, global culture or whatever else it may be called) (chapter 6). It can be argued that this cultural protectionism is a form of cultural resistance, inability to adapt to new forms of cultural expression, fear for losing what was so carefully produced. This brings in mind what Wallenstein (1991) wrote about cultural resistance, which he identified as part and parcel of political resistance. A resistance put up by the national political establishment against forces that threaten to reduce their power on internal policies.

This is an observation that comes out of the case study as both part two and three of this thesis have showed from different perspectives that ideology and politics have been heavily interfering with cultural policy in France. Culture has carried over a long period of time such a heavy political and ideological baggage that has weighted down many of France’s efforts to give an impression of a genuine concern over cultural matters. Although the socialists legitimised cultural policy (chapter 3), with culture placed very near the top of the political agenda even at period of economic difficulties, they also made a political capital out of it. Cultural policy followed closely the evolution of other governmental policies. At the beginning of the 1980s the cultural crusade of Lang used
heavy ideological messages to signify the new beginning in the country’s politics. As the decade evolved with the liberal forces taking over and the government’s bywords became productivity and modernity, Lang’s themes changed towards ‘économie et culture, le même combat’. The use of cultural policy to promote the changes in politics and ideology is significant. It indicates the potential cultural policy can have within national politics.

In the French case, the legitimation of cultural policy came at a time when the role of the state was questioned. The state not wanting to be left out from the internal and external processes of modernization, tried to disassociate itself with the old ‘état providence’. The heavy ideological battles of the 1980s regarding the preservation of public television and its cultural mission were given hand in hand with the liberal battles over the liberalization of the audiovisual sector (chapter 4). On the one front, cultural battles were given both at a national and international level and on another deregulation and its by-product commercialization was taking over. The nation-state now feels that has to compete with the private forces and increase its efficiency if it is to survive.

The crisis these new developments have brought to the French nation-state has in its turn caused a crisis in national identity, as the fundamental principle for political attachment in capitalist societies has been through national identities and citizenship to the nation-state. The French nation-state in its effort to reassert itself inside and outside its borders has employed policies of cultural resistance that only indicate a political resistance on its behalf. The close association of nation-state, culture and identity means that if the first is in crisis then consequently the others are too, as they are essentially its products. Any force that can contest the validity and priority national-culture has for its citizens, can undermine the legitimacy of its principal instigator. If the EU and the possibility of a European culture and identity are not perceived so much as a threat by the French nation-state is because France believes that it can be a leading force in it, politically and culturally (chapter 5). The fact that she has been behind major policy decisions on cultural and audiovisual policies within the European Union indicates her desire to replicate on a larger scale what she has on a national level: a culture and identity that will carry the universalistic and high cultural elements of its own culture and reinstall France to her old civilizing mission. The EU gives France a chance to continue playing an important role as a nation-state. The transferring of cultural resistance through protectionist policies to a European level indicates a political resistance not only on behalf of France towards the USA, but also a political resistance on behalf of the EU towards another superpower. Cultural politics make part of general politics both on a national and international level but for reasons that are not as pure in intention as they might appear.

This brings the discussion to where it was left at the end of the last chapter. The GATT negotiations, it could be argued, was not about cultural protectionism per se but a political statement on behalf of France regarding her position in the world. The identity crisis that the French nation-state has been going through had the opportunity to let the steam out during the GATT period. Was it national cultural production that she wanted to protect or was it an excuse to express her identity crisis that the French nation-state has been going through had the opportunity to let the steam out during the GATT period.

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219 “Quel est le mot le plus employé en 1990s? Je gagnerais volontiers que c’est le mot identité” (Daniel, 1991, p 5). The question of the French identity and nation has been the subject of numerous books, articles and colloquiums during the 1980s and 1990s. On the right, for instance we have the Club de l’Horloge with a book on the L’Identité de la France that talks about the retour à la NATION and denounces the multi-cultural society that can be destructive to French identity and through it of France. On the left, we have the club Espace 89 with a publication on the L’Identité française that acknowledges the crisis the French identity goes through but refuses to accept the nationalist tone of the right but invoking the universalism of the French culture. The well known French historian, Le Roy Ladourie, wrote a book titled Entrer dans le XXIe. Essai sur l’avenir de l’Identité Française in which he argues about the ‘desarroi de l’identite nationale’ (1991). The Journal Le Debat also published a series of articles on the theme of Retour de la Nation (1991). These are just a few examples of a very long list of publications and events that indicate the preoccupation of the French on their national identity.
frustration regarding her decline as a world power? Perhaps the two go together, decline and need for protection. France might have legitimate concerns over the dominance of American media products in her market but barring American products will not make French ones better and there is always the risk as Lebovics (1992) argues, that such a defence of national values and national production might be used as a cover for a reactionary anti-modernism or simply defensive policies that give French people fewer choices. You risk patronising your citizens by telling them what to watch or not. France’s position here is that French products do not stand a fair chance compared to American products for all the reasons that have been mentioned throughout the last part of this thesis. One could say in this case that what makes problematic France’s protectionism is that she employs it in the name of the nation. She certainly has the right to protect and sponsor artistic creation and promote cultural expression, especially those forms that are not commercial and of high artistic value. But how truer are to the best aspects of the French culture or to its most creative possibilities French made soap operas compared to their American or English ones? What we are trying to say here is that it is not the claim to protect one’s cultural values and cultural choices that is questionable but the desire to attach to them a national value that might be exclusive to other forms of cultural expression within the nation.

