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## ARTE – problems of creating a European TV Intercultural aspects at micro, meso and macro level at the European Culture Channel Arte

### *ARTE – problemas en la creación de una televisión europea. Aspectos culturales a niveles micro, meso y macro en el canal cultural europeo Arte*

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**ABSTRACT:** In communication science, the question of Europeanisation as well as a theory of interculturalism and multilingualism in the broader context of a 'European identity' has long been raised and discussed. Furthermore, empirical research has been searching for adequate methods to find an answer to this question so as to indicate whether the EU media landscape is coming closer together or drifting further apart. The European Culture Channel Arte started broadcasting in 1992. Since then, German and French TV editors have learned from each other how to produce formats appropriate for recipients of both nationalities or even a European audience. This article discusses possible changes towards Europeanisation through rapprochement and convergence exemplified by the French-German culture magazine programme *Metropolis* as well as by a diachronic scrutiny of changes in Arte's general programming structure. Organisational theory and intercultural media analysis at micro, meso and macro level are employed as theoretical foundation.

**Key words:** Arte, European Culture Channel, programming structure, in-

**RESUMEN:** En las ciencias de la comunicación, el tema de la europeización como también la teoría de la interculturalidad y del multilingüismo en contexto amplio de "identidad europea" ha tomado más importancia en los últimos años. Además, los científicos están buscando métodos empíricos adecuados para encontrar respuestas a esta pregunta, los cuales deben indicar si los medios en la Unión Europea incentivan la unión o desunión en el continente. El canal cultural Europeo Arte salió al aire en 1992. Desde ese año, los redactores alemanes y franceses intercambian sus conocimientos del campo televisivo para producir programas y formatos aptos para los televidentes de ambas naciones o aun para más audiencia en otros países europeos. Este artículo analiza si ya existe una unión televisiva tomando como ejemplo el programa cultural franco-alemán "*Metropolis*" y también el cambio en el estructura general del programa de Arte hasta la actualidad. Para realizar este análisis el artículo tiene como base la teoría de organización y de análisis intercultural a niveles micro, meso y macro.

**Palabras clave:** arte, canal de televi-

**tercultural media analysis, organisational approach.**

***sión cultural europeo, estructura del programa, análisis intercultural de los medios, teoría de organización.***

## 1. Introduction

Intercultural communication has been a widely discussed subject in media and communication science, especially as the European Union is increasingly aware of the need to tighten the bonds between its member states. The economic and financial sector is coalescing more and more, but is there also an increase in successful intercultural communication, specifically in shared European TV programmes?

This article tries to find an answer to the research question: How 'European' is Arte? Therefore, indicators at micro, meso and macro levels will be examined in a cross-cultural analysis. Cross-cultural studies have been a neglected subject in communication science; neighbouring disciplines like psychology, political sciences or sociology have delved earlier into international comparisons<sup>1</sup>. Even though the field of media and journalism might be extraordinarily coined by national structures, the potential of gain of knowledge is high when comparing media systems (macro level), media organisations (meso level) and journalists (micro level) as well as the journalistic output (content) in a multi level-analysis. What is important in cross-cultural studies is context: How does a specific national or cultural context influence the media landscape and its elements? Where do superordinate determinants come into play? How do the cultural and communication concepts differ? How can the differences be surmounted?

The article is structured as follows: First of all, I will expound on the theoretical framework and draw upon intercultural media analysis as well as organisational theory in order to then point out Arte's organisational structure and mission. Based on the question whether multilingualism might be seen as an obstacle to Europeanisation, the success resp. failure of Arte's predecessors, Eurikon and Europa TV, are discussed. Subsequently, the different culture styles and communication styles in Germany and France are presented. I will

<sup>1</sup> Cfr., also for the following, ESSER, F. & HANITZSCH, T., "Komparative Kommunikationsforschung als Mehrebenenforschung", in QUANDT, T., SCHEUFELE, B. (dir.), *Ebenen der Kommunikation. Mikro-Meso-Makro-Links in der Kommunikationswissenschaft*, VS Verlag, Wiesbaden, 2011, pp. 261-262.

also elaborate on the state of research presenting studies that demonstrate that different concepts of culture and different TV production styles exist in Germany and France. The focus then will be on the results of a content analysis of the Arte cultural magazine 'Metropolis' as well as on the development of Arte's programme structure. The conclusion will answer the research question and outline how far Arte can rightly be called 'European'.

### 1.1. *Intercultural media analysis*

For a long time intercultural communication has been seen as a social precondition to intercultural, i.e. not nationally limited, identity. Sometimes the impression that arises is that European identity stands separate and apart from national identity. But this is not the case, in fact they are complementary. Unfortunately, the field of 'identity' until now has been looked at primarily from a national perspective. **'While literature about national identity is constantly growing, relatively little has been published about European identity per se –in the sense of an identity which concentrates on Europe'**<sup>2</sup>.

Interculturalism can be defined as a mixture of cultures, meaning the encounter and merging of different cultures, whether it be in linguistic discourses or courses of action. Interculturalism, therefore, is at the same time the consequence as well as the result of transcultural communication processes<sup>3</sup>.

For a long time, communication scientists have been looking for adequate methods and theories to describe and examine these processes. 'Intercultural media analysis' is a way, theoretically as well as empirically, to study these forms of processes in the media. 'Intercultural media analysis is aiming at research on phenomena and processes of cultural transfer, mixture of cultures and cultural syncretism in diverse communication media'<sup>4</sup>. For instance, when analysing Arte's programme schemes, it might be interesting to look at which countries are primarily represented and which other countries are scarcely reported on.

<sup>2</sup> DELANTY, G., "Die Transformation nationaler Identität und die kulturelle Ambivalenz europäischer Identität. Demokratische Identifikation in einem postnationalen Europa", in VIEHOFF, R., SEGERS, R. T. (dir.), *Kultur Identität Europa. Über die Schwierigkeiten und Möglichkeiten einer Konstruktion*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1999, p. 267.

<sup>3</sup> Cfr. LÜSEBRINK, H. J. & WALTER, K. P. (dir.), *Interkulturelle Medienanalyse. Methoden und Fallbeispiele aus den romanischen Kulturen des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, Röhrig Universitätsverlag, St. Ingbert, 2003, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

Lüsebrink states the following subcategories of intercultural media analysis: *Intercultural transfer processes*: Arte, for example, endeavours to offer a balanced proportion of German and French programmes, thereby pursuing the goal of lessening the recipients' resistance to representations of foreign *savoir vivre*, but also of diminishing the influence of American programmes, so as to shift the emphasis in these intercultural transfer processes.

*Intercultural mediation authorities and negotiators*: Here Lüsebrink is referring to journalists, PR assistants, translators, and personnel of media and cultural institutions<sup>5</sup>. In this respect Arte, as a binationally organised channel with French and German staff, seems to be an ideal object for analysis.

