

ENRIC SOPENA

The author expresses his scepticism of the business and mass-media magnates, who have been dubbed “The Wise Men” by the Frenchman Paul Lefèvre. Sopena states that these Wise Men have names and surnames. They buy and sell newspapers, radio stations, television channels. In this article he takes a look at the experience of private television channels in France, the United States, Germany and Brazil. In Europe, information has begun to be replaced by light entertainment, a field which the journalist considers to be an audio-visual jungle.

The battle for viewing ratings and the astronomical salaries of the star-presenters have led to a rejection of the journalist’s credibility. The 1993 Sofres Poll about professionals in the field of information, which was carried out in France, gave a negative result. In 1991, credibility had gone down by 49%, compared to 1987, when 59% of the French placed their trust in the professionals in the field of information. As far as the future is concerned, trust can only be regained by guaranteeing pluralism on the part of the journalists and freedom of expression, not just in terms of the government or political parties, but also in terms of economic interests. The public audiovisual sector must be regained, and this must be done with the necessary economic support and, ultimately, the defence of genuinely democratic values: freedom of expression, pluralism and culture for all.