In a concluding note, it will be interesting to see how the debate on culture and international trade has evolved. France’s recent change in position by promoting cultural diversity as the main argument against the free-traders and the liberalization of the cultural sector, gives a additional insight into this country’s cultural policy. What does this change in position mean? Has France recognised the need to protect all forms of cultural expression with its borders? After the GATT agreement, France was quite contented not to change the status quo on cultural exception. She kept a low profile and hoped that the WTO meeting in Seattle in 1999 would not touch the issue again. Canada though, France’s strong supporter on cultural exception, had already made a strong statement on cultural diversity and wished to bring culture into the new discussions, hoping that WTO recognizes in its Seattle declaration that culture is not is its competence and that a new body should be dealing with the issue of cultural diversity and the exchanges in the cultural domain. Canada suggested that UNESCO should be this body, which was convenient as the USA is not a member. France saw no alternative but to agree, although, she maintained a low profile. In the end, the EU adopted the cultural diversity position by declaring that it will take measures for the protection and development of its members’ capacity to define and put in action cultural and audiovisual policies that would guarantee the preservation of their cultural diversity.

It is very interesting to note here that cultural diversity has replaced the notion of cultural exception. The term cultural exception was thought to have a defensive connotation: it evokes the states that turn to themselves through an out of date protectionism. By talking of cultural diversity, we can inverse the problematic by putting first the necessity to protect the variety of world cultures against the risk of uniformity. It consists of a concept that can be defended easier against those who support free-trade and above all it can be more appealing to those developing countries whose culture is in danger. France tried to defend

220 According to the Council of Europe, the notion of cultural diversity is widely inclusive as an overall cultural policy objective. The following aspects may be listed as qualities of cultural diversity (in no specific order): linguistic diversity, national and regional diversity, diversity of forms of expression and freedom of expression, broad access, participation, abundant supply of expressions of culture, national, regional, ethnic and other identities, living and developing cultural heritage (2000, p 14).
herself for this change with the minister of culture, Trautmann, explaining that although
cultural diversity is the objective France defends, cultural expression is the juridical means
used to achieve this objective in the negotiations.

If France’s new position on cultural diversity shows a trend to the right direction regarding the
support and protection of cultural expression, one should not be misguided regarding France’s real
aim. Her vision has a reductionist character. The preservation of cultural diversity is limited to the
protection of national identities in front of the threat of globalization. However, the national
dimension is not but just one on the many levels of cultural diversity. The principle even of cultural
homogeneity of nations has become extremely difficult to defend today. We must not forget that
the nations are constructed on a multitude of local and regional communities each having its own
historical, cultural and linguistic specificity. These communities were more or less assimilated
efficiently during the process of national unification but this does not mean that their specificities
have completely disappeared. We have also to remind ourselves that the political borders rarely
correspond to cultural or linguistic borders. Cultural diversity represents those identities that are
other than the dominant national ones.

The fact that France places herself at the forefront of the fight for the preservation of cultural
diversity can be see as a paradox. She definitely does not have a long tradition of defending
diversity. On the contrary, she never bothered much to apply inside her borders the principles that
she now defends in the name of all nations against globalization. The whole history of the French
nation’s construction is based on assimilation of the communities that compose her and the
eradication of regional languages in favor of a single language of the Republic: French. Even today,
France has difficulty in accepting the cultural diversity that exits with her borders. By accepting that
the notion of cultural exception should be replaced by the larger one of cultural diversity, France is
opening another front, this time internal, with the regions.