*Intercultural presentation and perception patterns*: meaning the predominantly broadcasted images, stereotypes or clichés: **For the imprint and social dissemination of foreign perception, the media have played a leading role** –since the emergence of a daily and weekly press in the early modern period<sup>6</sup>. The Arte serial 'Karambolage' shows a very informal and relaxed way to deal with stereotypes by exaggerating and then questioning and explaining them.

*Interculturalism of media discourses and media realities*: meaning the effect of messages on people due to their individual view of the world –including the above mentioned perception of identity. This has already been shown in detail by the Cultural Studies approach<sup>7</sup>. Following this approach, one's view of the world depends on the people and communication in one's own country. According to this, Arte faces the difficulty of coping with the two social and media realities of French and German people. Having Strasbourg as the main location and Arte headquarters makes it easier to get a feeling for the two different perceptions of life. The staff operates in an environment and landscape which has been exposed to French as well as German influences throughout history.

All things considered and summing up the achievements of intercultural media analysis for the purpose of examining intercultural organisations and media outputs like programmes of binational or even multinational channels, it can be concluded that Arte as a research object is located at the micro level of intercultural media analysis. To get a more complete picture, the macro

<sup>5</sup> Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>7</sup> Cfr. HALL, S., HOBSON, D., LOWE, A. & WILLIS, P., *Culture, Media, Language*, Hutchinson, London, 1980; HEPP, A., *Cultural Studies und Medienanalyse. Eine Einführung*, Westdeutscher Verlag, Opladen, 1999.

perspective, i.e. the description of historical, political, social, cultural and media environments must not be neglected.

### 1.2. Organisational-theoretical framework

The European media landscape is usually coined by national media organisations. The French-German culture channel Arte constitutes an exception. Here, intercultural as well as multilingual aspects belong to the daily organisation routine; Arte's TV production is determined by the organisation's structure –the programme schedule shall promote a 'European identity' by inter- and transnational organisational collaboration (meso level). Therefore, organisational theory lends itself to further analysis.

There is, however, no ultimate organisation theory<sup>8</sup>. Altmeppen perceives that "offers of the media can only arise from an organised environment and that the media are only observable through organisation"<sup>9</sup>. Organisations establish rules for the protagonists acting therein and are agents themselves. Organisations serve as a tie between structure and action. They stipulate institutional rules and norms for the various stakeholders. In an international enterprise like Arte, the responsible persons have to look for equivalent function levels regarding modes of operation and / or performance. The structures determine the conduct of an enterprise on the market and thus also influence its achievement on the market. Arte –as an organisation operating in various markets– needs structures which overcome the dilemma of diverging national markets, fluctuating market performances (for example in the shape of varying audience rates) and differing frameworks.

Organisations are formed by and within these frameworks of structures which have an impact on the staff as well as the media performance. The protagonists acting in an organisation are bound by these structural limitations and constitute as well as reproduce them (link to micro level). In the next chapter, the question as to which characteristics are featured in the observable and describable organisational structure at meso level and how these are dependent on the two media systems (link to macro level) shall be addressed.

<sup>8</sup> Cfr. PUPPIS, M., *Organisationen der Medienselbstregulierung. Europäische Presseräte im Vergleich*, Herbert von Halem Verlag, Köln, 2009, p. 96.

<sup>9</sup> ALTMEPPEN, K. D., *Journalismus und Medien als Organisationen. Leistungen, Strukturen und Management*, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden, 2006, p. 12.

### 1.3. Arte's organisational structure (meso level)

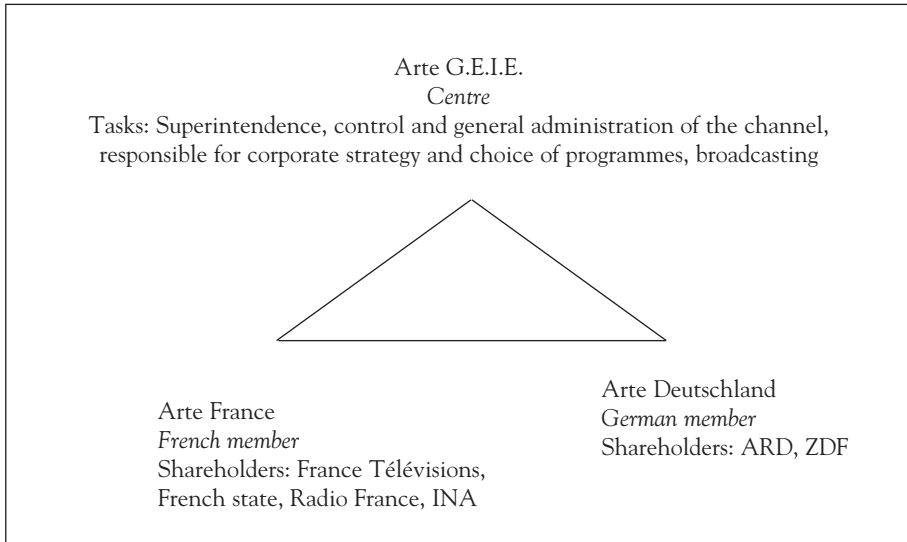
Arte is organised in a tripolar way<sup>10</sup>, a triangle with two national poles at the base and the joint broadcasting centre in Strasbourg as the coordinating vertex. Arte France originated from the French culture channel La Sept. That means: Arte combines the structures of a centralised as well as of a federal organised TV system. In Strasbourg, more than 400 members of staff are employed –in 1994 there were only about 140 members of staff. Arte France has got about 215 permanent employees and Arte Germany employs 20 people in Baden-Baden.

In order to meet the challenge of creating a successful European TV channel, Arte started broadcasting in 1992. The challenge, at first, was a political one –as can be deduced from the fact that the reason for creating Arte was a political one, too. The interstate treaty of 1990 expressed the objectives of the new channel: It was founded in an endeavour to tighten the relationship and the closeness between the peoples of Europe, offering them a common TV programme, which would serve as a portrayal of the cultural heritage and of the artistic life in the various states, the regions and the peoples of Europe and the world. That would be done with the prospect of guaranteeing the emission following the principles of free flow of information and ideas as well as the independence of the broadcasters<sup>11</sup>.

Arte resulted from foreign policy efforts; its founding fathers were first and foremost, Helmut Kohl und François Mitterrand. Arte is financed by the TV licence fees in France and in Germany, so there is a secure and firm footing for the journalistic work.

<sup>10</sup> Cfr. for the following ROTHENBERGER, L., *Von elitär zu populär? Die Programmentwicklung im deutsch-französischen Kulturkanal Arte*, UVK, Konstanz, 2008, pp. 54-55.

<sup>11</sup> Cfr. *Interstate treaty* of October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1990, published in Arte-manual, 1 et seq.

**Figure 1: Organisational tripolar structure of Arte**

Source: own depiction; following Rothenberger (2008, 54).

The supply of the German part is divided pursuant to a quantity structure. The ARD-institutions as well as the ZDF deliver their programmes according to given percentages. Furthermore, Arte has contracts with several European broadcasting corporations. All this seems to be a good organisational basis for intercultural European-bound TV programming but in fact is no indicator for the staff's intercultural competence.

