

Neoliberalism, Media and Globalization

Western Media Policies in the 1980s
and their Implications

Ingmar Zielke

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data is available on the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

Zielke, Ingmar:

Neoliberalism, Media and Globalization – Western Media Policies in the 1980s
and their Implications

ISBN 978-3-941274-57-0

Lektorat: Simon Bywater

All Rights Reserved

1. Edition 2010, Göttingen

© Optimus Verlag

URL: www.optimus-verlag.de

Printed in Germany

Paper is FSC certified (wood-free, chlorine free and acid-free, and resistant to aging
ANSI 3948 and ISO 9706)

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, scanning, or otherwise without the prior written permission of the Publisher. Request to the Publisher for permission should be addressed to info@optimus-verlag.de.

Author's Acknowledgements

The idea of exploring the interdependence of neoliberalism, globalisation and the media dates back to my coursework for the *Cultural Industries* module at the University of Warwick, United Kingdom in December 2008. The dissertation at hand has been awarded a First (distinction) from the Department of Cultural Policy Studies at the University of Warwick in October 2009.

I would like to express my thanks to my supervisor, Dr Egil Bjornsen, Senior Teaching Fellow at the Department of Cultural Policy Studies of the University of Warwick. I benefited greatly from discussions with him. Moreover, I would like to thank Richard Perkins, Film and Theatre Librarian at the University of Warwick, who was very helpful in researching the appropriate literature for this dissertation. The interview with Western Germany's former Post and Communication Minister, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, was indispensable for getting insight knowledge of Germany's way towards private broadcasting.

I would also like to thank my parents for their ongoing support and Paloma for her great consideration during my studies. Finally, I express my thanks to Matthias Kohrs, sociology student at the University of Hanover, who gave me important ideas for defining the term *globalisation*.

Thank you!

Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 FIELD OF EXPLORATION.....	2
1.2 STRUCTURE.....	2
2 NEOLIBERALISM, MEDIA AND GLOBALISATION	5
2.1 THE COMEBACK OF ADAM SMITH: NEOLIBERALISM.....	5
2.2 MEDIA, MEDIA POLICY AND THE MASS.....	7
2.3 ECONOMICAL AND CULTURAL GLOBALISATION.....	9
3 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE USA AND WESTERN EUROPE	13
3.1 THE LONG DOWNTURN AND THE COMEBACK OF LIBERALISM.....	13
3.2 IMPACTS ON CULTURAL INDUSTRIES.....	14
3.3 MEDIA POLICIES IN THE US AND IN EUROPE IN THE 1970S AND 1980s.....	17
3.4 THE EMERGENCE OF INTERNATIONAL MEDIA CONGLOMERATES.....	20
4 GERMANY'S MEDIA POLICIES IN THE 1980S	23
4.1 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE WESTERN GERMAN BROADCASTING.....	23
4.2 FROM PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING TO THE DUAL SYSTEM: MONOPOLISM OR FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION?.....	25
4.3 THE STAATSVERTRAG OF 1987.....	29
4.4 CONSEQUENCES FOR THE GERMAN MEDIA SECTOR.....	31
5 CONCLUSION AND PERSPECTIVE	35
6 BIBLIOGRAPHY	39

1 Introduction

Globalisation is “the process of increasing interconnectedness between societies such that events in one part of the world more and more have effects on peoples and societies far away” (Smith & Baylis, 2001:8). Considering global companies and products, the World Wide Web and the expansion of the English language, many would quickly agree with this statement. However, it also raises further questions: What made our world “increasingly interconnected”? What is shaping this “process”? Is the interconnection a purposeless consequence of technological advance or are other forces behind it?

The purpose of this work is to explore and reveal important processes of globalisation in the context of political, economical and cultural internationalisation. Therefore, it will focus on the role of the media, in particularly television, as well as media policies in the USA and Western Europe and their implications for the process of globalisation. As the media is intensely fuelling “the process of increasing interconnectedness” it plays a key role in the globalisation movement (Smith & Baylis, 2001:8). The internationalisation of cultural business and cultural texts, as well as the remarkable worldwide proliferation of new communications technologies has undeniably influenced the global culture (Hesmondhalgh, 2007:2).¹ Media unifies the global character of media policies, promotes economic *marketisation* and, arguably, drives cultural homogenisation.

While this work refers to the undeniable fact that a vast internationalisation and concentration in the media sector took place and that this most likely contributed to a globalisation of cultural policies (or vice versa) as well as the economy and culture, it will not examine whether globalisation is entirely in the “service of American capitalism” resulting in the homogenisation of global culture or if this assumption is wrong and globalisation is rather causing positive results such as fragmentations and hybridism (Barker, 1999:38) .

¹ Hesmondhalgh defines texts as “the best collective name for ‘cultural works’ of all kinds: the programmes, films, records, books, comics, images, magazines, newspapers and so on produced by the cultural industries.” (2007:2)

1.1 Field of exploration

By focusing on the United States and Western Europe in general and Germany in particular, this thesis aims to reveal the interrelations between neoliberalism, the internationalisation of media, especially television as well as those of more international cultural texts (including genres and technologies), and the subsequent development of globalisation: What made Western states move to neoliberalism? What impacts did the newly emerged political viewpoint have on the media industries? What impact do the media have on globalisation? How did cultural policies develop in a particular country (Germany) during the 1980s? How are political, economical and cultural developments in the context of globalisation connected? Is the internationalisation of the media industry reversible?²

1.2 Structure

Chapter two focuses on the term (*neo*) *liberalism*, its inherent ideas, and its re-emergence in the 1970s with its implications on the global media sector. In this context, it will also define the word *deregulation*, an important political tool for neoliberal policies not only in the media but also in various other fields. In addition, a closer look at the field of *media policy* is needed as this work is based on the assumption of a globalisation of cultural policies. The final focus is on the term *globalisation* itself.

Chapter three draws a more precise picture of the emergence of liberal policies in the Western world in the 1970s and 1980s. What triggered the political change from a *Fordist* model of society to a *post-Fordist* model, implying a retreat of the state in favour of more freedom for international markets? Moreover, it explores what role the media sector played in the shift to an *information society* and how the media sector developed under the new ideology in the United States and in Western Europe. The chapter then concludes that the international media market became more and more interconnected and interrelated which led to a large movement towards media concentration in a global context.

² The notion of 'Western' countries in this work will generally refer to nations which have experienced a history of democracy and economic liberalisation in recent decades; generally the North American countries and the members of the European Union (excluding the former communist countries).

Chapter four narrows the focus on the liberalisation of the media sector in the Western world to one particular example. Referencing Western Germany's broadcasting policy in the mid-1980s, it will have a closer look at the forces that triggered the liberalisation of Germany's broadcasting sector. To put those developments in a broader context, the chapter will also refer to the history of Germany's broadcasting and its particular characteristics.

Furthermore, the chapter will specify the political implications of the "media revolution" (Humphreys, 1994:239). How did the political tools for liberalising the broadcasting sector emerge? What impacts did those policies have on Germany's broadcasting sector? Why did the political change of the broadcasting policies lead to an increase in globalisation?

The conclusion will sum up the implications of global media on cultural globalisation. Moreover, it points out the main characteristics and ideas of the cultural policies of Western countries in the 1980s and their implications for the globalisation of cultural politics. It will also refer to the main characteristics of the media policy of Western nations. However prior to this, I will have a look at how (cultural) policies might change due to what Gordon Brown calls "the first financial crisis in the global age" (Brown, 2008:82).

.