Another ambiguity appears as we analyze the numerous French declarations: the voluntarism to
defend the cultural diversity is accompanied almost always by the affirmation of the necessity to re-
ランス the rayonnement of the French culture abroad, to the point that we question whether what
bothers France is not so much the uniformity of the global culture but the fact that it is the
American model that it imposed through it and not the French one. At the moment, the debate
over diversity as its predecessor of cultural exception did, has the tendency to limit itself to anti-
Americanism. The constant diabolization of what is American is in fact a way to avoid putting
herself into question as a nation.

The reality is that cultural products, although they are not like any other products, they are not any
less products than others. They circulate in a capitalist economy that has become globalized and
have an economic value attached to them. The activities and profits as well as the employment

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221 This section has been mainly based on the author’s discussion with Jean-Phillipe Gammel whose critical opinions
regarding France’s policies are shaped by the fact that he comes from the a region, Alsace-Lorraine that has its own
language and distinctive cultural character. Gammel has devoted a lot of his attention on the regional issue in France. The
following arguments reflect his position that the author shares.
offered in the cultural sector is constantly increasing, something that no government can ignore (see table 1 of annex for table 2 on more details for the world and European trade of cultural goods). The recent discussions in the EU and Canada on the new WTO cycle of negotiations, indicates not only a need to preserve cultural diversity but also find a way to balance policies that protect their identities without risking restricting the freedom of those industries that export cultural products. Culture more than ever cannot disassociate itself from its economic dimension.

The specificity of culture, though, in a broad sense needs to be taken into account in negotiations on any trade agreements negotiating objects that may have an impact on attainment of cultural policy objectives, given that these policies are promoting public good and values, like culture which is part of the general human condition. Canada’s suggestion on creating a New International Instrument on Cultural Diversity (NIICD) is indicating the new direction the international debate on culture and cultural products is taking. As societies become more multicultural, there is a need to recognize that national cultures and identities are not the only ones that need protection and promotion. National cultures will continue existing even if they did not exist and that is because a particular past, heritage is institutionalized. With them the nation-state will continue to exist but with some readjustments if it is to survive. The flows of capital, ideas, images, cultural values through international media have made the state boundaries permeable and are breaking down the national distinctions. The nation-state’s tendency to look at its society as a culturally homogenous one has been challenged and will be even more in the future. What the case study has shown to us is that resistance from inside the nation-state is caused by externally driven forces which although the threaten to dilute the national culture and identities, they may also reinforce them. France’s case is not a simple one, as her historical and intellectual tradition, sociological makeup and government structure all have contributed to a unique formation of nation-state and politics of culture. Her cultural resistance is a response to both external and internal processes of readjustment that is accompanied by a political resistance to what is seen as her displacement from a first class world power to a secondary one. Identity politics are a by-product of this process.
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General
Official Documentation:
  i. SENAT
  ii. Legislation
  iii. Government Commissioned Reports
  iv. Other Governmental Sources

B. **English Bibliography:**

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European Union/Council of Europe
UNESCO publications

C. **Other**
A. French Bibliography

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i. SENAT


### iii. Legislation


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Loi no 64-621 du juin 1964 portant statut de l’Office de radiodiffusion - télévision francaise *Journal Officiel* du 30 juin.

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Le projet de loi sur l'audiovisuel a été adopté par le Parlement et promulgué le 1er août 2000 Journal officiel du 2 août.

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UNESCO Publications


Other
Annexes

Annex One: Tables

Annex Two: Legislation (French and EU)/Glossary

Annex Three: Pictures (newspaper cartoons)