#### 1.4. Arte's missions: Culture and Europe

Arte regards itself as a concurrent to niche broadcasters (above all in the cultural sector) like 3sat and Paris Première and is further complementary to the respective national main channels. In order to be distinguishable from those, Arte has sharpened its profile increasingly in the direction of its two foundation pillars 'Europe' and 'culture'<sup>12</sup>. Quality evaluation at Arte is based on detailed descriptions of the programmes and time slots, and only to a very

<sup>12</sup> Cfr. Arte G.E.I.E. (dir.), *Arte Entwicklungsplan / projet du groupe 2002-2005*, Arte G.E.I.E., Straßburg, 2003; Arte G.E.I.E. (dir.), *Entwicklungsplan 2003-2005*, Unpublished document, 2003-2005.

small degree on audience ratings. The market share (7 pm to 3 am) of Arte is 0,9 percent in Germany and 2,1 percent in France<sup>13</sup>.

In comparison to previous European TV projects, Arte has circumvented such mistakes as an unstable financing through advertisement –it relies on a secured financing through the TV licence fee– but it has also made repeated mistakes like initially broadcasting too few programmes that were produced collaboratively in the Strasbourg centre. In fact, the Germans, at the outset, complained about too many French-culture-dominated programmes whereas the French thought Arte to be a German-led enterprise. Against this background, Arte still is and supposedly will always be confronted with the problem of finding a consensus as well as contents, formats and ways of presenting that will be appealing in both countries and will be a bit more ‘European’ as opposed to ‘only German’ or ‘only French’. In that regard, multilingualism seems to be one of the major challenges for European TV.

### 1.5. *Multilingualism: an obstacle to Europeanisation?*

“[M]embers of the arte-team have developed their own language, a mixture of French and German as well as technical and media jargon.”<sup>14</sup> The intercultural channel has to deal with the difficulties of bilingualism, with the daily use of two languages. There are different forms of multilingualism in TV which will be introduced in the following: *Separate multilingualism*, which in most cases applies to Arte, is “a separated linguistic dispersion according to the different versions of broadcasting language whilst maintaining the same visual basis of the program”<sup>15</sup>. This means that there is no 1:1-translation, instead, the TV journalists of different nations write their own text in their own native languages. The statements only have to refer to a common basis as regards content. *Parallel or interlinear multilingualism* signifies a translation via voice-over, simultaneous sound or subtitling. Arte generally falls in the category ‘separate multilingualism’, but also often uses over-voice or subtitles

<sup>13</sup> MARR, W., “Arte mit 20 raus aus dem Teenager-Alter. Trotz hochwertiger Angebote hält sich die Akzeptanz des Senders in Grenzen”, *Blickpunkt*, n° 4, 2010, p. 24.

<sup>14</sup> TROUILLE, J. M., “Arte – Franco-German Venture or First Fully-fledged European Channel?”, in GILES, S. & GRAVES, P. (dir.), *From Classical Shades to Vickers Victorious: Shifting Perspectives in British German Studies*, Peter Lang, Berne, 1999, p. 221.

<sup>15</sup> HAHN, O., ARTE. *Der Europäische Kulturkanal. Eine Fernsehsprache in vielen Sprachen*, Verlag Reinhard Fischer, München, 1997, p. 123.



when dealing with original statements. It sometimes even uses successive multilingualism (see below).

When regarding *total monolingual* programmes, the recipients are confronted with a single integrated broadcasting language. There are three options of total monolingual programmes: *Lingua-Franca-programmes* offer their broadcasts in a common widespread language, mostly English; this makes translations dispensable. *Language-area-programmes* are broadcasted in a language which is spoken in several nations. This, for example, makes it easy for 3sat and TV5Monde to broadcast an intercultural and international programme (3sat in Switzerland, Austria and Germany, TV5Monde in the Francophone world). When using *successive multilingualism* the programme is broadcasted in more than one language, but one after the other. For instance, the anchor recites his texts first in French, than in German, than in English. Arte tried this way of presenting at the magazine “Confetti” but noticed that the viewers got annoyed when hearing the introduction twice. Particularly the monolingual viewers did not much like having to listen to a language they did not understand at all. For them, watching TV has to have a recreational effect, not an educational effect.

As an intercultural, international and multilingual channel Arte is confronted with the difficult task of making multilingual programmes like panel discussions palatable to a mostly monolingual target audience. Inserts belong to the forms of multilingual presentation, too. At Arte, inserts and superimposed texts are always presented bilingually: sometimes two languages appear on the screen at the same time, sometimes one language first, followed by the other. This might be a motivation and result in a learning effect on people who are interested in learning the respective other language<sup>16</sup> but of course it remains doubtful whether this can be regarded as an indicator for Europeanisation.

When thinking up the titles for magazines and films, Arte follows the principle of “titrage trans”<sup>17</sup>. That is to say, they look for some sort of “bridge words” which evoke certain images in the percipient. If possible, they hearken back to mutually shared linguistic roots –think of the magazine “Metropolis”. Further examples at Arte are the former science magazine “Archimedes/Archimède” which refers to the Greek mathematician and physician, and the former title of the newscast “8 ½” (because of the broadcast time at half past eight): an iconic-numerical emblem which can be easily perceived in various cultural contexts.

<sup>16</sup> Cfr. BUFE, W., “Von der Mehrsprachigkeit bei ARTE zum mehrsprachigen Individuum. Anhand von Beispielen aus dem Deutschen, Französischen, Italienischen und Portugiesischen”, *französisch heute*, n° 1, 2002, p. 106.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 353.

Recapitulating the different aspects mentioned, one can summarize that Arte falls under the category ‘separate multilingualism’, but also often uses voice-over, subtitles or successive multilingualism. Solving the problem of multilingualism has been one of the major difficulties of former attempts of creating a European TV. Furthermore, financial and organisational complications as well as missing intercultural competence at the individual level have made European TV an –until now– endeavour without success, as will demonstrate the subsequent excursus.

## 2. *In search of a European TV program*

Creating a European television is a great chance to make people feel more European, to approach cultures, to enhance a European identity and disturb stereotypes. But of course, everyone putting his efforts in such a project is confronted with massive intercultural communication problems and even though there have been some attempts in history, even today successful European TV is still a vision. Arte tries to counteract this tendency, and even though it actually is a German-French corporation based on a German-French state contract, it can be seen as a starting point for European Television in general. Arte-journalists invented new formats which exceed national reception patterns. To understand the innovation of arte, it is necessary first of all to take a look at its predecessors ‘Eurikon’ and ‘Europa TV’.