Annex Four: List of selected unstructured interviews
Annex One: Tables

Introduction

Table 1  Sequential Model of System Change

Source: McQuail et al (1990)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traded cultural goods and/or services</th>
<th>World trade indicators</th>
<th>European world trade indicators</th>
<th>Intra-European trade indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audiovisual products and services:</td>
<td>The turnover of 50 largest audiovisual companies worldwide is about 118 thousands million US dollars (in 1993). In 1991 the share of different branches of the world-wide sales of 100 biggest companies was:</td>
<td>Geographical breakdown of the turnover of 50 largest companies worldwide in 1993:</td>
<td>Geographical breakdown of the turnover of Europe's 100 companies:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An aggregate category including radio and TV, cable and satellite distribution, film and programme production and distribution, phonogram production and distribution, video film and games production and distribution</td>
<td>-broadcasting: 68%</td>
<td>-the EU: 33%</td>
<td>-Germany: 26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-music: 4%</td>
<td>-the US: 36%</td>
<td>-UK: 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-cinema; cinema &amp; broadcasting; multimedia: 28%</td>
<td>-Japan: 26%</td>
<td>-France: 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-the rest: 5%</td>
<td>-Netherlands: 9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of the previous category:</td>
<td>-the US: 450</td>
<td>-cinema: 860</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>production and distribution of full length feature films produced and distributed through cinemas, home video and television</td>
<td>-Japan: 238</td>
<td>-television: 1 716</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-the EU of the 12: 433</td>
<td>-video: 1 153</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Western Europe of the 19 countries: 546</td>
<td>Total: 3 729</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-‘Greater Europe’ of 33 countries: 598</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television programme production: Overlapping with the previous category</td>
<td>Level of saturation in established ‘new’ distribution: cable TV penetration, % of TV household:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- USA (1994): 62.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Europe of the 16 (1994): 4.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pay-TV subscriptions, % of TV households:</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- USA (1991): 45.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Europe of the 16 (1994): 10.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deficit of fiction programme production in Europe in the 1990s:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Annual growth of demand: 35-40%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Annual growth of programme production: 12-20%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Share of European programmes on selected European channels:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- ARD 1998 1992</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sat1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- BBC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Channel 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Danish BC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Danish TV2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- France 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Canal Plus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- RAI1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Canale 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average share of European fiction on 9 public channels of small European countries:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- in 1990: 39.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- in 1993: 42.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Council of Europe 1997*

*Table 1*

*Indicators of the world and European trade on cultural goods in the early 1990s*
## The Cultural Programme of the Socialist Party
### Spring 1981 General Elections

Aid to creation in the cinema, music, the plastic arts, the theatre, literature and architecture will place cultural revival high amongst the Socialists' ambitions.

The state will encourage and partially finance the establishment throughout the land of centres for artistic creation, production and diffusion.

The teaching of art at school will be developed and access to works of arts will be facilitated by extending opening hours in museums, libraries and monuments through the recruitment of extra staff.

Schools will be open to the world. Teaching methods will be renewed to encourage all forms of expression.

Television and radio will be decentralized and pluralist. Local radio stations will be free to broadcast as public services. Their terms of reference will be drawn up by the local councils. A national audiovisual council with a minority of state representatives will be set up. Creation will be encouraged.

The Association Bill will also be submitted to the parliamentary vote during the next parliamentary session.

The promotion of regional identities will be encouraged and minority languages and cultures respected and taught.

Book prices will be brought under state control.

The government will see to it that French culture is actively promoted outside the national territory.

Strengthening of ties with Quebec. Creation of a Francophone Academy.

An International Council for Science and culture, a European Film School and an international Music Centre will be created.

### Table 1

| Table 1 |

Percentage distribution of Ministry of Culture’s Budget

*source: ministère de la culture: la lettre d’information (1 février 1982)*

### Table 2

249
Table 3 (a) Pyramid of subsidies (1)

1. Includes expenditures by all ministries (not just the ministry of culture) but excludes non-repeatable capital spending.
2. These three sectors are treated as one because the opera budget includes to some extent, dance and music.
3. This figure represents only direct aid to the press.
4. Excluding the fonds culturel du livre, which concerns exports.
5. Direct state financing of television was negligible. The license fee provided the main source of revenue for state radio and television (and the proportion deriving from advertising was limited to about 25%)
Table 3 (b) Pyramid of audiences (1)

1. Figures are expressed as a percentage of the French population of more than 15 years of age (1% represents approximately 400,000 people).
2. Opera, dance, music. These three sectors are distinct but were not treated separately in terms of financing.
3. Calculated as people who go to theatre at least once a month.
4. Calculated as people who visit library at least once a month.
5. Calculated as people who visit museum at least once a month.
6. People who visit a historic building at least once a year.
7. People who go to the cinema at least once a year.
8. People who read a daily paper more than once a week.
9. People who read at least once book a year.
10. People who look at television at least every other day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministry of Culture total expenditure in constant francs 1986</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paris</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ile-de-France</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provinces</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Council of Europe, Cultural Policy in France, 1991*
Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of ‘commercial’ cultural consumption</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Switzerland, Germany, Denmark</td>
<td>France, Netherlands</td>
<td>Italy, United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Austria, Norway</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Council of Europe, 1997 p.319

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sont allés au moins une fois…</th>
<th>Au cours de leur vie</th>
<th>Au cours des 12 derniers mois</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cinéma</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliothèque</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Théâtre</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spectacle de danse</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concert de musique classique</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concert rock</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concert jazz</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musée</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monument historique</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 6
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Channels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>First TV broadcast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>RTF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>RFT 2 channels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>ORTF 2 channels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>ORTF 3 channels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>TF1, Antenne 2, FR3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>TF1, Antenne 2, FR3, Canal +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>TF1, Antenne 2, FR3, Canal +, La cinq, TV6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>TF1 privatised, Antenne 2, FR3, Canal +, La cinq reallocated, M6 reallocated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>TF1, Public channels under single chairmanship, Antenne 2/FR3/la SEPT, Canal +, La cinq, M6, La SEPT, On FR3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>TF1, France Télévision France 2/ France 3, Canal +, La cinq Ceased 12/4, M6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>TF1, France Télévision France 2/ France 3, Canal +, From 28/9, ARTE (ex-La SEPT), M6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>TF1, France Télévision France 2/ France 3, Canal +, La cinquième (daytime), ARTE (evenings), M6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Excluding satellite and cable private channels public service channels

Table 1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Date of creation</th>
<th>Ownership/funding</th>
<th>Viewers</th>
<th>Profile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TF1</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Public service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Private: Bouygues owner shareholders/advertising</td>
<td>41 %</td>
<td>Light entertainment news/foreign series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antenne2 (France 2)</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>State, license fee advertising</td>
<td>24 %</td>
<td>News/fiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F3/FR3</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>State, license fee Advertising</td>
<td>14 %</td>
<td>News, fiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Cinq</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Cinquième</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>state</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>educational programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTE</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>La SEPT (50%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Culture Franco-German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(La SEPT)</td>
<td>(1987-1991)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>docum/fictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal Plus (encrypted)</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Subscriptions Havas CGE advertising</td>
<td>6 %</td>
<td>Sport, film, document. News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M6</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>CLT, Lyonnaise des eaux banks, advertising</td>
<td>12 %</td>
<td>music, fiction, entert.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure of Programming from 1983 to 1989</th>
<th>TF1</th>
<th>A2</th>
<th>FR3</th>
<th>La Cinq</th>
<th>M6</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1983 Fiction, entertainment News, information, documentaries</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986 Fiction, entertainment News, information, documentaries</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Fiction, entertainment News, information documentaries</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Table 3**
### Compliance of European Television Stations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>No. of stations</th>
<th>No. in compliance 1995</th>
<th>No. in compliance 1996</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6 (46%)</td>
<td>8 (62%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>5 in 1995, 6 in 1996</td>
<td>3 (60%)</td>
<td>4 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9 (47%)</td>
<td>9 (47%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9 (82%)</td>
<td>9 (82%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10 (77%)</td>
<td>9 (69%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18 (100%)</td>
<td>18 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (100%)</td>
<td>2 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6 (46%)</td>
<td>6 (46%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3 (38%)</td>
<td>5 (63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4 (44%)</td>
<td>5 (56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 (50%)</td>
<td>1 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4 (36%)</td>
<td>6 (55%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3 (100%)</td>
<td>3 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>64 in 1995, 80 in 1996</td>
<td>26 (41%)</td>
<td>38 (48%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2 (40%)</td>
<td>3 (60%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Table 1*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/region broadcaster</th>
<th>National/domestic</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>Italy</th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>GB</th>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>Brazil</th>
<th>Other European Countries</th>
<th>Total* European Countries</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria ORF</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium: Planters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRTN 1</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRTN 2</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>10.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>VTM</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium: French part</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRTF</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>N/a</td>
<td>N/a</td>
<td>N/a</td>
<td>N/a</td>
<td>N/a</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark DR</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nether lands Public</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stations</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway NRK</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal: RTP-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal 1</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTP-TV2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain: TVC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalonia</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden SR</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sw/land DRS</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
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</table>


Table 2
### French Cinema in Context
#### Comparative figures for 1981-1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience size</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>France</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>1bn*</td>
<td>54m</td>
<td>181m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>981m</td>
<td>103m</td>
<td>115m</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Number of films produced

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>France</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Average cost of film (in $)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>France</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5m</td>
<td>4m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### US film products in Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>France</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### US share of the film market in Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>France</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### France’s share of the domestic market