### 2.1. *Eurikon*

After having tested some theoretical map exercises of how a European Channel could be like, the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) managed to start its first supranational TV Channel in 1982. It was called Eurikon (from ‘Europe’ and greek ‘eikon’ for picture or icon). The founders were the broadcasting corporations IBA (Israel), RAI (Italy), ORF (Austria), NOS (the Netherlands) and ARD (Germany) (see Kommission der Europäischen Gemeinschaften; 1983: 18)<sup>18</sup> At first, the idea was that there should be one big international editorial staff. But members were not yet that far –neither in intercultural conduct nor in thinking in a European perspective. Instead of

<sup>18</sup> Ten more broadcasters participated as programme-suppliers: RTA (Algeria), YLE (Finland), TDF (France), ERT (Greece), RTE (Ireland), JRT (Yugoslavia), RTP (Portugal), SRG (Switzerland), TVE (Spain) and ERTT (Tunisia).

contributing a really European program, they stuck to national-limited ideas and conceptions of television program. They were not able to leave their traditional methods of working behind and think of new forms of journalistic TV-formats. So in the end every broadcaster created his own week, five hours per day. However, the people in charge tried to vary the concepts and presented some programmes with, others without anchormen and sometimes they even split the emissions according to the national topics.

## 2.2. *Europa TV*

The supporters of European television wanted to avoid all the problems of Eurikon in a new project: Europa TV. It was founded end of 1984 by ARD, RAI, RTE (Ireland), NOS and RTP (Portugal). The list of founders already shows a major difficulty: The potent TV-broadcasters of Great Britain and France (BBC and France 1) did not participate. The headquarters of Europa TV were located in Geneva, Switzerland, and the broadcasting took place in Hilversum, Netherlands. The financing was planned to be mainly advertising but the persons in charge had overseen a discrepancy: At that time companies were not as international as they are now and did not want to advertise on a European level.<sup>19</sup> In the end, Europa TV failed because of shortage of money. It ceased in November 1986, after not much more than a year of operation.<sup>20</sup>

Europa TV refrained from casting anchormen because they knew there would be hardly any face that would suit every national group. Again the programme seemed to be a version of 'the Best of Viewer's Digest'<sup>21</sup>, a mixture of programmes that were assumed to fit to every country. It was the minimal international consensus. Political discussions turned out to be very difficult formats; not only because of the topics but also because there was hardly any spontaneous and suspenseful conversation. Everything had to be translated first.

<sup>19</sup> For example, Persil in Germany belonged to Henkel, in England it was a product of the Unilever group. Light bulbs from Osram were called 'Wotan' on the isle because of an expropriation after World War Two (cfr. HALLENBERGER et al., 1993, p. 18).

<sup>20</sup> Cfr. SIEBENHAAR, H. P., "Europäisches Fernsehen. Mehrsprachiges, grenzüberschreitendes Fernsehen als Instrument des Einigungsprozesses?", in HAAS, H. & LANGENBUCHER, W. R. (dir.), *Medien- und Kommunikationspolitik. Ein Textbuch zur Einführung*, Wilhelm Braumüller, Wien, 2002, p. 183.

<sup>21</sup> STOOP, Paul, "Wenig Geld und große Pläne. Zum Programm von 'Europa TV'", *epd / Kirche und Rundfunk*, n° 43, 1986, p. 5.

The programme schedule followed a horizontal scheme; that means that, for reasons of habituation, every day at the same time the same formats were broadcasted. The news were placed at half past eight in the evening and sport at nine 'o clock. These time slots were quite unusual; but this was because every nation is accustomed to different times. In France for example, news start at quarter to nine in the evening because French people have dinner some hours later than the Germans, who already attend TV news at quarter past eight. It seemed to be impossible to respect all the cultural habits and at that time Europe had not been as close as it, perhaps, is today.

The portrayal of two earlier attempts of creating a European TV raises the question why intercultural and transnational television brings about so many difficulties. The main problem of European TV channels is that there are few journalistic formats which work irrespective of language. There have been initiatives that escaped the language problem like Eins Plus and 3sat as well as TV5Monde. They limit their programme on certain language areas. Others draw the line at specific topics: EuroNews specialises on news broadcasts, MTV on music and Eurosport on sports.

The experiences of Eurikon and Europa TV have let to the deeper insight that for a European TV it is somehow impossible to respect many languages, cultural habits or to reconcile all the European broadcasting corporations.

After having tackled the difficulties which can occur at a European TV, we will now go into detail as regards the macro and micro framework in which Arte and its employees operate.

### *3. Macro level: Media landscape and impact on TV production styles / working styles*

The socially and politically determined superstructure (macro level) embracing Arte can be summarized in the juxtaposition of 'federalism vs. centralism'. In France, everything is centred in Paris –journalists pay particular attention to the capital and it is also the main setting for (culture) reports. In Germany, the federal structure of the Bundesländer and the former occupation zones have entailed a decentralised cultural and broadcasting system. In both of the countries here analysed, the broadcasting services are characterised by a dual system and are perceived as merit goods (macro level), i.e. services that are provided gratis for public society. Kiefer defines merit goods, among other things, as

private and public goods and services which –as measured by a social system of references– are inadequately [...] produced and consumed. [...]

The market, taking ‘consumer sovereignty’ as a reference, can therefore only provide these goods in a suboptimal way. This is why the state or institutions intervene in the production and consumption of these goods.<sup>22</sup>

As a European broadcaster, Arte also significantly depends on EU media politics. Not until new technical standards, above all satellite techniques and digital television including the regulatory framework, were invented and permitted, could Arte achieve a broader dispersion in terms of the area it covers and evolve from a temporally limited to a 24/7-programme. However, digitalisation has led to a different TV-environment and thus to more competitors –which is extremely noticeable in France.<sup>23</sup>

But of course, the (inter-)national framework is not the only point as concerns interculturality at Arte. The diverging culture styles and communication styles far more determine the daily working and production routines.

### 3.1. Culture styles in France and Germany

The different understandings of what the concept of culture entails in France and in Germany will be discussed in the following.

*Arte*, first and foremost, is a work of art in itself, since it accommodates under the same roof two cultures, a Latin one and a Germanic one, which are so far apart that even their understanding of what the word culture actually means is different: for the French, *culture* tends to be associated with high culture or *beaux-arts*, which is not the case with the German *Kultur*.<sup>24</sup>

High culture meets a rather anthropological view of culture. The Germans have a much wider approach to culture and also consider the social aspect. “That means that there can be reports about artists’ communes and their activities, which are not really ‘artistic’ from an academic point of view. Culture, for the Germans, is perceived in a more general way as a comprehensive

<sup>22</sup> KIEFER, M. L., *Journalismus und Medien als Institutionen*, UVK, Konstanz, 2010, p. 90.

<sup>23</sup> Cfr. for example WROBEL-LEIPOLD, A., *Warum gibt es die Bild-Zeitung nicht auf Französisch? Zu Gegenwart und Geschichte der tagesaktuellen Medien in Frankreich*, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden, 2010, p. 98.