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>France</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Table 1**
### Les meilleures audiences des films à la télévision en 1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Titre</th>
<th>Nationalité</th>
<th>Audience %</th>
<th>Part de marché %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TF1</strong> Madame Doubfire</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>24,9</td>
<td>54,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les trois Frères</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>24,3</td>
<td>51,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodyguard</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>22,5</td>
<td>50,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pédale Douce</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>21,5</td>
<td>46,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop Zone</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>21,1</td>
<td>45,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>France 2</strong> L’expert</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>17,1</td>
<td>37,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un prince a new York</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>16,4</td>
<td>35,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harcèlement</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>16,1</td>
<td>38,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantôme avec chauffer</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>14,9</td>
<td>29,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lancelot</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>14,8</td>
<td>33,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>France 3</strong> Les bonheur est dans le Pré</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>15,3</td>
<td>33,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passagers 57</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>14,1</td>
<td>29,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mort ou Vif</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>13,8</td>
<td>33,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le mur de l’Atlantiques</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>12,6</td>
<td>28,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commando</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>12,4</td>
<td>29,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M6</strong> Blown Away</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>9,6</td>
<td>23,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimitz retour vers l’enfer</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>9,3</td>
<td>21,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le proviseur</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>8,8</td>
<td>22,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double impact</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>8,8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source : mediamat - mediametrie in [http://www.cnc.fr/d_stat/tv.doc](http://www.cnc.fr/d_stat/tv.doc) accessed 27/01/00*

### Table 2

#### Evolution des exportations de programmes de télévision français

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exportations (MF)</strong></td>
<td>221</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evolution %</strong></td>
<td>+38%</td>
<td>+325</td>
<td>+34%</td>
<td>+9%</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>+11%</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>+18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source INA –TV/F1 in CNC*

*Source INA –TV/F1 in CNC*

*Source INA –TV/F1 in CNC*

### Table 3
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broadcaster</th>
<th>Year launched</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>European Home Penetration in Key markets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTV Europe</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Viacom</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurosport</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>ESPN</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Canal Plus</td>
<td>France</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TF1</td>
<td>France</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN international</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Turner Broadcasting</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superchannel</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>US1994</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNT/Cartoon Network</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Turner Broadcasting</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euronews</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Public Broadcasters</td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Societe Occidentale</td>
<td>France</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery Channel</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Discovery</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>European Business News</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Dow Jones</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>N/a</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flextech</td>
<td>UK/US</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC World</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>N/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>BBC Prime</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pearson</td>
<td>UK</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cox</td>
<td>US</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Source: Audio-visual services and production, p 83, New media in the old world, Response TV in Media Business International, 4, no 3, November 1995, p 38

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Films Produced in Europe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 5
Annex Two:

Legislation/Glossaries/SENAT (sample of a Rapport General)

Loi du 30 septembre 1986
Le projet de loi sur l'audiovisuel a été adopté par le Parlement et promulgué le 1er août 2000 (Journal officiel du 2 août).

Les 10 principales avancées de la loi sur l'audiovisuel
Voici les principales dispositions destinées à renforcer le service public et à garantir la diversité de l'offre audiovisuelle.

1. Une télévision publique solidement organisée
La loi procède à la création d'un groupe rassemblant France 2, France 3 et la Cinquième, sous la responsabilité d'un président commun. Des accords de coopération seront passés avec RFO. Le Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel nomme le président du conseil d'administration de la holding, qui est également président des conseils d'administration des trois chaînes. Pour chacune des sociétés filiales, le président est assisté d'un directeur général, nommé par le conseil d'administration de la holding, sur proposition de son président.

2. Des moyens d'action renforcés
Les mandats du président, des membres du conseil d'administration de la holding et des filiales sont fixés à cinq ans, contre trois actuellement. Le remboursement intégral des exonérations de redevances est inscrit dans la loi. Le montant en sera versé au budget général de l'État. On notera que le règlement de la redevance pourra s'effectuer par paiement fractionné à compter du 1er janvier 2001. Le financement des chaînes, pour la radio et la télévision publiques, à l'occasion de chacune des lois de finances, sera à l'avenir lié à l'exécution de contrats pluriannuels d'objectifs et de moyens.

3. Une baisse sensible de la publicité
Le temps de diffusion de messages publicitaires sur France 2 et France 3 est réduit à 8 minutes par heure au lieu de 12 précédemment.

4. Une meilleure protection des mineurs
La loi prévoit plusieurs mesures de protection des mineurs vis à vis des programmes qui seraient susceptibles de nuire à leur épanouissement et ceux qui inciteraient à la haine pour des raisons de race, de sexe, de religion ou de nationalité. Elle charge le Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel du contrôle des chaînes à cet égard.