<sup>24</sup> TROUILLE, J. M., “Arte – Franco-German Venture or First Fully-fledged European Channel?”, in GILES, S. & GRAVES, P. (dir.), *From Classical Shades to Vickers Victorious: Shifting Perspectives in British German Studies*, Peter Lang, Berne, 1999, p. 220.

form of appearance in social life.”, explains Laurent Andrès, coordinator of the culture magazine ‘Metropolis’ at Arte.<sup>25</sup> Because French journalists adhere more strongly to ‘classical culture topics’ they, a priori, rarely come across political subject matters. The German approach is more open, making allowances for more side issues and embedding the chosen topic in a wider field. At the micro level much depends on the will and attitude of individuals: What stance on (inter)cultural aspects does the chief of programme have? What is his approach to technical or editorial innovations? It surely is of no negligibility that Peter Latzel, from August 2012 on managing director of Arte Deutschland TV GmbH, is the former Vice-Chief of Culture at SWR, a broadcaster in the South region of Germany.

Another cultural difference lies in commenting-style. “It is typically German to comment a lot, the French normally do so less often [...] because it is a question of cultural difference”<sup>26</sup>. These differences are

due to differing professional approaches to TV production and also due to different viewing habits on the part of the national audiences. I don’t know why the Germans always have to comment on everything. Comments, comments... A shoot without text is rare. In France, you easily “put up with” 20 seconds of “background noises” with a bit of off sound, more like an interview than a commentary<sup>27</sup>.

The cultural differences are interlinked with different communication styles that also are determined –to a certain extent– by national characteristics.

### 3.2. *Communication styles in Germany and France*

National socialisation has an impact on the individual actor’s **communication style** (link between macro and micro level). The differentiation of communication styles belongs in this context according to Hahn (1997a)<sup>28</sup>:

<sup>25</sup> ANDRÈS, L., in ROTHENBERGER, Liane, *op. cit.*, p. 346.

<sup>26</sup> ANDRÈS, L., in ROTHENBERGER, Liane, *op. cit.*, pp. 339-340.

<sup>27</sup> ANDRÈS, L., in ROTHENBERGER, Liane, *op. cit.*, p. 340.

<sup>28</sup> Cfr. HAHN, O., “ARTE an der Kreuzung der Kommunikationskulturen. Interkultureller und multilingualer TV-Nachrichtenjournalismus beim Europäischen Kulturkanal”, in MACHILL, M. (dir.), *Journalistische Kultur. Rahmenbedingungen im internationalen Vergleich*, Westdeutscher Verlag, Opladen, 1997a.

The German communication style is characterised as digital, extensive in information, direct, pragmatic and rational. It belongs to the group of 'low-context cultures', which are primarily located in Northern and Protestant areas. An Arte-example: "French colleagues were initially quite shocked at the directness of their German counterparts, for instance in their criticisms of films"<sup>29</sup>. In contrast, the analogue communication style of 'high-context' and relationship-oriented cultures like France is known to be more indirect, narrative, emotional and intensive in communication<sup>30</sup>. Associativity and connotations, incited by language, are more important than intrinsic logic. The 'how' is more important than the 'what'. Arte editors experience these differences in communication style during their meetings. The facts are not discussed until a little bit of small talk about all kinds of topics has taken place.

Other problems of intercultural communication occur during or before the meetings; using as an example the different ways of greeting: Should one kiss one's vis-à-vis on the cheek (two times or three times?) or just shake hands? When are the negotiating partners going to turn up? On time or late? Their sense of time clearly shows the differences between the two nations. According to Hall and Hall<sup>31</sup>, the Germans can be classified as monochronists, the French as polychronists. Monochronists carry their tasks out one after the other and take deadlines utterly seriously. The polychronists, who are mostly located in southern countries, can deal with many tasks simultaneously and sometimes take deadlines with a pinch of salt. These differences can cause serious distractions from work in intercultural enterprises<sup>32</sup>. Arte editors, for instance, complain about different ways of setting things: The French tend to talk a lot and always phone each other, whereas the Germans always need something written, something tangible. Finally, convergences occur: The French write

<sup>29</sup> TROUILLE, J. M., "Arte – Franco-German Venture or First Fully-fledged European Channel?", in GILES, S. & GRAVES, P. (dir.), *From Classical Shades to Vickers Victorious: Shifting Perspectives in British German Studies*, Peter Lang, Berne, 1999, p. 221.

<sup>30</sup> Cfr. HAHN, O., "ARTE an der Kreuzung der Kommunikationskulturen. Interkultureller und multilingualer TV-Nachrichtenjournalismus beim Europäischen Kulturkanal", in MACHILL, M. (dir.), *Journalistische Kultur. Rahmenbedingungen im internationalen Vergleich*, Westdeutscher Verlag, Opladen, 1997a, p. 139. Cfr. HALL, E. T. & HALL, M. R., *Verborgene Signale. Studien zur internationalen Kommunikation. Über den Umgang mit Franzosen*, Gruner + Jahr, Hamburg, 1984, p. 100.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>32</sup> Cfr. TROUILLE, J. M., "Germany and France –Promoting mutual Understanding through cultural Bridges?", in HALL, C. & ROCK, D. (dir.), *German Studies towards the Millennium*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main, 2000a; TROUILLE, J. M., "Culture d'entreprise et management interculturel", *Documents: Revue des questions allemandes*, n° 55, 2000, pp. 81-82.

letters and the Germans call their French colleagues. At Arte, a slow but steady process of intercultural rapprochement has gained momentum with regard to modes of interaction and personal conduct, as well as to programming and production designs, as the results of hitherto existing (empirical) studies as well as the author's own analysis will reveal.

#### 4. State of research

Many studies demonstrate that different concepts of culture and different TV production styles exist in Germany and France. The studies apply diverse methodological designs. Landbeck (1991) compared German and French strategies of TV news performances by analysing 148 newscasts of the channels ARD, ZDF, A2 and TF1 between 1986 and 1988 (TF1 was not yet privatised at that time). She observed that in the French newscasts there was a stronger dynamic and richer image culture, the so-called 'habillage'. The topics were presented in a specific audiovisual way, whereas the German newscasts focused primarily on the informative and educational function<sup>33</sup>. Another characteristic of the two different programme conceptions is that the French show a tendency towards presenting individual life stories. The Germans take a more abstract and comprehensive approach. The French news is presented and moderated in a less formal way. The news anchor acts more like a host and entertainer. Landbeck's findings conclude with the confrontation of 'French nearness vs. German distance'<sup>34</sup>.

Isaak (2004) makes the different evolutions of the respective TV landscapes responsible for the divergent styles: the German 'TV language' developed from the radio tradition and for educational purposes; the French from the cinema tradition, which is associated with creativity and artistic freedom<sup>35</sup>. Démerin (2002) describes the French 'news show' as influenced by 'subjectivité' and

<sup>33</sup> Cfr. LANDBECK, H., *Medienkultur im nationalen Vergleich. Inszenierungsstrategien von Fernsehrichten am Beispiel der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Frankreichs*, Niemeyer, Tübingen, 1991, p. 5.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>35</sup> Cfr. ISAAK, T., *Europäische Tele-Kultur? Der Kulturbegriff in Deutschland und Frankreich am Beispiel des europäischen Kulturkanals ARTE*, Bauhaus Universität Weimar / Université Lumière Lyon II, Weimar, 2004, p. 71.



'intimisme', the Germans adhere more to 'la parole', 'commentaire' and 'sens général'<sup>36</sup>.

Utard (1997) examined the news production and flow of work of the former Arte-newscast '8 ½', which has a mixed German-French editorial staff, and proved that the Germans chose more abstract and impersonal news titles in opposition to the French, who tried to personalise and applied many adjectives.

The finding of news turns out to be a problem, too. Kaiser (1996) interviewed editors of '8 ½'. She describes the discussions during editorial meetings about which topics would make their way into the evening newscast. The French could not comprehend the German weakness for ecological topics and conferences on the environment<sup>37</sup>. On the other hand, the Germans bristled at the uncritical attitude of the French towards nuclear energy politics. Topics that had no connection with Germany or France were easier to handle.

The difficulties become even more apparent when trying to create concepts for much more culturally specific formats like political satirical programmes or humorous comedy shows. At Arte, none could be produced until now because even when testing the concept with the editors the French did not get the German humour and vice versa as the 'culture of humour' has strict national limits. Another difference in taste concerns the fictitious genres: German editors go into the story straight away, their neighbours on the left bank of the Rhine regard this as inelegant and clumsy and prefer to take slow steps towards the story, the viewer remaining in a state of uncertainty<sup>38</sup>.

Intercultural competence can be instructed in international organisations but, in the end, comes to the fore in social interaction in daily working routine. Barmeyer and Davoine (2011) conducted guided interviews with 30 French and German Arte-employees at management level. One of their results is that intra- as well as extra-organisational factors have exerted influence on the personnel's intercultural competence. Most times, a bi-cultural socialisation

<sup>36</sup> Cfr. DÉMERIN, P., "Arte, vache sacrée des Français, vache à lait des Allemands, vache folle européenne?", *Le débat*, n° 120, 2002, pp. 17-18.

<sup>37</sup> Cfr. KAISER, I., *Le traitement de l'information sur ARTE à travers l'étude du 8 ½*, Institut d'Etudes Politiques, Strasbourg, 1996, p. 23.

<sup>38</sup> Cfr. GERLACH, T., "ARTE – vom deutsch-französischen zum europäischen Fernsehen", in FRENKEL, C., LÜGER, H. H., WOLTERS DORFF, S. (dir.), *Deutsche und französische Medien im Wandel*, Knecht Verlag, Landau, 2004, p. 236.

and pro-European biography go hand in hand with a high identification with the Arte organisation and its mission<sup>39</sup>.

#### 4.1. Content analysis of the “Metropolis” programme

In an attempt to detect French-German differences in a concrete TV production, the non-moderated culture magazine Metropolis, the author has conducted an empirical analysis. The empirical part of the study consists of in-depth interviews with Laurent Andrès, coordinator in Strasbourg, and a video content analysis of three German and three French recordings of Metropolis, episodes 1995, 2000 und 2005, which were chosen by random selection. The reasons of choosing Metropolis as an example to examine the dynamics and style of Arte are the following: Metropolis exemplifies changes and in some aspects convergencies of how German and French editors learned to produce a programme which is proper for both countries alike. Metropolis might be an indicator of how far the concept of interculturality is already inherent in Arte’s programme because it is one of arte’s oldest productions, one of its ‘core emissions’. It has not changed much in length and topic since the beginning and is still produced alternately by German and French editorial teams. The fact that the programme deals explicitly with questions of culture makes it very suitable for analysis. Furthermore, each broadcast consists of various features so that the content analysis can rely on a couple of different material.

The code book contains 82 quantitative and qualitative variables such as length of report, on- and off-voices, employment of digital effects, music styles or representation of social strata. It was subjected to a pretest, an intracoder and an intercoder-reliability test<sup>40</sup> as well as a validity test<sup>41</sup>. The significance of the results was checked by T-square or Chi-square tests. On average, the magazine consisted of five features in 1995 and of six in 2000 and 2005. In every year, the length of one episode amounted to approx. 55 minutes. The research has led to the following results, detecting differences and similarities between the French and German Metropolis-broadcasts in the described sample. Of course, one

<sup>39</sup> Cfr. BARMAYER, Christoph & DAVOINE, Eric, “Kontextualisierung interkultureller Kompetenz in einer deutsch-französischen Organisation: ARTE”, in DREYER, W., HÖBLER, U. (dir.), *Perspektiven interkultureller Kompetenz*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, 2011, pp. 311-312.

<sup>40</sup> Results of which were values of 0.91 (intercoder-reliability) and 0.88 (intracoder-reliability).

<sup>41</sup> According to Brosius and Koschel (2003: 187) this is done by testing completeness, integrity, theoretical plausibility and by comparing the code book with former research designs.

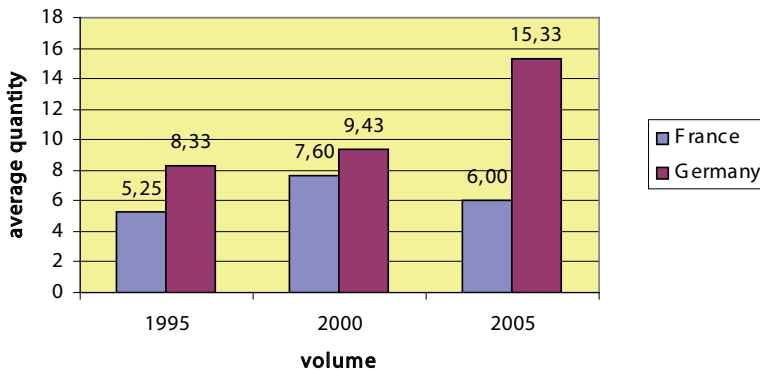
always has to keep in mind that other factors than the national imprint might be responsible for the results at hand; a perspective bias cannot be excluded. Furthermore, the sample makes no claim to be totally representative.

#### 4.1.1. Techniques

The average length of the German features remained quite constant over the years: about 500 seconds, i.e. not much more than eight minutes. In contrast, the French features' length was between ten and 15 minutes in 1995, but gradually conformed to the German version so that in the end it was decided that in both productions there should be about six contributions.

Another tendency becomes apparent when looking at the cutting frequency (number of cuts per minute)<sup>42</sup>: Over the years, France stuck to a very low cutting frequency. Sometimes, single shoots lasted up to ten seconds. Laurent Andrès affirms the results: 'The French episodes were very low in cuttings. These were features in which analysis and reflection played an important role, very classical'. In contrast to their left-Rhine counterparts, the German features increasingly exhibit a faster cutting frequency of every three or four seconds.

**Figure 2: Cuts per minute**  
Cutting frequency



Source: author, on the basis of Rothenberger (2008, 328).