5. La mise en œuvre du numérique hertzien
La loi organise les conditions de mise en œuvre de la diffusion hertzienne numérique. La télévision numérique terrestre va permettre à l'ensemble des Français de disposer, très
prochainement, d'une quarantaine de programmes audiovisuels et de services. Le dispositif anti-concentration prévoit que nul ne pourra détenir, directement ou indirectement, plus de cinq autorisations pour un service national diffusé par voie hertzienne terrestre numérique : les opérateurs historiques ne pourront pas détenir plus de cinq autorisations. Ils disposent par ailleurs d'un accès prioritaire aux fréquences, d'une part pour la reprise du programme actuellement diffusé en analogique (le "simulcast"), d'autre part pour un second programme, défini par eux. Le Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel devra allouer aux sociétés de l'audiovisuel public les ressources en fréquences nécessaires à l'exercice de leurs missions sur les réseaux numériques dès lors que le gouvernement aura donné son accord à la création d'une nouvelle chaîne. Les missions générales du service public définies à l'article 1er seront complétées dans ce sens. France Télévision est autorisée à créer des filiales pour éditer des services de télévision diffusés gratuitement en numérique et répondant à ses missions de service public.

6. Un nouvel espace pour les télévisions locales
La loi ouvre la possibilité pour les collectivités locales de déléguer la gestion du canal local avec des objectifs et des moyens clairs et contractualisés et pour les associations sans but lucratif de créer des télévisions de proximité.
Le Gouvernement s'engage à déposer devant le Parlement dans un délai d'un an un rapport sur les possibilités de développement des télévisions citoyennes de proximité.

7. De nouveaux moyens de régulation pour le CSA
Le pouvoir de régulation du CSA est conforté par une précision et une extension des critères d'appréciation sur le fondement desquels il peut ne pas reconduire les autorisations des services de radio et de télévision diffusés par voie hertzienne terrestre sans appel aux candidatures. Ces modifications visent à remédier aux critiques adressées au dispositif de présomption de "reconduction automatique" qui figeait le paysage radiophonique pour des années sans permettre à l'autorité de régulation de jouer pleinement son rôle.

8. Facilitation de la création des services en ligne
Une mesure nouvelle supprime le régime de déclaration préalable des services en ligne, y compris les services télématicques, autres que de correspondance privée, et tend à préciser la responsabilité des hébergeurs de sites internet et des fournisseurs d'accès.

9. Fin de l'exclusivité pour les décodeurs
La loi assure la transposition de la directive européenne 95/47 du 24 octobre 1995 qui permet d'utiliser un même décodeur pour la réception de plusieurs offres de programmes.

10. Des quotas modulés pour la chanson française
La loi permet désormais de moduler les quotas de chansons francophones imposés aux radiodiffuseurs. Depuis 1994, les radios doivent diffuser 40% de chansons francophones et, sur ce quota, 20% de nouveaux talents. Ce quota demeure pour les radios généralistes, mais il est modulé : pour les radios spécialisées dans la mise en valeur du patrimoine
musical, il est fixé à 60% de chansons françaises dont 10% de nouvelles productions, et pour les radios "jeunes" à 35% mais avec 25% de nouveaux talents.
Treaty on European Union: Article 128

1. The Community shall contribute to the flowering of the culture of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore.

2. Action by the Community shall be aimed at encouraging co-operation between Member States and, if necessary, supporting and supplementing their action in the following areas:

   - Improvement of the knowledge and dissemination of the culture and history of the European peoples;
   - Conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of European significance;
   - Non-commercial cultural exchange;
   - Artistic and literary creation, including in the audiovisual sector,

3. The Community and the Member States shall foster co-operation with third countries and the component international organizations in the sphere of culture, in particular the Council of Europe.

4. The Community shall take cultural aspects into account in its actions under other provisions of this Treaty.

5. In order to contribute to the achievement of the objectives referred to in this Article, the Council:

   - Acting in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 189b and after consulting the Committee of the Regions, shall adopt incentive measures, excluding any harmonization of the laws and regulations of the Member States. The Council shall act unanimously throughout the procedures referred to in Article 189b;
   - Acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission shall adopt recommendations.
GATT Glossary

**GATT (General agreement on tariffs and trade)** Accord sur le commerce des marchandises signé en 1947 qui fut longtemps le seul accord international sur le commerce en l'absence d'organisation internationale sur ce sujet avant l'OMC en 1995.

**CATS (General Agreement on trade and services)** Ou AGCS en français accord sur le commerce des services signé en 1994 qui prévoit, sur le modèle du GATI tienne libéralisation des services secteur par secteur. Vest dans le cadre de cet accord que l'Union européenne a battit l'exception culturelle en 1993 en refusant de prendre des engagements de libéralisation dans le secteur audiovisuel et en déposant des exemptions NPF.

**Clause de la nation la plus favorisée (NPF)**

L'application de cette clause étend a tous les membres de l'OMC les avantages qu'un membre accorde a un partenaire particulier : tous les Etats peuvent prétendre aux avantages de la nation la plus favorisée par un Etat. Dans le secteur audiovisuel, les accords bilatéraux de coproduction sont menaces par une telle clause.

**Traitement national**

L'application du principe du traitement national permet aux opérateurs étrangers implantés dans tin pays do bénéficier du même traitement et des moins avantages que les opérateurs nationaux. Dans le secteur audiovisuel, ces opérateurs étrangers seraient en droit de prétendre aux mécanismes de soutien financier tels que le compte de soutien et les subventions.

**ADPIC on TRIPS**

Accord sur les aspects de priorité intellectuelle qui touchent au commerce: également signé en 1993, il incorpore à l'OMC les conventions internationales dé l'OMPI et prévoit des moyens de faire respecter les droits.

**OMPI**


*Source : SACD Lettre aux Auteurs, Direction des Affaires International, nov-dec 1999*
S ENAT
PREMIERE SESSION ORDINAIRE DE 1988-1989

Annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 21 novembre 1988

RAPPORT GENERAL

FAIT

au nom de la commission des Finances, du contrôle budgétaire et des comptes économiques de la Nation (1) sur le projet de loi de finances pour 1989, ADOPTÉ PAR L’ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE

Par M. Maurice BLIN,
Sénateur,

Rapporteur général.

TOME III

LES MOYENS DES SERVICES ET LES DISPOSITIONS SPÉCIALES

(Deuxième partie de la Loi de finances)

ANNEXE N°6

CULTURE ET COMMUNICATION

Communication
Fascicule I l’audiovisuel

Rapporteur spécial: M. Jean CLUZEL.


Voir les numeros

Assemblée nationale (9 legisl.):160 et annexes. 294 (annexe n°8), 295 (tome III), 296 (tome II) et T.A. 24.


Lois de finances. ...Audiovisuel Communication Radiodiffusion Télévision.
DEUXIEME PARTIE

OBSERVATIONS DE LA COMMISSION

CHAPITRE PREMIER

CONTINUITE ET CHANGEMENT DE LA LEGISLATION

DE LA COMMUNICATION EN FRANCE

La loi du 30 septembre 1986 est apparue beaucoup comme le ‘point d’aboutissement d’une trajectoire caractérisée par le démantèlement progressif d’un monopole d’Etat condamné par l’évolution des technologies et des mentalités ‘et il est vrai qu’elle se place dans la continuité des cinq réformes précédentes intervenues depuis 1959(1).

A bien des égards, elle apparaît aussi comme un point de rupture dans une évolution marquée jusqu’alors par la stratégie défensive de gouvernements soucieux d’aménager le monopole de l’Etat pour mieux le conserver. Inspirée par le libéralisme économique, elle fait une large part au secteur privé.

Pourtant, et bien qu’il faut primature de porter un jugement sur les effets à long terme de ce changement, 11 semble que l’on assiste une fois encore à une sorte de bégaiement de l’histoire et que l’échafaudage législatif ne résiste ni à l’instabilité des mœurs politiques, ni aux insuffisances du secteur privé dans l’économie française.

1. LA REDEFINITION DE LA PLACE ET DU ROLE DE L’ETAT DANS LE SECTEUR DE LA COMMUNICATION

Le monopole de l’Etat dans le secteur de la communication audiovisuelle, historiquement lié à celui des télécommunications, est apparu au cours des ans comme un monopole à géométrie variable, plutôt sujet à la dilatation volontaire que contraint à l’amaigrissement force.

L’évolution des mentalités et des techniques, et plus encore les contraintes liées à son exercice, vont conduire, de 1982 à 1986, par une abolition en deux étapes, à l’ouverture du secteur de la communication audiovisuelle aux initiatives privées, et au passage d’une économie fermée à la liberté organisée.

1.1. Un monopole à géométrie variable

1.1.1. Les fondements du monopole

L’Etat ne s’est jamais désintéressé des moyens de communication. Leur développement depuis plus d’un siècle, leur place dans la vie quotidienne des Français en ont fait, d’après l’origine, un enjeu de nature politique et culturelle par l’impact des messages et des produits diffusés ou transmis. C’est également un enjeu de nature industrielle et commerciale en raison de l’expansion du marché des matériels et des services qu’il entraîne.

La liberté de communication, en régime démocratique, est un souci permanent des pouvoirs publics, en régime démocratique. C’est ce qui a conduit l’Etat à ouvrir l’usage des moyens de communication au plus grand nombre d’usagers, dans le cadre d’un service public dont il assurait la gestion directe.

Annex Three: Pictures
Cartoon 1