<sup>42</sup> Cuts and effects in input film clips were not evaluated because in these cases it is not the 'Metropolis'-producers who decide on arrangement and cutting frequency. They simply use material produced by others.

The low cutting frequency of the French editors is due to the cultural reasons mentioned in the theoretical part, i.e. the radio vs. the cinema tradition as well as high vs. low context cultures. Similarly, in national French TV one can find quite long passages of original sound. The Germans, however, show a tendency towards more, but shorter, statements.

The reporting Arte journalists, as well as the camera crew, were visible in eight German and eight French features; but one has to add that this phenomenon could be observed in all French episodes but only in one German volume (1995). Perhaps this is because of the French 'auteurisme'<sup>43</sup>: The author –like the director of a cinéma movie– views himself as an essential part of his production, autonomous and free of editorial restrictions; he does not only want to present a topic in a preferably objective way, he wants to form and shape it actively. The 'regard d'auteur'<sup>44</sup>, the subjective viewpoint of the author, conflicts with the German ideal of strict separation of information and comment or opinion that follows the Anglo-Saxon model of journalism. The French sometimes judge the German programme as too pedagogic; on the French side, the author's creativity is an important part of the feature. French authors at Arte want the audience to appreciate the originality of their idea and perhaps win them over to a certain point of view; German authors want the audience to learn something from their high information input and they want to present a very well-balanced choice of opinions.

#### 4.1.2. Content

According to the definition of a 'magazine programme' as a 'repository' and 'store cupboard'<sup>45</sup>, the features showed a wide scope of topics: e.g. a portrait of rock musician David Bowie, the carnival of Nice, new blinds at the Guggenheim Museum New York, psychedelic music, Colombian rappers, or the new novel by Umberto Eco. The fields of film, visual arts, music and literature constituted the main pillars of Metropolis. It was far more seldom the case that architecture, theatre, photography and new media appeared as main topics. This result shows that Metropolis is still bound to classical '**high culture**' topics and perhaps does not focus so much on establishing a 'European identity'

<sup>43</sup> EMANUEL, S., *Télévision et Culture en France: A la Recherche d'une Chaîne culturelle européenne*. Université de Rennes II, Rennes, 1992, p. 334.

<sup>44</sup> GERLACH, T., *op. cit.*, p. 236.

<sup>45</sup> Cfr. HAACKE, W., "Genesis und Stil des 'Magazins'", *Publizistik*, n° 3-4, 1966, pp. 235-247.

seeing as specifically European topics (identified by the explicit mentioning of 'Europe' or the comparison of several countries in a report) were left out. Possibly, this instance could be circumvented by content guidelines.

If besides the cultural, a political event is also discussed –and that was the case in only one French, but in seven German features– the topic is usually 'war'. A French television report from 2005 dealt with resistance movements under Mussolini. Explanation.

#### 4.1.3. *Soundtrack*

As previously mentioned, French journalists let the pictures speak for themselves; accordingly, the proportion of original and off sound is lower than in the German magazine episodes. The study identified a 'proportion of silence' (i.e. parts of the feature without original or off sound, only with atmospheric sound) of about 40 percent for France and 27.5 percent for Germany. That means that on the French side, on average, 60 percent of the whole feature is filled with protagonists or off speakers talking –and on the German side more than 70 percent.

Looking at the off sound, the percentage for the German productions is always higher than for the French productions, namely 34.97 percent as opposed to 20.64 percent on average over all three volumes. This analysis could only attest a higher percentage of original sound in French programmes for the episode of volume 1995. The impression that the French let the protagonists speak and comment more often supposedly derives from the fact that, within a television report, the original soundtrack most times prevails over the off sound. Furthermore, the French offer longer original sound passages at a stretch, whereas the Germans split the statements up into little pieces, using the space in between for their own commentary.

#### 4.1.4. *Protagonists*

The number of people presented with original sound in a feature differs strikingly: The French productions showed nine, seven and eight people per episode, the Germans 16, 23 and 21. Of course, that also stems from the higher number of reports in the German episodes. But the high number of protagonists offers the possibility for the German authors to cover a wide spectrum of people as regards age, nationality and social standing.

The main part (60 percent) was composed of middle-aged people. The percentage left was divided into all other age categories on the German side.

The French, by contrast, did not interview any young people, only middle-aged and older. When considering a rejuvenation of the culture magazine, it might be wise to have more protagonists of a younger age.

The protagonists in the French broadcasts were mostly artists (62 percent of the people with the original soundtrack). Others belonged to the 'haute bourgeoisie', **including philosophers and academics. The mixture in the German episodes is more varied, including, for example, the middle-classes and workers.** Of course, Metropolis is a culture and not a 'society' magazine and therefore concentrates on protagonists from the cultural field, but the differences in the choice of interview partners is likewise related to the two differing approaches to culture (see above).

The French reports, to a greater extent, deal with upper class artists of senior age. As with age and status, the German programmes showed more variety regarding the nationalities of the protagonists. In percentages: 15 percent of the German features' protagonists were Frenchmen, but only eight percent of the protagonists in the French features were Germans. Both nationalities presented persons from EU countries other than Germany or France (17 percent) and also non-Europeans, e.g. from the US, Ghana, Australia or Colombia. The main part, however, showed people of the producers' **nationality** (more than a third of all the protagonists). We can deduct from these findings that the level of Europeanisation at Arte is not as high as assumed. This might be a relevant aspect when thinking of future reforms or editorial guidelines. A French perspective on German culture and vice versa could be an easier way for the respective national audience to explore the neighbour's world.

#### 4.1.5. *Locations*

The film locations were usually situated in the same country that the producers' team origins, too. The respective neighbouring country ranked second in the evaluation, even though not more than a fifth of the features was shot on the other side of the Rhine. The US came in third place. Regarding these results, Metropolis is definitely still in search of a European programme and identity. Up to now, a strong focus on Germany and France could be observed.

In the majority of cases, the countries and locations mentioned in the features were similar to the film locations. None of the French features showed differences or similarities between two or more countries. In contrast to that, 40 percent of the German features compared the treatment of specific topics in several countries, e.g. the performance of a Wagner opera in Germany and Hawaii, or international design concepts at a trade fair. In most features the

differences were stressed, not the similarities. It is remarkable that a European culture magazine does not give a comparative overview more often. That, perhaps, would lead to a deeper and more differentiated understanding of Europe.

#### 4.2. Longitudinal analysis of the programme structure

Arte is aware of these difficulties, as well as of the public service broadcasters' (PSB) dual nature as merit goods on the one hand and as revenue good on the other hand; "financing from license fees can only be justified if PSBs cover tasks that serve the public interest and cannot be met by private broadcasters"<sup>46</sup>. Arte's motivation for several programme reforms, which have been conducted over 20 years of operation, consisted to a large extent in finding a balance between these two poles, i.e. appealing to more viewers by broadcasting a more attractive and more easily consumable programme without foregoing its cultural claim. A development from a specific elitist programme towards more popular formats can be observed when looking at the first 20 years of Arte broadcasting in a longitudinal document analysis of all the Arte programme reform documents.

Examining the various programme reforms of Arte and the different programme conceptions, it can be said that the reforms have led to a steadily growing formatting and horizontalisation, which come along with more continuity in the audience flow. In addition to this, one can observe an increasing openness towards new formats like docu-soaps, cookery programmes and quiz shows, which are used to refute Arte's reputation as 'TV for the elite' and 'indicate an advancing popularisation'<sup>47</sup>. The reforms also reflect the attempt to cope with the different switch-on and switch-off times of French and German viewers, thereby trying to ease intercultural communication processes on the micro and meso level<sup>48</sup>. Trouille calls it a "cultural problem"<sup>49</sup> that prime-time does not coincide in both countries: The French eat dinner very

<sup>46</sup> FELLNER, W. & GRISOLD, A., *Positioning Public Service Broadcasting in a Competitive TV Market: Small Country Programming Strategies based on a Wide-Reach Genre*, Working Paper n° 129, Vienna University of Economics & B.A., Department of Economics, Vienna, 2009, p. 1.

<sup>47</sup> ROTHENBERGER, L., *op. cit.*, p. 259.

<sup>48</sup> Cfr. MARR, W., "Neues Programmschema bei ARTE ab Januar 2012", *Blickpunkt*, n° 3, pp. 38-39.

<sup>49</sup> TROUILLE, J. M., "Arte –Franco-German Venture or First Fully-fledged European Channel?", in GILES, S. & GRAVES, P. (dir.), *From Classical Shades to Vickers Victorious: Shifting Perspectives in British German Studies*, Peter Lang, Berne, 1999, p. 218.

late, the German prime-time already starts at 20:15, right after the newscast. The attempt to show the same programme but with a time-shift has been made recently: The “Arte Journal” now starts at 19:10 in Germany and at 19:45 in France. The German-French anchormen-duo has been replaced by separate German and French anchors. At noontime (12:50), a “tout-image” is broadcasted simultaneously in both countries. Whether this dissolution and withdrawal of cross-cultural efforts will “clearly not be compatible with the channel’s philosophy”<sup>50</sup>, as Trouille argues, remains to be seen.

##### 5. Outlook: Arte on its way to becoming a franchise?

Arte has learned from previous cooperations in the TV-sector (e.g. Eurikon, Europa TV) and has, above all, recognized the difficulty of having programmes joint with more than two national partners. Those responsible for the programme point out that it would be problematic to integrate further countries, as states Victor Rociaries, director of administration at Arte, in an interview:

The cooperation of two countries is already difficult. If a third or a fourth country joined in, we would probably encounter insurmountable problems. That is why our present concept is different. The idea is that we keep a German-French core. What we want to develop in Europe is a sort of union of broadcasting stations that work under the label Arte like a franchise. At the moment, for example, we are thinking about the creation of an Arte Spain in cooperation with TVE. It would be a Spanish television station that would take over 60 percent of its programme from Arte and would complement these 60 or, possibly, 65 percent with 30 to 40 percent of Spanish contributions so as to be attractive in Spain. [...] You see, one could thus have an Arte Spain, an Arte Italy, all similar. That means that we would have a network of ‘franchise channels’ with a German-French core in Strasbourg<sup>51</sup>.

This development presents itself to Arte because problems would arise if one wanted to permanently integrate Spanish television in Strasbourg, for instance: up to now, far less than ten percent of the Arte programmes are Spanish productions and thus, for a Spanish audience, not very appealing. If Spain joined in, Arte would have to provide more space for Spanish programmes.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 218.

<sup>51</sup> Rociaries in ROTHENBERGER, L., *op. cit.*, p. 214.



This would mean a lower percentage of German and French contributions and that probably would go along with decreasing attraction in Germany and France. Thus, the franchise tactic offers an opportunity for other nations to join the channel but not to disturb the national and cultural preferences. Also, the staff would not have to expand its intercultural challenges.

It is important that the different countries should recognize themselves in the programme. Cooperation on the organisational meso level thus has an impact on the social macro level as well as on the direct micro level of the employees and, of course, the recipients. The channel wants to offer its audience a 'regard croisé', a 'crossed view' beyond culture and language barriers. It wants to promote a 'European identity'<sup>52</sup> by presenting the continent's diversity –intercultural communication at its best, but with all its accordant difficulties. With enhanced intercultural cooperation, Arte could contribute to European mutual understanding at all levels. Belgium and Austria, in particular, lend themselves to such a step thanks to great parts of the population that speak French resp. German.

An overarching aspect of the findings of this article is that Arte still is in search of a 'savour union' between the cultures. Even though one cannot speak of a preminent command of national aspects in Arte's daily working routine, the analysis has pointed out strong influences that trace back to national cultural, historical and social parameters and that will surely remain for some years to come. As to content, comprehensive topics, polyglot politicians and society people that have a transboundary attracting charisma are missing at a European level. Without these transcultural key figures which spread the European idea, a European TV –**and accordingly a European identity**– is almost impossible, but until now there are scarcely any European representatives who would call as much attention from the public as do national representatives, let them be active in the domain of politics, sports or culture.

Up to now, Arte has not developed into a franchise; first results of the current projects, for example with RTBF in Belgium, should clarify whether or not a further development in this direction makes sense and is realistic. It is considered to be especially important to keep a balance between the European-multinational programmes on offer and those that are directed at a national

<sup>52</sup> The results of the survey 'Eurobarometer' demonstrate that a basically positive sentiment towards Europe is still missing to a large extent.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION, Directorate-General for Communication (dir.), *Standard Eurobarometer 77, Spring 2012, Public Opinion in the European Union*, European Commission, Brussels, 2012.

audience, national media markets and national concepts of culture, and an equilibrium of programmes that are, on the one hand, attractive crowd-pullers and, on the other hand, do justice to Arte's mandate, which is to create a European identity with programmes aimed at Europe.

Finally, to suggest an answer to our research question, one might judge the level of Europeanisation at Arte quite high. Employees sensitive to intercultural aspects (micro level) and a transnationally organised headquarter in Strasbourg (meso level) work within a EU media framework (macro level), although it has to be admitted that the field of broadcasting is still mainly a national matter.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>53</sup> The author wants to thank the reviewers for their helpful comments and excellent suggestions for improvement of this article. Great thanks also to Christine Maulid and Deborah Simorangkir for proofreading the manuscript.

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## Appendix: List of abbreviations

ARD	Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Rundfunkanstalten in Deutschland
ARTE	Association Relative à la Télévision Européenne
G.E.I.E.	Groupement Européen d'Intérêt Économique
GmbH	Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung
INA	Institut National de l'Audiovisuel
RTBF	Radio-Télévision Belge de la Communauté française
SWR	Südwestrundfunk
TF1	Télévision française
TVE	Televisión Española SA
ZDF	Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen