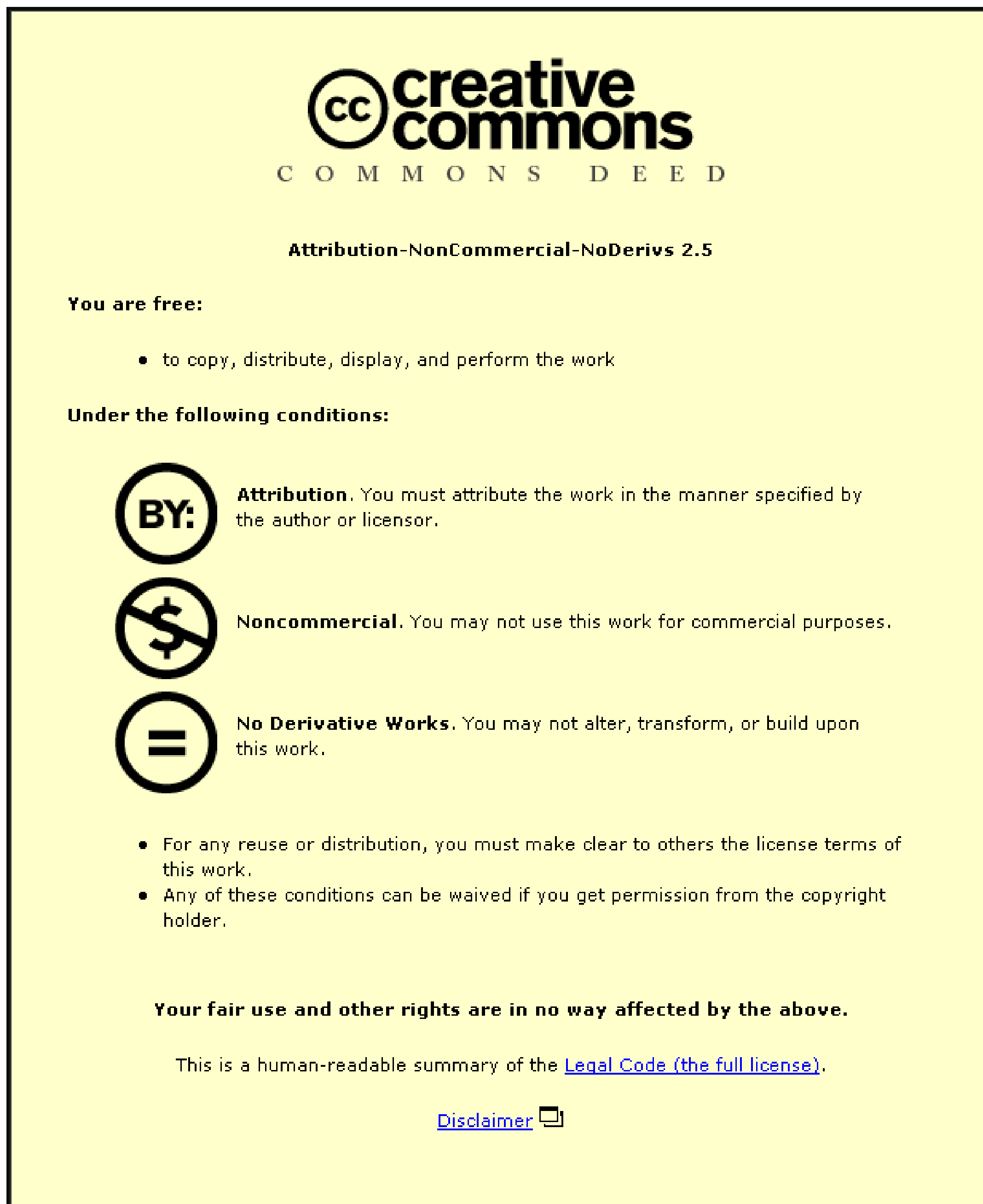


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CULTURAL IMPERIALISM AND SATELLITE

TELEVISION IN IRAN

by

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A Doctoral Thesis

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ABSTRACT

The increasing flow of international and Western cultural and information input into Iran, via satellite technologies, has affected the traditional, cultural and religious heritage of the country. Considering the political, cultural and economic realities of Iran and the history of its media, this research intends to examine the uneven flow of information and entertainment of global media via satellite in Iran within the context of the international communication and cultural imperialism theory.

This study attempts to revise the cultural imperialism theory through a case study and identifies its limitations and the areas that could be developed within its infrastructure such that it will be applicable to the current situation and contemporary arguments of the media flow. It reviews the cultural imperialism theory in the light of the active audience's perspective and analyses the mixed and contradictory dynamics of reconstruction, adoption and resistance of international media.

This research analyses the emergence of Persian language satellite television news and entertainment in Iran. A mixture of political, cultural and economic pressures dominates the editorial conduct of those expatriate and Persian language satellite channels. Political pressures, however, seem to be playing the most apparent role in that process.

This study critically analyses the activities of Jaam-e-Jam and VOA Persian language satellite channels and examines the factors that affect the editorial policies and practice of the studied channels. It addresses these issues by studying the evolution, style of ownership, organisational structure, and content as well as editorial and managerial power hierarchy of those channels. In order to assess the attitudes, and encoded messages of these stations, a combination of content and discourse analysis is used. This research also empirically examines the audience's response in a detailed focus group investigation to see how they perceive and interpret the encoded messages.

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Outline of Thesis

In the global flow of communication and information, each country plays a different role and displays different characteristics. Therefore, in order to understand the existing situation, there seems to be a need for individual flow studies. The primary concern of this study is to adopt a theoretical construct which acknowledges both the international domination and internal forces in the process of cultural flow. It also aims to adopt a framework to study the uneven flow of information and entertainment of global media programmes via satellite in Iran and examine their cross-cultural impacts. In this study, the question of how Iran is tied into the global system of domination through satellite broadcasting is analysed within the context of the international communication debates and theory of cultural imperialism.

Chapter one tries to revise the cultural imperialism theory and identify its weaknesses and limitations and to identify the areas that could be developed within its infrastructure. It assesses the existing media flow between nations and focuses on the transfer of technology and the importation of programmes to establish the theoretical and methodological framework for the study.

Chapter two examines the process of cultural imperialism through the emergence of modernity and advent of capitalism in Iran and also examines the local dynamics and resistance of people demonstrated in anti-imperialism movements throughout the country's history. It is concerned with the cultural homogenisation and the way that this issue has been responded to and rejected in Iran. The relevance of this chapter is to contribute to the body of knowledge analysing the character of cultural imperialism through modernisation process and capitalist development in Iran and the role of Islam. It focuses on how Iran has been engaged with the West and cultural imperialism throughout its history and how people have resisted the Western domination.

Chapter three demonstrates the historical and contemporary elements and internal forces that have worked alongside with the external forces of cultural imperialism, both of which have had a great impact on the socio-cultural patterns of Iranian society. It outlines the historical background of television in Iran, its recent development and the framework of IRIB. It analyses the technical and programme structure of Iranian television and discusses the technical dependency accompanied by imported programmes both before and after the revolution. It also looks into general

features of the Iranian television after the 1979 Revolution and analyses the ideological and political infrastructure and examines the Islamisation of the media in Iran, in both content and operation. In this, it looks into the internal forces behind Western cultural imperialism both before and after the revolution and studies the main factors underlying the huge popularity of satellite television in Iran.

Chapter four, through investigating the political propaganda, tries to examine the relationship between international politics and international satellite broadcasting and tries to demonstrate the active role played by the state in its engagement of ideological warfare. In order to achieve this objective, this chapter will focus on the activities of the Jaam-e-Jam expatriate satellite television and the Voice of America and their relationship to propaganda.

Chapter five examines the agenda and the attitudes of the programme contents of the two studied satellite channels. Content analysis will be conducted to ascertain the news agenda and type of production in both Jaam-e-Jam and VOA, and also to identify the main differences in news stories, and the way in which the bulletin and news periods are constructed, i.e. presenters, running sequence, duration, the stories and how they are covered on the two television stations. The emphasis will be put on the location of a news story, its subject matter, source, duration, the type of visual material used and its main character.

Chapter six focuses on the representation of the news stories, as well as the ideological functions which they may serve. It builds the case for a discourse study by trying to discover deeper levels of the creation of meaning, which in traditional content analysis cannot be adopted. The main purpose of this analysis is to investigate the portrayed images and the language used in news reporting in both stations. The intention of this investigation is to, within a discourse analytical framework, make these images explicit.

Chapter seven, by undertaking focus group investigation, examines the audience's interaction in a process in which the media messages are interpreted. It attempts to study the potential effects of satellite programming in Iran. It tries to draw a picture of the current cultural situation in Iran and the reasons for viewing satellite televisions by people. It specifically tries to point out the cultural and social problems, which competing ideology and politics of the state may pose for people, and therefore increase desire amongst them to watch material different from that on Iranian TV. It examines the effects of the studied satellite televisions and the impacts of their

propaganda on Iranian audience. This study uses the encoding-decoding model to analyse the focus group results which, as a structured model, facilitates identification of different orientations towards the interpretation of responses and the audience's perception of the media messages.

In the conclusion, the results of field studies will be analysed.

Part One

Cultural Imperialism and Mass Media

Chapter One

Cultural Imperialism

1.1 Introduction

We have reached an era in which television plays a crucial role in giving a new dimension to the possibility for interchange of ideas and information between people. Its contents affect the people's socio-economic life, politics, cultures, national systems and international relationships in different levels. The demand for the modern technologies and ready-made programmes increased rapidly with the development of television and satellite channels. As the broadcasting time has increased, so has the need for advanced television infrastructures.

The flow of Western culture via television programmes has arguably undermined the indigenous culture of developing countries. These cultural products may have great impact upon the feelings, thoughts and cultural values of people. It can be argued that although the emergence of advanced technologies have brought a degree of development to the broadcasting structure of developing countries, the creative uses for technology have yet to be carried out. In this respect, the existing unequal and imbalanced flow of cultural materials between North and South seems to be reinforced by these new communication technologies.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

Many assessments and rejections were directed towards the earlier Western modelled modernisation theory by the Third World countries in the last two decades. The rise of the debate over the New International Information Order as an essential part of the New International Economic Order also continued with these criticisms. The growth of the cultural imperialism approach can be seen in this framework. In

addition, the developments in communications technology, such as cable network, and Direct Broadcast Satellites, have also caused an increasing gulf between developed and developing countries in terms of access to technology. Under these circumstances, cultural imperialism and dependency theory have gained a new dimension.

The Modernisation theory describes the media as a tool for development and focuses on the national level of modernisation and on socio-psychological factors to determine the ways in which modern communications media could help accelerate the process of development and modernisation. The media imperialism perspective, however, emphasises the global structure of dependency and dominance relationships and international socio-political system, which decisively determines the course of media development within the ambit of each nation.

Fred Fejes uses media imperialism in a broad and general manner to describe “the process by which modern communication media has operated to create, maintain and expand systems of domination and dependence on a world scale” (Fred Fejes, 1981, P.281). Transnational corporation activities, internal factors in each nation state, and their impact on the culture, are the major concerns of the cultural imperialism approach. What is cultural imperialism, if it still exists, and how might this phenomenon be understood? This chapter attempts to explore the notion of cultural imperialism, and its many definitions within communication studies. Through a critical review of the notion, it will examine how the theorists of cultural imperialism explain the uneven flow of information and cultural products, and the unification of culture. Since the cultural imperialism perspective was developed in order to challenge the modernisation theory through the emergence of the dependency model, the cultural imperialism argument could best be understood by presenting some underlying points of the dependency model, and together, briefly, briefly examine the suggestions made by modernisation and diffusion models to improve socio-economic systems of developing countries.

1.3 Modernisation Theory and Dependency

Modernisation theory is based on spreading economic wealth to different, less affluent, social structures, thereby encouraging economic development and

improvement. Thus, development was thought of as an economic growth package, functioning as both a set of Western economic aims in developing countries together with the cultural, political, social and economic development of the so-called Third World nations. Modernisation theorists mainly attempted to convert a traditional society into a modern society based on Western-modelled industrial economic infrastructures, which in the end would only serve the economic and commercial interests of the advanced capitalist countries (Servaes, 1986, p.205). Manuel Castells also, by regarding the gap between North and South and the coexistence of societies with different levels of modernisation, argued that: "Indeed we observe the parallel unleashing of formidable productive forces of the informational revolution, and the consolidation of black holes of human misery in the global economy" (Castells, 1998, p.2). Since most of these black holes are located in the south, Kagarlitsky argues that "the problem is not that some countries are less modernised than others, but capitalism, which proclaims a global modernisation, is incapable of ensuring that it is carried out" (Kagarlitsky, 2000, p.115).

The economic analysis of 74 Third World countries in 1973 by Adelman and Morris reveals that economic growth has not improved the distribution of wealth and welfare either among social groups or among lower income groups in those countries (cited in Lee, 1979, p.18). It seems that the gap between the rich and poor, in other words, widened in developing countries as a result of some implications advocated by the modernisation. Therefore, the existing pattern of economic and technological domination and dependency was merely deepened. Golding and Elliot criticised the historical view of the modernisation approach with respect to developing countries that needed an 'external stimulus', such as advanced countries, to help bring them into the twentieth century. This view ignores the history of underdeveloped countries, many which have still not progressed because of the external domination of developed countries (Elliott and Golding, 1974, P.237). The role and function of communication as an energising tool of development and modernisation was also discussed by modernisation theorists. Since the United Nation's Declaration on Freedom of Information in 1948, which was rooted in the free-trade doctrine, most research on international mass media was influenced by the modernisation view (Schement, 1984, pp. 163-165). According to this perspective, exportations of Western media and the distribution of communication technologies would enable the Third World to create the necessary conditions of economic and social growth needed to improve their

situation (Herman and Mosco, 1980, p. 352). However, this view has been criticised by Sreberny-Mohammadi, as she argues that "Export of highly developed and sophisticated technologies to the Third World, often controlled by transnational corporations, brings environmental problems, and economic and other 'ties' without the basic scientific knowledge to build on and expand such technologies" (In Golding, 1996, p.65). More importantly, there is a cultural component attached to all technological issues, especially the acceptance of the superiority of Western values and practices. In this respect, as Hveem points out, the transfer of technology is often reflected in a deep loss of confidence in one's own culture (Hveem, 1983).

The role of mass media in national development was initially conceived by modernisation theory scholars such as Lerner, Schramm and Rogers, for whom sharing communication technologies was the most fundamental and important aspect for the diffusion of new ideas (cited in Lee, 1979, p.19). Lerner's studies in the Middle East focused on psychological changes in the 'modernised individual'. Rogers concerned himself with the psychological responses to the diffusion of the technological innovations, while Wilbur Schramm discussed the adoption of Western media systems in the Third World countries in a widely influential book distributed under the U.S. and UNESCO sponsorship. Media infusionists contended that the initial dependence of developing countries would be followed by a corresponding growth of domestic capabilities. In this way, the Third World could learn, adopt and borrow advanced technology and culture in order to improve their indigenous cultural forms of expression. Moreover, they insisted on an open interaction with core countries as they believed that culture does not need protection (Lee, 1979, pp.50-52). However, it has been argued that even economically developed countries such as South Korea and Japan have been influenced negatively by Anglo-American culture and media. By 1976, the dominant paradigm of modernisation had passed, although in fact, this theory still survives in a greatly modified form (Sinclair, 1990, p.286).

The developmentalist modernisation perspective, which tried to achieve Third World development by transferring massive capital and technology, was challenged by the dependency theory. In contrast to the modernisation paradigm, some critical empirical work on international communication (Schiller 1969, Tunsall 1978, Nordenstreng 1974, Varis 1983, and Mattelart 1979) indicated that mass media exports from technologies to programmes flowing freely from developed countries to the Third World have merely reinforced overall dependency and domination. This challenge

can be seen as a part of a broader movement among Latin American scholars during the 1960s, which sought to account for the increased social inequality, national indebtedness, technological dependency and economic domination by rapidly expanding transnational corporations allegedly caused by economic development politics (Sinclair, in Martin and Hiebert, 1990, p.207). By the end of 1950, with a subsequent attempt to reveal the reasons for regression, theories of imperialism began to consider the common effects of imperialism and capitalist development on overseas territories.

The dependency approach was also outlined by Paul Baran. He pointed out that development and underdevelopment is a two-way process in which advanced capitalist countries develop through the transfer of economic surplus value from overseas countries, while the overseas countries remain underdeveloped because of continuing exploitation caused by the Western ascendancy (Hoogvelt, 1982, p.166). Frank's work on Latin America was an elaboration of Baran's perspective, defining dependency as a body of neo-colonial international relations between "the centre and periphery" throughout the global system. The centre and periphery are structurally joined together and development in the former dominantly determines underdevelopment in the latter (cited in Servaes, 1986, p.208).

Wallerstein (1979) took Frank's concept of the "development of underdevelopment" as a starting point for his work. He stated that the world economy has been a capitalist economy since at least the sixteenth century, and that it has remained virtually unchanged. The power of transnational companies, which dominate international trade by controlling the price of basic materials, has further maintained the system of dependency between centre and periphery even after the colonial period. On the other hand, structuralist dependency writers, such as Cardoso and Flatto, also discussed the assumptions of imperialism, arguing that capitalist systems both exploit and develop the Third World. According to them, dependency does not necessarily only create a negative impact, as well as that internal factors are not as 'lifeless and stagnant' as Frank argued (cited in Hoogvelt, 1982, p.185).

The common arguments about the dependency theory can therefore be summarised as follows:

1. Dependency causes underdevelopment in terms of a global network of exploitation between 'metropolis and satellite' societies. External factors,

mainly developments in the metropolitan centres, determine and maintain the underdevelopment in the periphery.

2. Western metropolitan centres tend to perpetuate this dependency of the Third World to ensure favourable conditions for the export of their commodities.
3. Dependency is regarded as the central feature of the international economic system, both under colonialism and neo-colonialism.
4. A remedy for this dependency is suggested to be a 'severance of ties to the external capitalist powers' and 'socialist radical break' (Lee, 1979, p.32).

Criticisms directed towards the dependency perspective also can be summarised as follows:

1. It overemphasises economic determination and neglects cultural changes in dependent societies.
2. It incorrectly evaluates the internationalisation of capital and production.
3. It analyses internal classes and states within the periphery as passive factors of dependency and also neglects demographic and physical locations in the countries concerned.
4. It does not show how socialist societies fit into the world system.

1.4 Cultural Imperialism Theory

Since the 1970s, mass media scholars and researchers such as Schiller, Mattelart, Varis and Lee, have investigated global mass communication problems within the broader context of the dependency model and within the media imperialism approach. Schemert and Rogers distinguish between economic imperialism and cultural imperialism in the case of the media flows. The former refers to the financial dependency that is created by the sale of, for example, television series, films and news services to a developing country. This perspective proposes that national cultures, weakened by historical and economic circumstances, have been eroded by Western media dominance. Cultural imperialism is much more pervasive than economic imperialism, as it includes the importation of ideology that is inherent in all media flows (Schemert and Rogers, 1984, p. 308). They argue that sometimes media flows do not involve economic imperialism at all. For instance, the French government follows a policy of promoting French culture through assisting the

development of television and other media in former French colonies. This is cultural imperialism, but not necessarily economic imperialism. Although in most cases the two go together, Schemert and Rogers' view is to analyse them separately in order to gain greater opportunities for a better understanding of the media flow (Schemert and Rogers, 1984, p.308). Consequently, in their opinion, the motivation for economic imperialism is mainly a desire for profits rather than a desire to change another nation's culture. On the other hand, as McPhail stresses, the most recent manifestation of colonialism is electronic colonialism, which targets the mind. It aims to influence attitudes, desires, beliefs, lifestyles, consumer opinions or purchasing patterns of consumers in the developing world (McPhail, 1981). It can be argued that although economic interests are more important to exporters of communication hardware and software, the way for the survival of their dominant position is to produce new cultural patterns and values, which will make people consume more and more. As a result, these patterns created by metropolitan media centres are absorbed into recipient countries, bringing fundamental changes to their indigenous culture and lifestyles, ranging from tastes in food, clothing and music to native customs, artistic manifestation and even moral values. Cultural imperialism explains that Western dominance has perpetuated and increased inequalities in social, political, and economic systems that were inherent in the colonial system of Third World countries. The domination of a country's media activities by another are frequently described by the terms "cultural imperialism" (Golding), "communication imperialism" (Lee), "media imperialism" (Boyed-Barrett), and even more narrowly and specifically, "television imperialism" (Tunstall). Cultural imperialism is the one-way spread of a social system from the West across the globe. It leads to the decline of local traditional values in favour of Western capitalist values. Despite the freedom of many formerly colonised countries, their social systems remain heavily influenced by cultural, social, and economic facets of life in Western countries.

Petras defines cultural imperialism as:

"the systematic penetration and domination of the cultural life of the popular classes by the ruling classes of the West in order to reorder the values, behaviour, institutions, and identity of the oppressed peoples to conform to the interests of the imperial classes...United States cultural imperialism has two major goals, one economic and the other political: to capture markets for its cultural commodities and to establish hegemony by shaping popular consciousness...The principal target of cultural imperialism is the political and economic exploitation of youth" (Petras, 1993, P.139).

Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi views imperialism as a 'double-edged sword', which "must be seen as the major global diffuser of modernity, its cross-cultural carrier", pointing out that "they (Westerners) brought Western patterns of child-rearing and family life; of cuisine – from dried baby milk to packaged Western foods – and of leisure pursuits, such as cricket, now quite indigenised in the way it is played in Bombay or Barbados, and many other cultural habits and tastes" (Sreberny-Mohammadi, in Golding and Harris, 1997, p.66). She acknowledges the historical dimension of imperialism, in the areas of cultural impacts and argues that:

"It is relatively easy to discuss the 'cocacolonization' of the world, even the 'seikolonization' of global time; this ...as a reminder of the many, varied and deeply integrated structures of modernity that were in place long before these others, more superficial cultural changes. Many Southern cultures had already been irrevocably changed long before any electronic media arrived" (Sreberny-Mohammadi, in Golding and Harris, 1997, p.67).

Sreberny-Mohammadi, from a historical perspective, traces the roots of modernity, seeing it as the seeds which were sown centuries ago by Western imperialism. She outlines the impact of imperialism and its multi-faced cultural role in Third World countries. For her, this complex cultural role contains the elements of modernity that have negatively influenced the economic, social and psychological situation in developing countries. She criticises the various definitions and research of cultural imperialism, stressing that these documented studies have not adequately represented the historical dynamics of Western cultural penetration that continue to prevail within the modern infrastructure of Third World nations. She argues, "Yet, from the beginning, the concept was broad and ill-defined, operating as evocative metaphor rather than precise construct, and has gradually lost much of its critical bite and historic validity" (Sreberny Mohammadi, in Golding and Harris, 1997, p.49). She points out that these studies are 'either a discourse analyses on the global spread of modernity that focus on the textual or attribute this modernisation to the post WWII economic developments'. Sreberny Mohammadi categorises the major colonial influences of modernity in education, administration, language, etc. in the Third World, providing under each category a historical elaboration of the influences of the Western colonial powers and their economic, cultural, professional and socio-political impacts on the colonised countries.

Samir Amin (2001), by emphasising the historical dimension of imperialism, also indicates that imperialism is not a stage of capitalism; it is inherent in capitalism's

expansion. He argues that the imperialist conquest of the planet by the Europeans and North Americans was carried out in two phases and is currently entering a third one. Amin stresses that the first phase of this enterprise was marked by the destruction of the Indian civilisation by the United States. The second phase of imperialism, as argued by Amin, was based on the industrial revolution that manifested itself in colonial subjection of Asia and Africa in order to open their markets and to seize the natural resources of the globe. This phase of imperialism and the polarisation of the world, as Amin states, have increased the inequality between the North and the South. He argues that by the end of eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, by the political independence of the Asian and African nations, and also by the independence of the Americas, capitalism had adjusted itself to the new situation. Amin pointed out 'we have entered a third wave of imperialism expansion' (Amin, 2001, Available at: www.monthlyreview.org/0601amin.htm). He also argues that:

“although the objectives of dominant capital are still the same – the control of the expansion of markets, the looting of the earth's natural resources, the super exploitation of the labour reserves in the periphery - they are being pursued in conditions that are new and in some respect very different from those that characterised the preceding phase of imperialism” (Ibid).

Amin points out that in this new version of imperialism, the ideological discourse designed to secure the assent of the peoples of the central Triad (the United States, Western European, and Japan) has been refurbished and is now founded on the 'duty to intervene' that is justified by the defence of 'democracy', the 'rights of peoples', and 'humanitarianism' (Samir Amin, 2001, Available at: www.monthlyreview.org/0601amin.htm).

According to the cultural imperialism argument, global cultural flows are not part of a civilising or development process, but involve cultural imposition and dominance.

Neo-Marxist radical communication researchers have used the concept of cultural imperialism, which is placed in the framework of the economic dependency theory, to explain international media activities between rich and poor nations. This perspective also concerns the relationship between ownership and control of the media and power structures in society; the ideological signification of meaning in media messages and its effects in reproducing the class system (Curran, 1977, p.9). Nordenstreng and Varis suggest that mass communication in capitalist societies fulfils the functions of marketing profit as a branch of commercial industry, controlling consciousness inside

society in order to maintain the continuity of the socio-economic status quo. Furthermore, these functions are completed through the maintenance of an alliance between developing countries' governments and international capitalist corporations. Therefore, the flow of mass media products seems to be not only a commercial exchange, but also part of the Third World's communication structure which is under the influence of external powerful capitalist communication systems (Varis, in Lee, 1979, p.35). They claim that there is a link between international capitalism and the domestic elite, a view which Lee argues is over-simplistic. According to Lee's study in 1979, for example, in Taiwan the government elite and media commercial elite coalesced to diminish foreign dependence of television products because local programming found greater market acceptability, despite many intellectuals' demand for more slick foreign programmes (Lee, 1979, p.40). In addition, Murdock and Golding examined how transnational conglomerates control "the production and distribution of ideas of their age" (In Curran, 1977, p.28). Another definition given by Schiller points out that 'the term of cultural imperialism is the sum of process by which a society is brought into the modern world system and the manner in which its dominating structure is attracted, pressured, and forced into shaping social institutions to correspond to, or even to promote the values and structures of the dominant centre of the system' (Schiller, 1976).

Herbert Schiller was concerned with the issue of power in the cultural industries. In 1976, he wrote *Communication and Cultural Domination*, in which he outlines the growth of multinational and transnational corporations and their influence around the world. Schiller's (1991) concept of cultural imperialism is based on a feeling of injustice with the way the communication industry has become a means for international domination. The cultural imperialism perspective was developed in the late 1960's, as Schiller's book criticised American cultural exports for representing an imperialistic institutional policy to subjugate the world. In his analysis of the mass media in the U.S., Schiller argues that the major engine of American media's dominant position is a product of its military industrial complex. Schiller asserts that the U.S. mass media has served to present American control of the world communications system, for example by creating a global consumer society and promoting the concept of good life at home and abroad. Communication imperialism is, to him, a conscious and organised effort adopted by the U.S. military-communication conglomerates to maintain a commercial, political and military

superiority (Schiller, 1969). Schiller compared the Northern control of media systems to “economic measures of domination-control of capital and markets and of the infrastructure of international finance” (Schiller, 1976, p.1). He explained that those who control a nation’s media control the minds of that nation’s citizens because the media represents, expands, and creates social reality. Media content influences audience goals, perceptions, and expectations in life. Schiller explains that cultural imperialism can be attributed to three main causes. The first is the current domination of the world market by the North, particularly the United States. The features of the market are determined by the core power, for the benefit of the core power and its allies, who maintain that the rest of the countries in the world must conform to the dictates of a country whose needs are much different than their own. He calls this the one-dimensional flow of information. The second cause is the existence of the class structures within nations. These also extend across nations, placing some nations subordinate to others. The third cause is that the cultural products of a country are imbued with its values, norms, and philosophies. This serves to bombard the world, whose cultural information flow is dominated by Northern products, with capitalist ideas. The constant repetition and continuous consumption of Western media reinforces capitalist ideologies and aids multinational corporations in “securing world-wide markets and unimpeded profitability and ... [domination of] every cultural space that separates them from total control of their global or national environment” (Schiller, 1976, p.7). In Schiller’s eyes, the rising popularity of television was responsible for much of this cultural assimilation. Communication technology, marketing, and techniques of persuasion, manipulation, and cultural penetration combine to further Northern goals of domination (Schiller, 1976). Due to cultural domination, Third World nations are forced to conform to the status quo, to accept the one-dimensional flow of information, and adopt the customs of the West. Media perpetuates this relationship because it defines social reality; it is the teacher from which Third World countries learn to assimilate (Schiller, 1976).

Faced with the rising popularity of the concept of globalisation, Schiller updated his cultural imperialism thesis in ‘Not Yet the Post-Imperialist Era’, explaining that while most of the theory remains the same, the centre of power has shifted and national powers have a less important position than transnational corporations (1991). Western, particularly American, production of cultural products was still seen as serving to eradicate local culture, but as time passed, the institutional power had

shifted. While American influence was waning, “transnational corporate cultural domination” had maintained the imperialist cultural practices (Schiller, 1991, p.120). Another change Schiller notes is that television, once the prime means of cultural transmission, is now part of a package of cultural products. Maintaining that cultural imperialism still exists, Schiller refutes claims of cultural diversity, the emergence of a global community, and the concept of an active audience capable of mediating media messages. Schiller described imperialism as the state in which Western (primarily American) media products dominate culturally, alongside and often in conjunction with TNC’s. According to Schiller, cultural imperialism is a purposeful project in which media networks become vehicles for the cultivation of a dominant Western ideology in Third World nations.

Golding stresses that the media in developing countries have been transplanted from ‘metropolitan centres’. He notes that this can be interpreted through two theoretical assumptions. The first is ‘the transfer of technology’ and the second is ‘the problem of cultural imperialism’, which is a more ‘inclusive’ term than ‘media imperialism’ since it embraces international media, educational and cultural systems (In Curran, 1977, p.291). Particularly, ‘media professionalism’ is an ideology which has been transferred in parallel to the transfer of technology and is part of the general stream of cultural dependence. Media professionalism arrives at developing countries by means of their acquirements of modern technology together with the necessary professional operational skills and attitudes. Professionalism is integrated into a dominant culture and it has been carried through three mechanisms as Golding puts forward: ‘Institutional Transfer’, ‘Training and Education’, and ‘The Diffusion of Occupational Ideologies’ (In Curran, 1977, p.288). Like Golding, O'Brien also deals with ‘transfer and cultural imperialism’. Her study involves the nature and extensions of Third World countries, including ‘the transfer of institutional forms and professional practice in broadcasting’, and the ‘taste transfer’ of demand for advertised products and orientation to Western life styles shown in imported programmes (cited in Sinclair, 1990, p.288).

Non-Marxist media researchers have mainly focused on the economic scale of Americanisation, different individual-national dynamics and the positive, as well as negative effects, of international communication flow on indigenous cultures. Internal factors were granted more attention by non-Marxist authors. They claimed that each

country is able to move its internal forces to counteract external media influences in the process of development (Lee, 1979, p.43).

Boyd-Barrett defines media imperialism as "the process whereby the ownership, structure, distribution or content of the media in one country are singly or together subject to substantial external pressures from the media interests of any other country or countries without proportionate reciprocation of influence by the country so affected" (Boyd-Barrett, in Curran, 1977, p.117). He argues that media imperialism, as term, includes a 'much more specific range of phenomena' than the term of 'cultural imperialism'. He distinguishes the modes of media imperialism; 'the exportation' of international media influence as a deliberate commercial or political strategy, or 'the dissemination' of this influence unintentionally or without deliberation in a more general process of political, social or economic influence. After this comes the adoption of this influence as a deliberate commercial or political strategy, or the absorption of this influence, which is unreflective, and the result of contact (cited in Curran, 1977, p.119). For him, the various kinds of transfer could be organised under the general concept of 'media imperialism', which relate to the classic theories of imperialism. The four components of media imperialism are specified by Boyd-Barrett as:

1. 'The shape of communication vehicle', involving a specific technology at the consumer end and a typical range and balance of communication contents
2. A 'set of industrial arrangements' for the continuation flow of media production, involving a given structural relationship and financial facilities
3. 'A body of values' about ideal practice
4. 'Specific media content and market penetration' (In Curran, 1977, p.120).

According to Galtung, 'communication imperialism' is different from cultural or media imperialism because 'the word of communication' includes not only media activation but also transportation and communication technologies as well (Galtung, 1971). Similarly, Lee prefers the term of 'communication imperialism', which is based on Boyd-Barrett's definition of 'media imperialism'. According to Lee, communication imperialism is "the process in which the ownership and control over the hardware and software of mass media as well as other forms of communication in one country or together subjugated to the domination of another country with deleterious effects on the indigenous values, norms and culture" (Pall S. Lee, 1987, p.74). Although different concepts are used to explain the domination of a country's

mass media activities by another, there are three basic concerns commonly shared amongst authors, as Lee concludes: 1) exportation of both the hardware and software of mass media; 2) apart from normal media, other forms of communication such as satellites, computers, data bank service and transportation are also concerned; 3) the need for examining the cultural impact of the international communication activities on the developing countries. He also suggests that three further dimensions should be given attention in order to build the theory for the study of unbalanced international communication activities; "the role of interacting states", "the nature of the dependency of peripheral state", and "the effect of the unbalanced communication pattern on the dependent state" (Pall S. Lee, 1987, p.81).

Katz and Wedell, who reject any strong television imperialism, confirm the importance of broadcasting technology, emphasising the heavy commercial advertising, the predominance of American entertainment series and the relative absence of high quality educational and cultural television programmes in studied countries (Katz and Wedell, 1977). Like Boyd-Barrett they examined the structure of international communication activities from the process of export to the process of adoption and absorption of this influence. Critics and active audience theorists have also argued that the cultural imperialism theory does not acknowledge the active media audience member. Active audience theorists, such as Tamar Liebes and Ien Ang, have conducted research illustrating how domestic audiences respond to Western media in an attempt to prove that cultural imperialism does not exist. Liebes studied the impact of the popular TV programme "Dallas" in Israel. Applying the active-audience frame of analysis, the study included four groups of Israeli viewers: Israeli Arabs, Moroccan immigrants, Kibbutz members, and new Russian immigrants. Liebes found that the message imported by "Dallas" depended on the viewers' values that varied according to the experiences of the particular group to which the viewers belonged. The audiences therefore, actively produced meaning while consuming the media product. Another academic, Ien Ang, has also supported this finding through studying the impact of "Dallas" to confront what she termed "a stubborn fixation on that of American cultural imperialism" (cited in Schiller, 1989, P.150).

John Tomlinson also criticises the cultural imperialism thesis for its inability to recognise the creative power of audiences to resist domination of global media. He argues that cultural imperialism is defined by its discourse and that typical definitions of cultural imperialism limit its analysis. He describes the concept as the process by

which cultural products aid in transmitting economic messages and maintains political-economic dominance, providing several reasons for its rejection. He proposes that the contexts in which cultural imperialism exists and the structures that maintain it are often not as premeditated as they seem. Throughout his work he stresses that cultural imperialism is a complex and ill-defined concept because while some theorists explain cultural imperialism as intended domination, imperialism can be the result of efforts without being the intent of those efforts. For example, while Tomlinson wrote his book in English, he did not do so with the underlying intention of promoting English as the language of the literate. Rather, he wrote his book in English because that is the only language in which he can write (Tomlinson, 1991).

Another argument he presents is that the effects of media messages are mediated by other modes of cultural experience, by the people who use them, and by the purpose for which they are used (Tomlinson, 1991). Tomlinson states that progress in analysing cultural imperialism can only be made by closely examining the relationship between media texts and the audience. This is because the influence of media on culture results from a discursive process. He argues that the conflict presented by the concept of intentional cultural domination can be reconciled by considering the process to be the spread of modernity and as a process of cultural loss, not of cultural imposition (Tomlinson, 1991). Further, he explains that "if culture is seen as the resource through which people generate narratives of individual and social meaning and purpose", then cultural imperialism is really a capitalist modernity and cultural loss is a side effect (Tomlinson, 1991, p.173). The modernity he describes is called globalisation and is a more complex concept than cultural imperialism. The latter contains "the notion of a purposeful project: the intended spread of a social system from the centre of one power across the globe," while globalisation is the process of interdependence and interconnectedness that produces integration as the result of economic and cultural practices (Tomlinson, 1991, p.175). Globalisation is a less threatening concept because it explains that the culture of every participant in the global market is diluted, not just the culture of Third World nations. Tomlinson offers a glimpse into the cyclical nature of society by stating that the "processes of globalisation [are linked] with the cultural demands for localisation" (Tomlinson, 1991, p.178).

Having examined "cultural imperialism" in different perspectives the following section tries to place its theoretical and methodological framework within the forms

adopted in the context of cultural imperialism and analyses the transfer of technology and the importation of programmes as the major components of cultural imperialism.

1.5 The Components of Cultural Imperialism

The purpose of this section is to examine the major components of cultural imperialism; the transferring of communication technologies; and the importation of cultural products. The following tries to explain how these factors work together to promote different levels of cultural dependency in developing countries. However, one of these may have a greater impact than the others and may show different characteristics depending on the time or the country under investigation.

Transfer of Technology

Published materials, computer hardware and databases, with international consultant and management fees, often follow the flow of technological goods and services to developing countries. Training courses and the importation of Western methods are also common aspects of the transfer of technology (Gunter, 1978, p.151). Technology has played a crucial role in the economic, social and political developments of different countries for the past two centuries. Since the development of semiconductor technology producing the transistor for commercial use in the early 1950's, the integrated circuit in 1961, and the microprocessor in 1971, communication technologies have shown continuous proliferation and development (Dimmick, 1986, pp.473-508). With these technological improvements, at least three different areas of inequality have appeared which according to Sieghart are: 'the distribution of scientific and technological capabilities', 'industrial capability' and 'the information structures of societies' (Sieghart, 1982).

After the Second World War, the United States emerged as a global power. This situation brought new conditions, such as the alliance of peripheral nation states, to the metropolitan centres and more importantly, new forms of dependency - technological and industrial dependency - which tied developing economies to the developed centre, primarily the U.S., and later Japan. On the other hand, the social history of television in Britain and the U.S. illustrate that neither the invention nor

development of television as a technology, nor its institutional forms, were accidental (Williams, 1984). Williams argues that unlike all previous communication technologies, radio and television were the systems primarily devised for transmission and reception as abstract processes, with little or no definition of proceeding content. The technology of broadcasting developed before the content and has remained a 'by-product of the technology' rather than an independent enterprise. Consequently, in William's view, the current forms of broadcasting are determined by technology and are, in fact, a manifestation of the ideology.

Communications technology is seen to have a direct impact on economic development and political organisation, and to some extent, on lifestyles and culture throughout the world. Marxist dependency writers have come to recognise that the transfer of technology represents "the extension of capitalist production relationship and value appropriation" into the underdeveloped world (Sussman, 1984, p.296). According to Pavlic and Hamelink, the essence of the transfer of information is the transfer of technology. Technology is information represented by "models, diagrams, plans and formulae, embodied in studies, training programmes and equipment and transferred through sales and licensing of patterns and via technical experts"(Pavlic and Hamelink, 1985, p.54). Mowlana also distinguishes communication technology as can be broken down into two components: communication hardware, which is the actual physical carrier of messages (such as satellites, broadcasting and receiving equipment and microwave relay stations), and the communication software, which is the know-how and the means of utilising the hardware such as programme production, manpower skills and education (Mowlana, 1985, p.13).

The advancement of the international communication technologies, developed largely by the U.S., was most beneficial to its economy, as it exports much of the important technological equipments to other countries. This, in turn, brought about the dependency of the Third World on the importation of production and distribution of communication technologies. Thus, the one-way flow of communications technology (the process of export and dissemination) from the economically strong nations to the weaker nations is visible. Boyd-Barrett states that developing countries prefer, or are forced 'to adopt or absorb', the existing models rather than establish their own developmental activities (cited in Curran, 1977, p.121). In addition, most Third World countries do not have the expertise and resources to institute domestic communication

systems that could genuinely reflect their history, needs, concerns, values and culture (McPhail, 1981, p.55).

Although some of the developing countries have produced their own broadcast receiver sets, they are dependent on the importation of cultural products. Also, most of the international communications industry is owned and controlled by giant Japanese and Western transnational media and telecommunications conglomerates. Optimistically, even if the Third World countries could begin to produce their own communication software and hardware, they will always lag behind more technologically advanced countries in the race for development. Even for some industrialised countries, it is difficult to catch up with technologically developed countries such as the U.S. and Japan.

New technologies often create new occupations and new professional opportunities. Technological change, however, requires the constant adaptation of old professional routines and practices, as well as the ideology and the self-image of profession (Gurevitch and Elliott, 1973, p.505). O'Brien notes that 'the professionalisation of broadcasting which is based on exclusiveness and control and reflects transnational patterns of socialisation has been detrimental to initiative and adoption' (O'Brien, cited in Gerbner, 1973). Third World countries have relied on training schemes to fill the gap between their own broadcasting systems and those of the developed world. However, the training schemes of engineers, technicians, producers, operators, directors and so on are also dependent upon the same forces which are mainly former colonialist powers and are currently among economically strong nations (McPhail, 1981). According to Golding, the training of media professionals has taken on three forms: "the attachment of experts from the industrialised countries to media in the Third World", "courses and attachments in industrialised countries" and "training centres in the Third World" (cited in Curran, 1977, p.295). Similarly, Schiller points out that the training of the Third World broadcasters, since the very beginning of the broadcasting, has always been concerned with 'how to run French, British or American style broadcast empires'. However, the real obstacles appear subsequently as they further establish the cultural patterns of broadcasting which are 'endlessly persistent' (Schiller, 1976, p.110). American companies, such as RCA, have been active in supplying technical and vocational training, especially for new television services in the Middle East and elsewhere. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) provides technical and programming courses in addition to sending its experts

abroad. The French too, have their own extremely vigorous training schemes, especially in former French colonies. The United States however, has strived to dominate the prevalent pattern in Latin America, Middle East and Southeast Asia, and has retained its worldwide leadership (Tunstall, 1977, p.217).

The economic and political dependence of the Third World since colonialism, and even long after their national independence was secured, has continued and deepened as a result of cultural-media dependency. It has been very difficult to break from the chain of dependency, as the transfer of broadcasting models, along with the transfer of technology and skills to the Third World, strengthens this dependency. For instance, Iran since the early days of the introduction of the television to the country has purchased all of its broadcasting technical equipments from abroad. As it will be discussed in relevant chapters, the country's dependency on technologically advanced countries not only continued after the 1979 Revolution, but also has deepened due to the dramatic increase of Iranian television channels. Moreover, Western interests have also encouraged the adaptation of educational television in developing countries. It is evident in Latin America that 'telenovelas' resemble Western products in many ways. Basically, three models of broadcasting organisations have been transferred to developing countries; 1) the BBC model; 2) the French model, which has been exported largely to their former colonies; 3) and less centralised, yet more commercial organisations developed in North America and transferred to Latin America, Canada and other developing countries. While the public service British television system intends to inform, entertain and educate, the commercial system is designed mainly to entertain and to inform rather than to educate. The American broadcasting system is based on private enterprise and rationalised by individualism and freedom from political interference by the government. On the other hand, the BBC model is responsible for performing social tasks such as promoting national culture and the need to project ethnic or cultural minorities (Tunstall, 1977, p.217). The American modelled media system seems to be more influential not only in Third World countries, but also in small industrialised nations and more recently, Eastern European countries. The spread of new technologies reinforces and alters some of the existing social and economic structures in the world.

The Importation of Programmes

Along with the transfer of TV broadcasting technology, professional skills and organisational models, developing countries also import Western TV programme material and content. The need for continuous broadcasting, the increasing demands among different audience groups and the cost of production have led to further cultural dependency of Third World countries on imported media products. Basically, there are several determining factors in the flow of TV programming from one country to another. Shortage of capital to provide the back-up material as well as lack of trained technicians, script writers, actors, translators, producers and other essential staff are among those factors. Apart from the governments of the Third World countries that play an important role in the flow of TV programming, other relevant factors that can be listed are: competition, commercial motivation, ethnocentrism, language barriers and degree of cultural similarity between the producing and receiving countries (Pavlic and Hamelink, 1985, p.37).

It has been argued that imported communication technology also ensures the transfer of models, skills and forms. Mowlana asserts that some countries have not transferred the means for production of software programming while they have set the hardware for distribution of programmes. In most Third World countries, domestic television products find themselves competing with 'slick foreign imports and Western established standards of professionalism' (Mowlana, 1985, p.37). Although new technologies have brought about new production skills throughout the world, many countries simply do not have the sufficient production-making capabilities to produce local entertainment and other types of programmes that can compete with Western programmes. In this situation, even technologically advanced countries may not be able to compete. For example, although Japan has been successful in building TV broadcasting hardware industries that are exported to many countries in the world including the U.S. Japan has not been able to do the same with TV programming.

The early studies of international media flow, such as the study of Nordenstreng and Varis' about international TV programme flow revealed that most of the world's television programmes originate in the U.S. (Nordenstreng and Varis, 1974). Their research for UNESCO in 1974 documented the dominance of the U.S. in world television programme exports at that time. According to Mirus and Hosking, the reason for U.S. domination in the international trade of TV programming is due to

tie their broadcasting systems to foreign programming and foreign financial sponsorship (Schiller, 1976, p.107).

Economic profit seeking is the main motivation for international flows, although political and cultural intentions cannot be dismissed. Even in entertainment programmes, which do not have the direct aim of influencing people's attitudes and beliefs, can increase 'unconsciousness consumption patterns' and create false social consciousness. Therefore, imported programme material can distort the shared symbolic meaning in society at the expense of the traditional and elite cultures and arts. The modernisation and social change process, as some scholars argue, can result in a decline of traditional values by fostering new middle class and mass-popular culture (Lee, 1979, p.102). Golding stresses that, for example, African producers imitate the Western products in style, philosophy and format. While local broadcasters make their own programmes, they adopt imported material styles and models. However, it is a discussible concern as to whether these styles and patterns are universal since they have originated from just a few countries. Moreover, performers, producers, announcers, writers, technicians and directors all have examples of the correct practice with respect to selecting appropriate producers and attitudes (Golding, cited in Curran, 1977, p.300). Katz also asserts that authors, musicians, producers and directors often know too little about their own culture, which leaves them unable to produce the material for indigenous programming. Since the introduction of new technologies it seems that it becomes even more difficult to create indigenous and original programme patterns in developing countries. For example, in Iran, when broadcasting technology was first transferred from the West, the Iranian television programme policy also appeared to be characterised by increasing adoption and absorption of Western programmes, models, style and ideas. In 1976, for every show produced domestically, there were three imported shows being broadcast on television. Moreover, 99 out of 100 movies shown on Iranian television were imported mainly from West and the U.S. in particular. After the 1979 Revolution, although the government tried to increase its domestic production, the country still remained dependent on the importation of foreign products, especially Western movies and series to meet people's demand. The dependency of Iranian television on cultural products will be discussed in more detail in the relevant chapter. The U.S. established the norms for global culture through its long-established dominance of the international markets in both feature films and TV programming.

‘Cultural Discount’, which means that ‘a particular programme which is rooted in one culture, is attractive in that environment, however, it will have diminished appeal elsewhere as viewers find it difficult to identify with the style, values and behaviour patterns of the material in question’ (Hosking and Mirus, 1988, pp.499-515). They believe that while Japan's talents are culture-bound and have been developed over the centuries for a closed and uni-cultural society, the U.S. has been producing entertainment programming for a multicultural society. However, they ignore the fact that although the U.S. is the major media production exporter, it imports very few programmes (less than two percent) from abroad. In capitalist societies, the media productions are usually sustained by advertising revenues, which reflect the industrial and commercial structure of the economy and its ties with the economies of other countries (Cardona, 1975, pp.122-127). Audience maximisation is necessary to sell the products and services via advertising messages in the media. This allows advertising agencies to buy the airtime before popular programmes have even been produced (Boyd-Barrett, in Curran, p.127). Therefore, if a programme is rooted in one particular culture it may have a lesser chance of commercial success.

In addition, due to the high cost of making programmes, most developing countries cannot afford it, whereas foreign products can be purchased at a fraction of the minimum cost of domestic products (Golding in Curran, p.300). The most expensive programming from United States become available to broadcasters abroad at low prices due to the demand of the imported market. For example, by 1985 the maximum prices paid per for half an hour American serial by different countries were: Italy \$48,000, Canada \$20,000, UK \$14,000, Sweden \$2,500, Chile \$375, Bermuda \$45. Therefore, with such low prices, producers in many countries, especially in the Third World, cannot compete on an equal economic basis. Even in Canada, it costs a broadcaster about ten times more to produce a domestic drama than to import an American one (Hoskins and Mirus, 1988, p.511). Katz and Wedell also point out that in most countries the basic decision to broadcast even five hours of programme per day is enough to create the need to buy programmes from abroad. Most developing countries are forced to buy foreign products simply because they cannot budget to produce 2000 hours of programmes of reasonable quality per year (Katz and Wedell, 1977, p.162). Additionally, many developing countries can afford the new communication complexes only by accepting commercial packages, which as a result,

This, of course, affects the supply of non- U.S. drama available to compete with American products, both on the international and domestic market. Moreover, a narrow view of the world presented by many programmes, especially those coming from the U.S. led the local people to question their own values and culture. The dominance of entertainment programmes is one of the most important and remarkable points in global media flow. Katz argues that the adoption of Western programmes is the result of a situation where native people (as trainees) are sent to the West or are educated according to the forms of Western programming. They impose these programmes on audiences who have had little or no opportunity to make a choice about the format or content of Western programming (Katz and Wedell, 1977, p.226). There seems to be little doubt that the existing communication technologies and its product flow is largely determined by the economic, cultural and communication policy of developed countries, especially the United States. Today, advanced countries control the global standardisation of communication technology practices and its content within the world information order. Particularly, the U.S. has an immense position in the world-wide transfer of telecommunication technology, TV programmes, film and other cultural production. Globally, the cultural material still flows between nations according to the "one-way street" principle.

Having examined "cultural imperialism and its measure components", the following section focuses on laying the groundwork for the cultural imperialism debate through an examination of globalisation and current trends of media activities. In order to understand the contemporary face of cultural imperialism, this section attempts to examine that what the term globalisation actually means and then assesses the globalisation of culture within the framework of cultural imperialism.

1.6 Cultural Imperialism and the Concept of Globalisation

Some scholars; such as Latouche (1996), Amin (1997), Herman and McChesney (1997), see "globalisation as a new version of Western cultural imperialism, given the concentration of international communication hardware and software power among a few dominant actors in the global arena who want an 'open' international order, created by their own national power and by the power of transnational media and communication corporations" (in Thussu, 2000, p.78).

Robertson believes that 'the process of globalisation has predated modernity and the rise of capitalism. However, modernisation tends to accelerate globalisation and the process has indeed shifted up to high gear during the past 100 years. Moreover, European civilisation is the central focus and also the origin of the development (Robertson, 1992, pp.58-60). Tomlinson describes modernity as globalisation, accepting it as a more accurate explanation of world events than cultural imperialism, but explains that the true problem of both concepts is the way in which "human cultural goals become defined and enacted" (Tomlinson, 1991, p.178). In Tomlinson's *Globalisation and Culture*, he expands upon the discursive nature of culture and the "complex connectivity" of the modern world (Tomlinson, 1999, p.2). He proposes the idea that globalisation is a means by which to culturally imitate the time-space compression brought about by new technology. He proposes that global modernity is characterised by increased connectivity and "global-spatial proximity" that results in "cultural compression," not cultural homogenisation (Tomlinson, 1999, pp.3-7).

For Amin, globalisation is a process that began with the colonisation of the world by the old European colonial countries, which has now become more expanded and is also encouraged by the collapse of the Soviet Union. According to Amin, globalisation is not a recent phenomenon. It is a process that has passed through several stages and is in its latest stage. He views globalisation as a Western phenomenon that began with colonisation. He states that the colonised were given the culture of the coloniser, but that the coloniser took from the culture of the colonised in a discrete way. The coloniser took only those parts of the other cultures that were beneficial to him while giving the colonised all aspects of the coloniser culture irrespective of the wishes of the colonised. This is assumed to be the beginning of cultural imperialism, as stated by Amin. He adds that in the case of cultural colonialism or cultural imperialism, these two alternatives are ruled out. The colonised is forced to adopt the culture of the colonisers irrespective of the wish of the former (Amin, 2001).

European colonialism was associated with the advent of capitalism and also modernity. Capitalism, however, followed colonisation and evolved as a part of Western Modernisation. During this time the nation states also grew in strength, both politically and economically. Lenin identified imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism. However, this was not the case as capitalism continued to evolve. During the stage that was identified by Lenin as imperialism, the political and economic

components of colonialism were prominent. Yet, with subsequent evolution the cultural and economic components became stronger than the political component. In criticising global domination, cultural imperialism theorists argue that the media operates within a single world market organised by the global imperatives of the mainly American and Western European-controlled multinational corporations. Central to the process of economic domination is the role played by the communications-cultural corporations. Media products are largely determined by the same market imperatives that govern the overall system's production of goods and services. Their role is not only informational, but also ideological in that they promote and develop popular support for the values and artefacts of the capitalism system. As Schiller argues, "media cultural imperialism is a subset of the general system of imperialism. It is not freestanding; the media-cultural component in a developed, corporate economy supports the economic objectives of the decisive industrial-financial sectors". He also indicates that "it is the imagery and cultural perspectives of the ruling sector in the centre that shape and structure consciousness throughout the system at large (Schiller, 1976).

At the economic level, there are profound changes characterised by the consolidation of media providers into the hands of a small number of transnational conglomerates, for whom economic considerations are the primary determinants in what meaning should be produced and distributed across the globe. This increasing monopolisation and commodification of culture by a small number of primarily Western media providers raises questions and concerns about the nature of the images and meanings that are distributed around the world. Globalisation in this perspective is seen as characteristic of world imperialism, which attempts to enforce a common culture and economy for the entire world.

1.7 Globalisation of Western Culture

The focus of this section is to draw the contour for the discussion on the so called global culture. Basically the word *Globalisation* mostly refers to the growing inter-dependence between nations as they are drawn into a global economy, the main agents being transnational corporations. Apart from those with well known names, such as Coca-Cola and McDonalds, many of these corporations are involved with

media, communications and information technologies. For this reason, globalisation has also come to mean the threat of cultural homogenisation.

Thussu, by referring to the general patterns of media ownership, indicates that the West, the U.S. in particular, dominates the international flow of information and entertainment in all major media sectors, which could lead to the homogenisation of culture (Thussu, 2000). UNESCO also reported that the world trade for goods with cultural content almost tripled between 1980 and 1991: from 67 billion dollars to 200 billion dollars. According to UNESCO, there has been a significant increase in cultural imports, from \$47.8 billion in 1980 to \$213.7 billion in 1997, showing a jump from \$12 per capita in 1980 to \$44.7 per capita in 1997. Moreover, according to UNESCO, of the total films shown worldwide, 85 per cent are produced in Hollywood. This shows that the U.S. is located as the core of the entertainment industry and indicates the dominance of U.S. products. The World Trade Organisation rules do not allow countries to block imports on cultural grounds. Therefore, a direct consequence of globalisation might be the end of cultural diversity, and the triumph of a homogeneous Anglo-culture, which serves the needs of transnational corporations.

From the sociological point of view, the notion of culture is of primary importance in the globalisation process. There are two major perspectives on the notion of global culture: 1) the 'globalisation of culture in general' and 2) the 'globalisation of cultural industries'. The former focuses on the contra flow of cultural products and people between different regions, whereas the later is based on the convergence of consumerism and mainly focuses on the cultural projection of global capitalism that is dominated by the U.S. and other Western countries. Global culture theorists see culture as an autonomous process and argue that "cultural pluralism is itself a constitutive feature of the contemporary global circumstance" (Robertson, 1992, p.61). For Robertson, the autonomy of the cultural globalisation process is the outcome of inter-state processes that operate independently from conventional designated social and socio-cultural processes. Featherstone refers to the global culture as the 'third culture, which is oriented beyond national boundaries' (Featherstone, 1990, p.6). Accordingly, Hannerz sees this as "a scenario of global homogenisation of culture" (Hannerz, 1993, p.108). However, the theory of global culture has been criticised, as the main problem seems to concern the tension between cultural homogenisation and heterogenisation. Crane, by emphasising the autonomy of local culture against global culture, argues that:

"The globalisation of culture is not the same as the homogenisation of culture. Not only do national cultures modify global cultures but national governments also act as gatekeepers mediating cultural flows. Within a particular country there may be both acceptance and antagonism towards some elements of global culture" (Crane, 1992, p.162).

Moreover, as global culture requires global systems for distribution and marketing of culture, it is important to examine who stands to lose or gain - materially, politically, or culturally - if powerful nation-states and corporations promote global culture as a profitable pursuit.

The global pluralists of the media theory maintain "an optimistic voice regarding the diversity of media producers and locales and the many loops of cultural flows that have merged" (Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1991, pp.121-2). This contra-flow in global media activities has led some scholars to question the cultural imperialism theory. Rogers and Antola argue that Latin America telenovelas shown in the U.S. Spanish networks are an example of some form of 'reverse cultural imperialism' (Rogers and Antola, 1985, p.33). Moreover, Australian scholars, Sinclair, Jacka, and Cunningham (1996), have published a book that presents scholarly writings on the television industries of periphery nations such as Brazil, Mexico, the Middle East, Canada and Australia to prove that the cultural imperialism theory does not hold true in all situations. For example, the Mexican based television, which produces 78% of all its programming, and the Brazilian Globo Network, which produces much of its programmes, has managed to secure and dominate their domestic markets to a degree unmatched by the English-speaking market. These new patterns in global television have been explained by scholars such as Straubhaar who assesses the global movement of cultural products as asymmetrical interdependence. The approach of asymmetrical interdependence is a "flexible and complex" way to look at the uneven global relationships that lead to the development of media systems that range on a continuum from interdependent to completely dependent (Straubhaar, 1991, 43). He discusses the issue of production, which had previously slowed media development in the Third World, but due to the increased affordability of technology, is no longer a large problem. In addition, he supports the idea of an active audience that prefers local media fare and actively constructs its own meanings from media messages. He cites Brazil as an area that has taken Western media products and technologies and adapted them to fit their own needs, which has enabled them to produce programs with national and international appeal (Straubhaar, 1991). The resulting relationship is

unequal, but a give and take does exist. Through this example, Straubhaar explains that the international distribution of Western media products has begun to decline in the last ten to twenty years for a variety of reasons, while local media production has increased. This supports the idea of asymmetrical interdependency—a worldwide phenomenon characterised by the existence and demand for regional media products alongside the consumption of imported media products.

Thussu also argues that: "...their activities are regarded as a cultural revival, acting as a barrier to the flow of Western media products. They have emerged partly as a reaction to perceived Westernisation of the cultures and partly as a reaction to the alleged distortion in representations of non-Western cultures in the global media" (Thussu, 2000, p.204). This however, ignores the recent trends of the transnationalisation of cultural industries, as well as the growing U.S. dominance in the global cultural market. Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi points out that:

"...there were and are many more carriers of Western culture to the Third World than the corporate channels of the culture industries, and the cultural milieu of many developing countries were already 'contaminated', deeply and perhaps irreversibly altered by Western cultural penetration" (in Golding and Harris, 1997, p.51).

She (1997), states that the undermining of domestic media production via U.S. television programs and films that reinforced one-way flows is only one component of cultural imperialism, as she contends:

"Cultural imperialism is not maintaining its rule merely through the export of cultural products, but through institutionalisation of Western ways of life, organisational structures, values and interpersonal relations, language and cultural products...Cultural imperialism should be considered a multi-faceted cultural process since imperialism laid the ground for the ready acceptance and adoption of mediated cultural products which came much, much later" (in Golding and Harris, 1997, p.49).

According to Sreberny-Mohammadi, in media research we need to consider the nature of the transnationalisation of the cultural industries, as well as the flow of cultural products from the North to the South. In addition, Schiller (1976) and Guback (1984) have also emphasised the rise of U.S. corporate power and the U.S. worldwide ideological expansion in their interpretation of cultural imperialism. The organisation of the world market system by transnational capital has encouraged massive capital flows into many developing countries, maintaining and ensuring the U.S.'s global cultural domination. It seems that the U.S. cultural industry, instead of solely focusing

on exporting their cultural goods, have invested in cultural industries in developing countries. Through this, they are still able to dominate the world cultural market and also penetrate commercial ideologies of Western countries. It can be argued that the rise of cable and satellite television channels, as well as terrestrial television channels in Europe, Latin America, and Asia, has expedited the opening of their national markets to foreign producers and distributors, particularly those of the United States. Despite the rise of domestic products in developing countries, the global media industry is still very much overwhelmed by Western products (Tomlinson, 1991). For example, the U.S. film industry still dominates the domestic and international markets, accounting for 93 to 58 percent of the market in various Western European countries (Hesmondhalgh, 2002, p.188). According to the U.S. Department of Commerce (2002), U.S. exports of film and television programmes exceeded \$1 billion in 1985, increasing to \$2 billion in 1990. This has increased from \$7.5 billion in 1999 to \$9.17 billion worth of film and television programmes exports to the world in 2001. U.S. cultural exports have increased as many as nine times between 1985 and 2001. On the other hand, U.S. imports of film and television programmes decreased to \$129 million in 2001 from \$228 million in 1994 (U.S. Department of Commerce 1994; 2002). The U.S. net profit from the export of cultural products was estimated to be over \$9 billion in 2001, making it one of the largest U.S. industries to yield great benefits to the country in the last several decades. Moreover, in 2001, Europe was the largest audiovisual market for the U.S., accounting for 62.8 per cent of imports, followed by Asia at 17.1 per cent. The Asian audiovisual market has shown a 12.8 per cent increase since 1992 due to the increasing number of broadcasting channels (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2002). What remains clear is that the world imports far more cultural products from the U.S. than it sells to it. It seems that the Western TNCs have focused on domestic cultural markets through their capital as well as their cultural goods in the globalisation era. They want deregulation, privatisation, and commercialisation of the media industry in developing countries for easy penetration. Realizing that people prefer to watch programs in their own languages (Thussu, 2000, p.184), the U.S. media giants have adopted a strategy known as “think globally, act locally”. For instance, the U.S. manages some of the international agencies including IMF. On a general level, the IMF seeks to reduce government involvement in business decisions to support capitalism and so-called free markets (Schiller, 1999, p.190). In this light, Schiller points out that:

“American cultural imperialism is not dead. Rather, the older form of cultural imperialism no longer adequately describes the global cultural condition. Today it is more useful to view transnational corporate culture as the central force, with a continuing heavy flavour of U.S. media know-how, skills and practices which are derived from the long experience in marketing and entertainment industry” (Schiller, 1992, pp. 14-15).

Furthermore, although a non-American television market has emerged in recent years (such as Japan with its productions of cartoon films, and Brazilian television ‘Globo’ in producing telenovelas), the marketing policy adopted by those countries is similar to the North American marketing policy. The content of these programmes, especially Brazilian telenovelas, tend to adopt and imitate American soap operas (Melo, 1990, p.94). Oliveria investigated Brazilian telenovelas and notes that Brazilian television programming is “the creolisation of U.S. cultural products. It is the spiced up Third World copy of Western values, norms, patterns of behaviour and models of social relations. His findings indicate that the overwhelming majority of Brazilian soaps have the same purpose as their U.S. counterparts, i.e. sell products (Oliveria, 1990). It seems that since telenovelas concentrate their stories on a glamorised version of Brazilian reality they have a greater chance to capture a large domestic audience than an imported show. Therefore, since selling products, is above all, the role of popular culture in the era of transnational corporate market domination, it appears that those programmes have been used as an advertising and sales platform for transnational corporation products. Especially among the local sponsors for Brazilian programmes are familiar brand names such as Coca-Cola, Volkswagen, General Motors, Levi’s and so on. This indicates that although the availability of satellite platforms and digital technologies, as well as the deregulation of broadcasting, have enabled developing countries to develop their own original broadcasting systems and to export their media products, most of their products seem to be merely domestic adaptations of Western, mainly American, programmes promoting Western values and products. Different from the theory of global culture, the notion of the global cultural industry concentrates on the economic importance of global culture or consumer culture. As Robins argues, “...development of capitalist economies has always had profound implications for cultures, identities and ways of life. The globalisation of economic activity is now associated with further cultural transformation. Now we can talk of the process of cultural globalisation” (Robins, 1989, p.23). However the process of cultural globalisation concentrates on the convergence of culture and lifestyle across

the world and the manufacture of global cultural products, which are mainly produced in Hollywood. According to Sklair (1991), the actors of this global cultural space are the global cultural corporations and therefore the global culture is dominated by the transnational mass media and communication industries. Thussu, by referring to the general patterns of media ownership, indicates that the West, the U.S. in particular, dominate the international flow of information and entertainment in all major media sectors, which could lead to the homogenisation of culture (Thussu, 2000).

With respect to the fear of the McDonaldisation of society, the uneven direction of the flow has been pointed out by scholars such as Ritzer, as he prefers the term 'Americanisation' rather than globalisation, since the latter implies more of a 'multidimensional relationship among many nations' (Ritzer, 1999, p.44). Among the media critics, Douglas Kellner (1990) stresses the emergence of a 'new form of global culture', that with its globally produced images, sounds and spectacles, produce a basis that shapes people's lives and identities. With Kellner's view we observe a claim for the spread of a homogeneous culture, which is underpinned by a notion of a media powerful enough to shape our self-identities and our views of the world.

Moreover, according to some media and cultural critics, the notion of 'global culture' is obliterating local cultures, creating in its wake mirrors of American consumer society. The unequal relation of cultural power existing between the West and the rest of the world through global media and global television in particular has 'created a space of its own as a unique merger of entertainment and information technologies' (Schneider and Wallis, 1988, p.7). Therefore, global television is seen as 'global mass culture', one that is dominated by the image, imagery, and styles of mass advertising' (Hall, 1991, p.27). "This mass culture may be influencing the way people think about their regional or national identities, as they are increasingly exposed to global, which in most part are American, messages" (Thussu, 2000, p.168).

It appears that the global market has been supplied by global TNCs in the forms of economic and cultural organisation, production, and distribution. These giant enterprises pursue historical capitalist objectives of profit-making within continuously changing market and geopolitical conditions. In particular, the global economic expansion has sped ahead, with the triad of the U.S. European and Japanese transnationals buying their way into new markets through mergers, acquisitions, and joint ventures. It appears that such international relations are still more strongly based on inequality and dependence than on interconnectedness and interdependence.

So far this chapter has examined the cultural imperialism thesis, the cultural industries, and the free flow of media products as factors influencing cultural identities around the world. In addition, several ideas related to the globalisation phenomenon and charges of cultural imperialism have also been explored. While these are valuable discussions in and of themselves, it is important to draw together specific aspects and evaluate some of the basic assumptions and areas for criticism in the cultural imperialism argument. It is true that although the international media flow is far more complex than that which is described by the cultural imperialism model of the 1970's, international relations are still nonetheless based on inequality and dependence rather than on interconnectedness and interdependence. However, the present cultural imperialism theory also has its weaknesses and limitations. Basically, theorists of communication have stressed that consumer choice is impacted, globally and regionally, by cross-cultural media exchange (or lack of exchange). Despite these common points, the theorists do not agree on the outcome and effects of this cross-cultural flow of media products. The question that is raised here is: which of these theorists are correct? Can any one concept fully explain such a complex issue? When applied to current media practices, aspects of each of these concepts describe various levels of cultural exchange. In an attempt to sort out the complexities of these arguments, this small investigation will try to revise the cultural imperialism thesis through a case study so that it is applicable to the current situation and contemporary arguments. In order to achieve this objective, this study will critically analyse the historical emergence and the contemporary phase of cultural imperialism in Iran. It is hypothesised that the outcome of cultural imperialism is not the homogenisation of culture, but it creates conflict and resistance within a society. This thesis acknowledges the following criticisms towards the cultural imperialism perspective and the case study that follows this chapter will be based on an analysis of these points:

- 1- The cultural imperialism theory does not acknowledge the concept of the active media audience and does not explain anti-imperialist phenomena such as local dynamics, and resistance within dependent societies.

With regards to media power, the cultural imperialism argument offers an almost omnipotent view of the media that cannot be thoroughly justified. What it offers in terms of the media's power to affect cultural change is a dominance and transmission-based model, which seems to fail in theorising the power of audiences to creatively subvert the power of global media. What makes sense in regards to certain aspects of the debate, such as the conglomeration of ownership, reutilised production, and possibly formatted content, does not apply in terms of the audience and its effects. Adopting such a dominating image of the media creates an environment of co-dependency (which is borrowed from psychology) that casts the audiences as the victims of an all-powerful media system and its messages. Even under the assumption of the homogenisation of media messages due to concentrated ownership and Western bias, cultural imperialism denies the power of the audience to interpret the message and to decipher possible encoded meanings. This study, by undertaking focus group investigations, will examine the audience's interaction in a process in which the media messages are interpreted. Cultural imperialism also makes a definite assumption of the media's role and its influence on society. What emerges is a view of media and technology that is highly deterministic and devalues the role and importance of the cultural aspects of this argument. Cultural imperialism scholars, such as Schiller (1981) and Hamelink (1990), have rightfully argued that despite the advances in communication technologies, information itself and its technology have remained in the hands of the economically elite. This criticism is expressed in terms of the core and periphery theory which maintains that global imbalances exist between "core" (i.e. rich, industrialised nations of the First World) and "periphery" nations (i.e. poorer, rural countries of the Third World) in both the flow of media products and information. In this view, information and its technology are controlled by the core nations, and its flow is seen as uni-directional from the core to the periphery with little opportunity for peripheral nations to participate in the process (Hamelink 1990). The outcome of this uneven balance, according to the cultural imperialism thesis, is the homogenisation of culture. However, as stated earlier in this chapter, the process of culture is much more complex than the cultural imperialism argument credits. What is evident is that current global cultural flows produce both cultural homogeneity and socio-cultural conflicts that is demonstrated in the social and cultural crisis and the generational gap in affected societies. These socio-cultural conflicts emerge as result of the penetration of cultural imperialism. This is evident in

the current situation in Iran, as the uneven flow of information and entertainment of global media programmes via satellite has exacerbated socio-cultural conflicts. In the relevant chapter, the cross-cultural impacts of the heavy flow of cultural products into Iran will be examined. This small investigation in a historical perspective will examine the process of cultural imperialism through the emergence of modernity and advent of capitalism in Iran and examine the resistance of its people as demonstrated in anti-imperialist movements throughout the country's history.

- 2- The cultural imperialism perspective does not fully take into account the role of the national elites and the internal factors in the process of cultural imperialism, especially in developing countries.

As stated earlier in this chapter the process of cultural transfer is much more complicated than the cultural imperialism argument credits. What the imperialist argument seems to ignore is that apart from the external factors, there are some internal elements that can determine the role and structure of television in a country. Among them are: socio-political structure, economic system, historical background, and ideological and cultural environment. For instance, blaming the West and the U.S. alone for the spread of Western culture in Iran is overly-simplistic. Throughout Iran's history, internal forces have always interacted with external factors and have had a great impact on the formation of the structure of television in the country.

- 3- The cultural imperialism thesis appears to be placing too much emphasis on the economic factors, underestimating the role of political power in the process of cultural transfer.

Another possible criticism for the cultural imperialism argument lies in its overestimating of economic factors of global conglomerates and undermining the political power of state in the process of cultural transfer. The traditional cultural imperialism theory evidentially fails to actively acknowledge the role played by political powers as a force behind the cultural imperialism. It is important to note that power is never exerted only through military and technological control, but always through discursive control as well. The U.S.'s leading position in cultural sales

throughout the world which is achieved through its economic and political power indicates a complex relationship between economics, culture and politics. With the Cold War and the expansion of a governmental apparatus for spreading American culture, the use of political propaganda in the process of cultural imperialism becomes more complicated. The study of propaganda surrounding consumption suggests that economic achievements were seen in cultural terms. Since the main purpose of propaganda is to change beliefs and attitudes, as well as affect the value system of the audience, it therefore seems that economic success and political power have been exercised in the battle for the hearts and minds of individuals around the world. This provides a basis for chapter seven of this thesis, which investigates the potential effects of Western and mostly American satellite programming in Iran. In the relevant chapters, through investigating the political propaganda this study examines the relationship between politics and cultural power within the context of imperialism. To ensure that the broad objectives of this study may be achieved it will focus on (i) the Jaam-e-Jam expatriate satellite television and the Voice of America, (ii) their relationship to propaganda (iii) how this combination works as an instrument of cultural imperialism.

1.8 Conclusion

The cultural imperialism theory in its traditional form seems to adequately fail to theories the power of active audiences to creatively subvert the power of global media and ignores internal factors within a developing country. The cultural imperialism approach also tends to stress the economic sphere as a detriment to that of the political power.

The main objective of this chapter was to revise the cultural imperialism theory and identify areas that could be developed within its infrastructure. It also aims to demonstrate that there is an identifiable relationship between the global flows of cultural products, the global transnational media industries and the political power of the state. Today, a few advanced countries control the global standardisation of television practices and contents within the new world information order. In the global arena, the U.S. still has a very strong position in the worldwide transfer of telecommunication technologies, television programmes, films and dramas. In spite of

the emergence of the new sub-centres in exportations of television material such as Japan, Germany, and Brazil, television material flow between nations is still governed according to the “one-way street” principle. It is important to point out that the political power of Western countries, and the U.S. in particular, has been a fundamental factor in the process of cultural transfer. It can be argued that although the cultural imperialism perspective views the transnational corporations as being amongst the main factors in the transfer of culture, the political power of the state also plays a fundamental role in the process of cultural transfer. This is evident in the U.S. propaganda transmitted from its radio and television stations to all corners of the world. This indicates that with advanced communication technology, propaganda remains the key instrument of cultural imperialism.

There are also some internal elements that can determine the role and structure of television in a country. Among them are: socio-political structure, economic system, historical background, and ideological and cultural environment. For example, this thesis will demonstrate that to blame the West and the U.S. alone for the corrosive spread of Western culture in Iran is to fall into an easy category of traditional cultural imperialism. The internal factors interact with the external factors and have a great impact on forming the structure of television in a country. It can be argued that so far the expansion of telecommunication technologies such as satellite has not resulted in a more balanced flow of information between the North and the South and it seems that this pattern will continue to affect television flow, maintaining the future dependency of developing countries. This however, militates against the emergence of the new sub-centre production and exportation of television programmes. In this light, cultural imperialism still seems to be a very useful tool in interpreting the current cultural market.

In sum, the (broadly-defined) cultural imperialism thesis still remains a useful theory and plays an important role in interpreting the world cultural and media system. It has risen from a situation whereby the media of advanced capitalist countries were able to substantially influence production and consumption of cultural goods in Third World countries (Chadha and Kavoori, 2000). Cultural imperialism acts as a means of cultural transformation through the flow of cultural products, capital, and industries in the globalisation era. This study confirms that any progress made in analysing cultural imperialism can only be achieved through detailed case studies. The main objective of this thesis therefore, is to examine how the theory of cultural imperialism fits in with

the Iranian case. Therefore, in order to ensure that the broad objectives of this study may be achieved, the following chapter, through a more historical perspective, will examine the emergence of modernity in Iran and investigate the roots of imperialism through the development of capitalism and modernity.

Part Two

Local Conditions: National Policies and Everyday

‘Lives in Iran’, a Case Study

Chapter Two

Historical Approach

2.1 Introduction

As it has been discussed in chapter one, according to theories of imperialism, the imperialist relationship is maintained not only through suppression, but also through the expert and institutionalisation of Western, especially American, organisational structures. It has been stressed that “the dominant capitalist economic and social system led by the United States and a number of industrial countries tries to preserve its own global interests under the pretence of a new world order” (Mowlana, 1992, p.35). In this respect, Luxemburg argues that when developing countries undertake capitalist modes of production retain their pre-capitalist structures and serve as a source of cheap raw materials, providing additional markets for capitalists’ countries. This will result in the backwardness of the periphery system. In the case of Iran, what the modernisation theory put forward, and what was followed by the Shah’s regime, was the idea that Third World societies can become more developed or modern by being exposed to the values and norms of advanced Western countries through communication, and trade. This chapter attempts to demonstrate the clashes between modernity and indigenous values and examines how the paradigms of modernisation and cultural imperialism apply to local circumstances and life in Iran.

Chapter one tried to revise the cultural imperialism theory and identify its weaknesses and limitations, as well as the areas that could be developed within its infrastructure. It demonstrated that international relations are still based on inequality and dependence rather than interconnectedness and interdependence. As it was discussed in chapter one, the outcome of this uneven balance, according to the cultural imperialism thesis, is the homogenisation of culture. However, as it was stated in previous chapter, the cultural imperialism argument seems to ignore the complexity of culture and fails to explain anti-imperialism movements, local dynamics and resistance within dependent societies. This chapter examines the process of cultural imperialism through the emergence of modernity and advent of capitalism in Iran and

examines the local dynamics and resistance of people as demonstrated through anti-imperialism movements throughout the country's history. It is concerned with cultural homogenisation and the response and rejection of this issue in Iran. The relevance of this chapter is that it aims to contribute to the body of knowledge by analysing the character of cultural imperialism through the modernisation process and capitalist development in Iran, as well as the role of Islam. It focuses on how Iran, throughout its history, has been engaged with the West and how the Iranian anti-imperialist struggle dates back to the emergence of modernity a process by which the capitalist ideology was maintained in the country.

2.2 Iran in Transition

The term modernisation is used to describe the development of capitalism in Iran. It is characterised by showing the changes in the economy and society under the capitalist modes of production, as compared to pre-capitalism. This transition, from pre-capitalism to capitalism, began in the West and later influenced the rest of the world, including Iran, as a broader process of global capitalism and global production systems that have affected local circumstances and people's lives throughout the world. Basically, pre-capitalism was characterised by an overwhelmingly rural society in which feudal lords had political and judicial power. The mass of peasants were tied to the land and towns were few as peddlers carried out trades. The aim of production was consumption, not accumulation. Modernisation, which in this case can be equated with capitalism, in contrast, is a system in which urban life is dominant and the majority of population work in industry or services where money plays an important role. The development of capitalism as accompanied by industrialisation, consequently leads to the emergence of the modern bourgeoisie and working classes. The capitalist class, the bourgeoisie, owns and controls the means of production. They are involved in the hiring and firing of the labour force, or wage labourers in capitalist societies, and also oversee the choice of modern techniques, output, work environment and sale of output. The crucial distinction of capitalism is that there are no limits to wealth accumulation and what drives the system forward is not consumption, but self-expansion of capital (Hilton, 1976).

The nature and development of global capitalism in the world, and in the so-called Third World in particular, has been the subject of much debate. Although, the development of capitalism and its impact on the Third World was experienced long before WWII, the rapid transformation in these countries came during the post-1945 period. Many features, including the expansion of productive forces, accompany the transition from pre-capitalism to modern capitalism. The process of industrialisation has taken place in the Third World and utilises modern technologies and complex machinery to create a relatively large-scale of production, technical divisions of labour within these units of production, and a diverse range of skills within the workforce (Wield, 1983). However, these types of economic development, which were based on Western modelled industrial economic infrastructures, could only serve the economic interests of the advanced capitalist countries.

Iran was integrated into this capitalist system. The emergence of the modern state in the 1920's, under Reza Shah, the intensification of capitalist development in the post-WWII period, and integration of the country to the world market all transformed the Iranian economy and society. The nature of capitalist development in Iran has been the subject of some debate. Jazani describes the process of development in Iran as a Third World country and argues that the post-war period coincided with the end of feudalism and rapid growth of capitalism. He postulates that the development of 'dependent' capitalism in Iran since WWII increased the level of production, particularly in the industrial sector, and that this has resulted in real economic and social improvements. He pointed out that the character of dependency is inseparable from the capitalist system, foreign exploitation and imperialist domination in Iran. The dependent capitalist is found in the form of the 'comprador bourgeoisie', the agents of imperialism who are cooperating together to exploit Iran (Jazani, 1980). The changes in the economy and society have emerged as a result of capitalist influence over time. This was recognised by Marx in his analysis of the impact of capitalism on India:

"English millocracy intended to endow India with railways with the exclusive view of extracting at diminished expenses the cotton and other raw materials for their manufactures. But when you have introduced machinery into the locomotion of a country, which possesses iron and coal you are unable to withhold it from fabrication. You can not maintain a net of railways over an immense country without introducing all those industrial processes necessary to meet the immediate and current needs of railway locomotion, and out of which there must grow the application of machinery in

those branches of industry not immediately connected with railways. The railway system will become, in India, truly the forerunner of modern industry” (Marx, 1976, P.84).

The development of capitalism has been an uneven process. This development occurs at different times and often with a different dynamic which inevitably creates contradictions in the economic, political and cultural areas of society. Trotsky argues that capitalism reacts in both a positive and negative fashion within the less developed countries. He indicates that “by drawing countries economically closer to one another and levelling out their stages of development, capitalism operates by methods of its own, ... sets one country against another, one branch of industry against another, developing some part of the world economy while hampering and throwing back development of others” (Trotsky, 1970, P.20). The analysis of underdevelopment in Iran cannot start from the premise that it is due only to the external forces of imperialism, nor can it be attributed to the internal character of the society. The expansion of capitalism in Iran in the 19th and early 20th centuries and the implantation of the Western model of political institutions, economy and culture by the Shah was an effort to bring Iran closer to Western societies. The impact of Europe’s capitalist modes of production in Iran in the late 19th century was initially a slow advance. The subsequent changes in the economy and society have emerged as a result of capitalist influence over time.

The major characteristic of the modernisation process and the development of capitalism in Iran is its uneven development. The uneven development of the productive forces, the concentration of wealth, capital and power in particular regions and classes were among the major characteristics of modernisation development in Iran. The incorporation of aspects of the old modes of production into modern capitalism is a feature which continues even today. Basically, the uneven development has expressed itself not only on a global level, but also on a national and regional level and is reflected in the cultural, economic and political contradictions and imperialist conflicts of the modern period. This uneven development left Iran on the peripheral formation of the world economy, importing most of its capital goods, leaving it dependent on foreign exchange mainly earned through exports of oil. The uneven impact of modernisation and capitalism on Iran was apparent as early as the 19th century, which witnessed the emergence of Islamic reformists such as Amir Kabir. He did not reject modernity, but rather, wanted to appropriate it in a different

term which was compatible with the indigenous needs of Iranian society. He succeeded in establishing a few industries and a secular school in a largely traditional society. He began his attempt towards modernisation with military reforms. He started to reorganise the army and tried to centralise and strengthen the military forces. Therefore, in examining the assumptions surrounding the homogenisation effects of globalisation, the example of the Islamic reformists, which integrates the Western modernisation model with a traditional and indigenous model, is notable. Such ideas however, gained influence amongst sections of the population, as these views came to be expressed in the form of national independence and anti-imperialism sentiments against Britain, which at the time had major interest in the oil-rich south of Iran. The struggle for national independence against global convergence and imperialism was a phenomenon that expressed itself in the Tobacco Movements, the Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911), and later on, in the nationalisation of Iran's oil industry (1951-53), and finally in the 1979 Revolution.

2.3 Historical Background of Iranian Anti-Imperialism Movements before the 1979 Revolution

Before the impact of the West and Western capitalism, Iran was predominantly an agrarian society; the majority of the population lived in the countryside, with 90 per cent of the work force dependent on the agricultural or a nomadic life style. Absentee landowners held most of the lands whilst industries were not very developed. The 'bazaar' was an important place not just for merchant activities, but also for landowners and craftsmen who made and sold their goods there. It was a workshop, bank, religious centre and a place where merchants, craftsmen, moneylenders, peddlers and religious figures organised themselves (Abrahamian, 1985, P.128). The rise of 'Safavid' dynasty to power (1501-1736) opened a new chapter in Iran's history. Before this period Iranian people mostly believed in Sunni Islam and the country was either part of some larger empire or divided into a number of dynasties. The Safavid proclaimed Shia Islam as the new state religion and brought relative centralisation to the country and some order to the economy (Minorsky, 1980).

The 19th and early 20th centuries witnessed an important transformation in Iran's culture, economy and society, under the impact of the West and Westernisation process. The foundations of the traditional state were undermined and a modern state with new institutions was established. The growth of the Westernisation process and capitalist development began in this period and continued rapidly in the late 20th century. The most profound factor in this process was the integration of the Iranian economy into the world market, which radically affected the positions of different social classes. In the economical aspect, the impact of the West on Iran's political economy was part of integration towards global capitalism as a wider process of change in the world economy. European capital increased its domination of world trade through expansionist commercial policies (Wallerstein, 1979).

Generally, the unique geographical location of Iran at the crossroads of the East and West and the ice-free waters of the Persian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman, and the Arabian Sea to the south, provide a basic explanation for centuries of migrations, warfare, depredation, and imperialist conquests on the Iranian plateau. Moreover, the growing expansion of the imperialist countries, particularly Britain, in the regions such as India, contributed to Iran's strategic position as a buffer against the Russian advance towards India. The rivalry between Britain and Russia helped Iran to maintain its independence, as Iran was never colonised in the sense of being formally ruled from abroad and never had white immigrant settlers transform a substantial part of their economy to meet the economic requirements of the colonial countries (Tabari, 1983, P.53). Capitalist development in Iran was shaped by the political, economic and strategic requirements of Europe and not according to the needs of Iranian society. The influence of Westernisation and Western capitalism coincided with the weak and fragmented rule of the Qajar dynasty (1796-1925) and as result, Iran became more open to the influence of European capitalism in its imperialist form. This impact was a negative influence as some industries were destroyed through trade and imports of foreign goods. This imperialistic relationship was maintained through the expert, institutionalisation of Western organisational structures, values and cultural products that assured the continuous impact of the West on Iran.

By the 1850s, Britain was one of the leading trade partners of Iran and accounted for over 50 per cent of exports and even more of Iran's imports (Issawi, 1971, P.71). From the mid 19th to the beginning of the 20th century a number of concessions were

made, which enabled foreign subjects to exploit raw materials and carry out infrastructure development in Iran. In 1872, Shah agreed to give a 70 year concession to a British subject, Baron Paul Julis de Reuter, to build railroads, install telegraph lines, exploit mines, construct irrigation works, regulate river navigation, open a bank and build roads, mills and factories in return for a £40,000 payment to the Shah. Other important concessions were also made to the British subject for the exploitation of tobacco and oil. The Russians also increased their commercial and political hegemony after the 1850's, which generated further demand for agricultural goods. Russia, like Britain, gained concessions in fisheries, road building, telegraphs, railroads, and banking. In the late 1850's and 1860's, some private entrepreneurs constructed small factories, producing items such as paper, glass, gunpowder, sugar refining and cotton spinning. That many of these industries were not profitable is hardly surprising given the small size of the market, insufficiency of the infrastructure, competition from outside and failure of the state to protect these factories from outside competition (Floor, 1984). The effect of Western capitalism as a modern system was thus very limited and uneven, not just economically but also in the slow growth of the working class and bourgeoisie. However, these limited changes also generated demands for change in the economy and society.

On the whole, the influence of Western imperialism on Iran and the U.S. in particular was producing an engine for cultural transfusion as well as political domination over Iran. A growing sense of urgency was being expressed amongst some of the Iranian state bureaucrats, who came to resent both the insecurity of private property and foreign domination. Other social forces, such as religious establishment, also did not welcome the Western model of modernisation. Most of the Iranian 'ulama' had already gone through a major change in the late 18th century, namely the division between 'Usuli' and 'Akhbari' (two different schools in Shia Islam). The latter school argued that there was no need for religious scholars to exercise independent judgment of religious interpretation in the absence of the hidden Imam. In contrast, the 'Usuli' used their increasingly dominant position to grant extra legitimacy to the role of 'Mojtaheds' in exercising independent judgment. This laid the foundation for the enhanced authority of the highest ranking 'ulama' that were independent of the state, a development whose political repercussions became evident in the 19th and 20th centuries. In the context of these changes, both locally and globally the role of the

‘Mojtaheds’ become vital to their response against the impact of Westernisation process, Western capitalism and global homogenisation. They were not united in their response to the capitalist reforms but the one factor uniting them was their concern about their declining position under the impact of modernisation and imperialist forces. They felt that the global capitalist system posed a certain global ideology that acted as an engine for modernisation and creating an ideal structural base for the global imperialism.

The struggle for national independence against the imperialism was a phenomenon, which expressed itself in the Tobacco Movements (1891-92), the Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911), and later on, in the nationalisation of Iran’s oil industry (1951-53), and finally in the 1979 Revolution.

2.4 The Tobacco Movement

Foreign intrusion and interference during the century and a half before the 1979 Revolution was experienced by the Iranians as a continuous unfolding process. However, it can be divided in two periods: before and after World War II. In the earlier period there were separate national imperialisms, mainly British and Russian, and in the later period, the United States became a new superpower.

However, the pattern for both periods, which manifested itself in the mounting conflict between the imperialist’s interests and Iran’s religious class as a mobilising force of mass political action, was set quite clearly in 1891. This was a confrontation triggered by the action of the Shah selling the monopoly for the cultivation and marketing of tobacco to a British company called Regei. The Tobacco Movement is the first instance of significant political intervention against the imperialists, which influenced the whole national and international relations of the country and became one of the peak points of the socio-political history of Iran. In explaining the general social circumstances at the beginning of this movement, it is helpful to look at the social stratification of the Iranian society during this time. Sjoberg notes that the social stratification of the pre-industrial societies generally consisted of two classes: the upper class and the lower class. According to him, in most of the pre-industrial

cities there was also a third group called the 'out-casts' (Sjoberg, 1960, p.110). In the late nineteenth century, Persia as a pre-industrial society, although did not follow the exact pattern explained by Sjoberg, the social stratification of the country, was not too far from his classification. The Shah, as the head of the state and his family were at the top of the social hierarchy. People who were attached to his government were a part of the upper class. Also the religious leaders appointed by the government as Friday Prayer Leader or head of religious jurisdiction court (Shar'a court; responsible for the social and economic affairs of the people) were classified as upper class as well. The rest of the people, excluding out-casts, were the lower class. At the time of the Tobacco Movement, Shah, as the head of the state, was responsible for national security, as well as for conducting foreign policy and foreign relations. The 'Urf' courts, responsible for criminal matters such as robbery and the military apparatus were under the direct control of the Shah. The clergies, as the head of the people's community, were the representatives of the lower class and the socio-economic relations of this class were supervised by them. The bazaar, as the main economic sector of the society, was under their rule along with the educational system.

At the time, although the Shah was responsible for international affairs and concessions with other nations, those contracts directly affected the economic institutions of the country. And since the socio-economic matters of society were under the clergies' responsibility, those contracts and concessions therefore had an impact on the dominant authority of the clergies in the society.

In 1890, Naser-ed-Din Shah signed a contract with Major Talbot from England. All rights concerning the sale and distribution of tobacco inside Iran and the export of all tobacco produced in Iran were vested in the Imperial Tobacco Corporation (Algar, 1969, P.206). The agreement was for fifty years, during which the company was supposed to give £15000 annually, plus one fourth of its annual profits, to the Iranian government. Its income was free of taxation and its imports and exports were exempt from any customs tariffs and limitations. The estimated profit of the company was about £335,900 per year (Lambton, 1987, P.230). The Regie Company built fortress-like centres in Iran and imported soldiers and armaments. It removed authority of trade and business from almost one fifth of the active population. The behaviour of the company's agents, such as drinking in public places, offended people's cultural and ideological values. Also, an increase in the number of Christian missionaries was

perceived by clergies and the majority of population as another threat to the culture and religion of the country. In such a social context the Tobacco movement took shape. In these circumstances, people, especially tobacco merchants who lost control of the trade, expressed their disagreement by writing to the Shah and complaining to the religious leaders. But Shah rejected all forms of protest and forbade people from acting against the covenant. Gradually, under the leadership of the religious authorities, people protested against the contract.

Shirazi the religious leader (Marja) of the time objected to the Shah and warned him of the colonial dangers of the contract. In 1891-92, a mass movement arose against the monopoly on tobacco growth, which led to the cancellation of the concession. Shirazi promptly issued an order prohibiting the use of tobacco, which was instantly obeyed by people throughout the country. Appalled by this demonstration of strength, the Shah backed down and cancelled the contract with British company. The Tobacco Movement occurred as a result of the impact of capitalist penetration in Iran and its effect on local crafts and industry. The domestic merchants suffered from the competition of foreign goods and resented their domination. The leading role of the clergy during The Tobacco Movement increased their influence in the society. They represented a force to be reckoned with that could be manipulated, even combated, but never ignored (Keddie, 1962). The people continued to demonstrate their hostility towards foreign intrusions. Years later, the alliance between bazaar merchants and the clergy became an important force during the Constitutional Revolution.

2.5 Constitutional Revolution

The Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911) was born out of a combination of different factors including, an economic crisis in the country, the increase in prices, the inability of the Qajar to maintain their role, a growing nationalist movement against imperialist countries, and the change in the international political economy.

Revolution began with protests by merchants against the involvement of foreign officials in the government administration. An alliance was forged between the bazaar, as some of the high ranking clergies, secular intellectuals, landlords and tribal

leaders, who despite their different economic and political interests, all united against the monarchy and foreign powers. The impact of the West on the economy, political order and cultural values had intensified the conflict in Iranian society. The imperialist powers had heavily influenced the country's international affairs to suit their own global economic and strategic interests without any regards to the opinion and interests of the people. In part it had brought cultural imperialism, including the imported ideology and patterns of thought, which were in contradiction to the socially accepted norms. As a result, almost all of the social forces rejected Western cultural, economic and political domination in Iran. The clergies accused the Shah of being corrupt and of being a means of foreign control of Iran. Some of them, such as Nuri, argued strongly against the Shah's reforms and believed that Sharia (Islamic law) should not be watered down. Ayatollah Tabatabai (1841-1918), on the other hand, believed in adaptation, even in the context of religion. In this context the message was clear: there could be no security for the cultural, economic and political domination in Iran unless the religious class could be broken. The tactic was approved by the British and the Russians. The Shah, in 1905, yielded to revolutionary demands for representative government, hoping that party politics could be used to undermine the power of the clergies. A parliament was set up, and in 1906, Shah became, nominally at least, a constitutional monarch. However, the rise of Western ideas worked like a double-edged sword. For instance, the idea of parliament, which although was a Western idea in the first place, came to be used not just against the authority of the Shah but against the Western domination of Iran. The clergies accepted the idea of parliament, in accordance with the Shia law and believed that this could be used to defend Islam. Competing groups such as secular intellectuals recognised the power of the clergies and gave them recognition in order to maintain the support of the majority of the population. Some of the ulama called for the adoption of Sharia as the law of state instead of a Western-style constitution. Contradictions within the class alliance supporting constitutional reform were highlighted by the fact that when the secular reformers called for land reform, the ulama and the land deputies refused to accept it. This infighting amongst the intellectuals and the traditionalists encouraged the Shah to withdraw his position and dissolve the National Assembly in 1911. The weak character of internal forces and the intervention of external forces of imperialism, namely the Russians, saved the Qajar regime. The Constitutional Revolution ended in defeat but stands out as a revolutionary movement that attempted to challenge

imperialism and the ruling authority and changed the balance of power inside the country. It created new institutions such as parliament and trade unions, which were all new in the history of Iran.

In summarising the impact of the West on the Constitutional Revolution it is necessary to identify major changes in the political economy of the country. Capitalist development had a contradictory impact on Iran and it certainly opened up the country to the world market while weakening the traditional ways of producing wealth. Furthermore, during the Constitutional Revolution, Western capitalism was able to impose its cultural, economic and political will through military power. During this period Iran witnessed the consolidation of Western hegemony and the beginning of the classical age of imperialism. Many Non-Western countries found themselves coming under the direct control of European imperialist powers. At the same time in the name of modernisation, and under the system of European colonialism, a great deal of social, political, and economic transformation took place. However, the situation of this transformation was different from country to country. For example, although Iran did not face any direct Western military colonialism in its history, it was, in many respects, under the influence of Western ideological and political hegemony.

2.6 The Pahlavi Dynasty and Westernisation Process

The Qajar dynasty came to an end when the imperialist powers of Britain and Russia occupied Iran during WWII. Until 1921, Iran was subject to a situation of immense political and economic crisis. This period also witnessed the Revolution of 1917 in Russia as well as the development of the oil industry in Iran, both of which had a major impact on the political economy of Iran. Reza Shah came to power after a coup d'état in 1921 by British imperialism, starting fifty years of Westernisation in a highly traditional and religious country. Reza Shah believed that the religious classes were the only real obstacle to progress. Reza Shah, backed by the imperialism of Britain, transformed the traditional monarchy into a modern dictatorship armed with all the expertise and appurtenances of modern totalitarianism, including a ruthless secret police.

During World War II the Soviets tried to create independent republics in the northern provinces of Azerbaijan and Kurdistan in order to incorporate them later into the USSR. The British also tried to create conditions favourable to their future interests in the oil-rich region of Khozistan in the south and hoped to detach it from Iran after the war. Once Reza Shah had established his power, he stressed the idea of nationalism and promoted the idea of pre-Islam as a way of bringing Iran under the Western modernisation process and countering the influence of the clergies. He promoted the Westernisation process and the development of the economy through the framework of the global capitalism ideology. He did not have any consideration for the theoretical views of Shia Islam regarding theology and politics, which is rested on the basic principle of the 'Imamat' (the institution of rule by the Imams) and the role of Mojtaheed. The Shah became directly involved in the development of roads, infrastructure and industries through some larger levels of investment. Financial services were unified resulting in the establishment of the National Bank in 1927. The government set up its own monopolistic control of essential imports - tea, cotton, rice and sugar - and used quotas to restrict other imports. Under Reza Shah's regime the army and bureaucracy expanded enormously as the two important pillars of the state. Another major change was the discovery of oil in 1908 and its control became a major political issue between the oil companies and the state.

In cultural terms, Reza Shah tried to enforce the Western ideology, values and lifestyle in society. As an attempt towards the Westernisation of society, a law passed in 1928 decreed that all men had to wear European-style hats and later on encouraged the uniformity of Western-style dress. In 1935, Reza Shah forced people to abandon national and traditional forms of dress for a foreign one, prohibiting women from wearing the Islamic covering. Reza Shah, in 1926, also restricted the 'Sharia' law to now deal only with cases of marriage, divorce and guardianship. The Shah tried to maintain his role through the imported Western cultural products and institutions resembling European ways of life, values and interpersonal relations.

2.7 Superpowers and the Nationalisation of Oil Industry

By the end of WWII, the U.S. replaced Britain as a major superpower in the world. The rise of the USSR against the U.S. resulted in the Cold War, as the two imperialist powers competed over geographical, strategic, economic and political spheres of influence. Oil was a key factor behind the allied occupation of Iran, which began in 1941 and lasted for sixteen years. Iran's location in the Persian Gulf and its huge oil reserves were vital to imperialist countries. Iran was occupied by British, Soviet and American forces, as throughout the war the country became an important bridge to supply food and ammunition to Soviet troops.

From 1951 to 1953, the second anti-imperialism social movement took place in Iran, which struggled for oil nationalisation, challenged the power of both the monarchy and imperialist powers in Iran, and after its initial success, faced both internal difficulties and external intervention. Basically, the impact of the West in the 19th century led to changes in the political economy, notably the emergence of political movements against the tobacco concession given to a British company in 1890, and the Constitutional Revolution 1905-1911. It is in the context of these events that the oil concession was granted by the regime to a British subject, William Darcy, in 1901, giving him the right to develop, explore, produce and refine oil in an area of about 480,000 square miles of land (which was four fifths of the country, excluding the five northern provinces) for sixty years. In return, the Iranian state received £20,000 in cash, an additional £20,000 worth of paid up shares and 16 per cent of the company's annual net profits (Sampson, 1975, P.70). It was a part of imperialistic plane by the Imperialist power of the time to loot Iran's oil. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC) shareholders invested £21,656,252 (£5m of which came from the British government) and received an average of £16m profit per year over fifty years of operation (Amuzegar and Fekrat, 1971, P.13). The oil company appropriated most of the wealth and only a small percentage went towards improving the standard of living for local workers. The company's policies were typically colonialist. For example while the foreign employees were provided with hospital facilities, the local workers were not (Elwell-Suton, 1955, PP.96-100). The minimum wage stayed constant for over four decades whilst many of the workers lived in shantytowns. The result of this was tension between the oil companies and the local workers. When workers protested for an improvement in their conditions, including a wage increase, the oil

company responded by using foreign British troops against the local workers to silence them. At the same time, Reza Shah tried to suppress the independent power of the clergies, the landlords, urban classes and political organisations (Abrahamian, 1983). Although the Shah needed the support of the ulama when he took over power, he later on stripped them of their position in society by introducing some economic and social reforms. With the advent of WWII, the competition between the major imperialist powers over hegemony in the region increased. As it was mentioned before in this chapter, oil was a key factor behind the allied occupation of Iran, which began in 1941. Therefore, Iran's location in the Persian Gulf and its huge oil reserves were vital to the imperialist countries. Iran was occupied by British, Soviet and American forces and throughout the war the country became an important bridge for the supply of food and ammunition to Soviet troops. The U.S. already had a foothold in the region since the 1920's when their oil companies first started to seek concessions. The U.S. aimed to penetrate Iran's oilfields while the Soviet Union was interested in the north of the country and the British intended to keep both out of Iran. After the abdication of Reza Shah by the British imperialist, he placed his son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi on the throne in 1941. The new Shah then allowed them to use the railway and to keep troops in Iran until the end of the war. The Westernisation of the culture under Mohammad Reza Shah's regime began in a new form and began to gather speed. Also, the growing importance of oil in the world market, marked the beginning of a new era in oil-related economics and politics, both nationally and internationally.

In the 1940's, Iran entered the age of mass politics. Development of the oil industry and the modernisation initiatives of Reza Shah led to the growth of different social classes (working class, and capitalists) who became more conscious of their collective class interests. Whilst each had different interests, they were united against imperialist control and foreign domination of the country, especially of imperialist domination of oil industry. Resentment against the imperialist powers, especially Britain, helped to open up Iran politically and accelerated the growth of different political parties such as the 'Tudeh' (left wing pro-Soviet communist) organisation, as well as other secular and religious organisations which were mainly confined to urban areas (Zabih, 1966). The rise in anti-imperialist sentiments amongst the bourgeoisie, working class and merchants in the country persuaded some of the clergies to respond. In 1951, the

ulama issued a 'fatwa' supporting the nationalisation of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (Dihnavi, 1984). They joined the National Front, established in 1949, which was a coalition of nationalist groups and parties from a broad spectrum of political points of view. The single issue of the nationalisation of oil was key to maintaining the unity of both the secular and religious establishments. Oil became a symbol of resistance against Western imperialism. The regime's Westernisation of the country and the struggle to nationalise the oil industry helped to create new forms for the expression of Islamic faith in different eras. The presence of British imperialist troops in Iran during the war stirred up mass movements. In 1951, Mossadeq, the leader of the oil protest movement became Prime Minister. The National Front eventually managed to nationalise the Iranian oil industry in 1951, but this was met with an angry reaction from the British who led a boycott of the oil (Odell, 1986). Britain continued to pressure Iran and the organised boycott of Iranian oil had worked very effectively, as the consuming countries were able to import oil from other Gulf countries instead of Iran. Britain therefore imposed severe economic pressure on Iran, leading to a standstill in Iran's oil operations and exports. They also refused to pay any royalties owed to Iran prior to nationalisation whilst the freezing of Iran's sterling facilities led to massive economic hardship (Katouzian, 1981). As a result, the Iranian government's oil revenues declined from £16m in 1950 to £7m in 1951. Exports of oil declined from 242 million barrels (m/b) a year in 1950 to only 10 m/b in 1953. Also an increased in exports of non-oil sectors did not help the country to overcome its economic and political difficulties. The impact of the loss of oil revenues on Iran's economy was very harsh. It meant a drop in foreign exchange and a rise in economic hardship, which posed a political threat to Mossadeq's government. Mossadeq tried to take every political avenue in order to overcome these economic difficulties, attempting to gain U.S. support against Britain and the Soviet Union. However the U.S. never actively supported Mossadeq and believed that Mossadeq's persistence of the policy of nationalisation would adversely affect Western interests in the oil-rich Persian Gulf and beyond. The result of these political considerations was that they went along with the British boycott of Iranian oil (Bill and Louis, 1988). By the early 1953, Britain and the U.S. capitalized on the disintegration of the National Front and attempted to oust Mossadeq. Alarmed by his anti-imperialist policy they launched a coup against Mossadeq. The leading coup organisers –Norman Schwarzkopf, then American New Jersey Police Chief and Roy Henderson, the American ambassador to

Iran- acted together with the head of the CIA to overthrow Mossadeq's government (Milani, 1988). Finally, on the 19th August 1953, Mossadeq was removed from office and arrested and the Mohammad Reza Shah returned to power (Cottam, 1979; Azimi, 1989).

More than four decades after the Constitutional Revolution, imperialist powers once again brought a halt to the national movement. The result was the return to monarchy, planned and assisted by Western imperialism. The Westernisation of the culture under Shah's regime started in a new form and began to gather speed.

2.8 The Impact of Modernisation on Society

The return of the Shah on the 29th of October, 1954 marked an end to the relative openness in the political life of Iran. The Shah was both supported by and in close contact with the U.S. (Milani, 1989). He, like his father, tried to Westernise Iranian society, especially during the 1960's and 1970's. The dominant view was to rapidly modernise and secularise society with U.S. values and policy objectives. The increase in oil prices in late 1960's and early 1970's provided the country with financial assets. On the other hand the oil boom made Iran's economy almost totally dependent on oil revenues. In 1967, oil constituted 17 per cent of the country's GNP and by 1977 this figure raised to 38 per cent. Oil accounted for 77 per cent of the government's budget in 1977 and 87 per cent of its foreign exchange (Central Bank of Iran, 1959-1977). This enabled the state to receive enormous sums of money. The oil income provided Shah with economic power to control most parts of the economy and society, maintaining his political position, which included banning all independent political activities, as well as playing a major role in the cultural and ideological life of the country in promoting the Western lifestyle, ideology and cultural products.

The great concentration of wealth, capital and power in the hands of a few elites was at the expense of the relative impoverishment of the rest of people throughout the country. The Shah's regime on the other hand, could see the need for modernisation of the country in order to prevent political unrest. The increase in oil revenues after 1954 and military and economic aid from the U.S. enabled the state to promote

modernisation through a series of development plans known as the 'White Revolution', which aimed to change the country's old land relations and break political links between the landlords and clergies.

The modernisation process was mainly depended on oil revenues. The low level of direct taxes in state revenues reduced the distributional power of fiscal policy and prevented the development of a regular taxation system. This resulted in the uneven income distribution throughout the society and aggravated existing inequalities between rich and poor. Whilst the Iranian economy transformed, this took place on the back of oil revenues, as much of the country's technological needs had to be imported and paid by the oil revenues. This was in turn, dependent on the world market both in terms of its production and price. In early 1970's, the economic modernisation, which was concentrated in a few cities, encouraged rural migration to the major cities (Kazemi, 1980). The majority of the population, around 90 per cent, accounted for only 60 per cent of expenditure in the society, whilst the urban poor sometimes had to spend more than 70 per cent of their income on rent (Halliday, 1979, P.43). The Shah relied on the army to put down any political challenge to his regime and tried to secularise the society, but he failed to diminish the power of the 'ulama' in the society altogether.

Although the state tried to repress and where possible, eliminate both religious and secular opposition, the former, by operating through the network of mosques, continued to maintain a degree of strength against the encroaching power of the state. Westernisation of the country and state brutality did not lead to the end of religion as an influential social force. The Westernisation process and the adaptation of the Western form of lifestyle, which started with Reza Shah, gained new dimensions later on in Mohammed Reza Shah's regime, as Western music, imported films and TV programmes caused a great deal of cultural tension, struggle and protests against the regime in the late 1970's. At the same time, the importation of communication hardware and software promoted the dominating position of the West, especially the U.S., and created a base in which people became consumers of Western commercial and cultural goods. The regime also used professional experts, mainly from the U.S., in providing access and services. These experts worked with the intention of integrating the ideological system of the West into the dominant culture in Iran. In this process, Schiller offers a model for understanding and argues that:

“U.S. media imperialism in terms of its functions of selling media-related U.S. hardware and software, promoted an image of the U.S. and of the world that was favourable to American interests, and of advertising American goods and services - directly through the provision of more channels for advertising, and indirectly through the display of consumer lifestyles (Schiller, 1976, cited in Thussu, 1998, p.158).

The Western cultural domination and repressive measures taken by the state however, created a favourable situation for religious thinkers in which certain members of clergies, such as Khomeinie and Taleqani, presented themselves as anti-imperialist and guardians of the religion of Iranian society. They equated the Shah with Western imperialism and corruption in society as being an enemy of Iranian society and Islam (Khomeinie, 1981). Many of the clergies, such as Khomeinie, expressed their opposition to the Shah in defence of both the nation and the values of Islam. Khomeinie focused his criticism of the regime on the corruption, inequalities, and squandering of oil resources created by the state. The culture and religious beliefs of the society had evolved under specific cultural, socio-economic and political conditions and found new dimensions with the development of nationalism, anti-imperialism and capitalist development.

2.9 Moving Towards Revolution

In the 1960's and 1970's, the increasing Westernisation of the society in tastes and habits, whether through clothing, music, American fast-food and drinks and especially Western cultural products, were rejected by many scholars and thinkers. The majority of the clergies and religious thinkers argued that the traditional hold of Islam over the people was losing out to the influence of the West. They also protested against the Western cultural products especially the TV programme contents portrayed in the media. In this respect majority of clergies rejected the influence of the West, as some of them banned watching TV or going to the cinema. This act was followed by many people.

In this situation, although many Iranians were benefiting from the Western lifestyle that was taking over the streets, the masses did not have access to it, nor did they feel as if they were represented by it. In addition, there was no form of democracy, no

elections, no variations in news coverage of the Iranian radio and television. Moreover, a CIA-trained secret police, SAVAK, patrolled and eliminated any signs of dissent. It was inevitable that the exclusive nature of the uneven Western-style development and its distance from Iranian culture would finally lead the people to revolt. Basically, Iran is a predominantly Muslim country with its own history of civilisation, philosophy, and art. Although Iran was never physically colonised like Vietnam, India, or Algeria, at that time the cultural invasion was very thorough and very apparent. Discos and bars were plentiful in the big cities. French and American music became the norm, while traditional Persian music was neglected. In a matter of 40 years (1939-1979), people's lives had drastically changed with a leap towards modernisation, but one that was neither accompanied by democracy nor easily accessible by different social classes. Generally, because the Shah could not imagine any future for Iran except one that was modelled on the industrialised West, and because he, too, regarded his country's religious class as the great obstacle to progress, he allowed himself to become, in every way, the main instrument of imperialist power.

On the other hand, reliance on oil created basic problems as Iran became totally dependent on the world market. The economy could only function at the same rate so long as the inflow of oil income continued. The oil-led economic expansion increased the wealth of the upper echelon of industrial owners, comprising of 150 families. These elites owned 67 per cent of all industries and financial institutions (Bashiriye, 1984, P.40). In 1974, 47 wealthy families controlled 85 per cent of all firms with a turnover of more than 10m Rials (Halliday, 1979, P.151). This was in the light of rapid changes in society in many areas, including an increase in population and migration to cities, which created a huge demand for housing in urban areas.

In the political arena, the state continued to use repressive measures in order to maintain its rule. The government's strategy of increasing taxation and cutting social spending created a political crisis for the regime and strong discontent amongst the population at large, causing a rift between the state and the people. Meanwhile, the opposition groups mobilised dissatisfied people, and with an effective organisation and leadership, tried to exploit the opportunity to replace the existing political power.

The main opposition to the Shah were centred around clergies, guerrilla organisations and members of the intelligentsia. The Shah's Westernisation and his autocratic

regime gave little space for open activity on the part of the opposition. The maximisation of the power of Shah to enforce his will on the population was being met in two ways. First, there was an increase in the amount of money at his disposal from the boost in oil revenue, and secondly, the use of secret police and prisons as instruments of terror and compulsion. Therefore, even moderate opposition after 1963 was suppressed with exile, imprisonment, torture and murder. The army was brought in to crush mass demonstrations (1978) mounted by the clergies in Tehran and other cities, where thousands of people were killed. This sharp edge of power that Shah was willing to bear on his opponent was enabled by the imperialism of United States, as his main supporter.

Through the process of unrestrained personal ambition, the Shah became completely separated from his own people; it was the corruption of leadership in its ultimate form. He relied on money from oil revenue and on the support of the greatest imperialist power. At the same time, under the Nixon-Kissinger doctrine, Iran was seen as the regional power that would defend Western interests and act as a policeman in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean.

After 1963, in the face of state repression the oppositional organisation became involved in underground activities. They gained the support of the new generation, mainly university students, who they involved in the organisation of activities against the regime. The state response was very harsh and included imprisonment, torture and executions. The secret police, SAVAK, had rigorously enforced the rule that not even the name of Israel should be mentioned in a public discussion nor tolerated any criticism of the United States. New oppositional organisations also developed in the wake of the defeat of the 1963 Uprising. Among these were the Mojahedin-e Khalq and Fedayyan guerrilla organisation, former members of the Tudeh Party and leftist supporters of the National Front. Both Mojahedin-e Khalq and Fedayyan had great appeal to university students and the younger generation. However, they overestimated the propaganda value of armed action by an elite group, and therefore their organisations were unable to influence the wider social movement, which opposed the Shah. The social basis for the two groups remained exclusively comprised of students and some members of the middle-class with little working class membership, despite their theoretical recognition of the importance of worker's struggle. The failure of organisations such as Fedayyan and Mojahedin-e Khalq

provided a big opportunity for other social groups, notably Khomeinie, to exert his hegemony in the struggle for the leadership of the revolution.

In the 1970's Khomeinie, an exiled clergy, in a series of statements and recorded speeches (sent to Iran and distributed inside the country by his followers), blamed imperialist intervention for Iran's lack of independence and called for an overthrow of the Shah. He accused the Shah for his subordination to imperialist powers, especially to the U.S. and Israel. His ideological presentation of Islam was very different from those of the clergies who either co-operated with the Shah or kept quiet. He employed anti-imperialist rhetoric and demanded the violent overthrow of the regime. Khomeinie's ideology emphasised fundamental Islam in a new sense. He opposed gambling, alcohol, and the corruption of luxury and stood for the full implementation of Islamic law. He argued that Islam was not against industrialisation, development or modernisation, but against imperialism and Western domination. He regarded the "Western influence in Iran as a form of cultural imperialism, for example disliking the kind of music being played on the radio, and complained that not enough was done to promote Iran's independent Muslim culture" (Martin, 2000, p.115). He strongly criticised the state's media, arguing that the mass media was biased to serve Western powers and promote a global adoption of Western cultural values, undermining indigenous culture. He called for the Islamisation of the Iranian media and believed that the advanced communication technology, especially the global mass media, were characterised to promote cultural homogenisation in the form of cultural imperialism or Americanisation.

In order to widen his appeal, Khomeinie combined religion, nationalism and anti-imperialism sentiments. For him, imperialism was a blanket-term used to equate everything bad with perceived Western values. Religious organisations and the ulama used religion as a mobilising force and presented it as a symbol of resistance against the Shah and imperialism. Khomeinie tried to extend his support from the traditional sectors of society by arguing for an end to class society under Islam, for free elections and free speech for everyone, even Marxists (Parsa, 1989). Therefore, all the classes and social groups involved in the revolution gradually started to back the clergies and embraced Khomeinie as their leader. The clergies thus managed to win over a significant sector of the society. In this sense, the religious community formed a new organisation, led by clergies with collaboration from the bazaar and the modern-

educated Muslims. Thus, Khomeinie succeeded in attracting the support of the lower class as well as the middle class. These alliances permitted him to win the perpetual confrontation, making the authority of clergies dominant over the nation by finally excluding the authority of the monarch.

2.10 The 1979 Revolution

With the economic and political crisis in 1976-77 throughout the country and the violent demonstration, the clergy started to communicate their revolutionary propaganda in a way that was accessible to the Iranian people at a time of revolt and became involved in organising demonstrations and protests. In mid-1978, the situation started to intensify, particularly with the arson of the Rex Cinema in the southern town of Abadan where four-hundred people died. The government blamed the religious opposition for the incident (whilst the opposition blamed the Shah), but the consequences were costly for the regime. It was followed by street protests and strikes in urban areas, which marked a vital turn in the course of events. The regime used armed forces to quell street disturbances, killing hundreds of demonstrators, which merely fuelled the people's anger and led to further mobilisation. Finally, on November 6, the Shah replaced the Prime Minister with his military commander, General Azhari, and delivered a nationally televised speech apologising for his past mistakes. However it was too late for him to placate people's anger as many of his close supporters had already left the country or were on their way abroad. By the end of 1987, the Shah's family had left Iran, transferring as much as \$2bn from Iran only between November and December (Madani, 1983, p.345).

With the collapse of the Shah's political authority, the movement was growing in strength and Khomeinie was beginning to play a more prominent role. He finally went from Iraq to Paris, where the focus became for his establishment to formulate themselves as the leaders of the revolution. In this situation, the military government relied on the army, which opened fire on demonstrators. The strikes paralysed the economy and the number of street demonstrations was growing very rapidly. The soldiers began to desert the army and join the people.

On the 16th of January 1979, the Shah fled the country for Cairo, and on the 1st of February, Khomeinie came back to Iran and announced the establishment of the Provisional Revolutionary Council (PRC). Eventually the military leaders realised they could no longer maintain control over the army and thus declared neutrality. Fighting continued between what was left of the Shah's supporters and the revolutionaries, but only for a few days, as the monarchy's state was replaced by the new state with a clergy as the head of state. This raised the question of whether or not theocratic rulers could survive in the modern world. The following will examine the character of the state and society under the new regime. It will show the extent to which uneven development continues to shape Iran's political economy and its socio-cultural sphere.

2.11 After the 1979 Revolution

The revolution in Iran marked a fundamental change in its political history. One of the most seemingly stable and pro-Western regimes in the world was overthrown and replaced by an Islamic Republic. This appeared to be one of the most virulent anti-imperialist nations, declaring itself as being against Westernisation, which viewed as the main principle cause for social and economic deprivation. At the time the various areas of the world were divided between the two prevailing powers of the East and West, as NATO and the Warsaw military organisation were protectors of this new order. The movement not only directly challenged American imperialism, but also disarmed the Communists in their anti-imperialism claims. With Iran, the U.S. not only lost a most favourable geographic, economic and military position in one of the most sensitive areas of the world, but the waves of this anti-imperialistic outburst also severely demoralised the Western-affiliated regimes in Islamic and Arab countries. The essential message of the Islamic revolution was of a cultural nature based on religious thought and moral values. The two issues that required much attention from the new ruling elite were: the regime's ability to handle the domestic economy and its future relations with the rest of the world and the West in particular.

The post revolutionary government however, with its hard-line approach believed that social justice was only possible by reverting back to pure Islamic heritage as achieved

through a strict Islamic regime. The state proclaimed its aims as: re-introduction of the values of Islamic culture, reducing Iran's cultural dependency on the Western media products, reducing the economic dependence on oil revenues, raising the living standards of people, and reducing inequalities. With the economy relatively integrated with global capitalism, the state was faced with the legacy of the old regime's socio-economic and political programmes.

One of the striking features of the Iranian political economy before the revolution was its uneven development along the concentration of industries and wealth in a few areas, mainly major cities, where most of it was held by a very small section of the population. Against this background, the new regime was faced with difficulties regarding instability in the immediate aftermath of the revolution, half completed projects, under-capacity in many key industries, and unemployment. Moreover, the lack of raw materials and decline in markets left firms heavily in debt or even bankrupt. Under these conditions imports of intermediate and capital goods declined, and as a result, the GNP declined by 18 per cent between 1979 to 1980. In the following years, the country's economy continued to experience a relatively sharp decline in real output, a decline in GDP by 47 per cent between 1979 and 1987 at an average rate of 5.2 per cent per year, and drastic reduction in average living standards. This was followed by a decline in oil revenues and capacity utilisation, along with the intensification of the war with Iraq (1981-1989), as well as an increase in unemployment figures. The economic crisis was aggravated by the corruption and inefficiency of the ruling clergies. The oil-dependent character of the state did not change after The 1979 Revolution and oil continued to play a vital economic and political factor for the new ruling authority, as it did for the previous regime. The state continued to receive a large amount of oil money and, like the previous regime, planned a large expenditure programme without relying on effective taxation. Thus, as before the revolution, the country's economy continued to rely on oil, with the state as the major actor. Uneven development within the political economy continued, i.e. the oil revenues provided the state with a dominant role in the economy and society. In short, the deterioration of country's economic conditions was due to internal factors such as corruption and mismanagement, as well as external factors, including a prolonged and costly war with Iraq, turbulence in world oil markets, the freezing of

Iranian foreign exchange assets around \$11 billion following the hostage crisis of the U.S. embassy, and the embargo imposed by the United States.

After WWII, the importance of the Middle East for imperialists was enhanced by its oil resources, as three-quarter of the world's known oil reserves are concentrated in this region. American imperialism and the Middle East ruling classes were very anxiously watching the unfolding process of the revolution in Iran, which had serious repercussions throughout the Middle East. Multinationals such as Exxon and Mobil, which had made billions of dollars in the Gulf oil fields, were especially anxious about the situation. The American imperialists thus incited Saddam Hussein to attack Iran and equipped the Iraqi army with the latest weapons. They even supplied the chemical weapons used in the attack. Saddam then, with the support of the U.S. and its Arab allies, invaded Iran on 22nd of September, 1980.

Politically, the war helped the Islamic Republic regime to silence any challenge from the opposition and provided a nationalist and religious focus for people to rally around. The U.S.'s backing for Iraq's attack presented hard-line clergies with a golden opportunity to consolidate their position even more and to mobilise the masses behind the regime. The war also strengthened the militant clergy who could use the war to justify suppressing any opposition to the government, labelling them as 'traitors' and 'infidels'. This was clearly stated by Rafsanjani in 1985, as he stressed that, "We have been able to use the war to awaken the people and to fight the problems that threaten the revolution" (Chubin and Tripp, 1988, p.71). Military power also served as a symbol of national independence and presented the regime as the defender of Islam against the 'infidels'. As the war went on, Iran was finally able to regain its loss of land and even captured part of Iraqi territory. However, the U.S. and its allies in the region were not prepared to accept Iran's political dominance in the region. The common reaction to potential Iranian military success was summed up at the time by *Los Angeles Times*, which wrote that: "the global equilibrium would be fundamentally tilted against Western interests" (Gurdian, 29 Jul, 1988). These kinds of prospects much alarmed both the West and its regional allies. The reduction in oil prices as well as the U.S. military presence in the Gulf put huge pressure on Iran to end the war. By 1987, the U.S. came to openly support Iraq in an effort to make sure that Iran wouldn't harm U.S. interests and those of its friendly allies, such as Saudi Arabia. The external pressure mounted with the shooting down of an Iranian Airbus

by the U.S. Navy, killing 290 civilian passengers in July, 1988. Therefore, the economic crisis caused by imperialism and foreign pressure led the Iranian regime to finally accept UN resolution number 598 on 18th July, 1988.

Since the revolution, the regime's attitude has altered and a more moderate line has been developed towards regional economic and political developments, mainly due to the unavoidable forces of globalisation and the new global economic and political conditions. Rapid changes were emerging as a response to social and cultural issues, such as the allowance of the broadcast of Western TV films and serials in Iranian TV.

2.12 Society and the State under the Islamic Republic

The revolution, and eight years of war with Iraq, resulted in huge sacrifices, both physically and financially, for the majority of the Iranian population. In return, they expected material rewards rather than false promises. This dissatisfaction has been voiced by the people. One of the striking elements of Iran's capitalist development under monarchical rule, was the uneven development of the productive forces, the concentration of wealth, capital and power in particular regions and classes. This continued under the Islamic Republic and the dependency of the Iranian economy on the world market continued through both its exports of oil and imports of raw materials and consumer goods. There was, however, decline in these imports, which had a negative effect on Iranian society, especially on the most impoverished sections. According to the regime's own figures, per capita GDP declined from 133,000 Rials in 1977 to 54,000 Rials in 1987 (Statistical Centre of Iran, various reports). The widening gap between the rich and poor in the country made the situation worse, as the impact of the crisis was felt most acutely on the lower income earners. During the 1990s, Iran's economy continued to be characterised by low growth and high inflation, which reached a peak of nearly 50 per cent in 1995. The regime may have promised equal distribution of wealth on the eve of the revolution, but during these years after the revolution, growth was almost nil, with GDP declining by 7 per cent. Unemployment was estimated at 30 per cent for 1993, and as a result many people were living below the poverty line. The uneven development has not been just between the rich and poor. In the cultural sphere, since 1979, people have

been under a new form of cultural pressure coming from within the country. The Islamic revolution was a cultural revolution as much as a political revolution, imposing dress-codes and new laws banning alcohol, certain books, music, films, etc. These changes affected different people on different levels. The backlash against Western styles and habits was very violent for those who resisted or were open advocates of life under the monarchy. By the eve of the revolution, a large part of the population chose to reject the cultural invasion brought by global media imperialism. However, the younger generation had been exposed to the Western media products through either satellite or Internet. In Iran, Internet is commonly used by the youth, which enables them to obtain news, music and other forms of cultural goods from outside sources and to engage in other international, mainly English, language exchanges. They also continue to watch satellite television and have resisted the governmental ban on possessing and viewing satellite.

The social arena's demands for reforms became united under the movement led by Khatami, whom people selected as their third president on May 23, 1997. Khatami claimed to give priority to civil society, rule of law, greater political freedom, and respect for pluralism. While he did not describe freedom as anti-religious, he emphasised that institutions that did not appreciate the importance of freedom would be destined to fail and disappear. Khatami sought to establish an institutionalised freedom in the public sphere and attempted to draw boundaries that would allow for the necessary constitutional amendments. However, society was still denied a social contract based on openness, civil society, pluralism, and freedom. Iran still faced severe economic and political problems as well as a cultural crisis.

Since 2004, the political fractions opposing reformist demands have been gathered in the conservative camp. The main point of reference for conservative groups is the institution of Velayat-e faqih. Other references are the call for continued Islamisation of the state and the reflection of this religious character in all matters of state, absolute obedience to state authority, and absolute state hegemony in the political realm. In the last few years (2002-05) unsolved murders, increasing political pressures and arrests have served to maintain high levels of tension between the two groups. Moreover, Khatami's vague policies created great dissatisfaction and disappointment amongst the people. These sentiments were manipulated by the Conservatives in the Presidential election in 2005, in which the hard-line Conservatives won and gained

total control over the executive, legislative and judiciary powers. The Iranian economy is now in a state of crisis as the hardliners control all of the government sections. The state's currency has dropped in value and people are demanding social welfare and reforms.

2.13 Conclusion

The process of the development of capitalism and adaptation of modernisation has resulted in a cultural crisis, inequality and great dependency on the West. According to the theories of imperialism, this imperialist relationship is maintained not only through suppression, but also through the expert institutionalisation of Western, especially American, organisational structures. It has been stressed that "the dominant capitalist economic and social system led by United States and a number of industrial countries, try to preserve its own global interests under the pretence of a new world order" (Mowlana, 1992, p.35). With regard to the uneven development of capitalism, what we witnessed in Iran is the inadequacy of its economy and its great dependency in a way that follows the overall structure of the global capitalism which has formed to serve the interests of the West. This study confirms Luxemburg's statement, as she argues that when developing countries undertake capitalist modes of production, they retain their pre-capitalist structures as they serve as a source of cheap raw materials providing additional markets, which will result in backwardness of the periphery system. As it was mentined before, the present cultural imperialism theory cannot explain the internal forces, the anti-imperialist movements, or the resistance of local people in the general process of imperialism. The analyses of the Iranian social movements demonstrate the revolt against dictatorship, colonialism, and imperialism. This chapter demonstrated the resistance of people and the internal forces working together as two great factors, which the cultural imperialism thesis seemingly fails to take into full account. The present cultural condition of Iran will be closely examined in the next chapter through the analysis of the Television in Iran. The following will examine the evolution of Iranian television from its historical background to more contemporary developments.

Chapter Three

Iranian Television

3.1 Introduction

As it was shown in previous chapter, Iranian society was heavily exposed to Western values, ways of life and tastes as a result of Shah's modernisation process and his socio-economic policies. The driving force behind this exposition was the media and the television in particular. Before the 1979 Revolution, mass media in Iran was considered to be a platform for Western cultural products. Through the emergence of communication technology, the indigenous culture of Iran has been under the influence of Western culture, which flowed to their society through media products, particularly TV programmes and films. These cultural products had great impact upon the feelings, thoughts and cultural values of people, causing conflict and creating inflation throughout recent Iranian history. On the other hand, in Iran, the mass media have also been used as a tool for people's movements in a way such that the anti-imperialism movements and anti-Westernisation spirit became articulated through the journalism and literature. Historically there exists a close relationship between the mass media and political reforms in Iran. By the end of the nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth century there has always been a close relationship between mass media and the state, providing certain technical information for the ruling class. Therefore, the media in Iran throughout its history has worked as instrument that provided the basis for the governmental control both before and after the 1979 Revolution.

In the early part of the twentieth century radio and television began to develop under state control, which was run by those who were indifferent to indigenous Iranian and Islamic cultural values. The states in the Qajar dynasty, and then in Pahlavi, have been generally supported by Western imperialist powers and ideologically rely on

Western beliefs, values, ideas, and the media to legitimise their existence. In this context, even though the broadcasting technologies brought some degree of development to the broadcasting structure of the country, the proper accessibility and creative use of these technologies did not develop. The unequal and imbalanced flow of cultural materials, technical hardware and software from the West and the U.S. in particular brought more conflict and instability to the country. During the early twentieth century, under the monarchy the state and political system in Iran was incompatible with the Islamic and indigenous cultural system and values. The ideological discipline practiced by the media had its impacts on the growing sector of industrial and transnational infrastructure, which developed through the attempt to change the cultural, political and economic systems to meet the requirements for a global market system. The state used the power of the media for their own interests with disregard to society. The Shah, with disregard to the historical process of political development, saw modernisation along Western lines. Introduction and adoption of the Western-style modernisation by Reza Shah made way for foreign intervention in Iran and concealed their control over the country. Therefore, due to the contradiction between Islamic domination and secular power, each step towards Western-style modernisation was overtaken by a new socio-political and economic crisis. Among the most dramatic ones were the Constitutional Revolution of 1906 and the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

The introduction of modern communication technologies and the emergence of the mass media system at the beginning of the twentieth century enhanced cultural conflict and social crisis within Iranian society. This was because under the slogans of modernisation and economic development, Iranian society was deprived of the right to recognise its own unique and distinct social system and culture. In developing countries, the Western-style modernisation process became a one-way flow from the West to those countries. It paved the way for the worldwide diffusion of modernisation. Therefore, the modernisation process and economic development were only instruments used to dominate world economic and political systems while using the natural resources of developing countries for their needs.

In Iran, the industrialisation of society, which began in Reza Shah's regime and continued by Mohammed Reza Shah, and Westernisation of thought and lifestyle, especially through the media production, had not only loosened traditional values but had also devitalised the foundation of the political community in Iran. Therefore, the

1979 Revolution can be seen as a drastic reaction towards this imposition of the Western socio-cultural system on Iranian society. As stated in chapter one, the process of cultural transfer is much more complicated than the cultural imperialism argument credits. What the cultural imperialism argument seems to ignore is the role of internal factors and elites in developing countries in the process of cultural imperialism. These internal elements can determine the role and structure of television in a country. Among these elements are: socio-political structure, economic system, historical background and ideological and cultural environment.

Chapter two examined the historical phase of cultural imperialism through the emergence of modernisation and capitalist development in Iran. It demonstrated that how Iran has been engaged with the West and cultural imperialism throughout its history and how people resisted the Western domination.

This chapter tries to demonstrate the historical and contemporary elements and internal forces that have worked alongside the external forces of cultural imperialism and have had a great impact on the socio-cultural patterns of Iranian society. It outlines the historical background of television in Iran, its recent development and the framework of IRIB. It analyses the technical and programme structure of Iranian television and discusses the technical dependency accompanied by imported programmes both before and after the revolution. It looks into the general features of Iranian television after the 1979 Revolution and analyses the ideological and political infrastructure, examining the Islamisation of the media in Iran in both content and operation. In this, it looks into the internal forces behind Western cultural imperialism both before and after the 1979 Revolution and studies the main factors underlying the huge popularity of satellite televisions in Iran. It evaluates how the regime's censorship and strict control, along with the imposition of a hard line ideological and political perception, have driven people towards viewing satellite acting as a medium for the return of cultural imperialism.

3.2 The Emergence of Television in Iran

Television in Iran was first introduced in 1958 by private enterprise. "Television in Iran was established as two low-power stations using ten- and three-kilowatt transmitters in Tehran and then in Abadan in 1960. These two stations were

privately owned, commercial ventures of a wealthy Harvard-educated Iranian, Iraj Sabet, who had also introduced Pepsi-Cola to the country and later an RCA (Radio Corporation of America) television manufacturing industry” (Mowlana, 1989, in Kamalipour, and Mowlana, 1994, p.83). Before the organisation of Iranian Television (ITV), a technical agreement was signed between France and Iran in 1964 for a television training studio centre in Tehran. In the following years, this studio turned to be a centre for telecasting by a small television transmitter.

With the expansion of communication networks and microwaves in 1969, the National Television was gradually able to link the central station with various peripheral stations. In June 1970, the stations and installations pertaining to the private sector were purchased by the government and merged into that of the National Iranian Radio and Television (NIRT). With this merging of the two stations, television programmes were transmitted from two channels and in 1971, the Iranian Television was nationalised by the government, ending commercial television operation in the country. Its programme structure consisted of diverse programmes from music, entertainment, education to drama and cultural programmes, mostly imported from West and from the U.S. in particular.

According to the agreement signed in 1964, France would provide the establishment of a television education centre but not a television broadcasting centre. This educational centre would be used to train programme and technical personnel for future broadcasting purposes. It is clear that the technical side and infrastructure of television which, in fact, was given much more consideration than the social, economic and cultural sides of television, was not adequate and that the programme structure was not given any serious planning or research. As with the transmission and production technology, television reception technology was predominantly imported from developed countries. In addition, regular television broadcasting caused a massive demand for television sets, which were not manufactured in Iran and had to be imported from developed countries. Thus, Iran became a strong case of technical dependency on the West. Years later, although the domestic production of the receivers began through local production, it was mainly from assembly plants reliant upon imported parts. In sum, the initial transfer of broadcasting technology was realised in connected phases. In the subsequent stages of NIRT’s technological dependency, first came the transfer of transmission, production equipment and training of personnel by France at early stages, followed by the direct importation of

television sets to meet consumer demands. Later on the establishment of assembly plants for television receivers were used as a substitute for direct importation. When broadcasting technology was transferred from the West, NIRT's programming policy also appeared to be characterised by increasing adoption and absorption of Western programmes, models, styles, and ideas. It is striking that in spite of insufficient numbers of essential programme and technical staff, television broadcasting was about to begin.

Since the emergence of television in Iran until the 1979 Revolution, the NIRT programme structure was dominated by imported programmes from the West, especially from the United States. In addition to this, Western soaps and movies were the main constituents of prime time television every night. In the meantime, Iranian viewers started to become exposed to rapidly increasing numbers of American programmes. With the development of broadcasting time, the foreign-made programmes were extended. Although there were a few domestic programmes, they were mainly based on Western formats and content rather than on those of the indigenous culture. This was mainly due to the state's censorship such that all programmes with controversial and critical social issues were banned, with the producer fired and arrested by the regime. In 1976, for every show produced domestically there were three imported shows being broadcast on television. Ninety-nine out of 100 movies shown on television were imported and dubbed. The organisational and programme structure of NIRT television was influenced by the political situation of Iran. "There were no religious programmes on television and the Shah's so-called 'White Revolution' was designed to make Iran a secular society modelled on Europe and United States" (Mowlana, 1989, p.17). The organisational and programme structure of NIRT was under the strict control of the state. Western programmes, especially American series and films, increased remarkably, while home-produced programmes remained confined to light entertainment, music and variety shows, quiz shows and documentaries. While American programmes were the most popular programmes amongst the viewers of developed urbanised centres in Tehran and a few big cities, Iranian films, folk music and local programmes were more attractive in less urban areas.

However at the end of 1960's and beginning of the 1970s, Western, especially American programmes, were strongly criticised by leftist intelligentsia, nationalists and Islamic circles due to their ideological and cultural differences that had

undermined cultural and moral values of Iranian society. It was argued that the emergence of television caused unnecessary consumptions, loss of foreign exchange and the increase of dependency on foreign imported goods through its commercials.

3.3 The 1979 Revolution and the Islamisation of the Media in Iran

Since the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in Iran, the Islamisation of mass media in both content and operation has taken place. Basically, Iran is a complex society that is differentiated on political, social, economics and ethno-linguistics lines; neither capitalism nor nationalism has been able to reduce the gaps. Therefore, in such a geographically and linguistically diverse country, mass media, and television in particular, are treated as a means by which to unite people. Towards this aim the theocratic regime since the early days has employed the mass media in order to reevaluate the Islamic ideas and values. This is particularly relevant in a society that has previously been deprived of its ideological and cultural identity under the pressures of imperialism from foreign forces and secularisation, and later on from the Westernisation of the elites from within. Therefore, after the revolution the regime tried to rearrange the country's institutions, including the mass media, and frame them within its own perception of Islamic culture. Apart from the obvious political changes, the changes in media content were of utmost importance to the state. Under the Islamisation process, the state tried to spread values of the revolution through mass media and also other socialising agencies, especially television, in order to create a new normative structure that could replace the value structure of the Shah regime. Through the Islamisation of the society mass media was considered to be one of the most important vehicles in the development of these new norms and values. Therefore, the contents of media programming were seen as a major means of informing and re-educating people. In short, after the 1979 Revolution, the main characteristic of the Iranian media has been the internalisation of a hard-line perception of religious beliefs throughout society. In this context, the media, and television in particular, have been the subject of Islamisation and have been integrated within the existing traditional channels of communication. This has also resulted in the creation of a state-controlled system of public broadcasting.

After the revolution, mass media has been working under the direct control of the state and in a close relationship with religious institutions. Through this combination the state has tried to overcome Western domination of the media and has tried to obtain a degree of autonomy through production within the framework of its hard-line political and ideological values. The state has tried to combine its version of Islamic culture with the modern media system in order to create an ideological culture which is in accordance with the regime's strict religious point of view that ignores Iran's national culture, especially its pre-Islamic cultural heritage. The implicit and explicit policies in mass media, particularly in Iranian television, underline the importance given to these media by the leader and the regime. These policies are utilised as a major means of ushering in the idea of the state echoing the regime's belief that the Islamic Revolution is the answer to the secularism, corruption. The Islamisation is viewed by the regime as a process of re-socialising public society to adopt a version of Islamic ideals which are in accordance with the regime's socio-political and ideological beliefs.

The government refuses to recognise secular parties or even other Islamic groups as participants in the media. To the Islamic Republic, no other parties or individuals can have the best interests of humanity as their priority. The recognition and visibility of the media within the regime's setting is seen to be based on two concepts; 'commanding to the right and prohibiting from the wrong', and the concept of 'Ummah'. The former is the notion of the responsibility of individuals to guide others and show them the correct path of goodness. Implicit and explicit in this principle is the notion that individuals and groups are responsible for instructing people towards the truth and preparing the generations to accept Islamic principles. This guiding is a responsibility for leadership, government, every Muslim individual and all social institutions, which include the mass media.

The second concept that has an important impact on political life of the individual and whole society is the notion of 'Ummah', as it transcends national borders and political boundaries. Therefore, intercultural and international communication is necessary for preceding the Islamic Ummah. These two principles have become the guideline of the post-revolutionary Iranian media and the doctrines of radio and television's contents. In short, after the revolution, and throughout the Islamisation process, the regime's version of Islam and its hard-line approach integrated with modern communication media resulting in the diffusion of a strict religious culture through the media. The

contribution of mass media is used to legitimise the clergy's total control and hegemony, helping to sustain political and social changes by the regime in society.

3.4 IRIB

With the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 11th of February in 1979, the National Iranian Radio and Television was replaced by Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB). It is the only broadcasting organisation in the country. It conducts television and radio broadcasting with the entire country as its service area. In 2005, IRIB carried daily broadcasts of programmes over 10 television channels and 6 radio channels as well as local stations in different provinces all over the country. In addition to its domestic television and radio services, IRIB conducts overseas broadcasting services on short wave in 32 different languages and dialogues for more than 142 hours daily.

3.5 Iranian Television after the Revolution

Since the 1979 Revolution the current government applied a policy that moved all Iranian institutions towards Islamisation in all sectors of society. The Islamisation of television has been on the top of the agenda. There has been a restriction on foreign materials permitted in the Iranian broadcasting system. For an institution like NIRT, in order to implement the regime's values, they needed time, organisation and most importantly, human resources. Therefore, after the revolution there was a reduction in the broadcasting hours of television, which continued until the appropriate programmes were produced. In 1991, 85.3 percent of all television programmes were produced locally (Ravabete Omoomieh Seda va Symaye Iran, 1991, p.62). According to Kamalipour and Mowlana, "this change is significant in the orientation of broadcasting in the country. Before the revolution, the trend was reversed, with an imported to domestic programmed ratio of 3:1" (Mowlana, 1994, p.84). As Mowlana points out, "It was precisely this sort of programme that was contributing, among other things to the alienation of the Iranians, thereby, sowing the seeds of the revolution" (Mowlana, 1989, p.37). Table 1 shows the increase in production of domestic programmes in Iranian television.

Table 1**Domestic Iranian TV Programme productions, 1990**

Programmed Type	Percentage
Children and adolescents	16.4
Social and cultural	14.9
News	14.4
General education	10.4
Islamic education	8.7
Sports	8.4
Skill and how to do	5.1
Koran and call for prayer	4.9
Entertainment	3.7
Arts and literature	3.4
Political	2.1
Defence	1.3
Economics	1.1
Advertising	1.0
Historical	.4
Others	3.8

Source: Ravabete Omoomieh Seda va Symaye Iran, 1991

The government had made a conscious effort to make television compatible with its ideological value structure. In order to do so, from the early days they tried to increase the amount of domestic media products and limit the importation of foreign products. As a result “the United States has almost completely disappeared as a major provider and source of programming for Iranian television” (Kamalipour, Mowlana, 1994, p.86).

At present (2005), IRIB has ten television channels. The major channels include the television networks 1, TV 2, TV 3, TV 4, Koran network, and News network, which in 2004, produced 15645.04 hour programmes. In the same year, local networks channels also produced 21340.18 hour programmes and the two external channel networks: Sahar and Jame-Jam both produced 7409.44 programmes in eight different

languages including English, Arabic, French, Turkish, Azeri, Kurdish, Urdu, and Bosnian.

Television network 1 is the first television channel and can be viewed by almost the whole country. Television network 1 aims to reach a larger number of audience so its programme structure consists of diverse programmes from music, entertainment, religious, education to cultural, film and drama programmes. The number of live programmes is also higher on this channel than on the others. The programmes in TV2 are mostly local and regional. It covers 93.9 percent of the population. According to the most recent figures (2005), 91 percent of the programmes are domestic and the remaining 9 percent are foreign productions. The third television channel of IRIB covers 87.8 percent of the population. TV 3 aims at younger audiences so its programme structure is mainly based on entertainment and amusement. It has broadcasted 8731.31 hours of programmes in 2004, of which 58 percent were domestic products and 42 percent were foreign produced.

Table 2

Total duration proportions of different programmed categories on TV 3 in 2004

Programmed Categories	Duration (hour)	Percentages in Total
Islamic Education	395.52	5
Social Issues	1744.41	22
Economic	-	-
Historical	-	-
Political	38.32	1
Cultural	265.39	3
Sport & entertainment	5073.09	65
Common Knowledge	257.5	3
Iran and Iraq War	44.24	1
Total	7819.22	100

Source: IRIB's Centre for Social Research and Evolution of Programmed, 2004.

TV 4 broadcasts mostly educational, scientific and social programmes and covers 69.59 percent of the population. This channel has broadcasted the amount of 4286.51 hours in 2004, of which 76.48 percent of them were produced domestically.

Table 3**Total duration proportions of different programmed categories on TV 4, in 2004**

Programmes Categories	Duration (hour)	Percentage in Total
Sport and Entertainment	9.15	0.4
Common Knowledge	458.3	19.88
Iran, Iraq War	4.14	0.18
Cultural	384.53	16.72
Science and Technology	258.43	11.23
Economic	39.16	13.27
Political	305.43	13.27
Historical	4.56	0.21
Social	143.39	6.24
Islamic Education	694.52	30.17
Total	2303.33	100

Source: IRIB, Centre for Social Research, 2004.

The government has expanded its news sources to cover news happening inside and outside the country. This policy, as an infrastructural goal, is presented in the performance of IRIB in news contribution and broadcast. IRIB's Central News Bureau gathers news from inside the country and all around the world, mainly through different sources such as communication satellites, foreign press, and IRIB's bureaus overseas.

TV channels have increased their news broadcasts by 19.7 percent in 2001 compared to the previous year's figure. Moreover, domestically-aired news programmes amounted to 60 percent, from which 29 percent are broadcasted by the nation-wide networks and 31 percent by provincial networks. Also, in 2001, the total of 2008.36 hours of news commentaries and political programmes were broadcasted on different IRIB Radio and TV networks. The below figures represent a concerted effort by the regime to display its political ideology by providing the Iranian audiences and international community with propaganda that reflects and defends the regime on different positions.

Table 4

IRIB’s News Broadcast Amount in 2000 and 2001 (in hours)

Medium	2000	2001	Increase Percentage
Radio	21384.55	24140.41	12.9
Television	11152.19	13017.37	16.7
Total	32537.14	37158.18	14.2

3.6 Recent Developments

Over 2003, various TV channels of IRIB produced 44395.06 and broadcasted 109667.45 hours of programmes. Moreover, more than 83 percent of the productions aired on Iranian television channels were for domestic viewers while some 7409.44 hours were produced for those living abroad. A more recent figure shows that 48 percent of the total TV productions of IRIB in 2003 were produced by the provincial networks, 35 percent by the nation wide channels and 17 percent by Jaam-e-Jam and Sahar channels that are aired globally.

By looking at the state’s TV productions, it can be stated that over half of its programmes are informative and educational, 28.1 percent to guide and publicise, and 21 percent to entertain. The subjects of these productions are mainly socio-ideological, sports and general knowledge and have been designed to portray the regime’s point of view on every aspect and to influence audiences with their ideological, political and propagandistic messages. For the Iranian who live abroad as well as for foreign viewers, the state has expanded its service and has established a number of free-air satellite TV channels including Jame-Jam in Persian and Sahar in different languages of Arabic, Azeri, Kurdish, Bosnian, English, French, Turkish, and Urdu with 24 hours news and programmes for maximum propagandistic impact.

In 2003, the Sahar Universal Network produced and/or imported 3339.11 hours of programmes in eight different languages. The productions of this network have been mainly informative on political and ideological themes. This network also aired 8706.43 hours of broadcasting, 67 percent programmes, 23 percent news and 8 percent trailer/commercials in 2003.

Table 5**TV Production and Broadcasting Figures in 2002 and 2003 for Hour Duration**

Coverage	Centre/networks	Production		Broadcast	
		2000	2001	2000	2001
Nation-Wide Channels	Channel 1	4268.59	4458.08	8784.00	8760.00
	Channel 2	2299.12	2234.55	7162.54	7339.16
	Channel 3	5043.46	4330.12	8731.33	8760.00
	Channel 4	1485.42	1405.22	4286.51	4246.10
	Channel Koran	—	1252.00	—	—
	News channel	1767.39	1964.27	6689.08	7485.03
Total		14865.18	15645.04	35654.26	36590.29
Provincial	Channel Tehran	2004.51	2325.06	5203.47	5941.31
	Provincial Capitals	15709.25	19015.12	31837.57	40909.02
Total		17714.16	21340.18	37041.44	46850.34
Global	Jaam-e-Jam	3176.34	4070.33	17348.55	17520.00
	Sahar	2531.57	3339.11	7656.55	8706.43
Total		5708.31	7409.44	25005.50	26226.43
Grand Total		38288.05	44395.06	97702.00	109667.46

Source: IRIB Annual Report, 2003.

Over half of the TV productions made in recent years have been aimed at portraying the state's ideological values, 28 percent at guiding and publicising the state's developmental plans and reflecting its policies and its short and long-run programmes, and 21 percent at entertaining. On the whole, the themes of IRIB television production in recent years have mainly been socio-political (28 percent), sports and recreational (14 percent), ideological (16 percent), and cultural programmes (11 percent).

Table 6 shows the proportion and duration of different programmes in Iranian television in 2003.

Table 6

Total Duration and Proportions of Different Programme Categories on TV in 2003

Coverage	Centre/network	Guiding And Publicizing Programmes (Hour)	Informing And Socio- political Programmes (Hour)	Entertaining Programmes (Hour)	Total
Nation- Wide Channels	Channel 1	1647.15	2051.43	759.10	4458.08
	Channel 2	604.16	1380.43	249.56	2234.55
	Channel 3	759.34	1305.43	2264.55	4330.12
	Channel 4	202.00	1182.53	20.29	1405.22
	Channel Koran	1252.00	—	—	1252.00
	News Channel	86.29	1722.52	155.06	1964.27
Total		4551.34	7643.54	3449.36	15645.04
Provincial Channels	Channel Tehran	400.20	1422.28	502.18	2325.06
	Provincial Capitals	6543.02	8178.19	4293.51	19015.12
Total		6943.32	9600.47	4796.09	21340.18
Global Channels	Jaam-e-Jam	721.38	2165.59	1182.56	4070.33
	Sahar	280.03	3043.00	16.08	3339.11
Total		1001.41	5209.59	1199.04	7409.44
Grand Total		12496.37	22453.40	9444.49	44395.06

Source: IRIB, Annual Report, 2003.

In Iran children and young adults make up one-fourth of the population. That is why IRIB's has targeted this age-group of the population with a total of 6988.47 hours programmes, which mainly aims to educate them within the ideological and socio-cultural structure of the regime. The major themes of these productions have been socio-ideological (36 percent), cultural (33 percent), sports and recreations (11

percent), and general knowledge (10 percent). Moreover, 54 percent of the productions have been domestic and 46 percent foreign-made.

Table 7

Productions for Children and Young Adults in 2002 and 2003 in Hours

Medium	Year 2000 (Hour)	Year 2001 (Hour)
Radio	3743.27	3896.36
Television	2548.28	3092.11
Grand Total	6291.55	6988.47

Source: IRIB Annual Report, 2003.

The impact of television as the most popular and cheapest means of entertainment and information is likely to be much greater than that of any other medium in Iran. Therefore, the regime is well aware of the value and possible effects of its propagandistic potential. In this respect the regime has tried to improve IRIB technical capabilities in planning and expansion, as well as in TV productions.

Table 8

Number of Radio and Television Transmitters in 2003

Coverage Type	Stations	Transmitters
Short Wave (SW), Radio	5	34
Medium Wave (MW), Radio	92	224
Frequency Modulation (FM)	639	926
Television	3546	7509

Source: IRIB's Annual Report, 2003.

The government, in order to expand its control over the media, has established a specific university to train the manpower and technical staff for TV and radio. This organisation has enrolled a substantial number of students, all of who have undergone a severe examination process to ensure their ideological and political point of views.

The college of Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting is a higher educational institution aiming at training specialists in technical, production and artistic fields.

3.7 Legal Framework of IRIB

The legal framework of Iranian television has always been drawn by the relationship between the broadcasting organisation and the state. At the beginning of the emergence of television in Iran, although television broadcasting was franchised to a private company between 1958 and 1966, direct government control was maintained in 1971 when Iranian television was nationalised by the Shah regime.

After the establishment of the Islamic Republic in Iran in 1979, the National Iranian Radio and Television was replaced by the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB). According to Article 175 of the Constitutional Law, IRIB is directly controlled and responsive to the three Judiciary, Legislative and Executive powers. Hence, under the law passed on 29th of December, 1980 through the Islamic Consultative Assembly, a representative from each of the three powers administers its organisation, acting as Supervising Councils. This council also elects a fourth person as the Managing Director. The latter is directly in charge of the current affairs of the organisation and the execution of the decisions made by the Supervising Council. In the 1990's, the revised and supplementary constitution adopted that IRIB would remain under the supervision of the Supervising Council and the power of the Leader of the Revolution to appoint the director of the organisation. Also all newspapers, magazines, and cinemas are regulated and in some cases licensed through the Ministry of Culture and Guidance.

IRIB, with its current structure, has been under the direct control of the state. Putting the corporation under the control of the Supervising Council meant that IRIB could be brought under the hierarchical controls of the government without serious constitutional reservations. Moreover, the existence of this council does not guarantee the principle of independency and impartiality because in fact, the selection of the members and the other administrative bodies of the IRIB is totally dependent upon the decisions of ruling circle. The members of the Council cannot therefore be expected to reflect the pluralism of political ideas and alternative views in the country as a whole. The administration of IRIB appears to approve the decisions of the Velayat

Faqih and conservative party. It is debatable whether IRIB is able to become an organisation which meets the various needs and interests of the Iranian public equally and accurately. In order to reach that level of equality and accuracy, IRIB needs to be in an autonomous body free from any direct government control.

3.8 Transfer of Technology

At the beginning of the establishment of television and radio broadcasting in 1958, the broadcasting corporation purchased nearly 90 percent of its equipment from developed countries. As with transmission and production technology, television reception technology was predominantly imported from developed countries. In the late 1960's and early 1970's the domestic production of receivers was founded. However, local production came mainly from assembly plants reliant upon on imported parts. Therefore, Iran shared the same fate as other technologically dependent countries. Also the distribution of television sets was concentrated in the metropolitan centres and the availability of transmission was very low in distant areas. In sum, three complementary and connected phases enabled the realisation of the transfer of broadcasting technology. First, the transfer of transmission and production equipment and the training of the personnel; secondly, the direct importation of television sets to meet consumer demands, and finally, the establishment of assembly plants for television receivers as a substitute for direct importation.

After the revolution, IRIB's reliance on technologically advanced countries has continued in one form or another as the country still imports broadcasting technologies and maintenance equipment from developed countries.

3.9 Transfer of Programmes

As it has been mentioned before in relation to the establishment of Iranian radio and television, when broadcasting technology was transferred from the West, NIRT's programming policy also appeared to be characterised by the importing of Western, and especially American, programmes. Although some domestic programmes were made, they were nonetheless based on Western formats and

contents. In the meantime, Iranian television viewers were exposed to an increasing number of Western and American programmes. After the revolution IRIB tried to increase its domestic productions. The most recent IRIB annual report shows an increase in the production of domestic programmes including drama, series, cultural, and entertainment programmes. Table below shows the total duration and proportion of domestic produced programmes in different IRIB television channels in 1998 and 1999.

Table 9

Total Duration and Proportion of Domestic Produced Programmes in different IRIB Television Channels in 1998-1999

Television Channels	Amount (hour) in 1999	Total Percentage	Amount (hour) in 1998	Percentage of increase/decrease Between 1998-1999
Channel 1	3583.34	12	3171.23	+13
Channel 2	2341.53	8	2542.25	-8
Channel 3	4333.39	14	3914.44	+11
Channel 4	1264.30	4	1580.59	-20
Channel Tehran	1979.0	6	1714.35	+15
Jaam-e-Jam Universal network	2231.04	7	1450.16	+54
Total	15733.40	51	14374.22	+10
Provincials Capitals	12766.40.50	42	11081.43	+15
Total	28500.20.50	93	25456.05	+12
Sahar Universal network	2170.45	7	1773.11	+22
Grand Total	30671.05.50	100	27229.16	+13

Source: IRIB Annual report, 2001.

The programme structure of IRIB Television in 2000 illustrates that 89 percent of the amount of total transmission hours are domestically produced programmes. On the other hand, 11 percent of IRIB broadcasted programmes were from imported programmes.

Table 10

Total Duration and Proportion of both Domestic and Foreign Programmes of IRIB Television Channels in 2003

Television Channels	Domestic Programmes (hour)	Foreign Programmes (hour)	Total (hour)
Channel 1	7572.43.00	1187.17.00	8760.00.00
Channel 2	6197.34.00	1141.42.00	7339.16.00
Channel 3	6010.06.15	2749.53.45	8760.00.00
Channel 4	4246.10.00	-	4246.10.00
Channel Tehran	5281.23.17	660.6.49	5941.30.06
Jaam-e-Jam	8760.00	-	8760.00
Universal network for Europe			
Jaam-e-Jam	8737.48.00	22.12.00	8760.00
Universal network for America			
Total	46805.44.32	5761.11.34	52566.56.06

Source: IRIB Annual Report, 2003.

The current television programmes can be categorised as follows:

- 1- Ideological, educational and cultural programmes.
- 2- Serials.
- 3- Documentaries programmes, which aims primarily to portray the regime's views on political, economic, scientific, cultural and social matters, history and special national and religious events and ceremonies etc.
- 4- Children's programmes.
- 5- Sports and entertainment programmes.

6- Islamic education.

7- Cultural programmes.

8- Dramas, which are usually produced as theatrical plays or serials.

Regarding programme-making policy, political, social and cultural factors all very much affect the nature of programmes in Iran and strict policies are adapted to the content, types and time devoted to them. The contents of local products and imported programmes are subject to strict guidelines and censorship. All local products are seen as having to reflect the ideological and political philosophy of the government. In order to implement the ideological and political philosophy of the regime, a policy has been adopted in order to supervise the content of programmes and a censorship department has been established to monitor all programmes before telecasting. In this respect, the programme content is monitored carefully to ensure that it conforms to the political and ideological morality of the state. The domestic television products have a high content of religious, political and cultural nature, establishing a trend towards an imposition of a very strict condition. This has resulted in the total control of the government over the content of the programmes. The content of all domestic and foreign television programmes undergoes a severe content censorship process. Some of the basic adopted policies for censorship, according to IRIB's regulation policy, are as follows:

- Any Islamic, political, and socio-cultural content that contradicts the presented ideological beliefs by the ruling class and the conservative leadership
- Materials that expose the state of any wrongdoing or question government policy
- Woman who appear in athletic games or sports
- Women who appear indecently dressed and in dance scenes
- Scenes which arouse sexual excitement
- Derogatory references to the Religion
- References to betting, gambling or alcoholic drinks
- Excessive violence

3.10 Conclusion

The main objective of this chapter was to examine the historical and the current television industry in Iran and identify the internal elements that interact with

external forces of cultural Imperialism in shaping the socio-cultural patterns of the country. Another objective of this chapter was to demonstrate the dependency of Iranian television on foreign broadcasting technologies and programmes both before and after the 1979 Revolution.

The examination of Iranian television before the revolution clearly reveals a pattern of media dependency on broadcasting technology and the cultural products of the U.S. and a few other developed countries. The industrialisation of society which began in Reza Shah's regime and was continued by Mohammed Reza Shah, encouraged the Westernisation of thought and lifestyle, especially through media production and television programmes, which not only loosened traditional values but also reinforced and sustained the cultural imperialism process.

After the 1979 Revolution although some developments in the technical infrastructure of television have been made, Iran still is dependent on developing countries for its broadcasting technology. There have been great improvements in the production of domestic programmes however; their content does not seem to meet the viewers' needs and wants. In TV programmes, emphasis is placed on religious and political content in order to meet broadcasting criteria and satisfy the government. The adaptation of a strict censorship policy in Iranian television seems to be one of the crucial factors that had driven the viewers towards satellite and video for their main source of entertainment and news. Television in Iran has always acted as a government-owned propaganda vehicle that works to homogenise public opinion and sustains the status quo. The law in Iran does not allow private ownership of broadcast media. The Iranian government has considered the media in general and the broadcast media in particular, as sovereignty-establishing sources that work to enhance the government's rule and control rather than to serve the public. In other words, broadcast media in Iran is considered as a tool to relay messages from the government to the people and therefore, private ownership of such tools has insofar been denied and is considered a potential threat to the national security and national sovereignty principles. These internal laws prohibiting private ownership of broadcast media inside the country have led private investors, mainly from Iranian political exiles, to establish such organisations outside Iran. As Barraclough points out, television in Iran "is cast in the role of a disseminator of pro-government views" and "as long as this practice endures, satellite television will continue to have an inordinately important role not only in broadcasting, but in other issues pertaining to the public life of the

country” (Barraclough, 2001, p.25). It seems that the regime’s direct effort to implement its ideological and political perception through television programmes, along with the strict control and censorship that apply to the content of news, are among the main factors that have driven people towards obtaining foreign news and cultural products via satellite. This effort by the regime seems to work as an internal factor which has accelerated the process of cultural imperialism. Next chapter will address the satellite televisions broadcast to Iran and through investigating the political propaganda; it will try to examine the relationship between international politics and international satellite broadcasting. It will focus on the activities of the Jaam-e-Jam expatriate satellite television and the Voice of America and their relationship to propaganda.

Chapter Four

Whose System, Whose Culture?

4.1 Introduction

As it was examined in chapter one, the cultural imperialism perspective argues that the media operates within a single world market that is organised by a small number of transnational corporations mainly from the United States and the West. For these transnational conglomerates, economic considerations are the primary determinants in what meanings get produced and distributed on a global scale. In this sense, media products are not only informational but also ideological in that they promote the values and artefacts of the capitalist system. However, as it was mentioned in chapter one, this approach seems to stress the economic realm at the expense of the political sphere. It appears that the cultural imperialism argument tends to overestimate the economic factors of global conglomerates and undermines the political power of state in the process of cultural transfer. It does not seem to actively acknowledge the important role of political power as a force behind cultural imperialism. The U.S.'s leading position in the transfer of cultural sales throughout the world through its economic and political power seem to indicate a meaningful and complex relationship between economic, cultural, and political powers in the process of cultural imperialism. Basically, with the Cold War and the expansion of a governmental apparatus for spreading American culture, the process of cultural imperialism becomes more complicated. It seems that economic success and political power have been deployed in the battle for the hearts and minds of individuals around the world. The study of consumption propaganda suggests that economic achievements were seen in cultural terms. Through investigating the political propaganda, this chapter tries to examine the relationship between international politics and international satellite broadcasting. In order to achieve this objective this

chapter will focus on the activities of the Jaam-e-Jam expatriate satellite television and the Voice of America and their relationship to propaganda. The following section will discuss propaganda and its definition in the context of imperialism.

4.2 Propaganda and Cultural Imperialism

The emergence of new communication technologies has opened up new opportunities for propaganda. Jowett and O'Donnell define propaganda as the "deliberate systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist" (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2006, p.7). Pratkanis also described the function of propaganda as "attempts to move a recipient to a predetermined point of view by using simple images and slogans that truncate thought by playing on prejudices and emotions" (Pratkanis and Turner, 1996, p.190). Propaganda is a highly emotive, often ambiguous subject with many volumes already devoted to its understanding. As used in this study, propaganda refers to the attempt by the sender to influence its audience to act or think in ways conducive to the interests of the source. Alternatively, propaganda may reinforce existing convictions and attitudes, again conforming to the interests of the transmitting station. The success of this is not coincidental; if international broadcasts are politically motivated, their content and style will then be the result of extensive research into the target audience. This thesis, in the relevant chapter, will demonstrate that for example, during the field study people's dissatisfaction with the regime's economic system was the primary focus of attention for the studied broadcasting stations.

Such a definition of propaganda was readily accepted by Robert Holt, who believed that the basic purpose of the United States Information Agency (USIA), the parent agency of the Voice of America, was 'to spread a proper image of the U.S.', 'express a point of view', or 'to make the meaning of our actions unmistakably clear to citizens and leaders in other countries' (Holt, in Whitton, 1984, p.44). Parenti also stressed that "to the American public and to the world ... U.S. policy has been represented in the most glowing -and most deceptive- terms. Peace, prosperity, and democracy have become coded propaganda terms" (In Snow, 1998, p.10). Jowett and O'Donnell described the main purpose of propaganda as to "achieve acceptance of the

propagandist's ideology by people" (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2006, p.272). They asserted that:

"When the use of propaganda emphasizes purpose, the term is associated with control and is regarded as a deliberate attempt to alter or maintain a balance of power that is advantageous to the propagandist. Deliberate attempt is linked with a clear institutional ideology and objective. In fact, the purpose of propaganda is to send out an ideology to an audience with a related objective" (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2006, p.3).

Their examination of propaganda as a purposeful and ideological method of influence highlights the relationship between journalism and propaganda. In this way, cultural imperialism can be considered as the end result of propaganda. The ability of propaganda to actually change beliefs, attitudes and value systems is questionable since the manipulation of opinions, attitudes and understanding is not easily quantified. What is certain is that to be effective, the targeted audience must first be vulnerable to a message – either positive about the source or negative about the target – such as, for example, being politically alienated from a particular regime. This, in turn, motivates them to seek out foreign propaganda which reinforces their convictions.

Lester Markel, writing in 1958 for the New York Times Magazine, ascribed to propaganda a neutral status, describing it as 'a method, a technique, neither moral nor immoral with indispensable uses if employed skilfully and for good ends' (Markel, 1958, p.46). In contrast, the French sociologist, Jacques Ellul, judged transnational propaganda to be exclusively a weapon of war, one which actually helped to sustain the Cold War as a permanent and endemic state. Ellul published his thesis in 1965 therefore his perception of propaganda as an instrument of conflict is contextualised by the period he had experienced. So while his rejection of the neutrality of propaganda is contestable, Ellul offered some pertinent comments on 'democratic propaganda' which he described as 'ineffectual':

"Precisely to the extent that the propagandist retains his respect for the individual denies himself the very penetration that is the ultimate aim of propaganda; that of provoking action without prior thought. By respecting nuances he neglects the major law of propaganda; every assertion must be trenchant and total. To the extent that he remains partial, he fails to use the mystique. But that mystique is indispensable for well-made propaganda. To the extent that a democratic propagandist has a bad conscience he cannot do good work" (Ellul, 1965, pp.240-241).

K. J Holsti described the motive of propaganda as stimulating support and action, but asserted that the key to this is how the source of information is evaluated by the audience. The higher the evaluation, the more likely it is that the described objectives of the propaganda will be realised. In this context Holsti believed the BBC to be the most respected and trusted of international broadcasting stations (Holsti, cit, Ellul, 1965, pp.196-7). However, this raises some questions concerning the genuine complexion of the BBC, since such a progression of thought leads to the conclusion that the BBC is engaged in indirect propaganda. If it is the most effective in the terms established by Holsti, it follows that it will then be the most successful in its propaganda activities, which contradicts Ellul's criticisms of 'democratic propaganda'. In this method what matters is the appearance of objectivity. Pratkanis and Turner similarly to Ellul's, stated that "the volume and sophistication of the new propaganda is so vast, and growing, that we increasingly take it for granted as natural and, thereby, we find it exceedingly difficult to distinguish what is propaganda from what is not" (Pratkanis and Turner, 1996, p.16). In other words, credibility, balance and truth are used to sell a political message in much the same way as one would use overt propaganda techniques. For the propagandist the most advantageous feature of operating in this way is that it can neither be proved nor disproved as being propaganda.

For these reasons – its function to manipulate, if not change opinions; the subtle way it is often used; and, of course, its ability to permeate international boundaries – controlling the flow of propaganda has been an anxiety for practitioners of international relations. The first attempt to establish the ground-rules by which the content of broadcasts could be regulated was made by League of Nations, whose members were encouraged to use radio for peaceful means, or in its own words, to 'create better mutual understanding between peoples' (quoted in Philip M. Taylor, 1981, p.190). To this end the league formulated in 1936 at an International Convention concerning the use of Broadcasting in the cause of peace. This bound its signatories to prevent the transmission of material, "which to the detriment of good international understanding, is of such a character as to incite the population of any territory to acts incompatible with the internal order or the security of a territory of a High Contracting Party" (quoted in Taylor, 19881, p.190). This was certainly a grand objective. The problem, however, was that only three great powers agreed to be signatories – Britain, France and the Soviet Union.

After WWII, another attempt was made to control international propaganda. In this quest for a peaceful world order, the Charter of the United Nations decrees 'refrain from spreading subversive propaganda hostile to the government of a foreign country in times of peace to be a state's legal duty' (Charter of the United Nations, Article 2, Paragraph 4). In addition, the General Assembly adopted in 1949 the so-called 'Essentials for Peace' Resolution, which called on all nations "to refrain from any threats or acts, direct or indirect, aimed at impairing the freedom, independence or integrity of any state, or at fomenting civil strife and vetting the will of the people in any state" (Charter of the United Nations, Resolution 290). Regarding these statements Gerhard von Glahn (1967) wrote that hostile or provocative propaganda is a violation of territorial sovereignty. Under such conditions, he asserted, "an international delinquency has taken place and the activities of the interfering state must be regarded as being violation of international law" (von Glahn, 1967, p.119). He added, however, that the various UN resolutions and provisions on propaganda and incitement have either 'condemned' or 'called for', and have thus avoided framing their wishes in strict prohibitory language (von Glahn, 1967, p.132). In other words, propaganda and incitement have not been completely outlawed, but instead their regulation has been placed at the discretion of the individual member states themselves; they are not enforceable by the collective will of the UN. This reflects the inefficiency that has characterised both the League of Nations and the UN and practices that have guided their activities, as well as alludes to possible explanations for their failure to regulate the flow of international propaganda. Despite assertions to the contrary, self-interest is important in international politics. When states considered the League or UN to be operating in their favour they would gladly work through their framework, but readily ignored it when it suited them to do so. Now when they wish to object to broadcasts targeted at them, states have a whole body of international legislation they can refer to. For example, should they wish to declare the legality of the free flow of information across international frontiers, they can cite the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the decisions of the International Telecommunications Union, and the Helsinki Accords (quoted in Browne, 1982, p.24). In short a state can find in international law whatever it may require to justify its actions, and this has often happened in practice. During the 1950's, the U.S. invoked the Declaration of Human Rights when it appealed to the UN against the Soviet jamming of the Voice of America. But the Soviet Union also protested against

American broadcasts, referring to both a 1936 Geneva resolution and Resolution 841 passed by the UN General Assembly in 1954, which condemned broadcasts designed to “incite the population of any territory to acts incompatible with internal order” (in Erik Barnouw, 1970, p.121).

Such legal ambiguity has inevitably promoted states to find other means of controlling the flow of propaganda, with jamming of incoming signals being the most common. This, as it will be discussed in the relevant chapters of this thesis, is recognised and applied by the U.S. and some of the Iranian expatriate satellite televisions in their propaganda war against the Iranian regime. In addition to conducting an intensive propaganda effort themselves, the U.S. and a number of the expatriate satellite television persuaded a number of students in Iran to mount their own campaign, protesting against the regime.

Yet despite all of these problems associated with the control of international propaganda, broadcasting remains a most powerful medium in transferring culture and ideology, which in turns remains the key instrument of cultural imperialism. So many of the broadcasts quoted in this thesis (in chapters six and seven), can be labelled propaganda, however, the line between what is and what is not propaganda is a very fine one indeed and is largely academic; determining criteria are often subjective and inevitably clouded by one’s own political colouring. Moreover they are wholly dependent on both the intention of the broadcaster and the interpretation of the message by the recipient. This is vividly demonstrated by the Iran’s nuclear crises when repeated threats were broadcasted about the imminence danger of developing atomic bomb by Iran. Whether these are intended merely as propaganda or are intended to be serious threats that are supported by a political willingness to carry them out is a subject for debate is addressed in the relevant chapters of this thesis. Therefore, in order that the broad objectives of this study may be achieved, the following will focus on (i) the Jaam-e-Jam expatriate satellite television and the Voice of America, (ii) their relationship to propaganda, (iii) and how this combination works as an instrument of cultural imperialism.

4.3 Satellite-Televisions Broadcast to Iran

The historical debates on the unbalanced international news flow, the innovation of satellite technology and satellite television, stems from the fear of 'cultural imperialism' through its media contents. This was due to the apprehension that the audience would gradually lose their cultural identity due to prolonged and unmatched exposure to primarily Western media. Also the growing fear of the governments of losing their propagate power in the ever-growing media competitions have been among the reasons for launching more 'Geolinguistic' satellite television channels among some Third World countries such as 'MBC' in the Arab world and Globo in the Latin America. However, in some countries, such as Iran, the trade and usage of satellite dishes has been prohibited. Attempts to block the flow of international and mainly Western cultural and political programmes brought in by technological developments in satellites are rather futile, and the Iranian government has tried to block this flow by prohibiting the sale of reception dishes. But the current situation in Iran proves that prohibition, on the one hand, is very difficult and costly and on the other hand; the restrictions have somehow promoted satellite viewing amongst the people, especially amongst the younger generation who are "fed up with constant diet of religious sermon and homily in Islamic Republic" (Mohammadi, 2002, P. 31).

Basically, cable and satellite technologies became available to Western societies as early as the 1970's but Iranian households were introduced to these technologies in the early 1990's. The recent expansion in the television entertainment and news industries in many developing countries like Iran has created a new regional dimension to news and entertainment values. It has been more than a decade since Iranian viewers were first able to receive directly at home international television programme transmission that was not intercepted or controlled by their government. The introduction of the Direct Broadcast Satellites (DBSs) and Direct-To-Home satellite (DTHs) into the country has opened a controversially new international television window to Iranian viewers, exposing them to different cultural settings and values, also offering them news and entertainment that is not controlled by the state. As it was discussed in previous chapter, the regime's direct effort to implement its ideological and political perception through television programmes, along with the strict control and censorship that apply to the content of news, are among the main

factors that have driven people towards obtaining foreign news and cultural products via satellite. The past few years have witnessed a rapid parting from local and distinctive culture and great transformation in the consumption habits of the Iranian viewers through the repetitive waves of commercials and cultural commodities due to exposure to satellite programming. Mohammadi states that:

“as a consequence of the bankruptcy of cultural policy on the one hand, and boring and monotonous domestic programming on the other, people from all walks of life have become the victims of smugglers, paying high prices...to have access to programmes such as Baywatch, Neighbours and a few talk shows” (Mohammadi, 2003, P.31).

Given the dull programmes and biased nature of the state television news and despite the state's harsh restrictions, people continue to watch satellite programmes, especially Persian language satellite broadcasts. It is very hard to provide accurate statistics of satellite reception dishes currently available in Iran mainly because the governmental ban on possessing and viewing satellite has caused people to hide their reception dishes. Also the rapid increase in the numbers of satellite reception dishes makes any statistical figure seem obsolete. A recent estimation declared that “there are over two million pirate satellite receivers throughout Iran” (Mohammadi, 2003, P.31), though unofficial figures show a huge increase in the numbers of satellite reception dishes even in rural areas of the country. These figures now estimate that between 40 to 60 per cent of Iranian households have accesses to satellite television.

As it was mentioned in a previous chapter, media in Iran has always been considered as government-owned propaganda vehicles that worked to homogenise public opinion and sustain the status quo. The law in Iran does not allow for private ownership of broadcast media. These internal laws prohibiting private ownership of broadcast media inside the country have led private investors, mainly from Iranian political exiles, to establish such organisations outside Iran and mainly in the United States. In 1994, the Interior Ministry declared satellite dishes illegal and the law banning satellite dishes was put into effect by 1995. In January 2003, the Guardians Council, which must approve all legislation on constitutional and Islamic grounds, rejected the legislature that would legalise private ownership of satellite receiving equipment. The legislature was approved and supported by the majority of parliamentarians in December 2002.

During the last few years, along the lines of CNN, Euronews, and some other hundreds of satellite channels available in Iran, some Iranian language television

stations were launched providing entertainment and news content. As of this writing (2005), 21 Persian satellite channels are in operation, of which 19 of them are based in the United States. The U.S. based channels are Appadana International, Rang-a-Rang, Jaam-e-Jam International, Pars TV, Tapes TV, IPN (International Persian Network or Tamasha), ITV (Iran TV), Channel One, Melli TV, Azadi TV, NITV (National Iranian Television), AFN Farsi Net (American Farsi Net link), Lahse TV, ICC, Omid-e Iran, Didar TV, and VOA. All of these stations transmit their signals from the United States. PEN TV is based in Germany and PMC (Persian Music Company), transmits its signal from Dubai. VOA is a Persian-language television satellite channel of Voice of America which was launched in 2003 and is operated by the U.S. government. The rest of above channels are all privately owned channels that are operated mainly by Iranian political exiles.

According to the researcher's observation, all U.S.-based satellite channels broadcast their programmes live for 12 hours. The live broadcasts are recorded and are then repeated for another 12 hours, therefore qualifying them as 24-hour broadcast channels. To categorise the existing satellite channels, they seem to fall mainly within three different categories: six of them, including NITV, Azadi TV, Pars TV, Channel One, Melli TV, and Jaam-e-Jam International, all basically seem to be in favour of the monarchy in Iran. Eight of them namely, Tapes TV, PEN TV, Didar TV, ICC, Iran TV, PMC (Persian Music Channel), Lahse TV, and IPN, are commercial. Rang-A-Rang tends to challenge the monarchists, and finally, Appadana and AFN TV (American Farsi Net link) are commercial-political operations. However, most of them oppose the clerical regime in Iran and some of them such as Azadi and NITV are quite forceful in this. It appears that all of those channels, except Azadi, air a significant number of commercials and this includes Lahse TV, which is basically a 24-hour home shopping channel that features music as well. Due to the ever-growing popularity of satellite TV viewing in Iran, the state has been trying to electronically disturb the signals, which have reportedly caused interference in the country's telecommunication networks.

Currently, numerous radios, TV, and satellite signals that originated from United States and other countries around the world have occupied Iran's air space. At the moment there are around 20 Persian exile radio stations that are not affiliated with the government, including the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), China Radio International, Deutsch Welle, Kol Yisrael (voice of Israel), NHK Radio Japan, Radio

Farda, Radio France International, Voice of America, and voice of Russia all broadcasted in Persian to Iran. For instance, in December 2002, Radio Farda (Radio Tomorrow), financed by the U.S. government, inaugurated its 24-hour music and news programming in Persian aimed at the youth, which apparently has been successful in capturing the attention of a sizeable audience in Iran. These radio stations, alongside television satellite channels, offer a mixture of news and entertainment programmes with different degrees of political involvement. The Iranian government blamed these exile Iranian satellite channels for the student's antigovernment demonstrations in June 2003 and for encouraging Iranian people to rise up against the clerical regime. Therefore, the government has tried to jam several Persian-speaking satellite TV channels including Pars TV, Azadi TV, VOA, and NITV, by transmitting powerful jamming signals.

Although these satellite TV channels have the potential to facilitate constructive dialogue and enhance the viewers' knowledge and awareness, as well as protect the cultural heritage of Iran, my observation of their programmes indicates that this is something yet to be achieved. It is obvious that broadcasting is a very expensive, competitive and time-consuming business. None of these Iranian satellite channels clearly state their finances; even on their website there is no information about their sources of income, mission, philosophy, or affiliation. However, on the air, a few channels claim to be totally supported through private and public funds as donations or contributions. But the owners and operators of the channels sometimes accuse one another of having ties and/or being supported by the CIA, Reza Pahlavi, or even the Islamic Republic of Iran.

On the web site of VOA, it is clearly stated that it "is a service of U.S. International Broadcasting, which is funded by the United States congress and operated by the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), an agency of the U.S. government". Moreover, in 2003 abcnews.com reported that "following a demonstration of Iranian-Americans in Washington, D.C., Senator Sam Brownback addressed the gathering and expressed his support for 'young people fighting the mullah minority'. He previously had proposed the Iran Democracy Act, with a \$50 million grant to promote democracy in Iran and fund Iranian opposition groups abroad. He stressed that, similar in scope to the Iraq Liberation Act passed by U.S. Congress in 1998, the Iran Democracy Act would make regime change in Iran the official U.S. policy and provide funds to expand pro-democracy broadcasting into Iran"

(<http://abcnews.go.com>). This demonstrates the active role played by the U.S. government in transmitting cultural values and political intentions through cultural products and propaganda. In addition although, satellite TV owners have not clearly and openly revealed their financial resources, considering the fact that those channels played a crucial role in the student's demonstration in July 2003, and that some members of US government were advocates for regime change in Iran, many suspicions have been aroused about sources of these channels finances.

In any enterprise the financiers influence the overall agenda of a given entity, including radio, television, newspaper, or magazine. Therefore, it raises the question: to what extent can private and/or government funded broadcast operations serve viewers' interests through unbiased, balanced and multifaceted programmes? And to what extent can the Iranian satellite channels practice and tolerate democracy and freedom by respecting the rights of their competitors and viewers opinions?

Generally speaking, Iranian satellite TV channels have the potential to be an open medium for the Iranian audience. They certainly have the potential to inform, entertain, educate and serve Iranians throughout the world. However, their routine programmes indicate that satellite TV owners and operators lack the clear vision and professional skills to do so. These channels instead of focusing on the contents, scope, and quality of programmes, seem to focus on quantity. Considering budget restrictions and the limited production facilities and expertise, they could do much better. Generally, the programmes shown on Iranian satellite channels are more entertaining than informative and rather shallow in terms of meaningful content. The general patterns of their programmes consist of:

- talking host and call-in programmes
- Music videos
- Panel discussions which normally involves two individuals
- Commercials
- Movies
- Selling Persian rugs and paintings
- Short sketches
- News and information
- Expert advice, involving physicians, realtors, and attorneys
- Music and poetry

- Game shows

In addition, however, there are a number of useful and informative programmes, but there is little, if any, educational programming for children and adolescents. Considering the political, cultural and economic realities of Iran and the history of its news and entertainment media (which was discussed in previous chapter), the followings aim at analysing the factors that affect the editorial policies and the actual practice of two of the Persian language satellite channels. It addresses these issues by studying the evolution, style of ownership, organisational structure, and editorial content as well as managerial power hierarchy of Jaam-e-Jam International and VOA, Persian TV service.

Each of these Persian language channels: VOA and Jaam-E Jam International represent a different form of ownership, operational styles and organisational objectives. A closer look at their operations and their editorial content shows that their editorial and managerial conduct is not a straightforward reflection of their declared operational and ownership structures.

The examination of the above channels shows that a mixture of political, cultural and economic pressures dominates the contents and editorial conduct of the two satellite channels. Political pressures, however, seem to be playing the most apparent role in that process. Although in each of these cases the political forces have proven to be more influential in shaping the way the stations function and address issues, the patterns and styles of influence appear to act differently in each case.

4.4 Research Objectives

Editorial managerial policies are supposed to reflect the types of forces that influence the conduct of media organisations, as well as their political, social and economic position within their media markets. Studying the editorial and managerial policies, therefore, would provide a clearer vision and understanding of the hidden pressures determining the editorial practices, hidden agenda, and aims and targets of certain organisations.

Bourdieu sees an invisible political, economic and social censorship guiding the journalists and news business in general. He claims that it can be clearly seen “in the case of hiring for top positions” (Bourdieu, 1998, p.15-16). The managers and

editorial decision-makers of any media organisation are usually hired either by the government, adopting its positions, or by the owner(s) to represent and consider their economic and political interests. This kind of pressure is experienced within the media regardless of the degree of autonomy, independence or impartiality they would claim. Utter independence from political, cultural or economic pressures is an almost impossible situation, but the extent to which these variables can pressure media institutions varies from one social and political setting to another. By examining the operations and strategies of these channels, as well as analysing sample content of their programmes, the following will examine the forces and pressures that shape their policies and control the editorial conduct and practices of these Persian language satellite channels. In the process of identifying these forces, the following issues also will be addressed:

- Tracing the political, cultural, and economic goals and objectives behind launching these channels. This could provide a deeper perspective of the operational policies and strategies.
- Understanding the operational and organisational structures of the channels, which will assist in establishing the power hierarchy and hence the decision-making process inside the channels.
- Assessing the political and economic orientations of the channels and studying the type of programmes used and issues addressed in each of the channels.

To address these issues, and because of the novelty of the studied channels, a combination of content analysis and discourse analysis will be applied. The channels studied are Jaam-E Jam International and VOA, which are based in the United States.

4.5 Methodologies Applied

For a single investigator with a limited period of time, a practical method to obtain a great deal of information is an interview where the individuals can be asked their opinions, questioned about their attitudes towards satellite channels and their evaluations and perceptions about the cultural impacts of satellite viewing. However, for the purposes of this research, a combination of focus groups, content analysis and discourse analysis will be applied.

1. Focus Group:

For this investigation, which attempts to analyse the cultural impacts of satellite viewing, focus group discussion will be applied.

2. Content Analysis:

Content analysis will be applied to examine the general on-screen performance of each channel and to test if the kind of coverage patterns conform to the officially declared editorial policies. This analysis will also evaluate the programming contents in relation to cultural and political orientation. The recording schedules will be developed for non-participant observation. A composite week will be designed to cover the news programmes broadcasted in both stations between the period of April 20, 2004 and May 4, 2004. The schedules will develop in a way that covers time stretches throughout the composite weeks in which samples from most features, current affairs and news oriented programmes.

3. Discourse Analysis:

News stories will also be analysed within a discourse analytic framework. The purpose of this analysis is to investigate the portrayed images and the language used in the reporting of crises in both stations. The intention of this investigation will be to examine the usage of language in recorded programmes and expose the underlying ideologies that produce them, and, within a discourse analytical framework, make those portrayed images explicit.

4.6 Problems with Research

This combination of three methodologies was chosen as the most appropriate approach to study the media and their effects. Trying to assess the managerial and editorial conduct and practice of the two channels has proved to be a rather complicated procedure. In some cases, there is not any written editorial policy to start with and operations mainly seem to follow an unwritten common agreement or guidelines that would conform to the general orientation of the management of the channels. It is up to the researcher, therefore, to examine the actual operational policies or guidelines on one hand, and the variations between policy and practice on the other. These deductions are based on the research and observations of the

mentioned satellite channels. In addition, content analysis will be used to deduce those results about realities of editorial content and policies in both channels.

4.7 News and Entertainment of Satellite Television in Iran

Several cultural and social scholars consider the presence of transnational television services as a self-defence mechanism against what is known as cultural imperialism from the West. Setareh Ghaffari-Farhangi discusses the importance of the presence of broadcast channels that address audiences that share a similar cultural background from a religious point of view. According to her, these channels provide appropriate cultural vehicles to the Muslim population in the West.

Ghaffari-Farhangi argues that:

“Various cultural areas of the Muslim world (Persian, Arab, Turkish, Malaysia etc.) are perfectly capable of taking over a part of this gigantic market of cultural products...It must be recalled that during the era when only major press agencies had monopoly of news and where television was limited to just a few channels, Muslim societies were only passive consumers of programmes coming mainly from the west. Today, they can pride themselves on their specialised channels of news, education, sport and on disseminating their culture throughout the world, among the Muslim Diaspora” (Ghaffari-Farhangi, 1998, p.270).

Despite this optimistic view of the role of such regional and “Geolinguistic” channels, the fact is that inter-Iranian conflicts and differences in their political views do not affect the flow of television programmes through international television networks. Broadcast media that cater for the needs and wants (determined through demographic and audience research) of the Iranian audience, rather than serving any government’s propaganda policies, has been long awaited in Iran. But it is still to be seen whether these media services have achieved such objectives or not.

By the mid 1990’s, the number of regional and international television channels offered to the Iranian audience via satellite was large enough to undermine the state-run Iranian media. The government, instead of responding to the new demands of the audience in this highly competitive media environment, just banned it altogether. These satellite channels proved to be quite influential within Iran where entertainment is mainly a household activity. As discussed earlier, legislations inside Iran have so far prohibited private ownership of broadcast media; therefore, choosing the United States as a base for exile televised media could partly be due to the fact that there is a

large community of Iranian exiles living in the U.S. since the 1979 Revolution and is partly attributed to cultural, political and legal issues inside Iran. All of those satellite channels apply a cultural standard of operations that cannot be applied within Iran. For example, female presenters appear on these channels unveiled, something which is not allowed in Iran.

The emergence of satellite broadcasting could raise concerns about programming content, particularly from non-Iranian sources. This main concern could be contributed to the heavy flow of international and mainly Western specialised channels, bringing along an increasing fear of Western cultural penetration within the country. These concerns are broadly cultural, religious and inescapably political. However, these cultural and religious concerns regarding the programming content of Western satellite channels are not translated into the authenticity of Iranian satellite channels and programming content. Therefore, although the field of entertainment and news broadcasting has attracted a large audience in Iran, they have not managed to offer an alternative to calm down the fear of cultural imperialism. They not only did not succeed in eliminating the influence and attractiveness of Western entertainment channels, but they themselves are also very much influenced by the contents and presentation styles of Western channels. It seems that the fear of cultural imperialism in Iranian households has taken a different angle with the introduction of these Iranian satellite channels working alongside of other specialised international and Western channels such as CNN.

The operational style of these Iranian channels does not suggest an impartial and an objective coverage. Their programme contents are at best driven by imitating Western and mainly American programmes and their presentations, and newsroom staffs come from secular and Westernised sections of society. The lack of diversity among the working staff, editorial policy, and sources of advertisers has made their news and programmes inherently imbalanced, subjective, and with little or no consideration to the respect of others as well as to each other. Iranian satellite channels seem to have a tendency to avoid approaching any controversial issues related to the United States, and for that matter also avoid dealing with any U.S. opposition. The American style programmes, the lack of diversity in their newsroom members, and the fact that they are operating mainly from United States and their support for the U.S. government and/or monarchy are elements that put their politics under question.

4.8 Jaam-E-Jam International Satellite Television

Two years after the Islamic Revolution in Iran, Jaam-e-Jam International satellite television channel began transmission in August 1981. Its news and programme productions and its twenty-four hour transmissions are carried out from its station in California. Jaam-e-Jam TV Corporation is a privately-owned satellite channel, broadcasting programmes such as news, sport coverage, music videos, medical advice and excessive advertisements. The main owner and producer of the station is Manouchehr Bibiyan, Iran's biggest music producer from 1954 until the 1979 Iranian Revolution. For twenty-five years Bibiyan produced eighty per cent of Iran's music with his music company, Apollon.

According to the Jaam-e-Jam station's website, the main objective behind launching this satellite TV channel was to 'enlighten the Iranians as well as the international community about the cause and consequences of major social, economic and political upheavals around the Iranian Revolution and its aftermath' (<http://www.jaamejam.com>). Addressing Iranian audiences living inside and outside the country, the channel claims to work with a dual purpose: first, eliminating the information gap caused by the government-run media; second, providing accurate information about Iran to those living abroad. Jaam-e-Jam TV Corporation produces and transmits three different programmes. The first is Jaam-e-Jam International, which airs via the International Channel (IC), and covers most of the United States, Europe, and Middle East. Secondly is Jaam-e-Jam Sunday that airs via KSCI Channel 18 and covers the Southern California region. And finally, Jaam-e-Jam Shabaneh (nightly) transmitting via various cable channels, covering the Los Angeles area, the San Fernando Valley, and Glendale.

During its start-up phases, the channel has managed to gather up some Iranian writers, artists, journalists who took refuge in the U.S. after the revolution. Amongst them are the Oscar nominated actress Shohreh Aghdashlu and Parviz Kardan, who was the producer and director of the most watched sitcom in Iranian television history called 'Morad Barghi', which was on screen before the revolution. The station, by benefiting from these talented individuals, has therefore managed to gain a high degree of popularity among Iranian audience. The programme content varies from socio-political round tables and interviews with key political personalities, to entertainment programmes, interactive talk shows, medical advice, and music videos as well as

advertises. In many programmes the content seems to be rather superficial, although there are some meaningful talk shows as well.

Despite the initial declared objective of portraying the political realities of Iran and world regardless of whatever the political regimes might claim, the channel, which is in favour of monarchy, has been following a friendly policy with regards to U.S. policies. There is also no clear official statement of the station's financial resources.

4.9 VOA Persian Language Satellite Television Service

It was in July of 2003 that the US government launched its nightly Persian language satellite television, news broadcasting and political programmes to Iran. To do the job, VOA contracted a number of expatriate Iranian television professionals. The station relies largely on both its radio correspondents already working for its world services and on dubbing already produced English-language reports into Persian. The VOA produces programmes such as news and views and features original news reporting aimed at Iran's younger population. It was after the student protests against the government that BBG (Broadcasting Board of Governors), which is responsible for all U.S. non-military international broadcasting, decided to launch the Persian television service. The chairman of the BBG, Kenneth Tomlinson, has claimed that 'the new programme would bring an alternative to government controlled newscast providing Iranian with sound and factual reporting on their country' (Tomlinson, American Public Diplomacy in the Islamic World, February 27, 2003).

Claiming to be impartial and objective, VOA tries to influence the Iranian audience particularly the youth. Tomlinson, in the press statement released in July, 2003 asserted that 'by reporting what's happening in Iran today, we can help further the struggle for freedom and self-determination in Iran'. Tomlinson also argues that "our task now is to draw upon our previous success in the Cold War, to go forward with the new war of ideas as we offer democracy, tolerance, and self-government as the positive alternative to tyranny, fanaticism, and terror" (Tomlinson, American Public Diplomacy in the Islamic World, February 27, 2003, p.7). However, as Kamalipour pointed out, 'the validity of these claims for democracy and openness has been undermined by the fact that 'fear' and 'anti-terrorism' have been used by the Bush

Administration not only to restrict individual freedoms in the US but also to justify the need for war against Iraq or any other nation deemed potentially dangerous' (Yahya Kamalipour, 2003).

The television service was added to the already existing U.S. 24-hour youth-oriented radio programmes in the Persian language, such as Radio Farda (Tomorrow), also funded by BBG, broadcasting a mixture of pop music, news, and cultural programmes, aimed at around the 67 million people under the age of thirty. The TV station programmes include world news summaries, political analysis of issues and events, and cultural features, which according to the BBG press release of November 2003 by the U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors, citing a nationwide telephone survey of 1,000 people, claims that these programmes reach 12 per cent of Iranians over the age of 18. The content of the news, however, is skewed towards the political orientation of the U.S. government and in general, does not give much consideration to the political and cultural set-up of the Iranian audience.

4.10 Editorial Policies, Practices, Functions and Purposes

Up until the emergence of private and expatriate forms of satellite television to Iran, the state television has always reflected the policies and performance of the government. However, operating in a larger and more competitive market where international influence is largely felt, perhaps these expatriate satellite channels could have the potential to work under less biased regional and international editorial policies. The following will put these expectations to the test by examining the declared policies versus the actual editorial practices and the programming contents of these channels (Jaam-e-Jam International and VOA). A closer look will be taken at the organisational structure and editorial power hierarchy in the two channels: VOA for News, a U.S. government operated channel, and in Jaam-e-Jam a private-expatriate satellite channel.

It is essential for news related operations to have their own set of editorial policies or guidelines. These policies are the parameters that would ensure a certain degree of conformity amongst all staff members within that operation. In some cases, media operations and organisations tend to clearly outline these editorial rules, policies or guidelines in the form of written policies. Some organisations tend to apply their

‘unidentified’ policies by adopting a certain organisational structure that ensures a firm control over the editorial decision making powers and procedures.

Schlesinger indicates that:

“The existence of such policies implies that each news organisation constructs news in identifiable ways, in terms not only of selection of stories, but also their angling and mode of presentation. To put a construction on the news, impose a meaning on it, is inescapable, since the production process is one that at all stages involves the making of value-judgement” (Schlesinger, 1987, P.135).

What primarily affects the structuring of editorial policies of television organisations is the interplay between economic and socio-political forces of the addressed audience. Operating in a regional setting can impose some other factors as well, including how does the television station set its operational objectives and in the case of commercial television, where does it fit amongst other competition in its regional media markets? According to Bennett, an editorial policy or ‘review’ stands as the basis of operation of the media organisation. It usually presents the organisation’s professional and operational standards and guidelines to its own staff as well as to other competitors. Bennett argues that:

“The review policies of most news organisations are represented as insurance that the professional practices...will be used in reporting the news...Editorial reviews also exert its own influence on the political content of the news. Editors are not just overseers of news production; they are accountable to management of the competitive market position of their news product. As a result of this accountability, editors and owners (or managers) typically formulate implicit criteria that their news product must satisfy in order to be successful and professionally respectable in their eyes. Studies of internal workings of news organisations make it clear that these implicit criteria are major factors in socialising reporters and shaping the political content of news” (Bennett, 1983, p.68).

The socio-political forces are most influential in defining a certain editorial policy in media operations. The power of such forces - although existing in all socio-political system - vary according to the degree of democracy or openness of the surrounding environment. In democratic settings, Bennett argues that the combination of the political forces and economic factors lead to higher tendencies to standardise the editorial contents. According to Bennett, this is done in a way such that the economies working in a competitive field would dictate some sort of standardised news operation in which the key determinant of the news agendas and news content becomes the content of international news services. With respect to Iranian satellite television news

contexts, this argument can only stand true in addressing news stories. When dealing with regional news, these stations tend to use their own resources for coverage and analysis of news events. On the other hand, interpretations of events about Iran sometimes result in different versions of news report, which depend on the political viewpoint of each station. However, both stations use similar language in dealing with international news. For example, Islamic groups are referred to in the context of 'terrorist groups', exactly as they are so labelled by the U.S. government. It appears that the channel's position and strategies towards covering major issues, and the way that they approach certain issues, is in congruence with U.S. governmental policy. These channels use the stereotypical and propagandistic naming and labelling of opposition groups that U.S. government uses. During the composition week, the war in Iraq was a priority item in the news' top stories in both stations. Both channels for instance, referred to 'Al Sader', one of the Iraqi opposition leaders, as 'Rohaniy-e efrati' (extremist mulla), and in dealing with the Iraqi conflict they both used the same style of language and coverage.

The competition element in the Iranian expatriate satellite television context seems to have more of a political than economic angle. A closer look at those channels confirms that in the absence of any kind of democratic media in Iran they try to establish alternative media dominance in the name of freedom and democracy among the people. This is explained as being one of signs of the ongoing competition amongst the exiles' satellite televisions: to create and establish their cultural and political dominance in the country. Here, the factors influencing the prioritising of news events and angle of coverage come as direct results of the editorial policies of the stations, which in turn are primarily affected by its political and in case of VOA, national orientation. As it was mentioned earlier, the economies of operation in Iranian exile broadcast media organisations, theoretically speaking, do play a certain role in determining what goes on the screen, but just so long that it does not conflict with the major political and cultural set up of the organisation. This is especially the case with VOA, which is primarily a U.S. government controlled channel, addressing Iranian audiences mainly inside Iran. The main operational guidelines in this case coincide with the national interests and nationality of the organisation and the political and social stance that the United States government adopts in dealing with Iranian issues. The two studied stations presented in this research demonstrate different styles and strategies of editorial and managerial operation. In one case, there is not a

specifically outlined editorial policy, but rather, general guiding rules that are followed by the station. The other case presents a very tight editorial system that follows a clearly spelled out policy with a power structure and referral system that ensures the execution of that policy.

The patterns of institutional behaviour and operation in VOA Persian channel for news and Jaam-e-Jam International are completely different. While Jaam-e-Jam is an independent, expatriate company, closely run by its owner, VOA Persian channel for news is yet another department within a larger sector of the sole broadcast media provider in the United States. The size and type of either channel suggest two different editorial strategies and different styles of management and decision-making hierarchies.

4.11 Editorial policies and Practices in Jaam-e-Jam International Satellite Channel

Apart from VOA, all Iranian exile satellite channels, including Jaam-e-Jam International, operate alone and outside the framework of a larger organisation. Operating from a studio in one of the Los Angeles neighbourhoods, the Jaam-e-Jam organisational structure reflects a rather small net of managerial and editorial functions. The main structures and hierarchies of the organisation are as follows:

- At the very top of the organisation is the owner of the channel, Manouchehr Bibiyan, an exile Iranian who is also the producer of Jaam-e-Jam International TV and the president of Jaam-e-Jam cooperation.
- The Managing Director, who oversees the general operation of the channel.

Reporting to the managing director are:

- News Department
- Features Department
- Film Department
- Art, Music and Entertainment Department
- Marketing Department
- Personnel Department
- Financial Department

The programming policy is closely connected to the political nature of the station. According to the researcher's observation, the station broadcasts variety of music video clips, talk shows, political discussions and round tables, and programmes that discuss films and cinema productions and broadcast Iranian films, mainly nostalgic films from the Shah regime. The channel broadcasts a number of talk shows where more controversial issues are discussed and a chance for audience participation is provided. These discussions seem to draw in more audiences, even when these programmes do not give any news and when the audience would only see people who are in disagreement. This is when the audience would intervene and give their opinions, and this participation comes as an important factor. Another programme with a controversial nature is called 'Kelisaaye Khanegi Iranian' (Iranian Home Church), which promotes the Christian religion. This programme is broadcasted everyday for two to two and half hours' duration. In this programme, a few Iranians, and one American Priest discuss the Bible and encourage people, especially the youth, to convert to Christianity. It tries to portray Christianity as the superior religion and ultimate truth. It is important to note that the channel does not broadcast any Islamic and religious programmes.

Like some other Iranian exile satellite channels, Jaam-e-Jam allocates considerable time to the promotional material of the channel. Fillers are used extensively as well. Promotions and fillers run between 15 to 20 minutes per hour.

4.11.1 Editorial Policies, Guidelines and Referral Systems in Jaam-e-Jam

There is not any written or verbal editorial policy that employees are officially instructed to abide by. However, there seem to be some kinds of unwritten codes of operation and editorial conduct within the station. The station seems to follow a friendly policy towards the U.S., Europe and rich Gulf Countries. This non-offending policy also extends to minority groups and oppositions. For example, in the news programme, Kurd oppositions have never been referred to as 'Separatists', the name which the Iranian regime uses for them. In dealing with issues directly related to Iran, the station expresses a striking anti-regime position, harshly criticising its policy and leadership.

During the fieldwork, the news about abusing Iraqi prisoners by the U.S. forces was on top of the news agenda of every TV station. This channel, in dealing with this particular issue, stuck to news and interpretations offered by international and mainly U.S. government official sources. Even when dealing with the conflict in Iraq and the abuse of Iraqi prisoners in news-oriented programmes, it was presented and analysed based on the news and pictures provided by the U.S. official news agencies. American news agencies provide most of the news materials for the channel. Observing the channel's programmes and their contents shows a very positive reporting style in favour of the U.S. and its national and international policies.

4.11.2 Financial Challenges and Constraints in Jaam-e-Jam

The channel is privately owned and managed. Its annual budget is not stated clearly and the station claims that advertising and programme sponsorship are the only sources of income for the channel. Advertising time averaged about 10 minutes per hour, reaching about 20 minutes per hour during prime-time programmes.

It seems that the administrators of the Jaam-e-Jam have approached rich Gulf countries governments and private enterprisers in an early stage of its launching. From the nature of advertising on the Jaam-e-Jam screen, it is apparent that some of them have responded to this approach and are represented either by advertising messages of their national companies, or by advertisements put in as part of general tourist attraction campaigns. The main country represented in the advertising sample is the United Arab Emirates. In addition to this, advertisements coming from private companies are also substantial. Observations of the channel also show advertisements coming from private companies and are products of multinational companies, in addition to some home-made shopping advertisements.

4.11.3 The Way It Is On the Screen

The channel presents a main news bulletin and daily current affairs programme at 17:00 GMT. The main news bulletins include Iran's current events, business and sports news. Most of the programmes presented on Jaam-e-Jam are locally produced. However, they depend on materials either received or purchased

from other sources or interviews with one or more guests. Politically, most of the issues addressed in the current affairs programmes deal with the U.S. and Iran, with greater concentration on the Iranian oriented issues. The presentation-style of these current affairs programmes and roundtables depend mainly on guest speakers. The main current affairs programmes that deal with political and cultural issues use the same style of guests, audience telephone participation, occasionally having a direct satellite transmission with yet another guest.

Features and entertainment programmes on the other hand, tend to follow a speedier style of presentation and contain more visually appealing contents. The editorial content, however, deals rarely with regional or Muslim events and topics. The political agenda of the channel is focused mainly on Iran with very little focus on regional or international issues. A large time slot is dedicated to promotion programmes, but some of the general promotions tend, however, to carry political messages.

4.12 VOA Persian Language Satellite Channel for News

Organisational Structures and Power Hierarchy

The nature of the channel, as part of a larger administrative sector, including some other thematic or specialised channels in at least forty-four different languages, implies that its organisational and operational frameworks follow a strict structure. This fact is more apparent in the administrative functions and operations of the channel, which follow a central scheme or pattern leading up to the head of the sector. The Persian language news channel is yet another department for thematic channels within the Voice of America (VOA), an international multimedia broadcasting service for the U.S. government. The sector is one among several other sectors operating under the general or central framework of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, BBG, which oversees the five U.S. non-military international broadcast services. The organisational structure of the channel is a reflection of the size and the nature of the BBG as an institution. At the highest level of VOA operation is the BBG, which consists of nine members who are appointed by the U.S. President and confirmed by the US Senate. The board sets the guidelines, objectives and policies of all sectors and departments within the VOA. The chairman of the board in this case acts as the

highest executive authority. Any changes, alternations or restructuring of any basic elements within a department have to be approved by the Board of Governors. Reporting to Board are the Presidents of Radio and Television as well as the head of the sectors. The Sector of “VOA Persian Language Satellite News Channel” was officially established and launched in June 2003.

The head of the channel, Mr. Ahmed Baharlou, (an Iranian expatriate) is responsible for the execution of the operational guidelines and fulfilling the objectives set forth by the Board of Governors. He supervises the general administrative, editorial and production operations. The head of the channel oversees the operations of all the other divisions within the channel. This division of responsibilities should indicate a high degree of decentralisation and power delegation. In practice, however, this kind of power hierarchy works more towards ensuring full adherence to the objectives and policies of the channel as part of the larger institution. The channel uses a rather traditional style of news presentation, which is news briefs and main news bulletins that include reports, interviews, and sports sections. Both the editorial and video materials used for the news programmes are mainly in-house productions of the reports, pictures and news gathered from VOA news offices in other countries and also from U.S. officials and other U.S. news agencies. Looking at the background of the editorial staff members indicates that some of them, such as Anoshiravan Kangarlou, have been working as a presenter or have been a member of editorial staff in NITV before the Islamic Revolution. Anoshiravan Kangarlou is one of the presenters of news and views programme and was working as a director in Iranian television before the revolution for several years.

The channel assigns certain reporters to work in foreign countries using technical facilities and services provided by the VOA News-centre.

4.12.1 Editorial Policies and Guidelines in VOA

The establishing objectives and the description of the duties and responsibilities of each department within the channel, act as the basis for the editorial policy and operational guidelines. The document set forth by the Board of Governors stresses on several occasions that the main function of the channel is to serve the

United States image regionally and internationally. One of the main objectives of the channel is to launch a propaganda campaign against the regime in Iran.

4.12.2 Implementing the Editorial Policies

The mere organisational hierarchy of the channel generates measures that ensure the implementation of these guidelines and policies editorially. When dealing with Iran's news or news about the U.S., especially those of a political nature, the main sources of information are from the official VOA News-centre or other governmental sources. Any news items regarding the United States that may be aired on international news agencies are not used unless they are verified by VOA News-centre or another official source. Observation of the news content of the channel clearly shows that almost all news items about Iran, the U.S. government and the news about the U.S.'s relations with other countries are provided by either the U.S. government or other U.S. official sources. The channel's own resources of reporters and correspondents provide materials regarding Iran and all U.S. related activities that were not reported by the official sources. In short, for local and national materials international news sources are not relied upon.

The list of objectives tends to define the role of the channel as yet another propagandist station for the U.S. government and the centralisation of editorial power ensures this function. The type of issues addressed and the handling of priorities in the channel reflect a move towards this propaganda, especially when local, social and political issues are addressed. For example, the channel usually interviews Iranian regime oppositions, presenting their opinions on issues such that they do not criticise U.S. government policy. In addition, some of the social programmes produced by the channel do not give way to analysts and public criticism of the U.S. government. In one of the roundtable discussion aired on the 11th of June, 2004, the central theme of the programme was the funeral of late U.S. president Ronald Reagan. While the ceremony was broadcasted live, a call from Iran was cut on air because the caller expressed some criticisms against the programme and the United States. These kinds of incidents reveal that even mild criticisms are not tolerated. This also reflects the policy of the government founded media monopoly.

The strict editorial screening policy adopted and followed by the channel, together with the declared openness in handling different issues by the channel, reflect a double standard in dealing with different issues and a general official tendency to portray a total democratic image of the VOA throughout the world. On the other hand however, the limitations of such openness and freedom in speech are not well defined or declared. The propagandistic task of the channel is apparent in the considerable amount of programmes that are devoted to such a purpose. For example, observation of the channel programmes and their contents indicates several programmes praising the U.S. government's policies and projects. Some other programmes focused on the U.S.'s international activities. However, this propaganda task is not as obvious on regular days as it is during special occasions. The observation of the channel on the day before and the day after the funeral of Ronald Reagan, the former American President, indicated that channel did broadcast the President's funeral ceremony almost all day. In addition, almost all daily and weekly political and historical programmes were devoted to emphasising the late President's international role, especially in issues related to Iran.

4.12.3 The Way it is on the Screen

This channel produces and runs a nightly 30 minutes news broadcast at 19:00 GMT (21:30 – 22:00 in Iran), called Khabarha va Nazarha (News and Views), which features original news reports from Iran and the world along with analyses of issues and events, especial interest and cultural features. The channel also produces a weekly ninety-minute programme called Mize-Gerdi ba Shoma (Roundtable with You), which starts with a five-minute newscast, followed by a discussion among the host and studio guests where the Iranian audience can call in and discuss issues related to Iran. This programme is broadcasted every Friday. The political programmes about Iran are more critical and analytical rather than documentary in nature. Most of the programming material used by the channel is home produced. Sometimes pictures and editorial materials for news bulletins come from U.S. official sources and occasionally from international news agencies. The programmes presented on this channel are usually produced in the form of reports.

The kind of programming content presented on the VOA Persian News Channel is reflective of U.S. international policy and operation. Programmes dealing with regional or Iranian affairs also tend to reflect U.S. national attitudes and presentation. The main programme that reflects this attitude is 'Fasle Digar', or New Chapter, which is mainly a weekly programme that targets the young audience in Iran, offering informative and entertaining programmes. A one-hour programme that broadcasts every Tuesdays at 20:00 GMT (22:30 – 23:30 in Tehran Local Time) features different issues related to youth, such as sport, cars, American life, Hollywood, fashion, entertainment and reports on news and current events. Apart from this programme, other programmes also reflect the same character. They deal mainly with Iranian events from a U.S. government perspective and they rarely present opposition related coverage. The channel does not allocate any time for advertising or promotional materials.

4.13 Discussion

It seems that detaching or isolating news and entertainment mediums from the dominant political system is an unrealistic notion for most media idealists. Most media organisations have to abide by and respond to rules set forth by the political system in power. Different types of control are practiced. The extent of their limitations and allowed freedoms, however, vary according to the nature of the ruling political system. For decades and since the early introductions of broadcast media, the Iranian governments both before and after the revolution have considered and utilised television for propagandist purposes. The introduction of international satellite television to the country and the public exposure to other types of media systems, together with strong opposition groups outside Iran, have contributed to the expansion of exile satellite television abroad.

A mixture of political and economic pressures dominates the editorial conducts of these channels. Although in each of the studied cases the political forces seem to be more influential in shaping the way the stations function and address issues, the patterns and styles of influence appear to act differently in each case.

The first case, Jaam-e-Jam channel and its political owning power, continually claims complete detachment. Meanwhile, the channel's programme structure, its programme

contents and its practiced policies stress that the channel is being used by the pro-monarchist owning power to work alongside VOA to launch a propaganda campaign against the theocratic regime in Iran.

The VOA TV channel for News represents the type where political influence obviously works towards the same traditional convention of using the medium to propagate the international interests of the U.S. government. In order to assess how the political forces and economic influences affect the editorial policies and conduct of these satellite stations, each of the elements that play a role in such an assessment need to be individually addressed.

1- Addressing the Iranian Audience:

Receiving entertainment and news transmission from a different country was an activity restricted to Radio until the 1990's. But within the country, television news has always been the domain of the local government. Jaam-e-Jam International first adventured the television news and products to contradict the government domination in 1982. All other exile Iranian satellite channels that were launched afterwards claimed to be nationalistic in both nature and content. The agendas of their satellite news bulletins and political programming have been reflective of the foreign policy and governmental news of the host country.

The initiation of an all-news Persian satellite television station by VOA in the aftermath of student's protest in Iran, working along with Jaam-e-Jam and some other Iranian satellite channels, have drawn attention to the fact that an independent Iranian news medium is still far from being realised. The political and the financial powers behind these stations play a main role in sustaining their editorial policies and practices. Jaam-e-Jam, which is very sharp in its critics of the current regime in Iran, has its own set of limitations and boundaries. There have been no interviews with the religious-nationalist opposition and the station has never criticised U.S. political powers or activities, only stressing the U.S.'s soundness and positive role in the region. The VOA channel for news stands mainly as an American channel with the intention of bringing about a change in Iranian political power. One of its set objectives is to address a primarily Iranian audience, especially those who live inside the country. However, these two channels face the fact that their audience comes from different and even conflicting political backgrounds and orientations. However, not all

of the historical and current political turmoil in Iran is being translated in these politically orientated channels.

2- Democratisation of the Political Discourse:

The main reason that a political-orientated channel can attract a large number of audience is that they practice a hypothetical and political free speech. However, some, Iranian satellite TV channels, in addition to replicating the technical, visual and programming styles of the American broadcasters, have passed the stage of free speech into sensational types of discussions. These programmes are one of the selling forces behind the channel. The amount of the advertising in Jaam-e-Jam International is rather high, and it seems that the more programme is controversial, the more sponsorship the channel gets. Apart from Jaam-e-Jam International, some other political-oriented channels, such as Channel One and NITV, have adopted the same open platform policy for similar 'heated' discussions of political and current events. There are several discussion shows where controversial issues are discussed and audience participation is included. Most of these programmes deal with current Iranian economic, social and political issues.

The issue of democratisation of political discourse has emerged as a basic and important element in the development of the new Iranian satellite broadcast media. This kind of discussion was never practiced before. Therefore, the popularity of some of these channels comes from the fact that democratisation of speech inside Iranian communities has not been achieved traditionally. These types of programmes, even with a certain degree of freedom of speech, do open a closed window for Iranian viewers, providing them with what was originally lacking in the whole cultural and political system.

3- Credibility and Popularity:

The issue of the credibility of these new channels is still debatable and no proper studies have been conducted to evaluate such aspects. So far, channels have been measured or evaluated in terms of reception and popularity. The issue of credibility still needs to be evaluated. Traditional experiences of the Iranian audience with their national media have created a state of everlasting suspicion of the realities of the purposes behind the delivered messages. The obvious propaganda messages

and the continuous manipulation and negligence of news that affect the Iranian people are some of the reasons that led the Iranian audience develop a tradition of turning to international news sources for what they regard as 'credible' news. Prior to satellite television, this role was played by Persian services of international radio stations, such as BBC, and Voice of America.

Jaam-e-Jam has managed so far to be popular, a status that is reached primarily to the level of practiced democracy in their discussions and also due to the entertainment it offers. In the case of the VOA channel, its popularity and credibility has been very much overshadowed by its nature as a U.S. government-owned and operated channel. With such conditions, it will be very difficult, if not impossible, for this channel to be considered by the Iranian audience as reliable and credible.

4.14 Conclusion

It might still be premature to judge the success or failure of Iranian satellite televisions. The political and cultural realities of Iran make these satellite channels stand out. However, it seems that the editorial operations of the two channels are influenced directly by the political orientation of their organisation and/or ownership. Editorial policies are applied differently according to the organisational structure and operational strategies of each channel. This can range from direct censorship that could extend to cutting programmes on air to the mildest option of simply appointing the right people in the right positions. In both cases, the two measures are being applied to guarantee complete adherence to policy and guidelines.

The VOA channel operates within the boundaries set forth by the U.S. government, which is the indirect owner and operating power. Its policies and practices do not deny this fact; as they stress it as a service that mainly address Iranians and in doing so, it advocates and promotes the U.S. government's policies. VOA news content seems to be propagandist in nature. Holt believed that the basic purpose of the United States Information Agency (USIA), the parent agency of the VOA, is to 'spread a proper image of the U.S.', 'express a point of view', or 'to make the meaning of our actions unmistakably clear to citizens and leaders in other countries' (Holt, 1984, p.44). Holt argues that the main purpose of the USIA was to affect the policy decisions of others in such a way that American foreign policy goals would be

achieved. The agency itself, of course, does not readily admit this, and substitutes such carefully constructed labels as 'information effort' and 'public diplomacy' for propaganda, but propaganda it remains.

The case of Jaam-e-Jam is different. It is a private channel working from the United States, which should hypothetically provide it with more chances to operate openly without any governmental political influence. The reality is that the political and economic pressures have directly affected stations' activities. To avoid being economically crushed by political pressures, Jaam-e-Jam seems to have been working within the boundaries of the political realities of the host country. In doing so, the station does not seem to be keen on taking advantage of the amount of freedom offered to them by being both a private and an expatriate medium.

The fast growing exile broadcast media transmitting news and entertainment to Iran has changed the entire media map in the country. The exile Iranian satellite channels reflect an example of the new realities of expatriate political culture, a culture that is torn between democratisation and control and between Westernisation and traditionalism.

This chapter has examined the way that the satellite television stations under study are administrated, the style of their programmes, the production of news bulletins, and the methods that they adopt in their editorial work. This study is concerned with the fact that political goals are achieved through the use of language. Therefore, in order to critically assess their values and their attitudes, the next chapter deals with content analysis of news as the methodology of the investigation.

Chapter Five

Content Analysis

5.1 Introduction

As it was mentioned in chapter one, the cultural imperialism argument tends to overestimate the economic factors of global conglomerates and undermine the political power of the state in the process of cultural transfer. The theory does not seem to actively acknowledge the important role of political power as a force behind cultural imperialism since the power is never exerted only through military and technological control, but always through discursive control as well. In order to demonstrate the relationship between international politics and international satellite broadcasting and to demonstrate the active role played by the state in engaging in ideological warfare, this chapter will focus on the news programmes of the Jaam-e-Jam expatriate satellite television and the Voice of America and their relationship to propaganda. This chapter tries to examine the agenda and the attitudes of the programme contents of the two studied satellite channels. Content analysis is conducted to ascertain the news agenda and types of production in both Jaam-e-Jam and VOA, and also to identify the main differences in news stories, and the way in which the bulletin and news periods are constructed, i.e. presenters, running sequence, duration, the stories and how they are covered in the two television stations. The emphasis is put on the location of a news story, its subject matter, source, duration, the type of visual material used and its main character. This will provide a basis for the discourse analysis in chapter six which examines the usage of language in recorded programmes and exposes the underlying ideologies which produce them. Chapter six focuses on talk and texts as 'social practice', the way that particular ideologies are represented as 'common sense' and 'unquestionable' and the way that discursive practices could have major ideological effects, such as producing and reproducing unequal power relations between social classes, ethnic groups, etc.

Finally, to examine the degree of effect and success of these politically motivated satellite channels with respect to their target audience, in chapter seven, the results of the focus groups investigation will be presented and analysed.

The content analysis classifications, categories, units and definitions: appendix 1

5.2 The Research population and Sample Size

The determination of the research population and the size of the sample are important elements in quantitative studies. This study is concerned with the news in the main television news bulletin on the VOA satellite television channel and the main news update in Jaam-e-Jam channel. These satellite television channels are both transmitted from the United States. The duration of the field work spanned one month, from 29/06/2004 to 29/07/2004.

Recording timetable for both VOA and Jaam-e-Jam: appendix 2

Table 1

Television Station	Time of the Main News Bulletin (GMT)	Time of the Main News Bulletin (Iran Time)
VOA	6.30 p.m. GMT	9:00 p.m.
Jaam-e-Jam	5.30 p.m. GMT	8.00 p.m.

Timetable of the main news bulletin for both VOA and Jaam-e-Jam

5.2.1 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis is the news story which represents an independent news unit in dealing with a specific and independent event completely detached from the previous story by a barrier. The barrier may be a change in the news presenter or the subject of the news. The second (1/3600th of an hour) was adopted as the unit of time for measuring the research variables.

5.2.2 Analysis Items

To identify and compare the news agenda of the two channels the following was examined:

- The place where the news story took place
- The subject of news story
- The sources of news
- Duration of news
- The type of visual material accompanied the news
- The main character of the news story

5.2.3 The Location of the News Story

The geographical location where the news story occurred is classified into the following categories:

- a. Domestic: this includes all the events happening inside the country of which the station is transmitted from.
- b. Iran news: all the events happening inside the country.
- c. Islamic Countries: this includes the Arab countries and all the forty-five Islamic countries which are members of the Islamic Conference.
- d. Western Countries: including Canada, Australia, and all the East European countries and the former Soviet Union.
- e. Developing Countries: this includes the countries from Central and South America, Africa, South East Asia, India and China.
- f. Others

5.2.4 The Subject of the News

The news stories are classified into 14 subjects. These categories, which are based on Deutchmann classification (Stemple, 1981, pp.121-122), are as followed:

- 1) Political,
- 2) Military,
- 3) Economic,
- 4) Religious,
- 5) Disasters,
- 6) Accidents and crimes,

- 7) Education and culture,
- 8) Sport,
- 9) Humanities,
- 10) Social services,
- 11) Development,
- 12) Community health and medicine,
- 13) Arts,
- 14) Sciences and innovations,
- 15) Others

5.2.5 The Sources of the News

This is to define the mass and the quality of the material in each station. Since television news often contains visual materials that are accompanied by the reading material, this category was subdivided into two main sub-divisions as followed:

Sources for the Reading Material

- 1- Local (U.S.) news agencies
- 2- International news agencies
- 3- Government/official sources
- 4- Station's own resources
- 5- Other

Sources of the Visual Material

- 1- U.S. television stations
- 2- Other countries' television stations
- 3- Picture news agencies
- 4- Other

The sources of both real and visual materials were also classified into:

- a- Mentioned, where the sources of the news was mentioned by the newscaster, or in the case of visual material if there is a logo or written name accompanying the material
- b- Not mentioned, which applies to news where the sources is not mentioned

5.2.6 The Main Character in the News

This category applies to the main character that the news story is based upon. This category was classified into six sub-divisions:

- 1- The head of state, e.g. President, Prime Minister, etc.
- 2- Government officials such as Ministers, and Ambassadors
- 3- Prominent figures in the private sector including company owners and directors
- 4- Corporate bodies, including government institutions
- 5- Artists, celebrities, athletes, etc.
- 6- Other

5.3 Content Analysis of the Recorded Materials from VOA and Jaam-e-Jam News Programmes

The content analysis methodology, which concentrates on the analysis of the content of the media message, is defined as ‘a research method by which to achieve a quantitative, organised and objective description of the content of the apparent means of communications’ (Berelson, 1953, p.18). Berelson emphasise the quantitative aspects of content analysis as well as objectivity. He also stresses organisation in the presentation of data and asserts that numerical records in themselves do not mean anything in most situations. The following analyses the content of the news bulletins, news periods and news related programmes in both VOA and Jaam-e-Jam satellite television channels. It includes a descriptive survey of the characteristics of the content of these media channels.

In this study, content analysis is used to ascertain the news agenda and to identify the main similarities and differences in news stories and the way in which the bulletin is constructed, i.e. presenters, running sequence, duration, the stories and how they are covered on the two stations. This analysis also evaluates the programming contents in relation to political orientation. Special focus was given to the national orientation of the programmes and news items as well as the types of events or themes covered. The main purpose of these classifications and categorisations of content is to achieve a general view of how the news and programming agenda of these channels are set and

the kind of editorial pressures that have the most effect on them. What follows are the results of the analysis of the contents of news stories in the two studied channels (VOA and Jaam-e-Jam). The main news programmes were recorded over the period of one-month field work, commencing 29/06/04 and ending 29/07/04. For this content analysis, a composite week was designed, covering the period from June 29 until July 5, 2004. The schedules were developed to cover time stretches throughout the composite week in which samples from most feature, current affairs and news oriented programmes were included, in addition to the news bulletins and news briefs. The sample recordings were totalled at about 20 hours from each channel. All the programmes were recorded using a video tape recorder.

The recording time table of the broadcasted programmes in VOA and Jaam-e-Jam during the composite week: appendix 2

5.4 The Results

5.4.1 Jaam-e-Jam Satellite Television

The total number of news stories analysed was 108 items, broken down as follows: Tuesday (25), Wednesday (27), Thursday (17), Friday (16), and Monday (23). It should be mentioned that the programme is not broadcasted on Saturdays and Sundays. Total transmission time for the week was approximately 342 minutes (20,520 seconds).

5.4.2 VOA Persian Television Service

The total number of news stories covered during the week in question was 169 items, broken down as follows: Tuesday (31), Wednesday (29), Thursday (21), Friday (22), Saturday (22), Sunday (19), and Monday (25). Total transmission time for the week was approximately 210 minutes (12,600 seconds).

Table 2 shows the number and duration of news stories in the study week.

Table 2
Number and Duration of News Stories during the Week

Day of the Week	Jaam-e-Jam Television		VOA Persian Service	
	No. of news stories	Duration (minutes)	No. of news stories	Duration (minutes)
Tuesday 29.06.04	25	72.5	31	30.00
Wednesday 30.06.04	27	75.2	29	30.00
Thursday 01.07.04	17	60.0	21	30.00
Friday 02.07.04	16	55.0	22	30.00
Saturday 03.07.04	—	—	22	30.00
Sunday 04.07.04	—	—	19	30.00
Monday 05.07.04	23	90.0	25	30.00

Close examination of the above table shows that the largest number of news stories transmitted on VOA was 31 items on Tuesday the 29th of June, 2004 and the lowest number of items transmitted was 19 items on Sunday the 4th of July, 2004.

Table 2 shows that the number of news stories varies daily. The duration of the news period in Jaam-e-Jam varies whereas the duration of the main news bulletins in VOA are of fixed duration. The lowest number of news stories shown on Jaam-e-Jam channel was 21, shown on Thursday the 2nd of July over a period of 55 minutes. The largest number of news stories transmitted was 30 items on Wednesday the 30th of June, over a period of 75 minutes. Table 2 also indicates that although there was some variability in the number of news stories shown on VOA, the station maintained the duration of its news bulletins within set limits. This is something that Jaam-e-Jam has failed to do, which highlights the concept of news bulletins production and its attempt

to attracting audiences by selecting and stream lining the elements of news stories in a fast and concise way.

5.4.3 The Gathering and Presentation of News in both Channels

In order to analyse the style of presentation and the duration of time given to a specific news story and to see how the news bulletin and news period in both stations are collected, it was decided that one news story, which was on top of the news agenda in both stations during the composite week, would be selected and presented. During the fieldwork, and only one day after the transferring of sovereignty in Iraq, the NATO summit in Turkey and Bush's speech in Istanbul were on top the news agenda for both of the two stations. The content of this news story will be analysed to identify the above points. In addition, the language used in the text by the two channels will be presented and the similarities and the differences in the style and method of presentation will be discussed. In order to give a qualitative analysis of the content of this news item, the news story as it was presented in each channel will be reported, as the picture clips and visual material that accompanied this news item in each station will be discussed.

5.4.4 Jaam-e-Jam Satellite Television

The duration of this particular news item on Jaam-e-Jam was two-minutes and five-seconds. The news was read by the presenter from inside the studio, accompanied by slides and pictures of George Bush.

News Presenter only:

The news story in Persian:

پرزیدنت بوش که برای شرکت در نشست سران ناتو در استانبول حضور داشتند در یک سخنرانی گفتند که اگرچه اجرای د مکراسی به معنای تسامح دینی است اما این موضوع هرگز به معنای عقب نشینی برخی ادیان و مذاهب از اعتقادات خود و پذیرش نکات منفی فرهنگ غرب نیست . جورج بوش پیش از ترک ترکیه به مقصد واشنگتن در دانشگاه گالاتاسرای استانبول سخن می گفت افزود من وقتی که از محاسن آزادی می گویم نوارهای ویدئوهای غیر اخلاقی و اشاعه روحیه مصرف گرایی نیست . او گفت در کشورهای مثل سوریه و ایران عده ای محافظه کار خسته و بی پشتوانه مردمی در روحیه د مکراسی طلبی نسل جدید ایستاده اند . بوش همچنین گفت ما در گذشته با تحمل رژیم های دیکتاتوری و سرکوب گر خاورمیانه، آزادی را فدای ثبات و امنیت کردیم اما در عمل نتیجه مثبتی نگرفتیم . جورج بوش اضافه کرد نادر گرفته و تجاهاول ما نسبت به رژیم های دیکتاتوری و افراطی در منطقه

امنیت کشورهای غربی را بیشتر نکرده است بلکه برعکس دیدیم که احساسات ضد آمریکایی بیشتر شد و خودمان دیدیم • بوش اشاره کرد که از خشونت تا جایی گسترش یافت که ما آن را در خیابان های حمایت دیکتاتورهای جهان پشیمانیم •

Conclusion: The presenter inside the studio (in Persian);

این آقای پرزیدنت بوش اشاره کردند آنچه را که ما در مورد دیکتاتورهای جهان حمایت کردیم واقعاً پوزش می‌خواهیم از جهانیان •

The news story in English:

President Bush, in a speech given at Galatasaray University after attending the NATO summit in Turkey, asserted that “although practicing democracy means religious negligence, it does not mean retreating some religions from their beliefs”. He added that, “when I speak about the blessing of democracy, coarse videos and consumerism are not what I mean”.

He said that in countries like Iran and Syria some tired and discredited conservatives are trying to hold back the democratic will of the new generation. Bush also said that ‘in the past we tolerated tyranny in the Middle East and sacrificed liberty for stability, but it did not result in something positive. Bush added that the outcome of our negligence and ignorance towards tyrannies and extremist regimes in the region has been far from positive and their hatred for America has grown deeper and the violence has spread until we saw the evidence of that in the streets of our cities’.

Pictures of George Bush and the U.S. flag were shown repeatedly during the news reading.

Conclusion: The presenter from inside studio

Mr. President Bush has indicated that ‘We must apologise to the world for supporting dictators’.

5.4.5 VOA Satellite Channel

The duration of the news story on VOA channel was two-minutes and ten-seconds in which slides of the Bush’s speech at Galatasaray University were used, including the picture of NATO meeting in Turkey. The accompanying text was read by the presenter from inside the studio, which together with the slides, ran for three-minutes. During the reading of the text by the same presenter, video clips of George Bush were shown for thirty-seconds. This was followed by a picture report of the

NATO summit presented by the same presenter, which lasted for one and half minutes. The reports and the video clips broadcasted were all property of the station.

The News Story:

Presenter from inside the studio plus slides of George Bush and the NATO summit (in the original, Persian):

امروز استانبول در آخرین روز اجلاس کشورهای عضو آتلانتیک شمالی ناتو شاهد آخرین سخنرانی پرزیدنت بوش پیش از ترک استانبول به مقصد واشنگتن بود. بوش در این سخنرانی در دانشگاه گالاتسرای استانبول گفت آزادی، آینده خاورمیانه و تمامی بشریت است و کشورهای اسلامی نباید از گسترش د مکراسی خوف داشته باشند. بوش گفت وقتی از نعمات د مکراسی صحبت می‌کنم طبیعی است که دید یوهای خشن و تبلیغات تجاری غرب آن چیزی نیست که من در ذهن دارم. میان ارز-شهای د مکراتیک و معیارهای عالی قابل انطباق هیچ منافاتی نیست.

Voice and video clip of Bush, giving speech at Galatasaray University, Turkey:

Presenter from inside the studio:

بوش گفت: پا گرفتن د مکراسی در عراق برای آنهایی که در خاورمیانه در پی تغییرات هستند امید در بر خواهد داشت و پیامی کاملاً متفاوت برای تهران و دمشق دربردارد. بوش ترکیه را به عنوان نمونه کشوری اسلامی که با دولتی د مکراتیک تنوع مذاهب را تمرین می‌کند، مورد ستایش قرار داد. رییس جمهور آمریکا هم چنین از تمایل ترکیه برای پیوستن به اتحادیه اروپا حمایت کرد و گفت عضویت ترکیه در اتحادیه اروپا پیشرفتی حیاتی در روابط میان جهان اسلام و جهان غرب خواهد بود، چرا که ترکیه بخشی از هر دو جهان است.

Presenter from inside the studio plus slides of George Bush and NATO summit, The news in English:

In the second and the last day of the NATO summit, Istanbul witnessed the last speech given by George Bush just before leaving Istanbul for Washington. Bush, in his speech, which was given at Galatasaray University, said: 'freedom is the future of the Middle East and of all humanity and that the Islamic countries need not fear the spread of democracy. Bush said, "When I speak of the blessing of democracy, violent

videos and commercialism are not what I have in mind. There is nothing incompatible between democratic values and high standards of decency.”

Voice and clips of Bush’s speech at Galatasaray University

Presenter inside the studio:

The news in English:

Bush said that ‘the rise of democracy in Iraq, is bringing hope to reformers across the Middle East, and sending a very different message to Tehran and Damascus’. Bush praised Turkey as an example of an Islamic country with a democratic government that has been practicing freedom of religion. The president of the United States reiterated his backing of Turkey’s desire to join the European Union, saying it was a crucial advance in the relations between the Islamic World and the West because Turkey is a part of both.

5.4.6 Analysis

The Slides:

The main character of this news story is the U.S. president, George Bush, who is addressing issues directly related to Iran and the Middle East region. Both stations started with the picture and video clips of Bush and the U.S. flag, with the explanatory slides used afterwards.

The prelude or opening part of the news item:

The opening of the news item is usually read by the presenter inside the studio, together with the accompanying explanatory slides which normally appears at the top of the screen. Both the VOA and Jaam-e-Jam gave equal duration of time to the introductory part of the news item (twenty seconds) and used similar language for the text used in delivering the news item. The only difference between the two stations was the use of video clips. In delivering the news item, Jaam-e-Jam used only pictures of George Bush and the U.S. flag. VOA used slides and video clips of Bush’s speech at Galatasaray University to accompany the text, which was read from inside the studio. There is also a similarity in the language used and the approach used by

both stations. Both used general terms to express the conflict in the region and both failed to analyse the news.

The body of the news story:

Both stations used picture and video reports after the introduction. The duration of the report for the two stations was between one and two minutes. The accompanying pictures and clips in the report were similar for the two stations, as both only showed Bush's pictures and video clips of his speech. It was noted that both stations used a rather positive reporting style towards U.S. foreign policy. On the day this news item was reported, and only a day after the transfer of sovereignty in Iraq, both stations in dealing with this controversial political issue, featured Bush's speech in Istanbul, pointing out the statements he made about the emergence of freedom and democracy in Iraq and the end of tyranny without any comments or criticisms of it and without any reference to the American bombing of Iraq, dead people, wounded children etc. Their policy towards dealing with this controversial issue and the Iraq's new interim government showed stimulating support and acceptance. Also, by projecting the U.S. as freedom-loving, devoted to the self-determination of freeing people from tyrannies and poverty and directing them towards democracy and prosperity, both stations ensured the United States a favourable position.

The use of the natural voice of officials when quoting their statements was used by VOA in all the reports, as the Persian translation was composed as an accompanying voice to the report. The following section is the analysis of the content of the news stories in the two stations, which examines the location, subject and sources of the news stories. In addition to this, the duration of the story, the visual material accompanying the news stories and the main character of the news story will also be analysed.

The Location of the News Stories:

In order to demonstrate the international policy of both VOA and Jaam-e-Jam satellite channels and to examine the source for news stories in each station, the location of news, which deals with the geographical location of the news items, was investigated. The place where the news story took place is classified into:

- a) National: this includes all the events taking place inside the country that the stations are broadcasting from, which in both cases is the United States.
- b) Iran: which includes all the events that happen inside the country
- c) Middle East and Islamic Countries
- d) War in Iraq
- e) Islamic Countries outside the Middle East
- f) Western Countries, including European countries, Canada, Japan, and Australia
- g) Third World Countries, including countries from Central and South America, Africa, South East Asia, India and China
- h) Other, which include any news items not falling in any of the above categories

Table 3 shows the distributions of news stories by their geographical locations.

Table 3**Distributions of News Stories by Geographical Location (Duration in Second)**

Location of the News Item	VOA		Jaam-e-Jam	
	Number	Duration	Number	Duration
National (US News)	27	2063	9	660
Iran	18	3250	27	2780
War in Iraq	11	1911	9	585
Israel and Palestine	6	753	—	—
Middle East Countries	13	465	1	40
Islamic Countries outside the Middle East	16	640	—	—
Western Countries	20	935	8	480
Third World Countries	9	451	2	90
Other	8	779	2	180

Middle East and Islamic countries news stories occupy a leading position in VOA, which indicates the priority in news bulletins on the composite week. This is followed by news stories about Iran, with duration time of 3250 seconds. The table also shows that news from Third World countries come last in the ranking, accounting for only nine stories with a collective duration of 451 seconds. VOA also devoted a staggering 2063 seconds to the portrayal of American social life and the political views of government officials.

In Jaam-e-Jam station, Iran's news came first in the ranking with 27 news stories with duration of 2780 seconds. This is followed by news from Middle East and Islamic countries, with 10 news stories with the duration of 1225 seconds. What emerges is

that both stations devote a lot of their air time to Middle East conflicts, mostly war in Iraq and news about Iran.

5.4.7 The Topics of the News Stories

In this study, news stories are classified according to Stevenson and Shaw’s subject classification as either: political, military (war in Iraq), economic, religious, accidents and disasters, education and culture, sports, humanities, social services, development, arts, and other. This classification was chosen for its suitability to news television in general and to VOA news bulletins in particular. In the political category, the news story is dealt with in an analytical form. This analysis may be presented in the form of historical backgrounds, assessment of current situations, debates between opposite opinions, or stating these opinions. This category includes current affairs news stories, commentary and debates, propaganda, and news review.

Table 4 shows the topics of the news stories and their duration.

Table 4: Topics of News Stories (Duration in Seconds)

Topics of News	VOA		Jaam-e-Jam International	
	Number	Duration	Number	Duration
Political News:	18	3250	16	1325
- News about Iran				
- Israel and Palestine	6	753	—	—
- War in Iraq	11	1911	9	585
- Other	33	1883	—	—
Economic	—	—	2	50
Religious	1	45	—	—
Accidents & Disasters	5	90	1	105
Education & Culture	4	514	9	780
Humanitarian	8	301	2	300
Sports	5	342	—	—
Development	2	62	3	285
Social Services	8	829	13	1765
Arts	3	390	1	320
Other	4	215	—	—

Table 4 reveals that political issues occupied the leading position on both stations, with 58 news stories shown over the duration of 5886 seconds in VOA, and 33 stories

with the duration of 1865 seconds in Jaam-e-Jam Channel. This is followed by news about War in Iraq in second-place in both stations. From the above table it is quite clear that political news had the largest share of coverage in the news of the two stations, indicating the political nature of these stations. Looking more in depth at the table 4 reveals that with regards to political news, stories about Iran and war in Iraq were the most predominant in both stations, accounting for nearly two thirds of their coverage during the study week. During the fieldwork, the political situation in Iran was on top of the news agenda in both stations.

In VOA, anti-Iranian regime propaganda was broadcasted throughout the study week, which was the week prior to the anniversary of student uprising in June 2003. During the study week, several live satellite interviews were conducted with different opposition leaders and top members about democracy in Iran, the student demonstration in 2003 and the possibility of further demonstration on the day of the anniversary. This was followed by inside studio interviews with pro-US political activists. Among them was a round table with Prince Reza Pahlavi, analysing the outcome of the student riot and the possibility of further riots by students inside Iran. These interviews and analyses, which constituted more than 60% of all news about Iran, were presented on the main news bulletin everyday during the field work. This was followed by a promo featuring several leaders of opposition groups and slides of student demonstrations with the background audio advertising a programme called 'Negahi Faratar' (a look beyond), a political roundtable about the future of democracy in Iran. This was to be broadcast on the day of the anniversary of student's uprising and was repeatedly broadcasted for 60 seconds against the pictures of student's demonstration and wounded people etc at least twice during every news bulletin. Another programme in VOA is a news analysis section called "the Washington's View, presenting U.S. foreign policy", which analyses current issues related to Iran, such as Iran's nuclear activities. It reflected the U.S. government's official policy and attitude in different subjects. The two stations were virtually identical in their coverage of situation in Iraq and Iran's nuclear activities. Both stations covered the situation in Iraq during the study week in depth. However, the study week was not during combat operations, but it did fall in the week surrounding battle and the transfer of Iraqi sovereignty. The war in Iraq accounted for more than one quarter of all stories and roughly a third of all air time in both stations. Apart from news related to Iran, the stories about war in Iraq were also more likely than other stories to be long

and in depth. Although VOA claimed to be objective and accurate in its coverage of war and the U.S. invasion of Iraq, it has been observed that it reflects and actually defends the government's position on Iraq, using many of the propaganda themes suggested by the Foreign Office in broadcasts. An incident that reflects this approach was the students' riots against Bush and his invasion of Iraq in the last day of the NATO summit in Turkey. The event got only minimal seconds of VOA coverage claiming that the riot was against the NATO summit. For this coverage certain precautions were taken; for example, the incident of the burning of the American flag during the demonstration was put on the report but lasted only one or two seconds to avoid stressing the public disagreement with the general foreign policy adopted by the U.S. government. The station totally ignored the demonstrations against the War in Iraq that took place all over the world. This provides further confirmation that international broadcasting media could be used to help a state create conditions for a favourable political position.

The evidence offered by content analysis samples shows that the U.S. government and Bush's administration's viewpoint was presented and that the government's actions, especially in Iraq, are all explained within the agenda set by the government itself, without any criticism or analysis of U.S. policy in Iraq. VOA consistently projected the official line that the U.S. had invaded Iraq with the objective of destroying terrorists and of freeing Iraqi people from tyranny and directing them towards democracy. In much the same way, the station tried to persuade its Iranian audience that democracy, was an ideal that should be adopted.

VOA, in its national coverage also made some points about supplementing official embassy warnings by the Foreign Office and the State Department's appeals to the U.S. nationals, advising them to leave areas considered dangerous in Iraq. The news about how U.S. diplomats' families had left Iraq and were given combat lessons, especially on how to use gun, along with images of the U.S. ambassador in Iraq during the combat practice, was repeatedly reported. However, the effect of such broadcasts can either be to serve to heighten tension in public eyes by anticipating what may not be inevitable, or providing the U.S. opposition propaganda with a pretext for launching a fresh campaign highlighting the imminent dangerous situation. Materials of the content analysis sample show that both stations represented a very positive attitude towards political issues concerning U.S. foreign policy, as the only difference emerged in their styles of presentation. Therefore, while there is an

agreement in terms of the subjects covered in the two stations, there are significant differences in the way the news is covered. For instance, if a story is covered in VOA and is analysed by an expert inside the studio, followed by direct link to the correspondent from the location of the event, Jaam-e-Jam television by contrast, would cover exactly the same story, but without mentioning the source of the news. Jaam-e-Jam was most oriented to entertainment and lifestyle. During the study week, 2370 seconds of airtime in its news period programme was consumed by lifestyle, health trends, and pop music stories.

5.4.8 Topics of News Stories by Geographical Location

In order to examine the policy and news agenda in both stations, it was important to examine and analyse the subject of the news stories along with its location. Table 5 shows a very strong link between the topics of news stories and the geographical location of their happenings according to the station’s policy.

In the case of VOA, cultural and social and political news dominated the National (domestic) news, followed by arts and development issues. No emphasis is placed on economic, sports, religious and humanitarian topics locally. In reference to news about Iran, total dominance is given to political issues, with 18 stories reported over a time period of 3250 seconds. Apart from that there were only 4 news stories on social topics concerning Iran, with duration of 320 seconds. It is interesting to note that news about Iran is totally confined to political news. In the case of the Middle East and Islamic World and also Third World countries, political news were the most heavily exchanged news topics in VOA, followed by accidents and disasters. There was no coverage of other fields in the regions, apart from only 4 socio-political stories involving Middle East and Islamic countries. In dealing with issues related to Western countries, sports news stories came in the lead, with 5 Stories over a time period of 342 seconds.

Table 5 shows the topics of news stories by their geographical locations in VOA television station. It also shows the number of news stories in each category and their duration.

Table 5

Topics of News Stories by Geographical Location- VOA Television

Topics of News Stories	National (U.S. News)		Iran		War in Iraq		Israel and Palestine		Middle East Countries		Islamic Countries outside Middle East		Western Countries except the U.S.		Third World Countries		Other	
	NO	D	NO	D	NO	D	NO	D	NO	D	NO	D	NO	D	NO	D	No	D
Political	10	260	18	3250	11	1911	6	753	13	465	13	555	4	187	1	25	2	120
Economic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	25	-	-	-	-
Religious	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	45	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accidents & Disasters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	40	-	-	2	75	-	-
Education & Culture	5	448	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	180	1	90	-	-
Humanitarian	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	35	4	241	-	-
Sports	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	342	-	-	-	-
Development	3	92	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social Services	5	646	4	320	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	430	1	30	-	-	5	364
Arts	2	295	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	50	-	-	-	-
Other	3	385	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	118	-	-	6	166	2	42	-	-

NO: Number of news stories

D: Duration of each news story

Looking more in depth at the top issues in VOA, it can be seen that during the week study political news were given the most priority in the main bulletin. A closer look at the above figures reveal that almost all of the issues from Iran, the Middle East and Islamic countries covered by VOA are political or politically related topics, which gives a clear indication that VOA television prefers not to cover other topics concerning the region. Also most of the issues addressed in the news bulletin deal with Muslim related issues. With more concentration on Iranian oriented issues, 33% of the recorded sample of news programmes dealt with Iran related issues, compared to 19.5% of the news stories which dealt with War in Iraq.

Table 6 shows the topics of the news stories by their geographical locations in Jam-e-Jam satellite television station. It also shows the number of news stories in each category and their duration

Table 6

Topics of the News Stories by Geographical Location – Jaam-e-Jam Television

Topics of News Stories	National (U.S. News)		Iran		War in Iraq		Israel and Palestine		Middle East Countries		Islamic Countries outside Middle East		Western Countries except the U.S.		Third World Countries		Other	
	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D	No	D
Political	3	110	16	1325	9	585	–	–	–	–	–	–	6	420	–	–	–	–
Economic	1	30	1	20	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Religious	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Accidents & Disasters	–	–	1	105	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	50
Education & Culture	3	320	4	910	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	60	–	–	–	–
Humanitarian	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Sports	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Development	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Social Services	2	230	4	640	–	–	–	–	1	40	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	45
Arts	–	–	2	385	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Other	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

NO: Number of news stories

D: Duration of each news story

In the political field, the above table shows that greatest emphasis has been given to news from Iran, the Middle East and Islamic Countries. Economic, education and cultural stories centred on U.S. and Western Countries, whereas the Third World, Middle East and Islamic countries came with no story. Moreover, religious, humanitarian and development issues were not addressed at all, as shown in the table. The above figures also indicate a lack of variation in the topics covered, and more importantly, there is no logical sequence in the coverage of subjects and no comprehensive analysis of the issues involved. Additionally, there is a lack of emphasis on religious and sports topics. A close look at Tables 5 and 6 highlight that political and cultural news were the most predominant topics discussed in both stations. The coverage mainly concentrated on Iran, the Middle East and Islamic countries. Iraq was the centre of political news in both stations. The above table also shows that there is a conspicuous lack of coverage in sports, economic, religious, and development news stories in both stations.

5.4.9 Sources of News Stories

In this study the sources of news stories have been divided into two categories: 1) sources of reading materials, and 2) sources of visual material that accompanied the news story. The source of news material was identified by its written name or logo, or sometimes, as it was mentioned by the newscaster. If none of these applied, the material source was classified as unknown.

Table below shows the sources of both written and visual materials of VOA satellite television station.

Table 7
Sources of the News Story- VOA Television

1- Sources of Written Texts		
Name of the Source	Number	Percentage
Local News Agencies	1	1.6%
Middle East News Agencies	6	10.4%
International News Agencies	1	1.6%
Others	0	—
Total	8	13.52%
2- Sources of Visual Material		
Name of the Source	Number	Percentage
Middle East Televisions	5	8.45%
International Televisions	2	3.38%

Picture of News	0	—
Agencies		
Other	0	—
Total	7	11.83%

Table 7 shows that out of 169 news stories, the sources of 16 stories were quoted. A closer look at Table 7 indicates that Middle East News Agencies occupy the top position among the known sources with 11 news items. However, examination of news material showed that VOA used Middle East sources (Al-Jazeera and Saudi Television) only to cover news about terrorist's activities and hostage-taking in the region. News from local broadcasting organisations and International news agencies were followed in the above table.

In general, audiences were not told who the sources were. Basically, 86.48 per cent of the news stories studied contained anonymous sourcing and in contrast, less than a quarter of stories contained some level of transparent sourcing- two of them Middle East sources such as Al-Jazeera where the reporter not only identified the sources, but also attempted to explained the source's bias or relationship to the subject.

Generally, the low number of known sources of visual and written materials could also highlight the fact that VOA used its own materials and is not dependent on a wide range of sources for its news.

Table 8 shows the sources of written and visual news stories of Jam-e-Jam satellite television station.

Table 8**Sources of News Stories- Jaam-e-Jam**

1- Sources of Written texts		
Name of the Source	Number	Percentage
Local News Agencies	3	3.24%
Middles East News Agencies	3	3.24%
International News Agencies	2	2.16%
Others	0	—
Total	8	8.64%
2- Sources of Visual Material		
Name of the sources		
Middle East Agencies	0	—
International Agencies	3	3.24%
Picture News Agencies	0	—
Other	0	—
Total	3	3.24%

Roughly 91 per cent of all news stories observed from this station contained anonymous sources. Of the 108 news stories, Jaam-e-Jam television only acknowledged the sources of 11 news stories in its news period programmes. In identifying the sources, there was some attempt by the station to describe the sources' level of knowledge or potential biases, especially when Iranian sources were mentioned. Only 2 per cent of the news contained sources without some description of their relationship to the events. Table 8 also shows that international news agencies

came first with 5 news stories, followed by local and Middle East agencies, each with 3 news stories.

In general, Jaam-e-Jam seemed more likely to use blind anonymous sourcing without any description of who the source might be.

5.4.10 Types of Visual Material Accompanying News Stories

The types of visual materials, which accompany the news stories on the two stations, are shown in table 9.

Table 9
Types of Visual Material Accompanying the News Stories

Types of Materials	VOA	Jaam-e-Jam
	Number	Number
Video	110	1
Photographs & Slides	69	66
Maps	17	0
Cartoons	0	0
Illustrations	1	0
Text	16	0
A mixture	1	0
Total	214	67

Table 9 shows that 214 visual materials accompanied the news stories presented in VOA. The most used type of visual material by VOA was video with 110 reports. This is followed by photographic and slide materials, with 69 photo and slides. Illustration was used in one story and none of the stories used cartoons as visual aids. The total number of visual materials in Jaam-e-Jam was 67. Apart from one video clip, photos and slides were the only type of visual aid used by the station. It is been established that video materials are by far the most important form of visual aid, which has been used effectively only by VOA. In general, there are some differences

among the two stations in sourcing. Again, VOA reflected a more traditional or fact-heavy character as a U.S. News Agency, as it was more likely to run stories with semi or fully identified sources.

5.4.11 The Main Character in the News Story

The main character in the news story denotes the individual featured in the news item and the person at the centre of attention. The main character in the news story was classified into 6 categories:

- 1) The head of state, which marks the highest figure in a state including Prime Minister, Head of State, the King, Queen etc.
- 2) Government officials such as ministers, ambassadors, under-secretaries
- 3) Private sector, which includes company owners, company directors, etc.
- 4) Commoners such as artists, athletes, inventors, etc.
- 5) Corporate bodies that refer to governmental institutions or any group, such as environmental groups
- 6) Other

Critics have argued that television news has become personalised or even ‘celebritised’, causing journalists to build their stories more around people. To see if the VOA news content does the same, a content analysis of the protagonist in the news content was carried out. The material of content analysis shows that at least in the study week, the news apparently was not driven by events.

Overall, around 78 per cent of news stories in VOA, and 47 per cent in Jaam-e-Jam, focused at least half of their content on a single personality or government official and 28 percent of content shown on Jaam-e-Jam was built around institutions. Table 10 shows the leading character in news stories in the two stations. More than 29 per cent of news stories in VOA were centred around a primary protagonist George Bush was this personality 15 per cent of the time. This was followed by the new Iraqi Prime Minister, capturing almost 10 per cent of news stories. Other primary protagonists that appeared in news stories in VOA during the study week were: Saddam with 4 news stories, Jordanian King with three news stories, Israeli Prime Minister and Indonesian President equally with three news stories each, the new Iraqi President with 2 news

stories, and Arafat appeared in 1 story. The Japanese Prime Minister, Argentinean President, and Malaysian Prime Minister are among the primary protagonists that appeared in news stories in VOA. In Jaam-e-Jam out of 12 news stories built around a primary protagonist, Saddam appeared in five stories. This was followed by George Bush with three stories, the new Iraqi Prime Minister, the Jordanian King, England’s Royal Family and Prime Minister with one story each. Table 10 also shows that government officials occupied the top position in both VOA and Jaam-e-Jam stations, with a total number of 54 in VOA and 33 in Jaam-e-Jam. In addition to this, corporate bodies came forth in both stations with 12 appearances in VOA and 26 in Jaam-e-Jam station. Table 10 also indicates the over-emphasis of government officials and the head of state on the news in both channels.

Table below shows the main character in the news story in both VOA and Jam-e-Jam satellite television stations.

Table 10
The Main Character in the News Story in both Stations

	VOA		Jaam-e-Jam	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Head of State	42	29.81%	12	12.96%
Government Officials	54	49.28%	33	35.64%
Private Sector Officials	26	11.42%	16	17.28%
Commoners	11	2.04%	9	9.72%
Corporate Bodies	12	2.43%	26	28.08
Other	24	8.85%	12	12.96%

To sum up, VOA and Jaam-e-Jam seem to concentrate on the personalities rather than on the events. The examination of the contents of news stories in both stations shows that about two thirds of all stories were built around a single character or institution. The findings also show that President Bush was the main protagonist many times in

the news stories shown on VOA. Table 10 shows that the number of news stories with reference to government officials or heads of state are by far the largest, accounting for 96 stories in VOA and 45 in Jaam-e-Jam television. Both stations seemed to build their political stories around government officials or politicians.

5.5 Conclusion

The results of the content analysis samples show that both VOA and Jaam-e-Jam stations emphasise on the news of government officials, institutions, political topics, and generally use anonymous sourcing. Political news had the largest share in the news of the two stations indicating the political orientation of the studied channels. In their coverage of Iraq's situation and Iraq's new interim government no debate was offered, no point of view was expressed and no oppositional opinion was aired. In Jaam-e-Jam economic, education and cultural stories were centred on U.S. and other Western countries, whereas the Third World, Middle East and Islamic countries came with no stories in the above categories.

During the field study from the 29th of July to the 5th of July 2004, the Voice of America broadcasted news and analysis of the political situation in Iran, most of which were of four to six minutes in duration. The VOA Persian service was on air for just thirty minutes. Such a political broadcast was designed to attract listeners, form Iranian political opinion and perhaps stimulate some kind of action among its audience. In this way, VOA seems to be using people's dissatisfaction of their regime and seems to be trying to maintaining alliance relationships with the students' opposition lobby. Jaam-e-Jam, on the other hand, by offering a variety of programmes and entertainment, enticed an audience bored with the relentless preaching of their own TV and radio services. The following chapter will examine the usage of language in recorded programmes and expose the underlying ideologies which produce them. It will focus on talk and texts as 'social practice', the way that particular ideologies are represented as 'common sense' and 'unquestionable' and the way that discursive practices could have major ideological effects.

Chapter Six

Discourse Analysis

6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the representation of the news stories as well as the ideological functions which they may serve in the two television stations surveyed. It builds the case for the present discourse study by trying to discover deeper levels of meaning creation, which in traditional content analysis can not be analysed. This chapter adopts the approach of Critical Discourse Analysis which is a part of critical linguistics. It aims to analyse language in its social situation and the power derived from its manipulation.

Parker argues that ideology should not be considered as a 'thing having content, but rather, as describing relationships and effects in a particular place and historical period (Parker, 1990). News events are made intelligible against a background of culturally shared knowledge and journalists apply their social schema strategically in the construction of news events. Although the models that journalists use for events are inherently biased in terms of underlying social representations, personal variations and deviations are not excluded (van Dijk, 1988). These manifest in contradicting discourses and therefore, 'when ideas of progressive change are built into the contemporary political discourse, these dynamics are reflected in our everyday language' (Parker, 1987). For example, the relation between active and passive clauses or the absence of the agent in clauses expresses ideological choices. Although a linguistic form has many possible meanings, when it appears in the context of a systematically selected range of forms, the meaning of each form becomes more or less specified. However, selection is often merely reproduction of what the speaker has already learned (Kress, 1985). Kress refers to the content-structure of texts as the

way in which events are portrayed causally. Events appear in a transactive form (arising directly out of an agent's action and with a direct effect on a goal) or in a non-transactive form (arising as self-caused action or action that happens in an unspecific way). The mode chosen is related to the way in which the action is integrated into the speaker's ideological system and is related to a specific discourse.

6.2 Approaches to the Study of News Media: Theoretical and Methodological Issues

Discourse Analytical Approach

In discourse analysis, news text is the object of analysis. News discourse itself is a social and cognitive practice. It is said that negative reporting is produced by (the reproduction of) dominant ideologies that are encoded in the structures (that is, the content and style) of news texts (van Dijk, 1991). Critical discourse analysis focuses on the roles of ideology and power and their enactment and reproduction through discourse. It criticises the ways in which existing power inequalities and discrimination are maintained and reproduced through discourse. Discourse has not only pragmatic functions of persuasion and credibility enhancement, but also socio-political functions of legitimisation and control.

6.3 Research Techniques

In order to examine the structures and meanings of news, a detailed qualitative discourse analysis is needed. This approach allows for questions to be asked about the sorts of social identity, the versions of "self" and "other", that the media project (and about the cultural values that these projections entail) includes (van Leeuwen, 2000). In this thesis, in order to analyse the news, two approaches have been incorporated. The combination of content and discourse analysis is used as separate but complementary research methods. The previous chapter tried to examine the agenda and attitudes of the programme contents of the two studied satellite channels. Content analysis was conducted to ascertain the news agenda and type of

production in both Jaam-e-Jam and VOA, and also tries to identify the main differences in news stories and the way in which the bulletin and news periods are constructed, i.e. presenters, running sequence, duration, the stories and how they are covered on the two television stations. This chapter focuses on the language used in news programmes in both VOA and Jaam-e-Jam satellite channels. The following will address the theories that this research will draw upon during the process of analysis, and starts by defining the notion of discourse. The definition discussed here is drawn not only from linguistics but also from sociology and politics.

6.4 Discourse

Discourse is a term which is variably defined. Saussure asserts that 'discourse is any linguistic sequence more extended than a sentence' (Saussure, 1959, quoted in Laclau, 1993, p.432). At this level, language is not defined solely by grammatical rules. Instead of looking at its grammaticality, discourse is observed by its functional aspects as part of the communicative event (van Dijk, 1997, p.2). Discourse is then seen as an 'open system' that draws upon semiotic resources, such as text and grammatical rules, as well as other resources in its context (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999, p.19). This points out two aspects of discourse: its form, which is derived from grammatical rules, and its function, which is not necessarily defined by grammatical rules. Discourse studies are devoted to the investigation of the relationship between the form and function of language communication, with the issue of meaning at the centre (Renkema, 1993, p.1). Instead of looking at the abstract or ideal language system or the form, it sets out to explore actual language use or the function of language (de Beaugrande, 1991, p.265). Van Dijk proposes that discourse has three dimensions: language use, communication of belief and interaction in society (van Dijk, 1997, p.2). This three dimensional analysis reconnects language with contextual reality, perceiving the latter as the precondition of discourse constitution (Ibid). Hence the hypothesis of discourse theory emerges: discourse is constituted by its society and, at the same time, is socially constitutive. Since discourse has its origin in society, it is not possible to analyse discourse without taking its context into account. Discourse theory, therefore, examines the larger structures of discourse, bringing into consideration the social life in which the

discourse takes place and the social practices which are related to it. Discourse theory examines the relationship between the two in order to explain how society influences on discourse and vice versa.

Considering discourse as an 'open system' implies that there are many elements relevant to the analysis of discourse. For this reason, discourse analysis emerges as a broad area consisting of many approaches which look at discourse from various angles, namely, pragmatics which studies the 'acts' of signs (discourse); psycholinguistics which is dedicated to the exploration of people's cognitive processing; or socio-linguistics which finds correlations between social characteristics and discourse. It is not within the scope of this investigation to go into detail about every discourse analytical approach. This investigation will employ a framework which belongs to the critical discourse analysis approach. The following focuses on the review literature concerning critical discourse analysis.

6.5 Critical Discourse

The notion of discourse is employed across disciplines and takes on definitions which vary from one field to another. This thesis will limit the scope only to the definition of discourse in the linguistic sphere. Robert et al (1992) summarises definitions of discourse among linguistic perspectives into five categories:

- a. Language in its social context (Brown and Yule, 1983)
- b. Cohesion and coherence (Halliday and Hasan, 1976)
- c. Strategies for interpreting interactive signs and conversations (Gumperz, 1982)
- d. Linguistic unit larger than the level of sentence (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975)
- e. Language as a means for social, political and economic values (Foucault, 1972)

(Robert et al, 1992, p.70)

The heterogeneity of discourse definitions has arisen from diverse discursive approaches. These theories can be categorised into two groups: non-critical and critical approaches. According to Fairclough, the difference between the two groups lies in the scope of their analysis. Non-critical approaches aim at studying various

aspects of language as social interactions, critical approaches look further to uncover power and the ideological effects that discourse has on society (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p.258). Returning to Robert et al's summary, it can be seen that a.-d. belong to non-critical approaches while e. represents the critical approach. Note that a.-d. are also incorporated into the critical theory. In the following section 'critical' approaches will be discussed.

6.6 Critical Linguistics

This chapter draws mainly upon the critical linguistic approach. Therefore, it is the aim of this section to introduce the basic idea of critical linguistics (CL). Critical linguistics came into being in the late 1970's as a revolt against 'uncritical and asocial' paradigms such as structural grammar (van Dijk, 2001, p.352). Though the precursors of CL may be found in the Frankfurt School in the pre-war era, the theory formulates its main thesis in the work of Roger Fowler (Fowler et al) and Robert Hodge and Gunther Kress (Kress and Hodge 1979, Hodge and Kress 1988, 1993). This critical theory of language is developed from social science theories that look at the issue of power, ideology, and social construction, namely that of Michel Foucault (1972), Jurgen Habermas (1979, 1984), Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1991) and Antonio Gramsci (1971). It mainly argues that 'discourse is part of and influenced by social structure and produced in social interaction' (van Dijk, 2001, p.352). As part of the social structure, critical linguistics proposes that discourse, that is text and talk, may be used to reproduce or resist power abuse, dominance, and inequality in society (van Dijk, 2001, p.352). The aim is to promote public awareness about this potential of discourse so that discourse users understand, and thus are able to resist the social inequality produced by text and talk (van Dijk, 2001, P.352).

This chapter will focus on the works which provide the basis for the critical discourse analysis framework used here, namely Fairclough's CDA.

Basically, discourse is 'a system integrated with speakers' knowledge of the world' that should be described 'in linguistic, cognitive and social terms, along with the conditions under which speakers use it' (de Beaugrande, 1997, p.40). This is the elemental basis of critical linguistics. This approach claims that it is not simply a method, but an autonomous domain with its own characteristic objects, phenomena,

theories, principle and methods (van Dijk, 1997, p.32). Fundamentally, it believes that language has more than one dimension. To analyse discourse, its three dimensional aspects must be taken into consideration: language use, communication belief and interaction in socio-cultural contexts (van Dijk, 1997, p.2). The study of discourse is situated at the junction of these three dimensions, as it provides an integrated description of them. Thus, it can be said that the study of discourse is, by its nature, multidisciplinary.

At the centre of this study lies the issue of the meaning of discourse. This abstract meaning is referred to as semantic representations (van Dijk, 1997, p.8). The notion signifies less concern for the rigid order and form of language and more for its meaning. Although discourse studies, to a certain extent, denounce the rigid rules of grammar, it still argues that the actual discourse, featuring breaches of the normative rules of appropriate discourse, does have some shared strategies (van Dijk, 1997, p.31). Based on this assumption of discourse the study's belief denotes that meaning is something 'assigned' to it by discourse users. This, then, presupposes that there is a shared starting point that people use in making sense of communication (van Dijk, 1997, p.8). The approach proposes that in order to understand and interpret discourse, the mental component of discourse needs to be taken into consideration. Language users draw upon certain cognitive processes and representations when they communicate (Condor and Anataki, 1997). These processes and representations can be unique to each individual; this constitutes personal variation in language use. Meanwhile as member of a society, each language user has to draw upon some shared cognitive rules, values and norms, which enable mutual understanding. Therefore successful communication is assumed to involve both individual cognition and also socio-cultural cognition (van Dijk, 1997, p.17).

Basically the study of the properties of discourse takes into account complex, higher-level properties such as coherence relations between sentences, overall topics and schematic forms, as well as stylistic and rhetorical dimensions. Apart from structure, it suggests that one needs to look at the complex communicative event that embodies a social context, featuring participants as well as production and reception process in order to see the actual roles of discourse in social interaction.

6.7 Political Discourse: Hegemony and Social Antagonism

To understand the role of human social cognitive processes in the production of discourse means that fundamentally, discourse users are more or less conscious of the production because discourse is produced in line with the context interpreted by human social cognition. The point that discourse is produced according to the context, such as the speaker's social position, situation or aim, indicates an assumption that discourse is goal-oriented; discourse users aim to produce discourse which is the most effective in pursuing their aim in that particular context. The generative power of discourse is now not only an inherent potential, it is also (consciously or unconsciously) 'manoeuvred' as a tool to pursue the goal of discourse. It is then seen more or less like a cultural resource which can be used for personal gain. For that reason, it has become an area of contention; people are struggling to use discourse to represent their identities, identification or social relationships in pursuit of power. This area is a junction where discourse theory and social science meet politics. In discourse there is no one-to-one correlation between the signified and the signifier, and thus discourse is a system that can never be totally closed. Discourse users can then attempt to partially fix a signified and any of the possible signifiers available, whichever is most desirable to them. This partial fixing relation between the signified and signifier is called hegemony (Laclau, 1993, p.21). Hegemony is the central interest of critical linguistics; the notion was originally coined by Gramsci (Gramsci, 1971). It refers to the situation where the power of dominant group is integrated in laws, norms or habits by the use of discourse. Hegemony occurs when the signified can only present itself through what is classified as a 'floating signifier' or an 'empty signifier' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985 quoted in Howarth et al, 2000, p.8). Words such as 'politics', 'democracy' or 'justice' fall into this category. They provide a fertile ground for hegemonic discourse.

According to Laclau and Mouffe (1985), the contention in discourse springs from an assumption that there is social antagonism. Social antagonism is the blockage of identity that occurs when people have competing identities. The identity of one prevents another from developing their identity to full (Howarth et al, 2000, p.10). As discourse users adopt competing identities that are in conflict with one another, the discourse, which is the representation of their identity, is in conflict and competition

as well. As a result, the construction and experience of social antagonism are at the centre of Laclau and Mouffe's theory.

6.8 Theoretical Framework

This section discusses the theories that this investigation will primarily draw upon. This chapter uses Fairclough's critical discourse analysis. The theory, despite being a linguistic approach, is applied to the analysis of media and political discourse because it is considered to have the potential for an impact upon society. The framework primarily focuses on political discourse, such as, for example, Fairclough's study of the discourse of New Labour (Fairclough, 2000a).

The next section starts with critical discourse analysis (CAD), a proclaimed transdisciplinary approach aiming to tackle unequal power relations.

6.9 Critical Discourse Analysis

Basically, the theoretical assumptions of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) are:

- a. verbal interaction presupposes structure in our knowledge base, for example, social structures, situational types, language codes
- b. actions can also reproduce structure

From this assumption, it is apparent that the relationship between language and social structure is essentially dialectic. Texts are socio-culturally shaped as well as socio-culturally constitutive (Fairclough, 1995b, p.34). The essence of this theoretical framework is presumably to be able render understanding of the processes of 'naturalisation'. According to the assumptions, the processes can be summed up as follows:

- a. ideologies can become, more or less, naturalised and be seen as commonsensical rather than serving the interests of certain groups
- b. those naturalised ideologies then become the 'knowledge base' and orderliness that interaction depends upon
- c. the orderliness of micro events is dependent on the higher orderliness of ideological consensus

According to Fairclough and Wodak (1997), in order to conduct research, there are eight principles of theory which have to be borne in mind:

1. CDA addresses social problems

The main focus of CDA is not the language itself or the use of it, but the partially linguistic character of social and cultural processes and structures (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p. 271). In other words, CDA is interested in social issues, which are, to various degrees, the results or impacts of discourse. It aims to develop critical awareness of discursive strategies in the general public so that language will no longer be a tool manipulated by a powerful group of people to seek more power.

2. Power relations are discourse

CDA deals with the issue of language and power. It looks at how power relations are exercised and negotiated in discourse (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p. 27). Apart from the issue of power in discourse, it also looks at the issue of power over discourse. CDA believes that the ability to control and change the rules of discursive practice, as well as the structures of the order of discourse, can be seen as a means to gain power.

3. Discourse constitutes society and culture

The relations between discourse and society/culture are dialectical. Discourse constitutes society and culture and is also constituted by them. According to this hypothesis, society is divided into three broad domains so that the impact of discourse can apparently be seen: representations of the world, social relations between people and people's social and personal identities (Fairclough, 1992).

4. Discourse does ideological work

By ideologies, CDA refers to particular ways of representing and constructing society. This produces unequal relations of power, domination and exploitation. Critical awareness emphasises the need to determine whether a particular type of discursive event does ideological work. In order to do so, the analysis of texts, how they are interpreted and received, and what social effects they have must be taken into account.

5. Discourse as historical

Discourse is inseparable from its context. The concept of context here also includes intertextuality and sociocultural knowledge. By stating discourse as historical, CDA points out the connections discourses have with one another. They are connected to those produced earlier as well as those produced synchronically and subsequently.

6. The link between text and society is mediated

CDA is an attempt to make connections between socio-cultural structures and processes on the one hand, and properties of text on the other. These connections between text and society are complex and are therefore mediated by the order of discourse.

7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory

CDA suggests that the process of understanding takes place against the background of emotions, attitudes and knowledge. In the process, text is deconstructed and embedded in its social conditions (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p.227). That is, when text is linked to the issue of ideologies and power. In order to detect this discrete process, CDA relies on scientific procedures to 'denaturalise' it. It then concludes that interpretations and explanations are something dynamic and open to new context and information.

8. Discourse is a form of social action

CDA is a socially committed scientific paradigm. Its principal aim is to uncover opaqueness and power relations (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p.279).

CDA analysis is divided into two levels: verbal events or micro events and macrostructures such as society. CDA sees the latter as both the product of and conditions for the former. CDA rejects barriers between the study of the micro, of which the study of discourse is a part of, and the study of macro (Fairclough, 1995a, p.28). CDA proposes 'intertextual analysis' as a crucial mediator between the micro and the macro: the text and its context (Fairclough, 1997, p.189). Intertextuality is situated at the borderline between discourse practice and text. The notion allows oscillation between the two levels. CDA is interested in the manipulation of discourse. It terms the manipulation of discourse 'naturalised' ideology. By naturalised ideology, it means that language is used to win acceptance for S by presenting this view in a non-ideological way so that it is seen as a 'common sense' or as given. The process of revealing the mechanism of manipulation is, therefore, called 'denaturalisation'. 'The process shows how social structures determine properties of discourse and how discourse determines social structures' (Fairclough, 1995a, p. 26).

In order to unravel the discrete process of discourse manipulation, Fairclough suggests a framework that helps to indicate the impact of discourse in society and vice versa. The framework consists of three components: text, text

production/consumption and sociocultural practice. The three components are defined as follows:

“Text may be written or oral, and oral texts may be just spoken (radio) or spoken and visual (television). By ‘discourse practice’ I mean the processes of text production and text consumption. And by ‘sociocultural practice’ I mean the social and cultural goings-on, which the communicative event is a part of” (Fairclough, 1995a, p.57).

According to the framework, discourse practice mediates between the textual and sociocultural practice. “Sociocultural practice indirectly shapes text by way of shaping the discourse practice” (Fairclough, 1995b, p.60).

Fairclough by looking at the interface between text and discourse practice, introduces intertextual analysis. According to critical linguists such as Kristeva and Barthes, discourse does not have a self-contained meaning (Fairclough, 1995; Allen, 2000). It takes on meaning in its own context. The meaning of discourse has historical as well as sociocultural qualities built into it. Language acquires its meaning in relation to outside forces and factors: context, previous texts and culture (Allen, 2000, p.44). The inter-relational quality of discourse prevents it from being interpreted literally. This dependency relationship between meaning of discourse and its history and context is termed ‘intertextuality’. In this case, intertextual analysis is an attempt to find the traces of society in discourse and how discourse is designed to interact with society. For Fairclough, intertextuality is largely responsible for the heterogeneity of texts. The notion “entails a mode of analysis which highlights the diverse and often contradictory elements and threads which go to make up a text” (Fairclough, 1992, p.102). The heterogeneity or the ambivalence of text refers to the presence of various meanings co-existing in any particular text. This coexistence makes it difficult to point out the meaning intended by S. “Intertextuality is perceived as the source of much of the heterogeneity/ambivalence of texts” (Fairclough, 1992, p.105) because it refers to the inclusion of various other texts, such as the speech of others.

Fairclough primarily defines intertextuality as the changing articulation of genres. For Fairclough, society not only manifests itself in the meaning of its discourse, but also through its form of discourse, such as its genre. Genre is a kind of text configured by the text type, which has been developed and conventionalised (Fairclough, 1995). Genre is the production of social life, as well as of the society within which the social interaction takes place (Fairclough, 2000b). He believes that text does not directly initiate genre; text can be manifested from complex mixed genres. The recurring

pattern of complex mixed genres occurs in the same order of discourse (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999, p.59). These ordered sets of discursive practices are associated with particular social domains of institutions. The particular domain within which discourse takes place is termed its field of discourse (Bernstein, 1990). This existence of different genres in the same discourse is intertextuality. Intertextual analysis aims to describe the intertextual configuration of text. It uncovers how several text types may be drawn upon and combined simultaneously, as well as what social purposes that formulae of mixed genre may serve. News discourse is a field of discourse where there is evidence of intertextuality. It draws upon reported speech and employs a variety of genres demonstrated by use of different discourse-type choices. The choices indicate different genres. For example, a choice indicating a conversational genre appears in the form of reported speech.

6.10 CDA Analytical Framework

As it was mentioned before in discourse analysis, text is analysed in context and so words are analysed together with their specific syntactic and pragmatic functions. Discourse analysis is thus directed at meanings on the pragmatic level of communication underlying local and global semantic structures. Discourse analysis usually works with a checklist of analytical categories, which are divided into different levels of analysis. The analyst usually starts by writing up a "summary" (following specific rules of global meaning composition) of the text that it represents. Although discourse analysis does not allow for large amounts of text to be analysed, it is possible to use quantification to summarise the recurrence of particular discourse analytical indicators, such as topics, argumentation strategies or "topoi", syntactic choices for particular actions. A checklist may contain the following levels and elements of analysis:

Global Semantics

The production and processing of news texts is assumed to require cognitive operations, the activation of previous knowledge, and the updating of existing situation models and group- and event-schemata (van Dijk and Kintsch, 1983). Cognitive relevance is revealed in the physical organisation of news texts. The superstructure of news reports or news schema consists of a number of conventional

categories, which exhibit a special linear order as well as hierarchical organisation. Superstructures determine what content typically comes first, second, or last in a text (Van Dijk, 1988). Some basic elements in the analysis of the global semantic level could be:

- a. The topical organisation of news reports.
- b. The order and the prominence of topics within a single news story and among several stories. This may be relevant for an understanding of the ideological orientation of news stories and agendas.
- c. The connection of different thematic areas to the crime theme (entry, asylum, cities, poverty, unemployment, cultural difference) in causal explanation, to be derived from an analysis of coherence relations in text. For example, in a study on the Dutch press van Dijk noted that "crime and deviance may combine with cultural differences (in particular, treatment of wife and children in Islamic culture)" (van Dijk, 1988, p.244).

Local Semantics (Lexicalisation, Perspective, Implicature)

- a. An example could be the denominations used for immigrants and the traits attributed to them to depict them as different, so as to construct an image of, for example, racial violence, which obscures and stigmatises;
- b. The description (or picturing) of details (such as national origin, (religious) dress, accent, hairstyle, skin colour, or other phenotypical or cultural features) that are irrelevant for a description of the events or situation at hand, but supportive of prevailing stereotypes and/or prejudices about the described out-groups;
- c. The use of an abundant number of near-synonyms to describe the same group, issue or phenomenon (also called over-lexicalisation) as an indicator of the importance attributed to a specific trait or issue;
- d. The credibility of quoted speakers may be enhanced or lowered by the strategic use of verbs or adverbs with different presuppositions or other forms of implicitness. For example migrants, when quoted at all, tend to be assigned

lower credibility and less prominence than majority group speakers, whose credibility is more frequently enhanced and taken for granted. When presenting quotes, journalists may choose verbs, adverbs, or other style markers which reinforce negative stereotypes though the representation of the out-group as a threat and as not respecting "our" norms for civilised debate (Ter Wal, 1996).

- e. The journalist's perspective can be evaluated by considering how she/he positions her/himself with respect to the various actors involved in the discourse through the use of particular linguistic devices, for example those expressing distance vs. identification. Pronouns that can express so-called "relational meaning", for example, common belonging ("our traditions are threatened") are particularly important. Another example is the use of irony as a stylistic marker of distancing;
- f. The absence/presence of explanations that may impose an interpretative framework on the events either implicitly or explicitly;
- g. The ways in which responsibility is attributed/downplayed. In the analysis of explanations of crime, for example, a distinction can be made between circumstantial and personal attributions. The latter form involves a blaming-the-victim strategy, while the former may allow for an analysis of wider social problems and responsibilities (Van Leeuwen, 1995, 1996).

As it was mentioned before the approaches used in this chapter to analyse the recorded news texts is critical discourse analysis (CDA). "CDA sees discourse (language used in speech and writing) as a form of social practice" (Wodak, 1997, p.173). Discourse is "socially consequential" meaning that it can both sustain and reproduce the status quo or it can transform it (Wodak, 1997, p. 173). Because discourse is a form of social practice, "it gives rise to important issues of power" (Ibid):

Discursive practices may have major ideological effects; they can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations (between, for instance, social classes, women and men, and ethnic/cultural majorities and minorities) through the ways in which they represent things and position people. As a result, discourse may be racist or sexist and attempt to pass off assumptions

(often falsifying ones) about any aspect of social life as common sense” (Wodak, 1997, p.173).

Indeed, it is this focus on the relation of language to power that gives discourse analysis its critical dimension (Riggins, 1997, p.2). Van Dijk concurs that the most crucial task of CDA “is to account for the relationships between discourse and social power” (van Dijk, 1996). “More specifically”, he argues, “such an analysis should describe and explain how power abuse is enacted, reproduced or legitimised by the text and talk of dominant groups or institutions” (Riggins, 1997, p.2). In other words, CDA provides a “description, explanation, and critique of the textual strategies that writers use to naturalise discourses that is to make discourses appear to be commonsense, apolitical statements” (Riggins, 1997, p.2). This aspect of CDA is important because the ideological importance of speech and text and “the relations of power which underlie them are often unclear to people” (Wodak, 1997, p.174). CDA thus “aims to make more visible these opaque aspects of discourse” (Wodak, 1997, p.174).

How are these hidden aspects of discourse uncovered? Wodak suggests an interdisciplinary approach that takes into account the historical context of the discourse (Wodak, 1989, p.xv). History is an important aspect of CDA because as Wodak writes, “social processes are dynamic, not static” (Wodak, 1989, p.xvi). Wodak argues that interdisciplinary research is necessary “because social phenomena are too complex to be dealt with adequately in only one field” (Wodak, 1989, p.xvi).

The next step in CDA is “diagnosis”. Diagnosis involves making “mechanisms of manipulation, discrimination, demagoguery and propaganda explicit and transparent” (Wodak, 1989, p.xiv). However, here CDA becomes methodologically weak. While diagnosis is defined, any method on how diagnosis should proceed is not provided. Shore and Wright suggest using the process of “studying through: tracing the ways in which power creates webs and relations between actors, institutions and discourses across time and space” (Shore and Wright, 1997, p.14). From this approach, the questions to be addressed are: “‘Whose voices prevail?’ and ‘How their discourses are made authoritative?’” (Shore and Wright, 1997, p.15).

The process of ‘studying through’ enables the researcher to uncover patterns in data. As Potter and Wetherall explain, patterns emerge in two forms: as differences in either content or form, or as consistencies (Potter and Wetherall, 1987, p.168). Identifying how accounts or texts either share similar features or are different from

each other is the first phase in Potter and Wetherall's method of discourse analysis. The second phase involves analysing the function and consequence of language use. In this phase, the researcher forms hypotheses about the functions and effects of a particular discourse and searches for linguistic evidence (Potter and Wetherall, 1987, p.168).

The final process in CDA is interpretation (Wodak, 1989, p.xvi). Interpretation involves "understanding how and why reality is structured in such a way" (Wodak, 1989, p.xiv). At the interpretation stage, "most critical discourse analysts take an explicit political stance, identifying with those who lack the institutional levers to produce counter discourses" (Riggins, 1997, p.3). The goal of the analysts is that "their work will contribute to social emancipation" (Ibid). Does taking a critical approach mean that research is one-sided and hence less valid? It is true that every analyst might inject his or her own personal theory consciously or unconsciously into the work of application. The difference is that critical discourse analysts "state these values explicitly" (Wodak, 1989, p.xv). It must be remembered however, that CDA assumes that "all explanations are merely points of view", including one's own (Brown, 1998, p.207). The goal is to be critical of "explanations that ignore alternative interpretations" (Brown, 1998, p.207). As will be shown, both VOA and Jaam-e-Jam news discourse on Iraq's war has ignored alternative interpretations of war as anything other than the U.S. government's point of view.

6.11 Political Language in News

Edelman argues that to deal with the uncertainty that life holds, people often turn to religion and government "to cope with anxieties they cannot otherwise manage" (Edelman, 1998, p.131). It is easily recognised that religious language has the power to both "excite and mollify fears", but it is "seldom recognised that politics can do so as well" (Edelman, 1998, p.131). But the language of politics is just as potent as the language of religion. In a setting where people turn to the government to deal with concerns of crime, terrorism and the economy, "linguistic cues evoke pre-structured beliefs regarding the nature and causes of public problems" (Edelman, 1998, p.131). People are susceptible to political language because it generally comes from "sources people want to believe are authoritative and competent enough to cope

with threats” (Edelman, 1998, p.132). Thus, while the beliefs we hold about controversial issues may be problematic, “they are likely to be accepted uncritically because they serve important functions for peoples’ self-conceptions and justify their political roles” (Edelman, 1998, p.132).

Stability in discourses result because the rhetoric of both sides becomes institutionalised “minimising the chance of major shifts [in opinion] and leaving the regime wide discretion, for there will be anticipated support and opposition no matter what forms of action or inaction occur” (Edelman, 1998, pp.18-19). This “linguistically generated process” of polarising concerned groups “gives the political process an appearance of dynamism and tension that rarely has any bearing upon its outcomes” (Edelman, 1998, p.20).

Thus, Edelman argues that our social problems, and the subsequent response of the public to these problems, are constructed, or at least manipulated. But this construction is not always deliberate. In the case of public opinion, it usually “echoes the beliefs authorities deliberately or unconsciously engender by appealing to fears or hopes that are always prevalent” (Edelman, 1977, p.50). What are the fears that continuously plague the public? According to Edelman, suspicions of the poor and unconventional are unconsciously close to the surface for many (Edelman, 1977, p.50). This is evident when one considers “which kinds of observations of social problems readily come to attention and remain vivid and which kinds are seldom noticed” (Edelman, 1977, p.14). Political language becomes “especially vivid and memorable when the terms that denote depict a personified threat: an enemy, deviant, criminal or wastrel” (Edelman, 1977, p.14).

Edelman provides an interesting analysis of the political construction of enemies. He regards the construction of enemies as “a frequent and recurring form of political categorisation” that has some “striking characteristics” (Edelman, 1977, pp.32-34). For example, the categorisation of enemies is often controversial as not everyone holds that the targeted groups are actually enemies. “The very fact that their categorisation is controversial seems to intensify the fears of those who do perceive them as threats, for their own rationality is at stake. Believe in the reality of this enemy becomes the test of their credibility and the touchstone of their self-esteem” (Edelman, 1977, pp.32-34). In addition, those defined as enemies are usually a marginalized, “relatively powerless segment of the population” (Edelman, 1977, pp.32-34). Another characteristic of political enemies is that they “are thought to

operate through covert activities” (Ibid). Thus, while they may act and dress as normal citizens, “they are really engaging in secret subversion, dangerous to others and themselves” (Ibid). In this way, enemies are separated from “legitimate antagonists” who are depicted as openly hostile yet humanly equal opponents (Edelman, 1988, p.67).

Language is an important part in the construction of enemies. First of all, while “language ostensibly depicts its referent as the enemy, it is directed as well against people who fail to share its point of view” (Edelman, 1988, p.73). In the construction of drug users as enemies, terms such as junkie or pusher “challenge the ideology of humanists and liberals and associate them with the named enemy” (Edelman, 1988, p.74). This type of language creates polarisation. “By intensifying the debate it makes the issue more salient and attracts support and resources for both sides” (Edelman, 1988, p.74).

Second, “the language of enmity erases reasonable calculation and perspective and overwhelms consciousness” (Edelman, 1988, p.75). The result is a “loss of perspective” particularly concerning what measures should be taken against the enemy (Edelman, 1988, p.75). As Edelman argues, “for a time it was common in some American states to sentence people convicted of possession of small amounts of marijuana to prison for forty years, an action manifestly related to an assumption about the inherent evil in the person rather than to the harm that comes from smoking pot” (Edelman, 1988, p.75).

Thus, the political construction of enemies provides linguistic cues which “engender intense emotion and punitiveness” (Edelman, 1977, p.33). Enemies are regarded as such “a serious threat that their physical existence, their most characteristic ways of thought and feeling, or both must be exterminated or ruthlessly repressed” (Edelman, 1977, p.33). Often, the creation of enemies goes hand in hand with another political linguistic device: the national crisis. Edelman argues that the word “crisis” is perhaps the most powerful political term as it “connotes a threat or emergency people must face together...it suggests a need for unity and common sacrifices” (Edelman, 1977, p.45). While crises are frequent occurrences, “it is politically necessary to accept each crisis as unique, unexpected [and] a blatant deviation from the usual state of affairs” (Edelman, 1977, p.46). By perceiving each crisis as unique, we are less hesitant to make the sacrifices necessary to overcome it:

“The belief in a crisis relaxes resistance to governmental interferences with civil liberties and bolsters support for executive actions, including discouragement or suppression of criticism and governmental failure to respond to it. The recurrence of crises is bound to encourage less critical acceptance of governmental actions that would otherwise be resisted” (Edelman, 1977, pp.48-49).

Thus, the concept of crisis, particularly if it concerns the threat of enemies, is a powerful linguistic device.

As it will be shown later, Iran’s nuclear activity is portrayed to be an international crisis. The idea that Iran is about to produce nuclear missiles implies a threat of takeover of the enemy. The “crisis” of Iran’s nuclear activity is especially powerful because it is a “condensation symbol” (Elwood, 1994, p.4). As Elwood explains, condensation symbols are “names, words, phrases, or maxims that evoke discrete, vivid impressions in each listener’s mind and also involve those listeners’ most basic values” (Elwood, 1994, p.4). Thus, the word “crisis” gives the listener an impression of a serious threat and invokes heroic values such as self-sacrifice that should triumph at all costs.

The representation of conflict in the media has given rise to a crises discourse. This study uses crises discourse to analyse the news stories. The media sensationalises crises when they can be reported as profoundly disturbing ‘normal’ life and have an institutional context. Three sets of roles are characteristic of crisis reports. These are: perpetrators, objects/victims, and authorities (Bruck, 1992). The media sensationalisation of crises also involves a reporting technique, that Bruck (1992) calls ‘spectacularisation’. A spectacle is a social relation among people mediated by images. It allows readers to participate vicariously in the reported crises, whilst being protected by the assurance of being a distanced observer. And when readers are vicariously involved in the crises, reporters can subtly cast protagonists and antagonists. Stigmatisation of antagonists and labelling has been said to justify behaviour towards those labelled in a way which would otherwise be considered unacceptable. Gerbner (1992) points out that:

“Stigma is a mark of disgrace which evokes disgraceful behaviour... classifying some people as criminals permits dealing with them in ways otherwise considered criminal...Proclaiming them enemies makes it legitimate to attack and kill them...Stigmatisation and demonisation isolate their targets and set them up to be victimised” (Gerbner, 1992, p.97).

In this case, ‘language is used to constitute status and roles which justify claims to power, and to stigmatise opposition forces as ‘deviant’ assigning them to subservient

roles' (Fowler, 1985). In media reports, 'certain groups are defined as illegal to justify authorities in treating them as problems of justice' (van Dijk, 1987). Similarly, violence can be seen as a physical show of force which demonstrates who has power to impose what, on whom, and the circumstances under which this imposition can take place. It functions to designate winners versus losers, and victimisers versus victims. Violence in stories symbolises threats to human integrity and to the established order. Violent stories often demonstrate how in the process of restoring order, the threats are combated, and the (deviant) violators are victimised (Gerbner, 1992).

Another powerful linguistic device is the metaphor. Metaphor, according to Elwood, is important for two reasons. "First metaphors can evoke strong emotional responses in listeners. Second, metaphors provide both information and perspectives through which listeners can understand issues" (Elwood, 1994, p.22). Thus, metaphors are more than just figurative language (Elwood, 1994, p.22). "They constitute the ways to think about issues, they are the issues as people experience, feel, and believe them" (Elwood, 1994, p.22). As it will be shown later, both studied television channels regarded the U.S. invasion of Iraq as a part of the war against terrorism. The linguistic importance of the 'War on Terrorism' metaphor is important. For example, by using the metaphor of war to conceptualise the issue, politicians and policy makers can use the tools of war to advance their cause. One such tool is wartime propaganda and the manipulation of language to advance the goals of one side (Brekke, 1989, p.83). The purpose of wartime propaganda is to rouse feelings, "feelings of fear or timidity, the will to win or the impulse to destroy" (Brekke, 1989, p.83). These feelings are "evoked by particular groups in positions of power who are interested in the emergence or the continuance of a particular state of war" (Brekke, 1989, p.83). Thus, wartime propaganda is "designed to control, not to inform" (Alexander, 1990, p.61).

While the war metaphor may hinder our ability to discuss the issue in an intelligent manner, other linguistic factors are equally important in determining how we conceptualise different issues. The purpose of this section is to demonstrate how language shapes political action. I argue that in order to make the news text explicit we must understand the interplay between language and politics.

When it comes to politics, the use of language is an important element in the creation of meaning. As Edelman argues, "the key tactic must always be the evocation of interpretations that legitimise favoured courses of action and threaten or reassure

people so as to encourage them to be supportive or to remain quiescent” (Edelman, 1988, p.104). This type of language use is called “goal language”, it is persuasive and it gives the public “a badge to wear” (Apthorpe, 1997, p.44). Goal language helps to define the style or “gaze” of policies. As Shore and Wright argue, “it is an important aspect of how policy creates affect and effect” (Shore and Wright, 1997, p.21).

The following is based on an analysis of recorded sample of news stories, which were broadcasted on VOA and Jaam-e-Jam International satellite television channels during the field study. The programme chosen for analysis in Jaam-e-Jam is a news and commentary programme called ‘Rooz va Shab’ (Day and Night), which is a series of programmes devoted to projecting the station’s thought and reflects its opinion on the issues of the day. The main news bulletins in VOA also were selected for this analysis. The news stories are analysed within a discourse analytic framework. The purpose of this analysis is to investigate the portrayed images and the language used in reporting the crises in both stations. Current news implicitly show U.S. political ideology and perpetuate some of the images, which VOA in particular adopts as American style, implicitly as news. The intention of this investigation is to, within a discourse analytical framework, make these images explicit to allow alternative ways of constructing crises situations portrayed in news.

6.12 VOA, Persian Language Satellite Channel

The result of content analysis shows overwhelming political news and political comments in both stations. The acute animosity that characterised Iranian-American relations after the theocratic regime seized power is clearly reflected in the propaganda disseminated by both sides. The important role of the VOA Persian service is to keep as clear an image of the U.S. as possible before the Iranian people, when the Iranian regime has portrayed the U.S. as the source of the greatest possible threat to Iran. The pattern of news in VOA during the field study reveals an extraordinary effort to get the U.S.’s viewpoint on the war on Iraq and Iranian events across to the Iranian people. However, this coverage has omitted a series of significant facts; the full scope of the U.S. military invasion and Iraqis demand for their withdrawal has been conveniently ignored. VOA in its broadcasts has failed to mention the gradual emergence of anti-U.S. sentiments throughout Iraq, leading their

audience to believe that the insurgents are nothing more than disgraceful terrorists and Al-Qaida agitators.

Themes:

The following themes have been identified in the way in which VOA television portrays crises in its news:

1. Iran as a destructive threat to the world order and world peace.
2. Portraying full support for U.S. foreign policy and U.S. occupation of Iraq
3. Implicit support for the Israeli government in its oppression of Palestinians
4. Portraying Palestinians as deviant warmongers
5. Using television service as an instrument of America's diplomatic relations with the Iranian people, supporting and voicing the regime's oppositions both inside and outside the country, especially in regards to the student uprising
6. Launching an implicit attack on Islamic ideology and misusing Islamic values for its own purposes

A discussion of each of these themes through news stories follows.

1. Iran as a destructive and a threat to the world order and world peace

VOA in its coverage vividly demonstrates that it remains by and large consistent with the government's line and its policies. One clear example of this is the VOA's coverage of Iran's alleged nuclear activities. In the main news bulletin on the 30th of June, 2004 VOA reported detailed news about Iran's nuclear activities. The news was reported in a commentary section called "The Washington's View; A Description of US Policy". Hence the title of this section already reflects the U.S. government's official policy. It should be noticed that during the study week, this was the only time that news about Iran's nuclear activities was reported. The news was combined with portraits of the U.S.'s views on the subject, tales of the devastating

impacts of Iran's nuclear activities on human society, and the terror that accompanies Iran's activities. In this broadcast, in which only the U.S. government's accounts of the event were given, Iran is portrayed as actively destructive and as a threat to world security, as reflected in the following news:

The duration of news lasted for three minutes and twelve seconds.

The news in Persian:

ایران اعلام کرده است تولید سانتره فیوژهای راکه برای غنی سازی اورانیوم بکار می رود از سر خواهد گرفت
چنین سانتره فیوژهایی قطعات اصلی در تولید جنگ افزار اتمی است. آمریکا و کشورهای دیگر بر این
عقیده هستند که ایران زیرپوشش دنبال کردن نیروی هسته ای برای تولید برق پنهانی به تولید جنگ افزار
اتمی پرداخته است. جان بولتن معاون وزارت امور خارجه آمریکا در امور کنترل تسلیحات و امنیت بین الملل
این قدام ایران را یک مجادله و سرپیچی و انگشتی در چشم جامعه بین المللی می داند.

The news in English:

Iran has announced that it will reactivate the reproduction of 'centrifuges' which are used in uranium enrichment. These 'centrifuges' are main parts for producing Atomic weapons.

The United States and other countries believe that Iran has concealed its development of nuclear weapons under the coverage of 'using nuclear power to produce electricity'. John Bolton, the U.S. Foreign Secretary, regards Iran's actions as a means of dispute and disobedience and as a finger into the international community's eye. (VOA, 30 June 2004)

It is interesting to note that evidence is omitted when John Bolton suggests that "Iran concealed its development of nuclear weapons under the coverage of using nuclear power to produce electricity". Although there is no evidence to back this up, the news implies the idea of Iran's activity as a threat. As stated earlier in this chapter, the idea that Iran's nuclear activities cause a threat to the world is an important image in prohibitionist discourse. It is an image that is seized by the government. Moreover, in the first part of the news, the superficial image given is that Iran has done the right thing in announcing its reactivation of the uranium enrichment process. However, there is a sting in the tail; it implies that the end product of this process is something that is the 'main part in producing Atomic weapons'. The assumption of the high

potential danger of Iran's boycotts is implied in that the additional words 'building atomic weapons' is newsworthy enough to hit the audience and shape their assumption of what is going on. This image of Iran as deceptive and destructive is exploited in conjunction with the international community.

In the second part of the news the visual pattern between the two sentences is revealing. 'The United States and other countries' are the main headings. In the second sentence, 'John Bolton' is first. If one associates the word 'believe' with other words, it suggests that U.S. policy is considered to be a worldwide belief. There is a suggestion that Iran, in its U.S. proposed concealment actions is active in causing the animosity, should take the blame. In the first sentence the phrase 'the U.S. and other countries' is used, which could suggest that all constituencies of the world community are equally party to the decision, but that Iran, as an antagonist, is excluded. This portrays Iran, the antagonist, as being deviant from other countries and the rest of the world community. Effectively, this could stigmatise Iran through a divide and rule strategy.

The news ends with a metaphor to illustrate a point. The use of figurative language signals causal register, especially when the metaphor compares official matters with something less than conventional. The metaphor (a finger into the international community's eye) is used to describe Iran's activities and implies that Iran has endangered the international community through its harmful and destructive action. As a result, this can stir up feelings of enmity towards Iran's government and, in the process, projects the U.S. as the international peacekeeper who cares for the public interest. The appearance of such informal style, marked by the use of metaphor within the context of news discourse creates incongruity and intertextuality. This informal language within the formal discourse creates a stark change in genre articulation. This 'level one intertextuality' creates incongruity which is potentially humorous (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999). Here also, the impression that 'Iran challenges international authorities and therefore, is deviant', is intensified. This also can be seen in the following news report, where U.S. accusations of intimidation are reported.

News in Persian:

ایران تاکنون غنی سازی اورانیوم اقدامی راکه آن را به ساختن یک بمب اتمی حتی نزدیکتر خواهد کرد را رسماً اعلام نکرده است اما به سخن جان بولتن این موضوع موجبی برای آسودگی خیال نیست؛ برای من کاملاً روشن است که ایران سانتره فیوژها را برای استفاده از آنها به عنوان وسایل زینتی در اتاق های نشیمن ایران بنیان تولید نمی کند.

News in English:

Iran has not yet officially declared to have been involved in enriching uranium, a process that brings Iran even closer to developing a nuclear bomb. John Bolton said: ‘however this can not be a reason to put our thoughts at ease, to me it is absolutely clear that Iran is not producing these “centrifuges” to decorate Iranian living rooms. (VOA, 30 June 2004)

A similar image is portrayed in this news report as well. In the second line the ambiguity of ‘even closer’ is effective. Using this phrase creates the impression that the process has definitely already been started. This impression is then contradicted with the words ‘not been officially declared’. Immediately, the U.S. takes on the status of a misjudged victim of Iran’s criminal activities. The words ‘it is not a reason to put thoughts at ease’ implies a relationship between Iran’s refusing to be truthful and the U.S.’s lacking trust of Iran, which it rightfully should have. The sequential order serves to implicitly acknowledge the U.S.’s position and responsibility and then attributes this to Iran’s wilful defiance of the U.S. and international communities. The news also uses sarcasm when it says: “Iran is not producing those centrifuges to decorate Iranian living rooms”. This sarcasm can be explained as deductive logic in the form of an enthymeme. Enthymeme is a kind of argument which requires dialectical interaction between speaker and listener to complete its logic (van Eemeren et al, 1997, p.213). In here this sarcasm is used to imply that the U.S. is not misleading the issue and implicitly suggests that even ordinary people should be able to understand the danger posed by Iran.

News in Persian:

آقای بولتن می گوید: ایران هنوز یک تصمیم استراتژیک را برای دست یافتن به توانایی جنگ افراتمی دنبال

می‌کند و باید به عنوان تهدیدی برای صلح و امنیت بین‌المللی به شورای امنیت سازمان ملل متحد ارجاع شود
... جان بولتن می‌گوید ما نمی‌توانیم اجازه دهیم ایران یک حامی عمده تروریست بین‌المللی به ویران
کننده‌ترین سلاحها و ابزار رساندن آنها به اروپا و اکثر آسیای مرکزی و خاورمیانه و ورای آن تبدیل شود.

The news in English:

Mr. Bolton says: Iran still pursues a strategic decision to develop nuclear weapons. This must be treated as a threat to world peace and international security, which must addressed by the United Nations Security Council.

John Bolton says: We can not let Iran, that is, the main international terrorist ally, be able to develop the most destructive weapons with the equipments, which allow them to reach to Europe, Central Asia, Middle East and beyond. (VOA, 30 June 2004)

In addition to the use of threatening language, VOA also employs what Edelman calls “slippery definitions” (Edelman, 1988, p.109). VOA classifies Iran using very interesting terminology. In the above news, Iran is classified as a “threat to the world peace and international security”. This ranking puts Iran in line with criminal activities. Moreover, in the first line, the words ‘strategic’ and ‘decision to develop nuclear weapon’ suggest planning and direction. A ‘strategy’ typically looks forward in direction. The use of the word ‘strategic’ also adds to the war metaphor. Strategy and strategic manoeuvres are part of war discourse, implying that one is ‘outsmarting’ an enemy. It suggests that a war is about to occur. While creating anxiety through the use of threatening language, it also assuages this anxiety by reassuring that the U.S. will alleviate this crisis. In symbolic terms, it encourages international solidarity and the coming together of the international community to fight the destruction attributed to Iran’s action. Thus, by first presenting Iran as a universal threat and then using reassurance to invoke international solidarity, it can convert an essentially repressive campaign into an international movement in the public’s mind.

Moreover, besides presented within an image of being deceptive, Iran is also presented as destructive and disruptive of peace, stability and world security. The strong emotive connotations of ‘threat to international peace and security’ makes Iran seem fanatical. Although no people are mentioned here, ‘international’ implies that the international community is the victim of Iran destructiveness. Iran is expressed as ‘a chief supporter of international terrorist’. Such a label excludes an alternative image of Iran as demanding its right to use nuclear energy for civil purposes from those in international communities and leadership positions. Instead, an image is

constructed of Iran as destructive and intending to attack world civilisation and international authorities who are responsible for sustaining order in international community.

The presentation of the above news demonstrates how, by a careful selection of the facts and the calculated way in which bulletin is constructed, institutions, political topics, institutions, political topics, VOA applies itself to a propaganda campaign against Iran that does not involve outright deceit. However, what was omitted from the script is just as significant as what was actually transmitted. While the VOA described Iran's nuclear activities from the U.S. government's official point of view, it fails to present the Iranian perspective to go along with John Bolton's discourse of the event. If this was done, one could clearly differentiate between the journalistic account of the news and the voice of the United States government, as personified by the VOA. The latter seems to be the case since the VOA uses the U.S. government official as the only source for reporting Iran's nuclear activities. Here, the attitude of the Bush Administration towards Iran is adopted by VOA, which directly involves American foreign policy towards Iran and uses the nuclear crisis to expose, weaken and isolate the present government in Iran, supporting the view for its eventual elimination and replacement by the friendly United States. Even if VOA's responsibility to the United States government is accepted, this application of using only U.S. government official sources in reporting the above matter is most questionable and requires justification. Such a broadcast is an indication of the type of the picture the VOA is prepared to present to its audience. The VOA did not mince its words when a U.S.-account of events is thought to be necessary and considered most effective by their standards. What is certain is that the Iranian nuclear crisis represents another crucial point in the history of international broadcasting. The episode is certainly characterised by familiar propaganda, rhetoric and continuous sparring of claims, counter-claims and threats that has been a feature of all crises in the age of mass communication. Here the objective of U.S. propaganda is to get the audience to accept the U.S.'s view of events, and as a subsidiary aim, to shake their faith in the regime of Iran.

2. Portraying a full support for the US foreign policy and US invasion of Iraq

Looking at the VOA coverage of Iraq in depth shows that, the station has been engaged in a continuous and strenuous effort to defend the U.S. military intervention in Iraq. Voice of America broadcasts on Iraq reflects U.S. governmental policy, as the invasion of Iraq, which was aggression against another country, has never been called into question. In Iraq's scenario, VOA is seen to play as important a role during the invasion of Iraq, as it has been involved in psychological warfare operations since Iraqi and foreign opinion are essential in securing the success of the U.S. invasion. On the whole, VOA broadcast on Iraq seems to follow a rather predictable course. Most news is concerned with the alleged rapid return to normality and stability which has been disrupted by a few remaining terrorists and Al-Qaida agents. Such reportage was combined with a propaganda attack on any resistance towards U.S. military action in Iraq and elaborates VOA's efforts to legitimise the U.S.'s decisions and actions.

The news in Persian:

ستیزه جویان تحت رهبری زرقاوی در عراق امروز سه گروگان ترك را با تأکید بر مسلمان بودن نشان آزاد کردند. اما گزارشها از قتل یک مهندس ارتش آمریکا توسط گروگانگیرها حکایت دارد. شبکه تلویزیونی عرب زبان الجزیره امروز با پخش ویدیوی خبرداد سه گروگان ترك که در اسارت اعضای جنبش توحید و جهاد در عراق بودند آزاد شده اند. در بیانیه ای که قبل از آزادی این سه نفر بوسیله گروگان گیرها خوانده شد گفته شده است که این آزادسازی بخاطر همبستگی با برادران مسلمان ترکیه صورت میگیرد که در چند روز گذشته تظاهرات بزرگ را علیه جنگ و جورج بوش رئیس جمهوری آمریکا ترتیب داده بودند. در رویدادی دیگر گروهی از شبه نظامیانی که یک سرباز آمریکایی را به مدت چند ماه در اسارت داشتند ادعا می کنند او را به قتل رسانده اند. تلویزیون الجزیره دیروز با نمایش ویدیوی گزارش داد که تیم مافین، يك متخصص ارتش آمریکا با شلیک گلوله گروگانگیران کشته شده است. در عین حال یکروز پس از انتقال قدرت و حاکمیت مردم عراق با خوشبینی آینده کشور خود انتظار دارند دولت موقت عراقی امنیت لازم را به آن کشور در هم شکسته باز آورد.

The News in English:

Today the warmongers under Zarghavi's control freed three Turk hostages due to the fact they were Muslims. However, one report indicates the hostage takers murdered a U.S. army engineer.

Today, Al-Jazeera television station broadcasted a video report indicating that the three Turks that were taken hostage by the "Towhead & Jihad Movement" in Iraq had been freed. In statement read out by the hostage-takers, they explained that the release of the hostages was due to the demonstrations made against the Bush administration and the war in Iraq during the last few days. In another incident, a group of militants claims to have killed an American soldier, who they had in captivity for several months. Yesterday, Al-Jazeera television reported that 'Tim Maphin', a U.S. army engineer was shot dead by his hostage-takers. Meanwhile, only a day after the transfer of power to the new interim government, the Iraqi people showed great optimism towards their future and demanded that their new government restore the necessary security to their broken country. (VOA, 29 June 2004)

Here, what seem to be the matter for VOA is the appearance of objectivity when it is actually not objective at all. In other words, here credibility, balance and truth are used to sell a political message in much the same way one would use overt propaganda techniques. The word 'setizeh-jou' (warmonger) is used in the first sentence, which indicates that VOA propagandists had chosen their words with great care. This also indicates the level of their sophistication, for the Persian-speaking people of Iran, the term 'setizeh-jou' (warmonger) has a uniquely negative meaning that conjures up images of a hired insider enemy. Here, one can speculate about the effects of the words 'warmongers' and 'U.S. army' being used in the first two sentences, which seems to be a tactic which relies on the readers' tendency to recognise the two parties juxtaposed to one another as being in opposition to each other, and to preserve authority, indirectly supporting the U.S. army as opposing to the deviant warmongers. Moreover, VOA declines to describe the crisis as an uprising, preferring instead to use a term such as warmongers to refer to the oppositions. The word's unique political connotation detracts attention away from the real nature of the event and reinforces their characterisation as troublesome and war-lovers. The news also talks about the transfer of power to the new interim government. Here the reassuring claims of success (where it says: Iraqi people

showed great optimism towards their future) is interspersed with threatening language (about the warmongers kidnapping and killing people) used to justify the U.S.'s continuing occupation of Iraq.

Also in the first few sentences of the above news, there is a dominant trend to present anti-Bush and anti-war demonstrators negatively with a suggestive remark of a direct link with the terrorists and demonstrators and also with the Muslim faith as well. Here, the emphasis on the release of hostages seems to be based on the correlation with their faith and nationality, and since the station had already reported anti-war protests in Turkey, they are therefore able to portray Muslim Turkish demonstrators as terrorist agents. Furthermore, the news says: 'Al-Jazeera television, reported that Tim Maphin, a U.S. army engineer, was shot dead by his hostage-takers'; This casts doubt on the Al-Jazeera as a chosen station by terrorists and also refers to the particular images and stories that this station broadcasts as a mouthpiece of terrorists, which implies that the station is involved in criminal activities. Then straight after this, it goes on about the killing of a U.S. soldier by militants, again using the same tactic of placing the U.S. soldier and warmongers juxtaposed in opposition and creating the two poles of good and evil, again reinforcing the suggestion that the U.S. soldier is a victim of those evil warmongers. What VOA has done here is it has disguised propaganda as news and information, which is something that Nicholas Pronay has called 'propaganda with facts' (in Taylor, 1992, p.19). The news ends up projecting a favourable picture of the U.S. in this situation. For example, VOA reports that: 'only a day after the transfer of power to the new interim government, Iraqi people showed great optimism towards their future, and demanded their new government restore the necessary security to their broken country'. Accordingly this broadcast asserts the total conformity and support from VOA towards the new Iraqi government without even questioning it in any way and also asserts that there is no resistance and that all of the people in Iraq are grateful to the United States. In other words, the U.S. invasion has been portrayed as having been valuable to Iraq and that now people are demanding the restoration of law and order such that the continuation of the U.S. occupation of Iraq is necessary and justified. Such a message however, does bare the risk of such an interpretation and therefore, does jeopardize the VOA's relationship with the Iranian audience, but at the same time portrays VOA as an instrument of U.S. policy.

3. Implicit support for the Israeli government in its suppression of Palestinians

Given its political and strategic implications, the VOA broadcast of the conflict was carefully worded, as it is clear to see the deliberation that must have gone into phrasing the following news. It starts by focusing primarily on the news story, yet at the same time, expresses sympathy for Israelis and provides justification for their actions. VOA coverage of Palestine and Israel conflict demonstrates a pro-Israel bias and illustrates how the VOA is directly involved in American policy towards Palestine. In the following news, VOA shows a tendency to replicate Israeli government officials' version of the events.

The news in Persian:

در نوار غزه در رویدادی دیگر صدها نفر از فلسطینی ها به خیابانهای بیت حنون ریختند تا در تشیع جنازه مردی که به ادعای آنان هنگام نگاه کردن عملیات نیروهای اسرائیلی از پنجره خانه اش کشته شده بود شرکت کنند. ارتش اسرائیل میگوید: تنهاتیر شلیک شده در آن منطقه به سوی ستیزه جوی مسلح بود که در حال فرار از دست نیروهای اسرائیلی بود.

The news in English:

In another incident in the 'Gaza Strip', hundreds of Palestinians went off in the street while attending the funeral of a man who they "claimed" to have been killed by Israeli's forces while watching the combat through his home's window. However, as the Israeli army spokesman says: the only bullet that was shot in that area was towards an armed warmonger who was trying to escape from Israeli forces. (VOA, 4 July 2004)

In this news, Palestinians are portrayed to be disturbing and attacking authorities who are responsible for sustaining order in society. Here the image of the Palestinians' participation in a funeral is portrayed as destructive and disruptive of social stability, as their attempt is considered to be something which "goes off". The potential danger of Palestinian is assumed in that the words 'went off' are newsworthy enough to be in the head sentence. The other Persian word which is used later in the news, namely, "Eadeaa kardand" meaning 'made accusations', also suggests that Palestinians are not truthful in their account of the event. Here, an image of Palestinians as projecting their

own untruthful side of story onto the Israeli army in an accusatory fashion is created. Simultaneously, another image of the Israeli army's imperviousness to the circumstance of killing a man is suggested. Therefore, immediately, the Israeli army takes on the status of a misjudged victim of the Palestinians accusations. Moreover, the sequential order serves to implicitly acknowledge the difficulties between Palestinians and Israelis, and attributes this to Palestinians wilful defiance of Israeli authority.

4. Portraying Palestinians as deviant warmongers

The news in Persian:

در خاورمیانه ستیزه جویان فلسطینی برای دومین روز متوالی به شلیک راکت به جنوب اسرائیل ادامه دادند و این در حالی است که ارتش اسرائیل برای جلوگیری از این حملات مجدداً عملیاتی را در نوار غزه آغاز کردند. نیروهای اسرائیلی دیشب در واکنش به حملات راکتی روز دوشنبه فلسطینیان که به کشته شدن ۱۲ اسرائیلی منجر شد به حمایت تانک و زره پوش و بولدوزر شهرک بیت حنون را در شمال نوار غزه محاصره کردند.

The news in English:

In the Middle East, Palestinian warmongers, for the second day in a row, continue to fire missiles towards the south of Israel. Meanwhile, the Israeli army, in an operation, tried to stop these attacks. Last night, Israeli forces with their tanks and armoured cars, surrounded the small town of 'Beit Hanon' in the north of the Gaza strip. This operation is in response to the Palestinian missile attacks that killed 12 Israelis. (VOA, 29 June 2004)

The labelling of a group of Palestinians as 'warmongers' is problematic in itself. As Edelman argues, this labelling "serves the political function of extending authority over those not yet subject to it" (Edelman, 1988, p.69). Thus, the term 'warmongers' and 'Palestinians' focuses the attention of the audience on the utility of preventative surveillance and control and diverts attention from the link between Israeli oppression and the Palestinians defending their land. Above all, the terms 'Palestinians and 'warmongers' imply that the Israeli forces can assert who is dangerous or poses a risk, as well as who should subsequently be controlled or subject to discipline. Moreover, in this news report, the conflict between Palestinians (referred to as 'warmongers'),

and Israelis is said to continue, but no clear purpose or motivation behind the Palestinians actions supports the statement. Also, this image of the 'Gaza Strip' as a dangerous, deviant place implicates Palestinians as being involved in criminal activities. Furthermore, by calling Palestinians as a body of 'warmongers' that need to be forced by law to be obedient to society is created, and by this, VOA indirectly legitimises the Israeli suppression. Here the rejection of the Palestinians by VOA is expressed euphemistically, as its support for Israeli forces is expressed indirectly and indefinitely. An implication is that Palestinians (warmongers) are envisaged as antagonistic and destructive. In the same way, it appears that Israelis do not have much choice but to defend themselves and are even portrayed as the victim of Palestinians' criminal activities. The last sentence, which presents a picture of Palestinians totally surrounded and at the mercy of the Israelis, is an example of the VOA's tendency to polarise participants in a crisis and serves to remove power from the Palestinians as they are designated to a transgressor's role. In the last sentence, Palestinians are seen as simply objects of the Israelis' show of authority. The Palestinians, who are surrounded by Israeli missiles (as means of discipline and punishment), are stigmatised as deviant. This stigmatising excuses and justifies the Israeli army's punishment whilst warning Palestinians of the consequences of this type of deviance.

5. Using television services as an instrument of America's diplomatic relations with Iranian people to support and voice the regime's opposition both inside and outside the country, especially in regards to the student uprising

When it comes to politics, the use of language is an important element in the creation of meaning. As Edelman argues, "the key tactic must always be the evocation of interpretations that legitimise favored courses of action and threaten or reassure people so as to encourage them to be supportive or to remain quiescent" (Edelman, 1988, p.104). This type of language use is called "goal language" (Apthorpe, 1977, p.44). It is persuasive, and as Shore and Wright argue, "It is an important aspect of how policy creates affect and effect" (Wright, 1997, p.21). VOA news coverage of Iran shows a tendency to encourage Iranian people to rise up against their government

to a point where they would complain and protest and thus provide leverage to U.S. foreign policy objectives via the use of ideas with commercial and political sanctions. It seems that although the U.S. has never stopped the use of economic and political pressure to fight the theocratic regime, it becomes clearer that U.S. now prefer to focus on a psychological war via media. During the study week, VOA broadcasted a series of interviews with the regime's opposition everyday. In 10 to 15 minutes of duration, interviews addressed the student uprising and tried to encourage people to protest against the regime in the anniversary of students' demonstrations. Whether they were effective is questionable; many of the themes discussed by those expatriate oppositions must have gone above the head of ordinary Iranian people struggling to survive the harsh economic situation in Iran. Among the regime's oppositions, VOA however, put emphasis on the monarchy and broadcasted two hours roundtable with Prince Reza Pahlavi to endorse the idea. Perhaps this clearly demonstrates the close relationship between VOA and U.S. foreign policy and their support for the monarchy. In this context, VOA can be viewed as having collaborated with the opposition to overthrow the regime. In the event of students' uprising, VOA along with the U.S. government, declared a readiness to support the Iranian people in their efforts to defeat the theocratic regime. VOA, in its broadcasts, concentrated more on assuring the Iranian people that the opinions of United States, and indeed of the world, stand vehemently against the regime's actions in regards to suppression of students. In this context, the observation of VOA during the study week indicates that the agency is almost completely devoted to U.S. officials and government policy in its coverage of news, especially news about Iran's nuclear activities and the students' uprising. VOA has continued to be consistently hostile towards the Iranian regime in their reporting of the above crisis and indirectly launched a call for rebellion on the anniversary of students' uprising. This crisis inside Iran, which was generated by the combined force of the student demonstrations and the way they were suppressed by the regime, had an enormous impact on VOA and U.S. official policy. The close relationship between the U.S. government and VOA is illustrated by the fact that the agency contributed a series of reports and interviews about the crisis. Thus while VOA defends its own independence, its role as a tool of U.S. foreign policy remains. In a crisis of identity, where VOA's role as a source of news and information must be weighed against its obligations to government, the station shows strong tendency to follow the latter first and foremost.

To realise the U.S. political aspirations, the psychological warfare and propaganda targeting it, it should be noticed that in Iran government officials and media are torn apart by factional disputes, thus offering good opportunity for a disruptive U.S. propaganda effort. Furthermore, intellectuals, students and those who are politically conscious are considered particularly important since the government was not ready to respond to their demands. Propaganda could therefore serve to articulate their demands and perhaps sow the seeds of future discontent. In addition to this, the widespread unrest among common people who are disappointed in Khatami's political and social reforms should be considered as a major target for U.S. propaganda. The premise of this rather sophisticated strategy is that U.S. has tried to exploit the fact that after almost a decade in power, promises made by Khatami's government have failed to materialise. Propaganda output would therefore encourage discontent by comparing lifestyles in Iran and the West. By emphasising the rich, high standards of living, or the virtues of the capitalist system enjoyed by its society, America as a means of combating theocratic dogma in the long run would prove counter-productive and the poor section of society could feel aggravated and more disillusioned with exploitative capitalism. Because the regime from the beginning was tainted as anti-American, portraying itself as a friend of the poor and preaching social, political and economic revolution to create equality, its credibility among its supporters would be destroyed. Hence propaganda emanating from the U.S. describes the uprising as a 'national salvation struggle' against tyranny and oppression. Every day, during the study week, the VOA news presenter read some messages claimed to be e-mails from people inside Iran, aiming to unveil the barbarous and cruel face of the regime to the population so that they can be aware of the regimes oppressive activities and direct them towards mass protests against the regime. However, such intensified propaganda against the regime in Iran and its alleged nuclear activities, with the VOA's support of protestation and subversive activities in Iran, could also merely reflect its efforts to divert public attention away from the U.S.'s involvement in Iraq. In other words, the U.S. recognised the need to intensify its anti-Iran propaganda if the success of its foreign policy is to be secured. A direct link between policy and propaganda is thereby established. The direct link between U.S. foreign policy and VOA is clearly presented in the following news.

The news in Persian:

در شرایطی که ناامنی بزرگترین مشکل امروز عراق توصیف می‌شود و خود عراقیها اگر بتوانند سعی می‌کنند از عراق خارج شوند اما چرا سید حسین خمینی نوه ۴۵ ساله آیت ا... خمینی به آن کشور بازگشته، او در گفتگوی تلفنی از کاظمین در بغداد به صدای آمریکا گفت: برای زیارت و برای تنفس در محیط آزاد به عراق بازگشته اومی گوید” در حال حاضر او در عراق بیشتر احساس آزادی و امنیت می‌کند تا در ایران“.

The news in English:

In a situation where insecurity is said to be one of the most important problems in Iraq at the moment, and they Iraqi people if they could, would try to leave the country, why then has Seyed Hussein Khomeinie, the Ayatollah Khomeinie's 45 year old grandchild, come back to the country? In a telephone conversation from Kazemein, he said that he came back to Iraq to make pilgrimage and to breathe in a liberated place. He says that in Iraq he feels much more free and secure than he did in Iran. (VOA, 30 June 2004)

Here the news can be categorised linguistically into a form called 'prolepsis'. Prolepsis is an argument that denies the claim that is to be made, or attempts to dissociate him/her from the claim. 'It allows S to express their prejudice or negative comments while denying such articulation' (Lockyer and Pickering, 2001, p.639). First it prevents S from threatening his/her own face while making negative comments; it makes the comments sounds unprejudiced and therefore S can maintain an appearance as rational and objective. Second, seen as a 'rational and objective' remark, his/her criticism appears to be common knowledge, not ideological. In the above news, VOA's prolepsis can be categorised into the following pattern:

Pattern: negativity + but + allegation

In this form, VOA, by saying in the beginning that 'insecurity is said to be one of the most important problem in Iraq', it implicitly suggests that under occupation Iraq is a secure and stable place. VOA, by using negativity, attempts to appear objective, and in fact, only mentions the negative point here in order to rule out any criticism towards Iraq's situation. In other words, VOA uses the prolepsis as a slipway to make an allegation about Iran under the regimes' exploitation and tyranny and claims that it therefore, is not a secure place. VOA here also uses the pattern of the adjacency pair: Question + Answer. It poses a question about why Khomeinie's grandson came to

Iraq. After this it proposes an answer to legitimise the point it wants to make. The question which is a simple 'why' provokes the audience's curiosity in a certain area that they might not have considered before so that VOA can lead them to its desired conclusion. Moreover, the pattern between the two sentences is also revealing. 'Going to Iraq, is the main topic in the first sentence. In the second sentence, 'feeling free and secure' is the main topic. To associate 'Iraq' with other words 'freedom and security', is to make direct and strong suggestion that since Iraq was brought to this security and freedom by the U.S., if you want the same security and freedom, you should therefore let the U.S. come to free you. Here the occupied Iraq is portrayed as a place with established security and freedom, where even a high rank Iranian clergy who happen to be a close relative of late Khomeinie chooses to go and live there. In this, VOA tries to present Iran as chaotic and deviant place and the impression given is of a volatile environment, such that the U.S.-occupied Iraq is far more secure, free and a better place. In other words, VOA uses this opportunity to intensify the situation and represent it as a bankruptcy of a system which has practised to control its people under a theocratic regime. This however, clearly shows the propagandistic nature of VOA. In this news, VOA by ignoring the invasion of a country, the blowing up of factories and dropping bombs on women, children and the aged, presents a guarantee of democracy by freeing men and women from exploitation. This celebration of Iraqi invasion's achievements was concluded with the assertion that Iraq is a country that has been freed from totalitarianism and oppression of all kinds. In this news, VOA broadcasts a fact which has a substantial propaganda impact and uses to the favour of U.S. government policy. The following news demonstrates how U.S. propaganda targets the regime of Iran and actively encourages its people to rise up and overthrow the regime.

The news in Persian:

هیجده تیر ماه نزدیک می‌شود و در فاصله شش روز تا به حرکتی که با صلح جویی آغاز شد و باخشونت پاسخ داده شد بازتلفن‌ها و ایمیل‌های شما حاکی از حساسیت دیگر این روزها دارد. در آستانه ۱۸ تیر نیروی انتظامی اعلام کرده هر دختری که مچ پایش بیرون باشد شلاق خواهد خورد نکته بعدی آنکه تهران در آستانه ۱۸ تیر به یک دژ نظامی شبیه‌تر است تا یک شهر.

The news in English:

The 18th of Tir (8th of July, the anniversary of the student uprising), is again upon us, and again your calls and e-mails indicate of the sensitivity of these days. As we get closer to the 18th of Tir, security forces have warned that any woman who does not cover her ankles will be whipped. The important thing is that as we get closer to this anniversary, Tehran has become more like an army fortress than a city. (VOA, 02 July 2004)

In the above news, VOA's strategy is to stir up the audience's feelings so as to draw their attention to the point it tries to make, and that point is to get people to demonstrate on the anniversary of student uprising. There is also evidence of categorisation by using social deixis. In the above news, VOA uses 'we' to refer to the station and the Iranian people. The way that VOA refers to the Iranian government (the security forces) isolates it from the rest of people. 'The security forces' have become 'someone else' who does not belong to the same group as the people. At the same time, the pronoun 'we' helps to consolidate the sense of group unity between the station and the people. It promotes a sense of unity which indirectly builds an antagonistic feeling towards those who do not belong to the group. In this case, the target is the Iranian government. This evidence of categorisation can be found in the news above, which also can be considered an emotional appeal to the audience, as VOA seeks to stir the audiences' emotional involvement towards the issue.

In addition, the impression given by this news is that although the authority structure of any society is intended to protect people from harm, this implies that they are destructive and cruel. A sense of people's, especially women's, vulnerability and need for protection against a criminal and murderous regime is created here, which makes it seem like a real danger and threat to the society. Here, VOA, through stigmatisation and demonising the regime, tries to isolate its target and set the regime up to be victimised and destroyed. Moreover, by classifying the regime as criminal and by proclaiming them as the people's enemies, they legitimise attacking and killing them. In other words, it permits dealing with them in such a fashion that would otherwise be considered as criminal. Such overt incitement is combined with classic psychological warfare. These techniques can be considered as useful for two primary reasons: they are intended to throw the regime into a state of panic, while at the same time they are designed to generate popular support for opposition groups and encourage a general uprising against the regime. This also suggests that the U.S. recognises that although

its practical support to change the regime might be minimal, propaganda can continue to expose the regime by influencing Iranian opinion. The above news also indicates the fact that VOA is engaged in an elaborate scheme to manage Iranian public opinion just days before the anniversary of student uprising. This may of course provide the pretext for an exaggeration of the situation inside Iran. By these sorts of statements, VOA tries to make it easier for the U.S. to consolidate its own position in Iran by fostering hatred against the regime. However, if these allegations are not completely true and are part of psychological operations, then the station would suffer a loss of credibility since it could no longer be trusted. The station needs to determine the level of support necessary for a mass protest among all sections of society and to identify weak spots of the regime that could be exploited by propaganda.

The news in Persian:

به نظر می‌رسد که با کم رنگ تر شدن هر ساله دوم خرداد ۱۸ تیر پرنگ تر و شفاف تر می‌شود و حالا چه تظاهرات صورت بگیرد یا جلوی آن گرفته شود فرقی در این قضیه نخواهد کرد دلیلش هم این است که روزهای مخصوص باطل و دهل زدن و تبلیغ و سروصدای گوش خراش برای مردم مهم نمی‌شود، روز مهم هم می‌توان حتی با سکوت هم حضور خودش را در ذهن و قلب مردم نشان بدهد.

The news in English:

It seems that as the 2nd of Khordad (this date refers to Khatami's election and the reformist movement) is fading away, the 18th of Tir is gaining momentum. However, if people protest or even if they get prevented from protesting, it would not make any difference because the fact is that important days for people will remain important, even if people celebrate it in their heart and in silence. (VOA, 02 July 2004)

The above news shows that although U.S. propaganda desperately tried to provoke anti-regime reaction among people, seeing that nothing important happened, they now desperately try to play down its significance. The above news reflects a face-saving effort by VOA that characterised its propaganda at this time, rather than a genuine statement.

However, VOA could claim that its broadcasts are viewed by an overwhelming number of Iranians. It is important to note that the size of an audience, actual or

potential, is not a sufficient criteria by which the effectiveness of propaganda can be judged; simply because broadcasts were heard or viewed does not mean that the messages they contained were absorbed and acted upon which is, after all, the true test of propaganda.

6. Implicit attack on Islamic ideology and misusing Islamic values for its own purposes

The news in Persian:

این چه سنت و اخلاقی است که بجز تنفرو خیانت و تفرقه چیز دیگری از آن نمانده است؟ این چه دین و آیینی است که جزمکر و دروغ و خیانت کار دیگر نمی داند؟ این چه جنگی است که گلوله های آن به جای دشمن بر سینه جوانان خودمان اصابت می کنند؟

The news in English:

What kind of moral and tradition is this that nothing has remained of it except hatred, betrayal, and dispersion?! What kind of religion is this which knows nothing than deceit, lies, and betrayal?! What kind of war is this in which its bullets, instead of the enemy, hit our youth's heart?!

The above news can be categorised as an enthymeme because the conclusion is left for the audience to infer. The language here is bold and without redress. The outright insults and provocative language mentioned here clearly and directly attacks Islam. This news attempts to put down Islam by overtly attacking it with the hopes of making the point that Islamic ideology is devious and bad by nature. By saying that Islam is innately bad, its offensive attack on Islam is legitimised. VOA uses a metaphor in making these points. It compares Islamic ideology and practice to bullets that cause damage and harm to people. VOA presents its argument in the form of questions. By using questions, VOA can draw people's attention to the implicit point it is about to make. The questions generally work as an invitation for the audience to look at Islam critically. Here, VOA implicitly attacks Islam and portrays it as decisive, destructive and threatening to society. The strong emotive words associate Islam with fanatical behaviour and imply that the society which seeks to serve is the

victim of its destructiveness. The sequential order serves to implicitly acknowledge the appalling atrocity and then attributes this to Islam as an ideology and disgracefully makes it responsible for social oppression. It seems that U.S. propaganda for Iran intends to draw attention to signs of internal weakness within the country and blame Islam for all this and therefore, destroy the myth of Islam as the new age salvation or in other words, 'killing two birds with one stone'.

VOA concentrates its programming on the student uprising and the regime's oppression and has allowed a considerable amount of invective to be voiced in its commentaries. Moreover, although the above commentary was claimed to be an e-mail from someone in the audience, it reflects the views of the broadcaster and vividly demonstrates that the station remains by and large consistent with the U.S. government's line and its policies. This would not only encourage the overthrowing of the regime but also an attack on Islam at the same time. The pretext here is that such propaganda is an area expected to create an ideological battleground with Islam and is a dismissive of the claim that Western, and especially U.S., ideological propaganda does not exist. Western and U.S. propaganda against Islam does indeed exist.

6.13 Jaam-e-Jam International Satellite Television

After the 1997 Revolution in Iran, the United States found itself in a difficult situation. On one hand, it tried to use political and economic sanctions and possible military activity against the regime, and at the same time it had to supplement political and economic activities to create a viable situation for the regime's opponents. News and information were therefore the most valued services, especially if indigenous propaganda could be obtained. The ultimate success and effectiveness of using media as an instrument of foreign policy is dependent on the ability to bridge the cultural gap through the understanding of traditions, family life, social practices and value systems.

In this line, the U.S. government was directed towards the possibility of establishing a strictly Iranian broadcasting system which could: counter U.S. favourable propaganda in Iran and influence Iranian, as well as world opinion, and increase support for U.S. policies while exposing the subversive practices of the regime. In this

situation, Jaam-e-Jam International as the first ex-patriot Iranian satellite television came into existence. Despite the station's claim of it being objective, the channel, which is a supporter of the monarchy, an opponent of the regime and a strong supporter of United States, has been in line with the U.S.'s psychological warfare against the regime. This friendly policy towards the U.S. and its allies is taken to an extreme where Israel is concerned. The country is hardly ever mentioned. During the study week there was not a single mention of the country despite the conflict and bloodshed in Palestine and in the Gaza Strip at that time.

Equally as complex is the role assumed by the Jaam-Jam. Its work is too bound up with U.S. policy which, in turn, is subject to the psychological warfare of U.S. propaganda. Therefore, given its complexity, it would be impossible to trace the whole effects of U.S. propaganda and information efforts together with a chronology of the events on Jaam-Jam international. The following is an overview of these efforts and focuses on a number of examples to illustrate the argument.

Themes

The following themes have been identified from the way in which Jaam-e-Jam portrays events in its programmes:

1. Portraying support for the U.S. invasion of Iraq
2. Being in line with U.S. foreign policy regarding Iran's nuclear activities
3. Implicit support for U.S. foreign policy

1. Portraying support for the U.S. invasion of Iran

Jaam-e-Jam's coverage of war in Iraq indicates a tendency in its reporting to serve specific a political purpose, with the intention of possible justification and support for U.S. activities in Iraq. The justification for the U.S. invasion of Iraq was approved and was subject to neither scrutiny nor debate. It is important to notice that questionable acts are accepted only when the policy behind them is also accepted. During the study week, a considerable amount of air time was devoted to the news about Saddam's prosecution and his trial court. A striking example of this support was

presented in one of the live Day and Night programmes. In this programme, after reading and talking about the news of Saddam's trial court, the audiences were asked to call in and talk about what they thought to be the most appropriate punishment for a dictator such as Saddam. In this respect, a live call was terminated on air because the caller stressed that Bush should be prosecuted along with Saddam for his previous support of his regime. The following news and commentaries illustrates the defensive policy that the station follows in its reporting.

The news in Persian:

انتقال رسمی حاکمیت به دولت موقت عراق که دو روز پیش از موعد مقرر صورت گرفت نخست وزیر سوگند یاد کرد و برنامه های خود را توضیح داد آقای علوی در سخنانی که از تلویزیون پخش شد وعده داد که جامعه ای را برای تمام مردم عراق از تمامی قومیت ها، نژادها و مراتب بسازد و به تمامی مردم آن کشور خدمت کند. مجری در ادامه افزود: دو روز حاکمیت عراق زودتر انجام گرفت و انشاءالله که ثبات در تمام جهان حکمفرما شود.

The news in English:

The transfer of sovereignty to Iraq's new interim government took place two days earlier than planned. In this ceremony, the new Iraqi prime minister, after taking oath, explained his future plans for Iraq. Mr. Alavi in a televised speech promised to serve the Iraqi people regardless of their tribes and race and to rebuild the country.

Presenter added:

The transfer of power in Iraq took place two days earlier and we hope that such security and stability can be experienced all over the world.

It is important to notice that during the study week, Iraq's new interim government took centre stage when it came to news regarding Iraq. It seems that Jaam-e-Jam only concentrated on returning the country to normality and stability, regardless of resistance, conflict and the killing of the Iraqi people. In other words, the station consciously refused to give an accurate picture of what was going on in Iraq. The presenter's commentary at the end also gives the impression that security and stability are the future of Iraq, which in turn is a result of the American occupation of Iraq. It also furthermore suggests that what applies to Iraq could also apply to some other countries as well, notably Iran. The station's presentation style suggests support for

the U.S.'s actions against Iraq, as it presents the occupied Iraq as a sovereign state. Recognition of this is also suggested by the fact that the station never criticises or even questions U.S. foreign policy even in the slightest. The commentary that was added by the presenter clearly states the station's policy and attitude towards the U.S. policy regarding Iraq. For example, the statement that "we hope such security and stability can be experienced all over the world", justifies the occupation and suggests that the U.S. occupation of Iraq has brought this stability and security to the country.

The news in Persian:

همسایگان عراق از انتقال قدرت پیش از موعد مقرر استقبال کرده اند و ابراز امیدواری کرده اند که این امر نهایتاً خشونتهای مداوم در این کشور را متوقف سازد. ملک عبدالله پادشاه اردن گفت که او مطمئن است که از این پس عراق آزادی و استقلال خود را باز خواهد یافت.

The news in English:

Iraq's neighbours have welcomed the beforehand transfer of power and stressed hope that this could put an end to violence in Iraq. Kuwait and Jordan, two of the U.S.'s strongest allies in the region, expressed that this would bring security and stability to the region. King Abdullah (king of Jordan), also stressed that now freedom and independence are the future for Iraq.

Parallel to the VOA's role in propaganda, the station tries to fashion the invasion of Iraq as liberating and democratic. Nevertheless, because the new Iraq interim government has been criticised as being merely a puppet of the United States, the station's propaganda has been constantly on the defensive and reactive rather than inspired. It seems that all the station's efforts are a means by which the objectives and progress of U.S. foreign policy could be projected. It also suggests that Jaam-e-Jam could make a contribution in shaping Iran's public opinion and therefore, the station has been actually used as a channel that could assist U.S. diplomatic efforts.

Jaam-e-Jam nevertheless, by only portraying the view points of some of the strongest U.S. allies in their support for the Iraq's interim government and nothing else, reflects its very positive policy towards the United States. In its support for American foreign policy it seems, of course, to have been more than just a little bit economic with the truth.

2. Being in line with the U.S.'s foreign policy regarding Iran's nuclear activities

In dealing with Iran's nuclear crisis, a striking conformity in style and language with VOA is presented. Despite the different positions expressed on this matter, Jaam-e-Jam in this issue did stick to news and interpretations offered by U.S. officials. The following news reflects this conformity.

The news in Persian:

یک مقام ارشد آمریکایی ابراز نگرانی خودش را در مورد برنامه های هسته ای ایران اعلام داشت. آقای جان بولتن معاون وزارت خارجه آمریکا در امور کنترل تسلیحاتی از اینکه ایران برای از سرگیری ساخت غنی سازی اورانیوم مجدداً فعالیتهایی را داشته ابراز نگرانی خودش را اعلام کرده و آقای بولتن که در حال حاضر در لندن بسر میبرد گفت که سرگرم گفتگو با شرکای اروپایی خودش است که بتواند این مشکل را حل کند.

The news in English:

A U.S. government official expressed his concern about Iran's nuclear activities. Mr Bolton the US secretary ... stressed his concern for Iran's alleged plan to re-activate its uranium enrichment programmes. Mr Bolton is discussing this matter with the U.S. European allies in England. (Jaam-e-Jam, 30 June 2004)

Here Jaam-e-Jam seems to present the events from the biased perspective of the U.S. government. In this issue, the station chooses to adopt and reflect the U.S. government's position because it is regarded as centralist. It is striking how Jaam-e-Jam and VOA covered the crisis in a similar fashion. Therefore, Jaam-e-Jam, in its coverage of Iran's nuclear crisis, could be faced with the fact that amongst the better educated, more opinionated, and perhaps potentially more influential sector of the audience, it would be very difficult to differentiate between the voice of United States, as personified by VOA, and Jaam-e-Jam. In line with the VOA, Jaam-e-Jam is trying to tell its Iranians audience that their government is a bad, inhuman and criminal regime.

The news in Persian:

ایران اعلام کرده است که در تاریخ ۲۹ جولای قرار است که فعالیتهای غنی سازی خود را از سر گیرد. بد نیست بدانیم که سه کشور آمریکا، فرانسه و آلمان از موقعیت و تصمیمی که ایران برای غنی سازی گرفته بسیار عصبانی هستند و آقای البرادعی اعلام کرده اند که هیچ گونه توافق سیاسی مسئله هسته ایی ایران راحل نخواهد کرد. آقای البرادعی اعلام کرده که اکنون در مسکو هستند اشاره کرده اند که هیچ گونه توافقی در این رابطه با ایران روی نخواهد داد.

مجری در ادامه افزود:

و این عکسهایی که مشاهده می فرمایید نشانگر فعالیتهای هسته ای و اتمی است که در نقاط مختلف ایران عکسهای هوایی گرفته شده.

The news in English:

Iran has announced that the country has decided to re-start its enrichment programmes from July 29 onwards. However, the United States, Germany and France have expressed their anger and dissatisfaction over Iran's decision. In this respect, Mr. Al-Baradei has asserted that no political agreement will be considered to solve Iran's nuclear crisis. Mr. Al-Baradei also assured that there will be no compromising with Iran on this matter.

Presenter added:

These pictures that are taken from some nuclear installation plants in Iran evidently indicate that Iran is engaged in nuclear activities.

In this news, Jaam-e-Jam assures its audience that the leaders of the free world follow Iran's destructive atomic plans extensively, and suggests that Iran is actively destructive and threatening. The language used in the above news constructs Iran's nuclear activity as such a threat, which in turn, implicitly confirms and supports the U.S.'s stance on this issue. It also portrays the dissatisfaction of the rest of the world with Iran and their deep concerns and frustration over Iran's criminal activities. Here Iran also has been presented as inferior. This news also attempts to limit the framework in which Iran's nuclear issue can be discussed. Any argument that does not support the U.S. official point of view is deemed invalid. The station tries to insinuate awareness of Iran's role in a destructive plot against the world. Also the station, in order to reject Iran's claim about the peaceful use of nuclear power, broadcasted some pictures of Iran's strategic buildings and nuclear installations, claiming this to be evidence of Iran's criminal activities. In this way, and by

portraying Iran as dishonest and dangerous, the station certainly and deliberately fuelled anxiety over Iran's nuclear activities. In the above broadcast, Iran's nuclear installations were portrayed as a future means of exerting Iran's destructive plans and to justify U.S. efforts to stop Iran and to influence public opinion in favour of the United States.

3. Implicit support for U.S. foreign policy

The political taboos within a media organisation and its editorial policy could be identified when addressing any political or even historical issue. The political and financial powers behind the station play a significant role in the way that events are portrayed. It is important to notice that whenever there is a mention of U.S. foreign policy or activities the station stresses their soundness and positive role. The justification for invading Iraq, as it was discussed previously, was subject to neither criticism nor debate. This is extremely important for the purpose of this study to note that during the period covered by study week both VOA and Jaam-e-Jam's propaganda output were consistent on both Iran's domestic and the U.S.'s international policies, making involvement much easier to accept.

During the study week, Bush's speech in Turkey was a frequent topic of discussion on the channel. Jam-e-Jam devoted considerable airtime to getting Bush's point of view across. The purpose of such commentaries, subject to similar criteria of other issues, was to reflect the U.S.'s opinion on the issues of the day.

On the 1st of July 2004, Jaam-e-Jam International broadcasted news of Bush's speech in Turkey in which he reaffirmed that the U.S. would continue to fight for freedom and democracy. This particular news was presented in the same traditional 'propagandistic' style. Given its political and strategic implications, this news was broadcasted several times in Jaam-e-Jam, which in turn reveals the stations effort to get Bush's viewpoint across to the Iranian people.

The news in Persian:

آقای پرزیدنت بوش در ترکیه مطالبی را درباره آزادی ملت‌های خاورمیانه اشاره کرده اند و گفتند دموکراسی در کشورهای خاورمیانه انعکاسی از ملت‌هاست و دموکراسی در هر کشوری ساختار، سنن، رویکرد و

عقاید مخصوص به خود را دارد؛ اما باید اینها به برخی از اصول ثابت آن پایبند باشند ...

ایشان بامحکوم کردن برخی که در غرب با ایراد سخنان نسنجیده و ناآگاهانه باعث ایجاد کدورت و دشمنی بین کشورهای اسلامی و غربی می شوند گفت: هنگامی که افراد در کشور من درباره دین اسلام جاهلانه و توهین آمیز سخن می گویند این سخنان آنها در خارج شنیده می شود و با این کار قطعاً به پروژه دموکراسی مادر خاورمیانه ضربه می زند.

وی در بخش دیگری از سخنانش اشاره کرد که در کشورهای سوریه و ایران عده ای محافظه کار خسته و بی پشتوانه مردمی در روحیه دموکراسی طلبی نسل جدید ایستاده اند.

The news in English:

President Bush, in his speech given in Turkey about the freedom of the people in the Middle East, said: ‘democracy in the Middle East reflects its people. However, democracy in every country has its own structure, tradition, and opinion; there are certain commitments to its basic principles that do not change from place to place.

He condemns those, who in West with their ill-mannered perception, cause hatred and animosity between West and Islamic countries and added: ‘when some in my country, in an ill-informed and insulting manner, say something bad about the Muslim faith, their words are heard abroad and do great harm to our cause in the Middle East.

Bush also indicated that in some countries like Iran and Syria, some discredited autocrats are trying to hold back the democratic will of a rising generation.

Bush’s speech in Turkey was greatly publicised in both VOA and Jaam-e-Jam. However, the bits that the Jaam-e-Jam seems to concentrate on mostly indicate the station’s tendency to mediate between the Iranian people and the U.S. government, trying to portray a very positive image of the United States. The above news, which is taken from Bush’s speech, focuses on the U.S.’s alleged mediation efforts in solving the problems between Islamic countries and the United States. The bite taken from Bush’s speech stresses these mediation efforts. Also, in the second part of the news, to conclude his broadcast, Bush addresses the people from Iran and Syria directly, assuring them that the U.S. is their friend, sharing both their aspirations for democracy and their sorrow for being oppressed by their totalitarian regimes. In sharp contrast to the earlier part of the broadcast, such attempts to achieve intimacy with the Iranian audience makes this propaganda and its accompanying threats more effective. Accordingly, broadcasting such clean and peace-loving image of the U.S. echoes a

theme of propaganda that tries to uphold the U.S. as a defender of Iran and its people. Moreover, it seems that in an effort to show its loyalty, the station is been too vociferous in its praise of the United States. However, for any Iranian audience resentful of what could be perceived as cultural imperialism, this could have a rather negative effect.

The news in Persian:

حضور نیروهای انتظامی در شهرهای ایران افزایش پیدا کرده و این درحالی است که حضور نیروهای ویژه در سطح شهرهای بزرگ ایران افزایش چشمگیری داشته. محمدباقر قالیباف فرمانده نیروی انتظامی اعلام کرده است این نیروها هیچگونه ارتباطی با نیروهای ضد شورش ندارند. ایشان در روزنامه همشهری اعلام داشته که با بد حجابی شدیداً مبارزه میکنند و این باعث سؤال است که ایام تابستان که میرسد این صحبت بد حجابی در مورد بانوان ایران پیش می‌آید، بهر حال این آقای قالیباف هم یک مجری هستند یعنی یک روزی هم این مجریان مثل آن ۱۱ نفری که با صدام حسین محاکمه خواهند شد، باید بدانند که این ۱۱ نفر هم روزی مجری بوده اند.

The news in English:

The presence of especial forces in Iranian towns has increased dramatically, especially in big cities. The Chief of Security Forces; Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, has announced that there is no link between these forces and anti-riot forces. He also, in a talk with Hamshahri newspaper, announced that they will vigorously fight the 'bad hejabi' (unveiling of women).

Now this raises a question of why every summer the concept of women unveiling receives such controversy. After all, this Mr. Ghalibaf should know that he is one of the regime operators and that one day just like the Saddam officials, he will be prosecuted.

The above news seems to be more like a compilation of allegations woven together in the form of a narration. The station's allegations are not supported by any evidence.

Not surprisingly, Jaam-e-Jam like VOA, focuses its efforts on directing the audience's attention towards the alleged discrimination against women by the regime, which would appeal to public opinion inside Iran and abroad. The second part, which is a commentary, then uses the tried propagandist method of appealing to history, that this regime like Saddam's regime will one day, meet its doom. However, the station has been equally prepared to sweep the more questionable aspects of that same history

under the carpet when it suits its purpose. It demonstrates that this dissatisfaction has been the primary focus of attention for both broadcasting services in order to manipulate the audience's sensitivities by appealing to freedom and women's rights, and to strengthen and further anti-regime sentiments among people and direct these sentiments in the interests of the United States. In doing this, the dangers of a suppressive regime and the character of the autocratic state are stressed. The objective of such a broadcast is to demonise the regime and harness opinion against its actions towards women, particularly among the influential intellectual sections of society. This could also indicate an underlined attack on Islamic rules and believes. To supplement such propaganda, the station blankets the country with its commentary about the student uprising and targets the regime's hard-line approach towards women, hoping that it would generate more rebellion within the country. This has been used alongside the maximum exploitation of the virtually alleged occupation of Iran's cities by the regime's anti-riot forces, to the highest political level. The news ends with a commentary that makes a comparison between Iran's regime and Saddam's destroyed regime, which appears to be directly engaged in promoting the U.S.'s invasion of Iraq. In this respect, this reporting style could be seen as having served the VOA and thus, by extension, the propagandistic efforts of the U.S. government.

6.14 Conclusion

The discourse analysis demonstrates the role of VOA in explaining and justifying U.S. policy, in addition to frequently operating as an instrument of psychological warfare. VOA, by using discourse, tries to "influence the text and talk in such a way that, as a result, the knowledge, attitudes, norms, values and ideologies of recipients are – more or less indirectly – affected in the interest of the" [US government] (van Dijk, 1996, p.85). VOA's use of language, including the use of thematic structures (Iran is destructive/Iran's nuclear activities subvert international security) creates a discourse of anxiety. The station both arouses and assuages this anxiety through rhetorical constructions that blur reality. As Edelman argues, public officials and policy makers are not "helpless boats at the mercy of currents and passing storms, for officials help stir up the currents that move them" (Edelman,

1977, p.51). Through discourse, VOA tries to “build cognitive structures” (Edelman, 1977, p.51). In this way, it would be able “to shape mass opinion and then only reflect it” (Edelman, 1977, p.51).

Saul argues that it is “an obsession with the true versus the false [that] leads us to artificial solutions as reassuring as the old certainty that the world was flat” (Saul, 1992, p.17). Thus, by invoking concepts such as ‘War on Terrorism’ and Iran’s destructive nuclear ambitions, the politicians are able to “focus on the alleged weakness and pathology of the individuals, while diverting attention away from their pathological social and economic environments” (Edelman, 1977, p.27).

As it was discussed before, the cultural imperialism argument does not seem to actively acknowledge the important role of political power as a force behind the cultural imperialism since the power is never exerted only through military and technological control, but always through discursive control as well. The discourse analysis demonstrates that during the period under examination, both VOA and Jaam-e-Jam in their objectives, applications and approach have been similar, as both have used a positive approach towards U.S. foreign policies and have implicitly defended it. The above analysis shows that both stations have been located within the overall propaganda strategy during the studied period, which in turn, shows the relationship of both stations to the shaping, implementation, and projection of U.S. foreign policy. The analysis has tried to demonstrate the relationship between international politics and international media broadcasting. It demonstrates how U.S. foreign policy has been augmented by the use of satellite television broadcasting, which in turn has made invaluable contribution to its policy. Furthermore, they have also acted as an important channel of diplomacy, as the events of the Iranian nuclear crisis and student’s uprising confirm. These events were political events, motivated by political circumstances and shaped by politicians and statesmen who made their decisions independently of the media. These decisions were then reflected in the policies and output of the studied broadcasting stations. This was practiced by information and propaganda transmitted by the stations, which selected and manipulated the facts to be used. In this context, the direct result of the propaganda is cultural imperialism, which functions as a part of an ideological war. However, in order to gain an understanding of how the U.S.’s policies and its intentions have been received and interpreted in the target country, a focus group study has been conducted. The next chapter will comprehensively study the Iranian audience to understand the audience’s interaction

in a process in which the media messages are interpreted. The following chapter is the result of the focus group discussions.

Chapter Seven

Focus groups Investigation

7.1 Introduction

As it was mentioned in chapter one, the cultural imperialism theory does not acknowledge the concept of the active media audience and does not explain the resistance towards the media contents within dependent societies. In regards to media power, the cultural imperialism argument offers an almost omnipotent view of the media that cannot be thoroughly justified. What it offers in terms of the media's power to affect cultural change is a dominance and transmission-based model, which seems to fail to theorise the power of audiences to creatively subvert the power of global media. What makes sense in regard to certain aspects of the debate, such as the conglomeration of ownership, reutilised production, and formatted content, does not apply in terms of the audience and effects. Adopting such a dominant image of the media creates an environment of co-dependency (to borrow from the realm of popular psychology) that casts the audiences as the victims of an all-powerful media system and its messages. Even assuming the homogenisation of media messages due to concentrated ownership and Western bias, cultural imperialism denies the power of the audience to interpret the message and to read the possible encoded meaning. This chapter, by undertaking focus group investigations, examines the audience's interaction in a process in which the media messages are interpreted.

The last two chapters focused on the Jaam-e-Jam expatriate satellite television and the Voice of America and their relationship to propaganda, as well as the way this combination works as an instrument of cultural imperialism. Their examination of propaganda as a purposeful and ideological method of influence highlights the relationship between journalism and propaganda. In this way cultural imperialism can be considered the end result of propaganda. However, the ability of propaganda to actually change beliefs, attitudes and value systems is questionable since the

manipulation of opinions, attitudes and understanding is not easily quantified. What is certain is that to be effective, the targeted audience must first be vulnerable to a message – either positive about the source or negative about the target – such as, for example, by being politically alienated from a particular regime. This in turn motivates them to seek out foreign propaganda which reinforces their convictions. As it was discussed in chapter three, the regime's direct efforts to implement its ideological and political perception through media and television programmes, along with the strict control and censorship that apply to the news content, are among the main factors that have driven Iranian people towards obtaining foreign news and cultural products via satellite. This effort by the regime seems to work as an internal factor which has accelerated the process of cultural imperialism.

As mentioned before, the main purpose of propaganda is to change beliefs, attitudes and affect the value system of their audiences. The aim of this chapter is to examine how the content of broadcasts is interpreted by their target audience. The following section examines the theories of mass media effects in light of the active audience's perspective and analyses the contradictory dynamics of reconstruction, adoption and resistance of international media. This provides a basis for the focus groups that investigate the potential effects of satellite programming in Iran.

7.2 Cross-Cultural Media Impacts on Their Audiences

With the advance of communication technology, it seems that we have reached a different era in which all aspects and forms of the media, especially audio-visual media, perform a crucial role in giving a totally new dimension to the possibility for interchange of ideas and information between people. This, in turn, affects the socio-economic life, politics, cultures, national systems and international relationships that have emerged as a result of the communication revolution, which has been the dominant technological development of the second half of the 20th century.

The notion that the media representations shape the perception of the audience is fundamental to the work of many scholars who investigated how people from other societies in South America, Asia, and Africa are represented in the media of North America and Europe. Media representations are seen as a link in a circular chain.

They both reflect and reinforce existing patterns of power. Edward Said, in his book 'Orientalism', argues that Western scholars' understanding of the Middle East and India are constructed in ways that support the West's vision of itself and justify Western control of these areas (Said, 1978). Other scholars have expanded on Said's work by further investigating mass media portrayals of the Middle East, such as Nadel in 1997, and also by applying similar models to Western portrayals of the culture of Africa, South and Central America, and East Asia, which are presented in the works of Torgovnick in 1990, Shome 1996, and Heung 1997. Shohat and Stam for instance argue that:

"Western media tend to portray people of Africa, Asia, and Central America as childlike, instinctual, and close to nature. The suggestion of the irresponsibility of individuals from these regions can be seen to justify the West's attempts to exercise control over these areas of the world. Furthermore, these kinds of portrayals allow for the role of the White, male European or North American as conqueror or sense-maker. The heroic European or North American who saves or rules over peoples of other regions is common figure in films and adventure novels created in the West but set outside it" (Shohat and Stam, 1994, in Hall 2001).

Experimental researchers have found evidence that, at least in certain circumstances, media representations can shape international audiences' *perceptions of the societies* that the media come from. Most of these works deal with the impact of exported U.S. television programming promoting U.S. popular culture and foreign policy. Several studies have found that exposure to U.S. programmes is associated with developing a perception of the United States which is connected with the content of American programming. Some of the active audience theorists, such as Liebes and Ien Ang (1985), conducted research to evaluate the domestic audience's response to a popular television programme called "Dallas". Liebes studied four groups of Israeli viewers and found that people's interpretation of Dallas was in accordance to their own values and was also according to their specific background. Ien Ang also supported this finding through her study of the impact of Dallas on foreign viewers. She, like Liebes, by applying the active audience frame of analysis, tried to question the existence of cultural imperialism. However, Schiller (1989), in his book (Culture, Inc.) responds to these kinds of criticisms by arguing that:

"Assuredly, this was a finding most agreeable to the producers [of American media content] and one that sharply rebuffed the worriers who championed a new international information order. How heartening to the cultural message makers to learn that cultural imperialism does not exist! Each audience

receives and makes its own message...the transfer of cultural values is a complex matter. It is not a one-shot hypodermic inoculation of individual plots and character representations. It involves the much more difficult to measure acceptance of deep-structured meanings that may not even be explicitly stated. Can the transfer, for example, of acquisitive or consumerist perspectives be simply quantified?" (Schiller, 1989, p.149)

In this light it seems that the relationship between the media messages, its audiences and its meaning is complex and by no means can the media be assumed to be simply a vehicle for brainwashing audiences. In recent years, a great deal of interest has been noted in audience research for mass media. Much of this interest could be accounted for by the question of the role of the media in relation to certain behaviours. However, increasing interest has been shown in a more functional approach to the use of mass media. The primary objective of these investigations has been the consumption patterns of the audience members. For so-called "effects" research, the basic model consists of relatively passive viewers whose dispositions are either maintained, displaced, or heightened through interaction with the media, which often leads to the seemingly contradictory predictions concerning the effect of the media.

Early analyses of the media have placed great powers over their audiences to mould opinions, beliefs and attitudes as well as shaping their audience's behaviour. Media were assumed to be a 'needle' that 'injected' messages into their audiences, and influenced them directly. In this case, the opinions and attitudes of the message are supposed to work as a drug injected into a vein (Kraus and Davis, 1976, P.115). Berkowitz (1969) also claimed that the witnessing of behaviours enacted in the media serves as a cue for provoking similar types of behaviour (assuming a certain amount of prior arousal exists). While the basis for such effects studies are the contents of the media and the psychological state of the audience member, the conscious motivations of the consumer in actually turning to the particular content or medium are ignored. In addition to this, 'functions' research has a two-level approach: on the macro-level - the sociologically oriented study of the media's role in socio-cultural that it maintains; and on the micro-level - the 'uses and gratifications' tradition.

The type of functions research which focuses on the macro level of analysis, has taken many forms. The research on diffusion of innovation analyses the impact of the arrival of mass media in developing countries and its influence on modernisation in both social and technological terms (Rogers, 1969, Frey, 1973). Also, the studies of political socialisation, such as Adoni's study in 1976 of media use among Israeli

adolescents, and Katz's study in 1971 on the role of the media in political campaigns can be noted. In addition to the early formational empirical work, there are more theoretical studies of people such as those conducted by Wright (1960), and Merton (1957), which try to conceptualise the functions of mass communication media in society. The common point uniting these divergent approaches is the treatment of the media as social institutions exerting an influence on society as a whole or on sections of that society. In this type of research, the cultivation theory provides a framework to analyse the influence of the mass media. Cultivation research focuses on "television as a socialising agent". In this view, television influences the perception of images about the real world. As Gerbner (1990) pointed out, the relationship between images in the media, the amount of television exposure, and the viewer's beliefs in the reliability and reality of that message is the primary importance in the possible influence of the media. Zaharopoulos in 1997 studied the relationship between television viewing of U.S. programs and the perception that Greek high-school students' hold of U.S. cultural values. He found that those students who watch U.S. programmes more frequently tend to have more positive perceptions of the character of U.S. citizens.

Tan, Li and Simpson, in 1986, studied Taiwanese and Mexican students. Tan and Suarchavarat also studied Thai students in 1988. The results of these two investigations indicated that American television is the major source of social stereotypes about Americans. In 1980, Hawkins and Pingree reported that Australian children who were heavy viewers held television-like beliefs about the world. Moreover, in 1988, Kang and Morgan investigated the relationship between U.S. programmes and the attitudes of college students in Korea. Differences were found between males and females. Females who viewed U.S. television were associated with more liberal attitudes about general roles and family values. Among males, greater exposure to U.S. television was associated with hostility towards the U.S. and protectiveness of Korean culture. In addition to that, Morgan and Shanahan in 1991 studied the relationship between television and the development of political attitudes in Argentine adolescents. They found that heavy television viewers were more likely "to agree that people should obey authority, to approve of limits on freedom of speech, and to think that it is someone's own fault if he or she is poor" (Morgan and Shanahan, 1999, P.88).

Another type of media studies is the use and gratification research, which focuses on

active audience members whose media use is assumed to be purposeful and directed towards gratification. The uses and gratifications approach seeks to integrate media usage into a meaningful pattern consistent with a person's general lifestyle. Most of these works however, have focused on a single cultural orientation, usually concentrating on a limited number of either social, demographic, or psychological factors and attempting to measure their influence on media use and gratification, such as Rosengren's and Windahl's work in 1972. The analysis of the studies conducted by Elmasmar and Hunter in 1993 indicated that the effect of foreign television on domestic viewers was not strong. The research that employed the cultivation theory to study the influence of U.S. media on perceptions of foreign audiences reported differences between males and females, and heavy and light viewers. The studies indicated that heavy viewers tended to have more positive perceptions about Americans' wealth and living conditions and stressed that male audiences often had more negative perceptions than females.

As it was mentioned before, the relationship between the media messages, audiences, and meaning is complex and by no means can the media be assumed to be simply a vehicle for brainwashing the audiences. There has been some evidence indicating the possibility of resistance to media message by their audiences, which in turn indicates the power of the people to think and behave as active subjects rather than passive objects. For instance, Hunter, in his study of the Los Angeles riots, views the audience's opposition to the assumptions embedded in the news as: "either constituting meaningful acts of resistance in their own rights, or contributing to a consciousness necessary for meaningful social action at some later point in time" (Hunter, 1997, P.162). It seems that although recent audience research and debates focused on individuals as active subjects, this activity is conditional. Crotea and Hoynes (2000) point out that:

"Although audiences are active, their activity is still subjected to a variety of structural constraints. The media messages, themselves, matter because they make some interoperations more likely than others. The cultural tools that audiences bring to the interpretation of media are not uniform; different people from different social locations will not have the same resources at their command. By ordering the distribution of cultural tools, social structure serves as a constraint on the process of meaning making" (Crotea, Hoynes, 2000, P.293).

In this respect, some cultural imperialism critics such as John Tomlinson also criticise the cultural imperialism thesis for its inability to recognise the creative power of

audiences to resist the domination of global media. Tomlinson argues that the effects of media messages are mediated by other modes of cultural experience, by the people who use them, and by the purpose for which they are used (Tomlinson, 1991). The following study, by undertaking focus group investigations, examines the audience's interaction in a process in which the media messages are interpreted in the light of active audience's perspective. It attempts to study the potential effects of satellite programming in Iran. It tries to draw a picture of the current cultural situation in Iran, and the reasons for viewing satellite televisions by the people. It specifically tries to point out the cultural and social problems that competing ideology and politics of the state may pose for people, therefore creating more desire among them to watch material different from that on Iranian TV. It examines the effects of the studied satellite televisions and the impact of their propaganda on their Iranian audience.

7.3 Methodology Applied

For a single investigator, in a limited period of time, a practical method to obtain great deal of information is to use an interview where the individuals can be asked their opinions, questioned about their attitudes towards satellite channels and their evaluations and perceptions about the cultural impacts of satellite viewing. Within the research available for studying the mass media, a focus group discussion under qualitative research methods is one of the most effective ways to provide information about why people think or feel the way they do. It also allows for group interaction and provides great insights about opinions that are held within the society. For this investigation, non-directive interview with open-ended questions were used in order to allow individuals to respond without setting boundaries or providing clues for potential response categories. The focus group interview not only helps to produce qualitative data that provide insights into the attitudes of interviewees, but will also provide an environment in which disclosure is encouraged. Moreover, it can be suggested that focus group results are valid in terms of being used carefully for an issue, which is suitable for focus group inquiry. Also, as focus groups are similar to other social science measurement procedures, its validity therefore depends not only on the procedures used but also on context. Krueger, argued that:

"Validity is the degree to which the procedure really measures what is proposing to measure...The cynic can argue that nothing is valid.

Measurements or assessments of the human condition can be distorted intentionally or unintentionally. Typically, focus groups have high face validity, which is due in large part to the believability of comments from participants. People open up in focus groups and share insights that may not be available from individual interviews, questionnaires, or other data sources"(Krueger, 1994, PP.31-32).

In this study, which attempts to analyse the cross-cultural impacts of the communication technology and in this case, satellite viewing, using focus group discussion seems to be one of the most effective ways to provide some insights into attitudes of participants as it tries to examine the reality of life in Iran. It also allows the individuals to respond with their own words without setting boundaries.

Furthermore, a focus group interview gives the participants greater freedom to answer as they answer in a way that suits their interpretation. In this kind of analysis of people's perceptions and attitudes, which relies primarily on verbal responses to impute value orientations, individuals can articulate their meanings and represent their own behaviour. The assumption of underlying questions which allow the respondent to structure their answer is that respondents will interpret them in terms of their own values and reveal their own priorities. For example, when asked in the first wave of focus group interviews if they did like satellite programmes, some people were quick to reply that they were not after news and political programmes, and some other said that they only liked films and music shows, or that they were not the kind of people to watch unrestrained programmes. This suggests that they regarded satellite programmes not as a means of informative, educative or anyhow elevating, but for entertainment and a way to escape the reality of their lives. A simple 'yes' or 'no' to the question would not facilitate such insights. In this analysis, differences in communication and verbal responses may be of critical importance to the values that are implicit or explicit in relevancies that are being conveyed to the listener. Communication involves the representation of ideas in particular symbols-lexis and grammar, but it also represents a particular structuring of experience that is reflected in what is verbalised.

This study uses the encoding-decoding model to analyse the focus groups results which as a structured model does facilitate identification of different orientations towards the interpretation of responses and the audience's perception of the media messages.

7.4 Encoding-Decoding Model

This model, as a semiotic approach, has been used to understand the audience's response to media texts. David Morley studied audiences of an early evening news programme and argued in his paper (The Nationwide audience) that audiences actively decoded meanings from a media text. Morley is one of the first to empirically test Hall's model of the encoding-decoding theory. Stuart Hall's model of encoding-decoding suggests that meanings are encoded by the producer into the media text, and the audiences decode the meaning from the text. This theory acknowledges that there is a preferred meaning in the text, which is the meaning made by the producer. This meaning is encoded by the codes and conventions of the particular medium to hide the texts' own ideological construction. The audiences then read, listen or watch the media text and interpret the message. The audience's interpretation is dependent on a number of frameworks outside the text. These include socio-economic frameworks such as class, gender, age, education and ethnicity. They include the individual's past experiences and also include previous knowledge and experience of the medium.

The theory takes into account the individual members of the audience and realises that there is a preferred meaning in the text, but also places emphasis on the audience in the process of constructing a meaning. The theory acknowledges that the meaning made by the audience is affected by various other factors, including socio-economic framework and past experiences. In other words, the producer (encoder) frames or encodes the text in a certain way, while the readers decode it differently according to their own background, socio-cultural situation and frames of interpretation (McQuail, 1994). Hall (1980) argues that the meaning of the text is located somewhere between its producer and the reader. This meaning however, is neither a fixed concept nor a totally uncertain 'polysemy' (Fiske, 1987). According to this, the meaning exists in a certain position which is the balancing point in the process of the dynamics of encoder and decoder and is the result of tension between encoder's dominant intention and decoder's reading strategy.

Hall proposes three major reading strategies for the types of audience decoding; preferred reading, oppositional reading and negotiated reading. According to this, the audience member assumes the 'preferred or dominant' position when they recognise and agree with the full-preferred meaning offered by the media text. The oppositional

position is established when the audience member understands the preferred meaning, but disagrees with it due to their own set of attitudes and beliefs. The negotiated position is established when the audience member opposes or has to adapt the preferred meaning. The classification of focus groups' responses into the above categories is felt to facilitate reliable discrimination. The response is readily identifiable because it is limited to the characteristics contained within the definition. This study uses the encoding-decoding model to analyse the focus groups results. Moreover, because people do have an ideological belief system to draw upon, especially in discussing cultural products, therefore, for the purposes of this focus groups investigation, three basic categories of ideological patterns (secular, extremists and Islamic protestant) were created. This could facilitate identification of different orientations towards the interpretation of responses and perception of the media messages among Iranian audiences. These basic categories of value positions could typify Iranian audiences as created from ideas grounded in what people said in the focus groups. The following examines the existence of these ideological concepts that are crucial factors in the infrastructure of Iranian society.

Basically, analysing cultural products leads to the point of cultural relevance. The term culture brings forth many different interpretations and carries varying connotations. In analysing the socio-cultural influences of satellite television in Iran, the meaning of culture therefore needs to be addressed. According to Cai (1994), culture is "a group of inhabitations of a geographical region under a single government with a primary language". Da Silva defines culture as "...the set of values and beliefs through which members of a social formation explain their experience, express their artistic creativity, and motivate society as a whole to act" (da Silva, 1986, p.90). While the former places emphasis on the people who make up a culture, the latter focuses on the shared systems and actions of a group of people. Based on the above definitions, the operational definition of culture for this research is a group of inhabitants living in a geographic area under a single government with a primary language. The inhabitants possess shared systems which may be transmitted across generations by means of verbal and nonverbal communication. The members of a given culture are perceived by outsiders to maintain a common identity and/or solidarity upheld by these shared systems. The shared systems may include world views, processes of cognition, behavioural patterns, social structures, media influences and motivational resources (Cai, 1997).

Rosengren (1985) stipulated that the central focus of any culture is its values. Communication plays an essential role in how values are learned and shared within a culture. From interpersonal communication to mass media, the dissemination of information is vital in understanding the relationship between a culture and its society. The imposition of one culture's values system on another is a primary concern in the cross-cultural flow research. Smythe reported that cultivation is the purpose of a social system, while television's function is the propagation of perceptions of social reality. "...the TV 'world' reflects... [and] changes the 'real' world ... the cultural products of all kinds in the 'real' world are equally to be understood as propaganda for the social system which produces them" (Smythe, in Nordenstreng and Varis, 1973, p.50). The cultural imperialism theory postulates that cultural invasion leads to a change in the symbolic meanings of a society along three dimensions (Lee, 1980; Wells, 1972). The symbolic meanings are structures of "taste, values, and preferences, views about the society, human relations, and life" (Lee, 1980, p.104). Exposure to information about the 'outside world' via media vehicles, particularly television, creates rising aspirations. Consumers become frustrated when these expectations and aspirations are unmet. Imported television programming brings with it consumer products that (1) are economically unsuitable to developing countries; (2) damage various domestic industries; and (3) "create a 'conspicuous consumption' pattern" (Lee, 1980, p.104-105). In this respect Iran can be considered as a culture of conspicuous consumption and economic disparity. Almost all of the products advertised on satellite channels are imported from other countries to Iran. Under such terms, satellite television would most likely cause further disparity between different sections of society, especially between those who have and those who do not. Moreover, in a wider context of society, satellite broadcasting in Iran under socio-cultural terms, has brought serious cultural tensions and struggles which seem to be deeply ideological.

Basically, broadcasting involves the representation of cultural products. Cultural production also always involves values. And because it involves values it is bound to involve an 'ideological struggle' about what is right and what is wrong. To understand this 'ideological struggle' that broadcasting is caught up in, it seems necessary to identify and understand the values of its audiences. In other words, to understand those cultural tensions, it is necessary to examine how and where these tension points

come about. The theme of this investigation is been to provide an empirical analysis of such media effects on Iranian audiences.

The infrastructure of the society in Iran is complex; it can be divided along some different, overlapping lines. In today's infrastructure of the socio-cultural reality of Iran, the ideology is perhaps one of the most important dividing lines in the society. The focus group results indicate that respondents' opinions were divided on the issue raised in the interviews based on the individual's own values, and the individual's values appeared to link to their ideological background rather than their educational background or sex. To understand the 'cultural tensions' that satellite broadcasting has brought into Iranian society, it is necessary to examine the values of those that it speaks to. Where, in other words, are these values are rooted? To answer this question it was necessary to create a conceptual framework that could explain the roots of the values that this investigation appeared to detect. As a starting point, an examination of the dividing ideological patterns in the society in discussing the cultural issues that broadcasting presents seems necessary. In addressing the ideology, van Dijk defines it as "the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group, [allowing] group members to organise the multitude of social beliefs about what is the case, good or bad, right or wrong, for them, and to act accordingly" (van Dijk, 1998, p.8). In this respect, people do have an embracing ideological belief system to draw upon, especially in discussing cultural products.

In considering the latter, three basic categories of ideological patterns were identified. These basic categories of value positions could typify Iranian audiences in terms of ideas grounded in what people in the focus groups had to say. The three basic categories of value positions that were identified according to people's comments in focus group were; secularist, Islamic Protestants, and Islamic extremist. As many of the questions asked did directly utilise these concepts, therefore, those categories were used to organise some of the questions and to categorise people's responses. It was shown that in terms of people's perception and values, these three categories, although they are conceptual constructions, did have an empirical reality. It is because people operate within a set of values, which were encompassed by those ideologies. It should be noted that extremist, protestant and secular respondents might change positions depending on the issues being addressed. If these concepts are seen as a personality trait, one would not accept much movement on different issues. But because the above concepts refer more to sets of beliefs, therefore, there might be

movements in position when individuals confront cultural and moral issues in practice.

It must be stated that the existence of these ideological concepts are crucial factors in the infrastructure of Iranian society, and thus, they were not generated abstractly and then imposed on the subject material. The development of the concepts, extremist, protestant and secular, had grown out of genuine existences that was necessary to considered and encountered in the focus groups interviews. The three basic categories of value positions were held to be: secularist (with rather preferred reading strategy), Islamic Protestants (with negotiated decoding position), and Islamic extremist (with oppositional reading strategy). What follows here is an outline of the three basic ideological models which form the basic set of orientation to the politico-cultural questions in terms of their perception construed in terms of socio-political effects of cultural products. Outlining the contours of such models makes for analytical clarity and clearly maps onto the positions articulated in the focus group interviews.

The three main substantially different models could underline people's perceptions of the nature, role and effects of broadcasting media in Iran. Firstly, the secular model takes the primary function of broadcasting to ensure that peoples' basic needs, are narrowly construed, and that actual preferences are met regardless of the nature of the media products. This is because, in the secular model, the sole importance is to protect people's political freedom, which ensures that people are free to lead their lives as they so choose. In this model, Iran is considered to be from a medieval religious theocratic state, which in order to progress, needs to cut away from all religious boundaries. Hence, in here religious values are to be kept strictly separate from political values in terms of the state. In this concept media are there to provide news, information and entertainment that are shaped according to whatever they wish to watch regardless of the possible cultural and political impacts that they may have on their audiences. It is not the job of the state or any institution to determine what people should watch, nor should people's interests be shaped or guided. In this conception, the substantive religious, and socio-cultural commitments of the regulators should be kept distinct from, and not interfere with the (satellite) broadcasting programmes that are designed to meet viewers choices. Of course, in Iran there is a huge difference between the state's broadcasting service and satellite broadcasting where people have enormous choices. In such a model, broadcasting regulation, if required at all, can only be justified in order to protect or maximise

viewers' autonomy through ensuring the viewers' freedom of choice. Of course, a secular viewer is certainly opposed to and challenges the state's monopolies that tend to diminish the viewers' choice by banning the satellite programming available to people. This perception is not concerned with programme content except in a very thin, limited sense. For the secular, the right to privacy is fundamental, and therefore the state's control is considered as an intrusion into privacy, which clearly undermines their rights as citizens. Thus, where the state is failing to act just and fair manner and abuse their position for their own interests, for a secular then, foreign cultural invasion into their privacy through satellite programming is justified. Moreover, the secular can admit that although, Western cultural products, violence and pornographic programmes might be morally dubious, this is no reason to even regulate what people watch in the first place. For, according to them, and with regards to the lack of religious believes, they have the right to choose how to lead their lives, and this includes the right to be mistaken or immoral or adopt a pro-Western culture and its lifestyle. The recent history of Iran indicates that secularism was often not experienced as a liberating movement, but as an assault upon people's faith. Throughout history, modernisation and secularism coincided with a process that was copied from the West, bringing Westernisation and cultural imperialism with it as well. For example, Reza Shah (the father of late Shah of Iran), used to send soldiers into the street with bayonets to force women to take their veils off. It seems that the rise of extremist ideology in Iran was the direct result of such aggressive activities.

Conversely, although the extremist concept which is the ideology of the ruling class in Iran, agrees that the primary function of the media is to Islamise the country and move Iran back to its roots, traditions and culture, which is of course according to the ruling class interests, it is limited to their biased perception of Islam. And this comes with the ignorance of the pre-Islamic culture of Iran which is deeply rooted into the nationalist sentiments of Iranian. The purpose of the state, according to this model, is to protect and promote the conditions required to cultivate and promote the ruling class version of religious, political, and cultural values. Therefore, media broadcasting should ensure that broadcasting practices and programmes inform and educate people on the right kind of beliefs, and religious values that do not contradict their values. In this concept, the media have a duty to serve the people's preferences only where those preferences conform to or promote the ruling class position; otherwise, such broadcasting service should not be allowed. In this model, the total control and

monopoly of the media broadcasting are in the hands of the state to ensure that informative, educative, cultural, social and religious perceptions of people are guided and shaped by theocratic requirements. The extremists agree that intrusions into privacy are justified on the grounds that moral and social behaviour, if are unacceptable and against their own sets of religious principles, should be exposed. According to this model it is the state's job to regulate and control society to promote the social and religious virtues required to lead a pure life, and thus, nothing is as a matter of principle, outside the jurisdiction of the state.

To preclude certain kinds of programming on the grounds that they are obscene in some way is dependent upon a moral judgment, and thus on this view obscenity provides grounds for censorship. However, in Iran, the state not only banned the sexual content of programming and heavily modified many non-explicit programmes, but different socio-political and even Islamic views that contradict the state's views, are also subject to censorship and are heavily regulated or banned. For example, a speech by Aghajari that was in June 2002, where he attacked "traditional Islam" (the extremist view point that is held by the theocratic regime), cost him a death sentence. In this model, individuals are divided into two categories: they are either an insider or an outsider. This portrays the doctrine of the clerical regime; you are either with us or against us, there is no middle ground in this concept, and not much room for democracy.

According to the Protestant view, the media should put people in a situation whereby they can make informed choices about which political representatives they wish to elect, which social or foreign policies to support or protest at and what the current socio-economic trends are, which affect their lives (these standpoints clearly appeared in the decoding mode among negotiated reading sample). The protestant conception of the function of broadcasting is to provide people with the information required to function in society and to provide programmes which speak to people's interests. However, the moral and social commitments of the regulator are necessary in order to produce and broadcast the programmes that are designed to meet people's cultural and socio-political needs. But any regulation of this sort, in this view, inevitably gives rise to the question concerning whether values, tastes and conception are being imposed illegitimately upon others.

On such model, public broadcasting clearly has certain duties to serve and cater to the interests and preferences of the individuals and the public, and not of a certain group.

The broadcasting system should be properly construed as having a remit to broadcast to and for the public at large. Thus, the general public's needs and preferences should drive the programming schedules and content, not a particular group with particular interests. In this view, broadcasting media should not be under the control of the government or monopolies. The broadcasting system therefore, should work independently from the state and from any particular political or ideological group. In this view, broadcasting regulation should be concerned with programme content in terms of its indecency, offensiveness or immorality. In this view, although society is considered to be a base for the individuals within it to develop and flourish as social beings, it also acknowledges its individuals' right to privacy. Thus, it would not accept that intrusion into privacy is justified on the grounds of unacceptable moral or social behaviour unless, of course it jeopardises society as a whole or its national interests.

The Protestant perception (which is rooted in ideas of some of the Islamic intellectuals such as Ali Shariati) argues that in Islam there has never been a class of the clergy, and all these titles, which were created as recently as 50 to 60 years ago are imitated from the Christianity and church hierarchy. Therefore, all the divisions and the hierarchies they have created, such as Ayatollah and even the Vellayat-e-Faghih, are Catholic and not Islamic. According to this view, Islam should be rescued from the clergy. The extremist ideas imposed by the theocratic regime on Iranian society are based on the perception of clergies and not on Islam itself. The Protestant view points out that many perceptions and personal ideas were added to Islam by the clergy that were merely historical additions and not part of the religion itself. In this respect, the concept of clergy itself is a contemporary phenomenon and that Shiite Islam as it has been used by clergies misguided.

Shariati (1933-1977) is among the first to fight this attitude. He called for the separation of Islam (core Islam) from the clerical interpretation, something that he called traditional Islam. In this model, Shiite Islam can be a modern and democratic ideology. It is argued that current Shiite Islam is the creation of clergy and is comprised of cleric interpretation and is according to their thinking, which is inflexible and incompatible. Aghajari, one of the protestant activists, in his speech at Hamadan University that led to his arrest three years ago, pointed out that:

“The way in which the religious scholars of previous generations understood and interpreted Islam is not Islam. It was their interpretation of Islam; however

just as they had the right to interpret the Koran in their way, we have the same right. Their interpretation of Islam is not an article of faith for us" (Aghajari, 2002).

With this respect, Shariati argues that "the interpretation of Koran does not only belong to religious leaders, people can have their own interpretation of Koran, it is not a crime as the clergies claim it to be. In doing so, the clergies want to keep people in the dark so that they can gain total control and power of monopoly" (Aghajari, 2002). Shariati rejects the institution of Marja-e Taqlid in extremist religious ideology and argues that this brings eternal slavery since people are supposed to act like brainless followers who always must follow the master. In terms of human rights, this view agrees that all people have inalienable rights and are free to express their opinion. He contradictorily stated that women and men have equal rights in Islam, and Marja-e Taqlid's opinion on this matter or any other matters does not represent Islam. This view presents Islam a progressive ideology that respects the rights of all regardless; the religion, believes, race or gender, and perceives people to be free to be whatever they want to be. Shariati called for Islamic humanism and expressed the need for both religious culture and community culture to work alongside each other in the society.

The concepts of secular, Islamic Protestant and extremist are the three fundamentally different and conflicting perceived ideologies that shape and guide peoples' socio-cultural, political, and religious perceptions and values in Iran. The essential thrust of this chapter has been to draw out just what people's fundamental values are and to understand, in relation to those models, just where people tend to fall. Basically, social changes can be cast in many ways. The development of this Western secular culture consequent on catering to the entertainment needs of the Iranian audiences is something that is not been met by the indigenous media and its mass delivery of Western cultural products through satellite television. The existence of cultural differences in any society always offers the possibility of conflict.

What cannot be overlooked here is that while culture was seen to involve ideological and moral questions, the regulation of culture, as both a value in itself and as valuable in practice, became extremely problematic. The regulation of culture will undoubtedly become increasingly technically difficult with the development of advanced communication technologies, but this does not seem to be the central problem. The real problem in Iran seems to be the authority and the measurement under which regulation has taken place. The introduction of these new technologies has led to the increased availability of foreign shows to many Iranians. Several pertinent questions

arise regarding the impact of the trans-border flow of mostly American and Western programming on their Iranian audiences via satellite. Does access to satellite correlate with a preference for American and Western programming? Does this vary according to different programme content type? Does watching satellite television versus state television lead to more pro-American attitudes? Does it lead to different perceptions of reality? Essentially, what are the current preferences in Iranian audience viewership since the inception of satellite television?

This investigation attempts to answer these questions. The primary purpose of this investigation is to examine the potential impact of satellite television on the culture of Iran. It attempts to revise the cultural imperialism paradigm in the light of the active audience perspective. This investigation has employed textual analysis and in-depth interviews as the major research methods. In order to disclose the preferred meaning coded by the encoders (VOA and Jaam-e-Jam satellite channels), textual analysis of the two news orientated programmes was conducted. Previously the results of content and discourse analysis provided original data and revealed the encoded meaning and the agenda of both stations. The following is the results of focus groups interviews. In this case study, all the interviews took place in two cities of Iran, Tehran and Karaj, and lasted between two and two and half hours, facilitating insight into many facets of individual's attitudes.

7.5 The schedule of the focus groups investigation

The schedule consists of two parts and nine sections:

Part One

- General questions about the family
- The reason for obtaining satellite TV
- Assessing satellite programming
- State's policy and punishments regarding obtaining satellite
- Cultural and ideological patterns surrounding satellite programming
- Politics and democracy in Iran

Part Two

- Audience's response to studied satellite channels
- The main sources of news among the studied sample

7.6 The Sample

For the purpose of this research a focus group guide was conducted. Open-ended questions were given to the participants so they could provide their own answers to the questions. In asking open-ended questions, the interviewer may have been instructed to probe more information as needed. Data was collected in between the two hour to two hour and a half focus group session. The researcher began the focus group by addressing the purpose of this study, explaining the rights and obligations of participants, and then expressing appreciation towards participants.

The protection of the subjects' identities is the primary concern in the protection of participants in this research. Regarding the potential problem of confidentiality associated with focus group studies, and due to the nature of snowball sample (that one person refers to another, the group members may know each other), the researcher strongly assured the participants that the study is confidential and the information discussed in the focus group would not be revealed to anyone. The transcription of the data identified participants ominously and did not include any identifying information. Research results were reported in the aggregate, with care taken to ensure that no participant could be identified.

In constructing the sample, the researcher was interested in the elite city opinion, as this is an important group in generating social changes. Moreover, this is a key group of people that the government needs to control in order to maintain power. Results of the analysis of the focus group interviews with the above sample might not be generalised to the whole population. The sample is not a representation of the population, and cannot therefore be generalised to larger populations, but it is felt that small scale intensive studies of selected samples and the results of the analysis of the interviews that are undertaken from the sample provide data which affords sharp contrasts and which facilitates insight into qualitative differences, which might not be emerge from random samples. The study is not therefore, attempting to make ethnic generalisations, but to examine characteristics of the thoughts and attitudes in the sample group, which come from a developing country. Although some studies and surveys may have produced correlations of certain indices of the effects of the

international media on people's thoughts, perceptions and behaviour, it still may seem to be impossible to cover all the relevant variables by examining representative sequences of interaction between the medium of communication and people. However, through open questions it is hoped that the mixed and contradictory aspects of media influence on people in the context of cultural imperialism and its outcome in a complex situation will be explored.

This study is concerned with the perception and attitudes which emerge from focus group interviews. It arises directly from the mass media research programmes concerned with investigating the impacts of the emergence of new media technologies on public opinion. The findings from the focus groups are based on 20 group discussions, each of which lasted up to two hours and were carried out in two waves. The first set of 11 groups took place in January-February of 2004 and the second set of 9 groups was conducted in January 2005. In order to ensure the representativeness of the sample, a selection was adopted. The groups were chosen from different social backgrounds which cover the bulk of the population. However, the focus was put on the elite city opinion, as this is a key group of people that could generate social change which therefore the government has to control in order to maintain power. Also, a selection criteria within these groups were used to ensure a wide spread variety of ages and occupations. For the first wave of interviews, these criteria were also placed to ensure that there was a spread of families with children living with their parents at home, those without children living at home, and, of course, those who have never had children. The criteria also included people and families who had satellite television.

The first wave of focus groups consisted of 11 groups in all. The primary function was to explore why and how often people watch satellite television and to find out their preferences, and how they view the state's prohibition of satellite viewing. The second wave, which consisted of 9 groups, was used to explore people's opinion about the news contents in VOA and on the news and issues that were analysed in both the content and discourse analysis parts. Given that all data requires interpretation, it was decided that it would be very useful to present some of the news materials used in the content and discourse analysis to the second set of focus groups, not only to be used as points of discussion, but to see how the participants would respond to these news reports and how they would interpret the broadcasting stations that report them. The two recorded news materials from VOA, were shown to

all the groups in the second wave of interviews. The recorded materials were from the VOA main news bulletins on the 29th and 30th of June 2004. The first chosen news story was about the statements made by the grandson of Khomeinie, the late leader of Islamic Republic, in a telephone interview with VOA (which was discussed and analysed in previous chapter), and the second one was a televised-report about Iraq's situation after the U.S. invasion. The focus groups were held in Tehran and Karaj. In the group, both the researcher and participants had the opportunity to interact in the natural human setting that would allow them to express their living experiences that are related to the research's purpose.

For the sample recruitment (which is the process of gathering the group together in the same place at the same time), this study uses snowball technique. To apply this technique, as Lindlof states, is to find a contact who knows the target group. He or she might be willing to pass along the names of parishioners who would be willing to participate. Getting referrals from others, or through word of mouth, is a good means of gathering a sample. If one person is interested, she or he may be able to provide names of other potential participants. This type of recruiting is known as the snowball technique (Lindlof, 1995). For this investigation 'snowball' sample was applied for Iranian subject recruitment. The subjects were asked to have their friends and acquaintances that were appropriate for the study to call the researcher. When they called, the researcher explained the study to them, verified their age and gender, and invited them to the focus group. At the beginning of the focus group, the subjects were informed about the purpose of the research and their rights and obligations as subjects. Participants were informed orally that they may withdraw at any time during the interview. They were also told about the extent of their obligation, the purpose of the study, and its outcome. It was explained to them that their participation is confidential and that the researcher would not divulge any information from the focus group.

7.7 Analysis of the Data

This analysis is concerned with several kinds of data and procedures for coding each group. Data was collected from the total of 94 Iranian people that participated in 20 focus group interviews, which were hold in two waves.

The people from first stage, which consisted of 11 focus groups, were classified as urban nuclear families from Tehran and Karaj, from different age groups and holding different professions, from university lecturer to retired army officer.

Stage One

Town	Parent/s	Age Group	Children	Profession
Tehran	Couple	30-44	2 boys aged 8-14	Self-employed
Karaj	Couple	39-42	2 boys aged 8-16	Self-employed
Karaj	Couple	34-45	1 girl aged 12	Dentist
Tehran	Couple	30-35	No children	Both: computer engineer working in a private company
Karaj	Couple	36-42	1 girl and 1 boy aged 10-17	Man: Businessman Wife: Hairdresser
Karaj	Couple	47-54	3 girls and 2 boys aged 15-23	Clerk
Tehran	Couple	32-41	1 boy and 1 girl aged 3-12	Working in a private company
Tehran	Single parent	60	1 boy living with his father aged 15	Oxford educated doctor, manager in the ministry of agriculture

Karaj	Couple	50-62	2 girls and 1 boy aged 23-31	Retired army officer
Karaj	Couple	33-37	1 girls and 1 boys aged 2-15	Bank manager
Karaj	Couple	27-35	1 girl aged 10	Mechanic engineer working in a private company

The people from second stage, which consisted of 9 focus groups, were classified as urban professionals from Tehran and Karaj, from different age groups and holding different professions.

Stage 2

Town	Sex	Age Group	Occupation
Tehran	3 women and 4 men	22-49	Student, lab assistant, University lecturer,
Tehran	2 women and 3 men	21-53	Student, clerk, teacher, University lecturer
Karaj	2 women and 3 men	26-47	Housewife, engineer, doctor, self-employed
Tehran	6 women	25-44	Clerk, working in educational section
Karaj	2 women and 4 men	23-64	Student, housewife, self-employed
Tehran	3 women and 2 men	21-55	Student, teacher, lecturer
Tehran	1 women and 4 men	22-60	Student, expert, one with PhD in social sciences

Tehran	3 women and 4 men	23-52	Student, one with PhD in laboratory sciences, clerk
Tehran	2 women and 4 men	35-49	Teacher, student, housewife, businessmen,

Also the educational experiences of the sample ranged from school students to doctorate in different field of studies. All focus group interviews were tape-recorded and then transcribed as completely as possible. The researcher has carefully followed participants' responses in order to separate different themes in their answers. Themes were categorised based on the participants' responses. The researcher then coded all the issues that participants had addressed. The themes were then placed in categories of responses. This study uses the encoding-decoding model to analyse the focus groups results, which as a structured model, does facilitate identification of different orientations towards the interpretation of responses and the audience's perception of the media messages.

7.8 Hypothesis of the Investigation

As mentioned previously, this investigation attempts to study the potential effects of satellite programming in Iran under the revision of the active audience paradigm. Significant differences were identified between the parents (aged 35 and over) and their children (aged 13 to 23) throughout the period of study. Significant differences were found in their attitudes and behaviour. These differences were associated with the purposes for which the responses were given, and reflected differences in attitudes and perceptions that the younger sample attached to the various questions asked. As significant differences emerged from the responses of studied sample based on their attitude analyses, this investigation therefore, is more concerned with the analysis of aspects of the social environments and the role played by the studied satellite televisions and the kind of imperialistic influence for their Iranian audiences which produce these differences. It also analyses the significant differences in attitudes, perception and behaviour that these media have produced among their audiences.

It is hypothesised that in a country such as Iran, cultural imperialism as an expression of a secular ethics which contradicts one's religious norms and beliefs would cause a serious conflict within the society. The second hypothesis is based on the premise that the youth not only watch more television, but rely on the medium as their primary source for news and entertainment. It is hypothesised then that a generational gap is accruing in the society. The followings present the results of the analyses made from the data which emerged.

7.9 Focus Group Findings

The followings present the results of the analyses made from the emergent data, which are analysed according to the encoding-decoding model.

Initially, it might seem that little can be gained from categorising the responses of the sample when asked some general questions in the interviews. The question, 'What do you think about American society, and American popular culture?' was a general question open to wide interpretation. It is interesting to note how such an open question was interpreted, entailed different meanings and elicited different modes of reading. Although this analysis cannot register how the individuals think, it can categorise what is represented in the response, the content and format of the reply. Significant differences emerged from responses given to the above question among the sample. The most common responses given to the above question from people aged 13 to 22 were: 'It is OK. I like it.' On the other hand responses given to the same question from people of 23 and above were different as they were somehow more critical in their assessments.

The last comment was followed up by asking: 'What do think about U.S. foreign policy?' 9 out of 13 people in 13-22 aged group were agree with the policy. Again the responses given to the question by people aged 23 and over were significantly different and the immediate response given was: 'It is wrong.' The following section of the analysis sought initially to examine the differences that emerged between the responses of the 19 focus groups. It focused upon the following questions:

1. Do differences emerge in the range of aspects of the medium of communication and, if so, what significance could lie in sample's responses?

2. Do differences emerge in the way that participants organise their response and if so, can the differences be organised in a way such that how people responded to the question could be categorised according to their ideological background and the degree of media influences?

These questions, especially the first one, relate partly to the possible influence of mass media on their audiences and the role of audiences to participate actively in interpreting events. According to the data collected in the interviews, and based on the encoding-decoding model and according to the criteria set for focus group research (namely: people's acceptance or rejection of US popular culture, people's responses to US propaganda and foreign policy, and people's support or opposition to Iranian government), were categorised as followed:

- i. Preferred reading: where the decoder fully grasps on the core intention of the encoder and accepts the preferred meaning embedded in the message and interpret it within the frame of the dominant code. In this study, participants with explicitly positive and agreeable attitudes towards U.S. popular culture, lifestyle and foreign policy are categorised under this section.
- ii. Negotiated reading: where decoder accepts or agrees with some aspects of the dominant meaning, but rejects or alters others. In this study, all the participants who consciously rejected U.S. foreign policy but accepted its popular culture, lifestyle, or some other social aspects of its society such as democracy and social welfare are categorised here.
- iii. Oppoitional reading: where the decoder may read the encoded message subversively and reject the dominant meaning. Thus, those participants that rejected both U.S. popular culture and foreign policy and support the theocratic regime are classified here.

Moreover, because people do have an embracing ideological belief system to draw upon, especially in discussing cultural products, three basic categories of ideological patterns were therefore created. These basic categories of value positions that might typify the Iranian audiences from ideas grounded in what people in the focus groups said. Indeed, given the complexity of the whole issue of values and the addressing of attitudinal questions, not to have operated conceptually from the outset would have resulted in the collection of meaningless information. The three basic categories of

value positions were held to be: secularist (with rather preferred reading strategy), Islamic Protestants (with negotiated decoding position), and Islamic extremist (with oppositional reading strategy).

Table 3

The sample's General Position within Reading Strategy framework

Total Sample	Preferred reading	Negotiated reading	Oppositional Reading
94	9	79	6

Considerable variations and significant differences in answers occurred among the samples' responses which are as follows.

1. Both the preferred and oppositional readings are stratified.

7.10 Preferred Reading

In this category the decoder is capable of not only grasping the core intention of the encoder and preferred meaning embedded in the text correctly, but agrees with it. For example, a 20 year old woman after viewing news clips of VOA about Iraq, when asked to give her opinion about the news she said:

In Persian:

چیزی که 'وی او ای' می‌خواست بگوید این است که الآن عراق جای بهتری شده و مردم آزادی و دموکراسی دارند.

In English:

What the VOA wanted to say is that Iraq is a much better place now than it was before, now people have democracy and freedom.

She added then:

In Persian:

من اخبار کانالهای ماهواره را قبول دارم و فکر می‌کنم اینها نسبت به کانالهای دولتی بیشتر حقیقت را منعکس می‌کنند.

I accept the news that satellite channels broadcast and I think they are more likely to portray the truth than state media.

Another female participant in this group after watching the news said:

In Persian:

من فکر می‌کنم که 'وی‌ا‌ای' نسبت به کانالهای دیگر سعی می‌کند که بیطرف باشد یعنی مسائل را مطرح کند و قضاوت را به عهده مردم بگذارد. در این خبر 'وی‌ا‌ای' می‌خواهد که نشان دهد که الان در عراق مشکلی وجود ندارد و همه چیز در حال عادی شدن است و اینکه آمریکاییها دارند برای عراق کار می‌کنند.

In English:

I think VOA, in comparison to other stations, tries to be more impartial. It tells the news story and lets people judge for themselves. In this news story, VOA tries to show that there is no problem in Iraq and that everything is going normally there and to say that the Americans are working there and that the people have no problem.

These participants are typical decoders who carried out the preferred reading. They both caught the dominant intention and preferred meaning advocated by the decoder, and expressed it clearly and accurately. Furthermore, she agreed with this core point from a standpoint near to that of the encoder's. At the core level, the communication between encoder and decoder is accomplished by a genuine kind of "preferred reading". Furthermore, in this category and in the examination of the statements made by the participants to the focus groups, what can be seen is an appreciation of how the portrayed social world operates, and in terms of perception and behaviour, the media is seen as an important influence. Among the whole focus group sample, few people considered to hold preferred reading strategy. From the total of 94 people that participated in the 19 focus groups interviews, only 9 people (2 male and 7 female, aged between 15 to 22), fell into this category. However it is important to note that from the total of 13 people aged 13-22, nine people held the preferred reading position. The table below shows the number of people in each reading position, in the above age group.

Table 4

The total number of people aged 13-22 among the sample	Preferred reading	Negotiated reading	Oppositional reading
13	9	4	0

These results indicate the orientation of the teenagers and young adult to evaluate the U.S. cultural and political issues in rather positive terms.

The above people were asked 'What type of programmes would you watch most on satellite?' The reply from this group was: '*entertainment programmes, films and music*'. One girl said:

In Persian:

من موسیقی و فیلمهای آمریکایی نگاه می‌کنم .

In English:

I watch music and American films.

Another female participant replied:

In Persian:

من فقط کانالهای آمریکایی مخصوصاً 'ام تی وی' را نگاه می‌کنم این کانال موزیک خواننده های مورد علاقه من مثل 'مدونا'، 'جنیفر لویز' و 'بریتنی اسپیرز' را پخش می‌کند .

In English:

I only watch American channels, especially MTV. It broadcasts nice music from my favourite pop stars such as Madonna, Jennifer Lopez, and Britney Spears'.

It was picked up by her sister:

In Persian:

من تو 'ام تی وی' بیشتر 'ام این ام' را نگاه می‌کنم که خیلی دوستش دارم به غیر از آن من کانالهای آمریکایی و آن کانالهای فارسی زبان را نگاه می‌کنم .

In English:

'I watch Eminem on MTV, I like him a lot. I also watch American channels and those Iranian expatriate ones.

This tendency towards U.S. cultural products, especially towards films and pop music, appears to be a pervasive trait among young people that hold a more secular view of Iranian society, which has affected and transformed the social pattern, cultural and social identity of a particularly younger generation in Iran.

This group was asked: 'What do you think of U.S. foreign policy?' The general responses from this category were either: 'I have not thought about that.' Or 'I do not think that it is wrong.' For example, one of the male participants (aged 21) said:

In Persian:

به نظر من این دنیا مثل یک جنگل می‌ماند که آمریکا دارد نقش شیر این جنگل را بازی می‌کند چون قدرت دارد همه کار می‌کند و با قدرتش می‌خواهد کل دنیا را فتح کند و دنیا یک کشور بشود و آن هم آمریکا • به نظر من این غلط نیست و این خیلی فرق می‌کند با آن چیزهای ضد انسانی که به آمریکا می‌بندند •

In English:

In my opinion, the world is like a jungle and the U.S. is the lion of this jungle. Because it has the power, it wants to conquer the world and make the world one country, the United States. But that is not wrong, and this is different from all the anti-humanitarian acts that some people accuse the United States of engaging in.

Participants were asked 'What did they think of American society and its culture?'

When asked this question a 15 year old girl said:

In Persian:

من این را دوست دارم و این فرهنگ را قبول می‌کنم و رد نمی‌کنم و فکر می‌کنم ایرادی ندارد • می‌دانم یک سری از آنها با فرهنگ ما سازگاری ندارد ولی از همان اول قبول می‌کنم حتی اگر با فرهنگ ما اختلاف داشته باشد •

بر طبق آنچه که در ماهواره می‌بینم من فکر می‌کنم جامعه آمریکا خوب است و مرا جذب می‌کند من فرهنگ آمریکایی را می‌پسندم و آن را بر فرهنگ ایرانی ترجیح می‌دهم •

In English:

I like its culture and accept it. There is nothing wrong with it, and I don't reject it. I know that it contradicts our cultural values but I accept it anyway from the beginning. According to what I can see on satellite televisions, American society is very nice and it attracts me. I like its culture and prefer it to Iranian culture.

Another girl (aged 19) from a different focus group interview, when asked about American culture answered:

In Persian:

من آنچه را که دیده‌ام دوست دارم و فرهنگشان را قبول دارم و فکر می‌کنم در زندگی کمتر به خوشان سخت می‌گیرند و فکر می‌کنم که آنها موفق‌تر هستند •

In English:

I like what I've seen and I accept the culture. They take it easy in life and I think they are more successful.

This was picked up by her sister (aged 17):

In Persian:

من آن را دوست دارم و خیلی دلم می‌خواهد که آنجا بروم و زندگی کنم، من فکر می‌کنم همه جا خوب و بد دارد ولی به طور کلی من آنجا را خیلی بیشتر قبول دارم و دوست دارم.

In English:

I like it, and I'd love to go and live there.' She continued: 'I know that everywhere you go, you get good and bad but generally speaking, I highly approve of American society and like the culture.

The comments made by young males in this reading position were similar.

These comments were made by young male and female, aged 13-22, none of whom had ever been to United States or any other foreign country. The above group was asked 'How do you get their information about the raised issues?' The response from both male and female was: 'satellite television.' Therefore, the differences in evaluations, which emerged in the focus groups discussions, could perhaps partially be explained by the image and attitudes that the media mediates to society, since so much of the information that people have about the world is provided by the media. For example, one of the female participants (aged 18) in this group while speaking about American society said:

In Persian:

آن یک جامعه مرفه و پیشرفته است و مردمش مرفه و شاد هستند.

In English:

It is a prosperous society. People are wealthy and happy.

Then she emphasised that her perception about United States was based on the American films. She then added:

In Persian:

من خیلی دوستشان دارم و معمولاً خیلی تحت تأثیر اینها قرار می‌گیرم.

In English:

I love them and I am usually deeply touched by them.

As it is clear for a teenager who's never been abroad, the media can work as a window to the unknown world. They present people with a rather biased picture of the

world. It is interesting here that religion is rolled into a discussion of culture and society when religious ideology itself leads to certain cultural values. In this group, in which almost all the participants hold a secular ideology, religion is taken as a metaphor for social malaise. It has come to symbolically represent that which is seen as wrong in countries like Iran and as an obstacle preventing Iran from joining the modern world. And there was, according to these people, much to object to. For example, one of the female participants, aged 19, stated:

In Persian:

در جامعه ما خیلی چیزها به زور بوده و مسلمان بودن من دست خودم نبوده ، چون پدر و مادرم مسلمان بوده اند من هم مسلمانم .

In English:

In our society there are so many problems and there are many things that have been imposed upon us. Me being a Muslim has not been by choice, it is because of my parents, they were Muslim so it makes me Muslim too.

Some of them seemed to be very much influenced by the staggering 3 hour daily programme on Jaam-e-Jam International on promoting Christianity. When they were asked 'What they did think of that programme', a young girl aged 18, said:

In Persian:

بعد از دیدن برنامه های ماهواره مخصوصاً اروپا و آمریکا ، برای من خیلی از هم سنای من پیش آمده که اسلام را زیر سؤال ببریم . من فیلم ها و برنامه هایی را که درباره مسیحیت و مسیح در ماهواره می بینم کاملاً قبول دارم . من انجیل را خوانده ام و به مسیح اعتقاد دارم .

In English:

After watching satellite programmes, especially those from the United States and Europe, it has come to my attention to question Islam and to criticise it, and I know that it is not only me and that many other young people feel the same. I have watched the programmes about Christianity on satellite and I have no problem with that and I accept them completely. I also have read Bible as well, and I believe in Jesus.

To support the above girl's statement, another member added:

In Persian:

خیلی وقتها شده که بعد از دیدن برنامه های ماهواره من نسبت به اسلام انتقاد کرده باشم . من صحبت هایی را

که درباره ادیان دیگر مثل مسیحیت در کتب دینی و درسی خودمان شده قبول ندارم • من کتابهای آنها را خوانده ام و با مسیحیان هم صحبت کرده ام و میدانم که در اسلام چیزهایی که درباره مسیحیت میگویند درست نیست •

In English:

It has happened a lot that after watching satellite programmes, I have criticised Islam. I do not accept the comments about other religions such as Christianity that are stated in our religious book. I have read their books and have been talking about them and I know that what Islam says about Christianity is not correct.

Another female participant aged 17, said:

In Persian:

من چیزهایی را که درباره مسیحیت و مسیح در ماهواره می بینم کاملاً قبول دارم ، بدون هیچ مشکلی •

In English:

Without any doubt, I completely accept what they say about Christianity and Jesus on satellite television.

When asked how she did find out what Islam says about Christianity, she simply said: 'I have learned about it from satellite'. Almost all of the participants in this group mentioned 'satellite television' as the only or the main source of information for learning about the above issue. They particularly mentioned the Jaam-e-Jam channel and its 3 hours a day programme promoting Christianity as their main source. What happened here is an illustrative of how young people with little or no background knowledge of an issue, would establish facts from what they receive from the media. What is seen here is indeed a classic case of cultural imperialism where being imposed to such an aggressive cultural and ideological programme has led to changes in how they perceive Islam. In this group, the idea of secularism holds that the purpose of the state and regulation is to protect and promote the freedom required for people to lead their lives how they choose. Thus, religion and social values should not be the concerns of broadcasters, as people have the right to do what is immoral as long as they do not infringe upon the basic rights of others.

Following the comments already quoted, acceptance and approval of raised issues and very high evaluation that were made by this group, which was consisted of teenagers and young adults, seemed to stem from the images that are portrayed by satellite televisions. The above responses clearly show how these young people consider

satellite television as their main source of information. The information gained from the interviews of people from this category highlights that the media can and does shape people's views, and therefore influences behaviour, especially those involving subjects that viewers are unfamiliar with or know little about. The answers given by the sample of this category show the different images and views towards their evaluation of American society, its popular culture and its foreign policy from other participants in negotiated and oppositional readings. It is important to notice that none of the respondents in this group had been to the United States or any European countries, therefore, their views are mostly based on what is portrayed by their preferred media. The answers given by respondents from this category clearly reflect the acceptance towards encoders' dominant intention and shows how the media are used to act as an agency of social control in transmitting their views of the world. People, in this, seem to agree that the primary function of broadcasting is to ensure that people's basic need are narrowly construed and actual preferences are met regardless of the nature of the media products. This is because according to their secular belief, the sole importance is to protect people's political freedom which ensures that people are free to lead their lives as they choose. In this view, cutting away from all religious boundaries is of the utmost importance. Hence, in here, religious values are to be kept strictly separate from political values in terms of state. In this concept, media are there to provide news, information and entertainment that are shaped according to whatever they wish to watch regardless of the possible cultural and political impacts that they may have on their audiences. It is not the job of the state or any institution to determine what people should watch, nor should people's interests be shaped or guided. In this conception, the substantive religious, and socio-cultural commitments of the regulators should be kept distinct from, and not interfere with, the (satellite) broadcasting programmes that are designed to meet viewers choices. Of course, in Iran there is a huge difference between state's broadcasting service and satellite broadcasting where people have enormous choices. On such a model, broadcasting regulation, if required at all, can only be justified in order to protect or maximise viewers' autonomy through ensuring viewers' freedom of choice. Of course, a secular is certainly opposed to and challenges the state's monopolies that tend to diminish the viewer's choice by banning available satellite programming. This perception is not concerned with programme content except in a very thin, limited sense. For people in this category, the right to privacy is

fundamental, and therefore the state's control is considered as intrusion into privacy, which clearly undermines their right as citizens. Thus, where the state fails to act in a just and fair manner, and where abuse their position for their own interests, for a secular then, foreign cultural invasion of privacy through satellite programming is justified.

7.11 Negotiated Reading

In the model proposed by Hall, negotiated reading is among the three major strategies, where the decoders accept some aspects of the dominant meaning but reject and alter others. The data obtained from focus group interviews shows that from the total of the 94 people participated in the 19 focus group interviews, 79 people fell into this category. In this group, all the participants consciously rejected U.S. foreign policy but had a tendency to accept its popular culture, lifestyle, or some other social aspects of its society such as democracy and social welfare.

Reasons for Satellite Viewing and their Preferred Programmes

It was decided to begin the discussion by asking a general question to provide some grounds for the questions that followed. The participants were asked: 'Why did you decide to get satellite television?' The main and dominant response was '*To be entertained*': '*The state's TV is so boring, and the programmes are not satisfactory*'. So immediate was this response that the participants were questioned: 'What kinds of programmes do you watch most on satellite?' Back came the reply: '*Mostly films and music*'. A male Doctor also added:

In Persian:

برای استفاده از اخبار • متأسفانه اخبار داخلی عموماً خط داده شده است اینها اخبار راجهت می‌دهند و در نتیجه شما مشکل می‌توانید به اخبار صحیح پی ببرید •

In English:

For news and information, the state's news is biased and therefore, it is hard to find the truth.

This group gave the boring and biased nature of the state's TV programmes and news as a major reason for the huge rise in satellite viewing.

Commenting on this last statement, someone said:

In Persian:

در تلویزیون داخلی اگر تنوع باشد و برنامه های شاد باشد مردم دیگر سراغ ماهواره نمیروند. مردم آهنگ میخوانند، آواز میخوانند موزیک پاپ میخوانند. این موسیقی لس آنجلسی که پخش میشود یک کپی بیشتر نیست، فقط کپی می کنند از روی موسیقی غربی و همان خواننده ها مثل عارف و دیگران کپی می کنند و مردم هم چون چاره ندارند در بازار سیاه موسیقی آنها را می خرند. حالا چرا در ایران محیط را فراهم نمی کنند که این خواننده ها بخوانند و موسیقی رشد پیدا کند و بازار سیاه هم نباشد. مردم شاید زیاد هم دنبال سیاست نباشند فقط میخوانند یک فیلم ببینند و سرگرم شوند، این سیاست در خلال این چیزهای سرگرم کننده وارد میشود.

In English:

If the state's TV produces cheerful programmes with different varieties then people would not go for satellite. People want songs, people want music, and they want pop music. This Persian music that is produced and broadcasted from Los Angeles is nothing but an imitation of Western music. Singers like 'Aref' and others copy from Western music and because people have no other choices and they buy their music from black market. Why doesn't the state create a situation where Iranian music can develop where those singers are free to sing in Iran? When watching satellite, people may not be after politics. They only want to watch a film and be entertained, but the politics comes along with this entertainment, it comes within satellite programmes.

Another woman responded:

In Persian:

ایام عزاداری در ایران زیاد است و در آن روزها برنامه های عادی را هم قطع می کنند و همه شبکه ها فقط نوحه و سینه زنی پخش می کنند.

In English:

There are too many national religious mourning days in Iran and during those days the state TV has absolutely nothing on except wailing and lamentation throughout all its channels.

This was picked up by another member:

In Persian:

ما در جامعه وسایل تفریحی نداریم هر چند ماه یک بار شاید یک کنسرت باشد.

In English:

People do not have any entertainment to fill their time. Every other few months there might be a music concert and that's about it.

What people appeared to say in the above interviews is that if they were satisfied with the state-run television programmes and if their needs and wants were met, they would not turn to the black market to supply cultural products. Also, since they have paid for the satellite service then the onus is on them to decide the value of the content. And this decision ought not to involve the interests of others. Here, thus the existence of desire for cultural products is the determining factor in deciding this cultural exposure. Moreover, respondents put forward various reasons in arguing for how the state's prohibition of satellite has increased the desire among people to obtain a satellite dish and view the programmes.

Cultural and Ideological Values Portrayed by Satellite

The last comments were made by a woman aged 34, who had two children aged 9-14 living at home together with her husband. She was asked then: 'How long did they have satellite television?' She replied:

In Persian:

چند وقتی است که ماهواره داریم اما ما در حال حاضر ماهواره را تصمیم گرفتیم قطع کنیم.

In English:

We have had it for quite some time, but now we have decided to cut it off.

When asked 'Why', she said:

In Persian:

ما بخاطر مسائل اخلاقی کانالهای غربی تصمیم گرفتیم این را نداشته باشیم. پی.ام.سی، کانال موسیقی ایرانی هم یک ایرانی پخش میکنند و یک خارجی و آهنگهای خارجی صحنه های خیلی بدی دارند و ما این کانال را قفل کردیم، من دوتا پسر دارم و نمیخواهم بچه های من این چیزها را ببینند. این کانالهای ایرانی زبان هم که فقط میخوانند سیاستهای آمریکا را درست جلوه دهند و القاء کنند.

In English:

It is due to immoral nature of some of Western satellite channels that we have decided to cut it off. Even in PMC, Persian Music Channel, which broadcasts equal amounts of Iranian and Western music, there are a lot of erotic and immoral scenes, especially in their Western music. Therefore, we decided to block this channel. We have two

boys and we do not want them to be exposed to such immoral and impious programmes. Moreover, on the Persian language satellite channels, all they do is try to justify and inculcate U.S. foreign policy.

The above woman was saying that she was affronted by the rather sexual nature portrayed on screen in Western songs and objected to the contamination of a channel that she would watch by inclusion of such scenes. Her rights, therefore, were breached on two ways. She had a right not to have her values assaulted and she had a right to enjoy nice Persian music that she could enjoy. The infringements of rights as an assault on values as a focus of concern came particularly to the fore in the negotiated and oppositional discussion groups where people had either complained about the things that they had seen on satellite, or had felt so strongly about them that they cut off the satellite or blocked so many satellite channels.

Moreover, in the above statement, her reason for cutting off the satellite was particularly moral. What she is at pains to illustrate, however, is that the individual is not a prisoner of circumstances, that the individual has free will and can choose for her or himself how to actively response. In short, this asserts that the individual is a moral being and she/he can act based on her or his ideological and political believes. It will be seen later, however, that people consider an individual's moral, cultural and ideological structure and attitudes to be very important in accounting for anti-cultural and unsociable acts, and hold the media accountable for distributing and encouraging dispositions favourable to such behaviours. She finished by saying that all the Persian language satellite channels had an agenda designed to promote the acceptability of U.S. foreign policy. She was not alone in her position and other people also supported her in her position that there is an agenda in those expatriate satellite channels which is being pushed.

The idea of an agenda 'being pushed' is one way of viewing the inclusion of views and lifestyle that are not considered indigenous and can produce drama through moral contention. Another is to view the inclusion of such material as the loosening of the ideological, cultural and moral authority structure of social life, where one culture and lifestyle has a claim to superiority such that the representation of Western culture and lifestyle and Western behaviours is not only possible, but enforced too. This would especially apply to expatriate satellite programmes claiming to be Iranian, but are in essence promoting American culture and lifestyle. The re-structuring of Iranian

television with the rise of Iranian expatriate satellite televisions supporting U.S. foreign policy and its popular culture have encouraged the pushing forward of the boundaries of what is considered acceptable.

A 29 year old engineer, in his comments about Iranian expatriate televisions added:

In Persian:

اصلاً این کانالهای ایرانی زبان هیچی ندارند هر فیلم یا سریالی هم که پخش میکنند مربوط به زمان قبل از انقلاب است و خود کانالها هم یک سری خط و مشی سیاسی دارند که چون برای مامهم نبوده پای این کانالها ننشسته ایم ما فقط موسیقی را تماشا کرده ایم که این تنها چیز جدیدی است که دارند که این هم موسیقی ایرانی نیست یک سری از این موسیقیها هجویات هستند و یک سری موسیقی پاپ و سرگرم کننده است که در میان جوانها خیلی طرفدار دارد.

In English:

Those channels have nothing, all the films and serials that they broadcast belong to pre-revolution era, and they all have an underlying political agenda in which we are not interested. We only watch music on these channels, which is only produced on these channels. However, I could not even call them Iranian music. Some of them are only good for nothing. There is also that entertaining pop music that is popular among young people.

His wife continued:

In Persian:

در میان موسیقی ایرانی لس آنجلسی هم افراد با ارزشی مثل سیاوش قمشی هستند که من خیلی میپسندم.

In English:

'Among the expatriate Iranian music, there are a few talented artists such as Siavash Ghomeshi that make valuable music. I really like his music'.

Another woman regarding the Iranian expatriate satellite channels added:

In Persian:

من به برنامه های سیاسی آنها علاقه ندارم آنها یا طرفدار آمریکا و یا سلطنت طلب هستند ولی من به بحثهای پزشکی یا برنامه های 'مد بیشن' علاقه دارم.

In English:

I don't like their political programmes, they are either Monarchist or pro-United States. I like their medical discussions or mediation programmes.

A man added:

In Persian:

به نظر من این برمی‌گردد که چطور از این استفاده شود اگر استفاده صحیح از آن بشود، بسیار خوب است برای کسب اطلاعات و دانستن موضوعات روز و هرکس با هر سلیقه ایی می‌تواند از آن استفاده کند. البته بعضی کانالها مسئله دار هستند و این کانالها حتی روی فرهنگ خانواده های اروپایی تأثیر منفی می‌گذارد، اما دولت نباید آن را قذغن کند. اگر صحبت از آزادی است، مردم باید آزاد باشند که هر کدام را که خواستند انتخاب کنند.

In English:

I think it all goes down to how we use it. Satellite can be very good in obtaining the up-to-date information and can be beneficial for everybody in whatever taste they may have. However, I should stress that there are some problematic channels which can have negative effects even on Western families. But, that does not give the state permission to ban satellite. If we are talking about democracy people should be free, they should have choice.

The above comments were followed up by asking about the cultural and ideological values that they thought satellite programmes portray. A female engineer aged 26 said:

In Persian:

بین فرهنگ ما و برنامه های ماهواره تناقض وجود دارد و ما این تناقض را می‌بینیم و با آن مشکل داریم اما تا یک حدی این آزادی خوب است ولی بعضی چیزهای آن زننده است، مثلاً بعضی فیلم های ایرانی را که بعضی از این شبکه ها می‌گذارند، من می‌بینم که این فیلمها اصلاً حرفی برای گفتن ندارند و می‌بینم که نقش زن در اینها چقدر پایین است.

In English:

They are inconsistent with Iranian cultural values. There is a direct contradiction between our culture and satellite programmes. We see this contradiction and we have a problem with that, but still I think that some degree of freedom is good. For example, when I see the old Persian films on Iranian satellite channels, I can see that women's roles are so low in these films, they don't have anything to say.

One of the other male participants in this group who had two children said:

In Persian:

ما اگر برنامه ای باشد که از نظر اخلاقی نادرست باشد یا لباس آنها نامناسب باشد ما فوراً کانال را عوض

می‌کنیم یا تلویزیون را خاموش می‌کنیم بدلیل اینکه من عقیده دارم که بچه ها در این سن وسال فرم می‌گیرند و تأثیر می‌گیرند از محیط و از چیزهایی که می‌بینند. من بعضی خانواده ها را می‌شناسم که پدر و مادر موقع بیرون رفتن کنترل ماهواره را به با خودشان می‌برند و بچه ها را با کنترل ماهواره تنها نمی‌گذارند.

In English:

We change the channel at once or turn the TV off if the programme is not culturally or morally suited or contains scenes of nudity. It is because I believe that children are so impressionable and are influenced by their environment and by what they watch. I know some parents who take the satellite remote control with them when they go out. They do not leave their children home alone with the satellite remote.

The above statements indicate the indication of how the social world operates, and in terms of cultural and ideological deviation and immoral behaviour, the media is seen as major influence. These responses are not alone in their view, as the focus group sample clearly shows many people considered the influence of television as a major cause of the current social crises. This is because, in examining daily existence, people are experiencing how the satellite channels are responsible for what which they witness in terms of culturally immoral behaviour. However, with some exception, they cannot imagine themselves influenced in such a way, but they can see other people, especially children and youngsters, being influenced. The importance of this is that if people do establish a link between the media and behaviour then this necessarily structures their attitudes towards regulation. In this respect, a woman, aged under 50, who had four children aged 17-24 living at home, said:

In Persian:

کانالهایی هست که مضرند و بچه ها را از راه بدر می‌کنند و باعث مشکلات می‌شوند و باعث اختلاف عقیده بین والدین و بچه ها می‌شوند من آن چیزها را نگاه نمی‌کنم و برنامه هایی که بخواد برای خانواده مضر باشد ما نگاه نمی‌کنیم و حذف می‌کنیم و حتی نمی‌گذارم که بچه هایم ببینند و به خاطر همین کنترل است که فکر می‌کنم تا حالا موفق بوده ام.

In English:

There are some programmes that are harmful. They cause so many problems such as behaviour deviation among youngsters and discrepancy between parents and their children. I do not watch such programmes and I do not let my children to watch them either. I actively control what can be seen on satellite and because of this control, I think I have been successful.

The above statement shows concerns about the media, but what is interesting is that in a society like Iran, people do not focus on one of the most traditional of concerns: violence in the media promoting real life violence. It seems that here the protection of children could be used as a cover for what was really in their thoughts, the protection of their own cultural and religious values. What is seen, in effect, is a much wider concern for the infringement of people's values. That is, the showing of material that goes against the values of people and their sense of decency.

Following the above comments quoting that the media was responsible for some of the social crises, the whole group was asked: 'But do you think there is anything else behind it?' the responses given were further from the imitative effects model of television: '*The way that they were brought up as well*', a participant said. Here then is the recognition of the power of the real world to shape who and what we are. Personal influences were seen just as strong as mediated influences in determining behaviour.

However, another man commented:

In Persian:

من می‌بینم که حتی بچه های علما و افراد صاحب نام مذهبی و دولتی هم که با ماهواره در ارتباط بوده اند نظراتشان و عقایدشان به عقاید غربی نزدیکتر شده و با خانواده و پدر و مادرشان بسیار تفاوت دارد و این نشانه تأثیری است که این رسانه روی نسل جوان گذاشته که این باعث 'کانفلیکت' شده در سطح خانواده ها و در سطح جامعه.

In English:

I see that even the children of those religious authorities who had been in contact with satellite, somehow their attitudes and perceptions became closer to Western beliefs and very different to that of their families and parents, which has caused conflict among the families and within society. This shows the effect of satellite on the younger generation.

This was picked up by another member, a 55 year old engineer man:

In Persian:

من با صحبت های آقای دکتر موافقم و این مسئله پذیرش و تأثیر ماهواره روی طبقات مختلف اجتماعی چه از نظر سن و سال و چه از نظر فرهنگی مشهود است در افراد با سن و سال بالا و آنهایی که از نظر اعتقادی مذهبی یا ملی هستند اینها معمولاً انتقاد می‌کنند و پذیرش کمتر است ولی در مورد جوانها همانطور که آقای دکتر فرمودند در آنها خیلی تأثیر گذاشته است.

In English:

I totally agree with Dr ... and this acceptance of satellite and the effects that satellite have had on people from different social classes and different age and cultural backgrounds are a real problem. People over 40 and those with religious or nationalist backgrounds are those who often criticise satellite rather than accept it, but in case of younger generation as Dr ... stated earlier, satellite has been very influential.

The above statements show how in Iran, the explosion of available satellite channels and the arrival of new delivery systems and the exposure of youth and children to these mostly American cultural products, has brought conflict to Iranian society and has created a gap between generations.

Another man added:

In Persian:

من فکر می‌کنم الان تفاوت فکری جوانان ایرانی با غربی خیلی کمتر شده در سابق اینطور نبود.

In English:

Now I think the attitudinal differences between young Iranian and Western values and perception have been eroded. But, it was not like that in the past.

He continued:

In Persian:

من نمی‌گویم همه مشکلات ما بخاطر ماهواره است، بلکه بسیاری از معضلات ما تبلیغات ماهواره نیست بلکه بسیاری از معضلات ما تبلیغات ماهواره نیست و حاصل خود جامعه ماست ولی بعضی هم از ماهواره تأثیر گرفته اند مثلاً من دوروبر ونک بیست سال است زندگی می‌کنم من الان وقتی می‌خواهم از خیابان ونک به خانه بروم خجالت می‌کشم، این لباسهایی که این جوانها می‌پوشند انسان حتی خجالت می‌کشد به اینها نگاه کند، آدم سرش را می‌اندازد پایین.

In English:

I am not saying that all the problems we have come down to satellite, some of them are the production of our society, but many of them are the direct effect of satellite viewing. For example, I have been living in 'Vanak' for 20 years, but nowadays when I drive down the streets of 'Vanak' to go home and I see these young people dressed in obscene clothes, I feel so ashamed to even look at them. I put my head down.

There is little point documenting similar comments made in the interviews. The main point to extract is that whether or not one has had experience of these crises first hand, or has been witnessing them in the society, the satellite was held as being primarily responsible for these problems. The question about satellite effects was asked in other focus groups. A man, aged 37, said:

In Persian:

این بی‌بند باریه‌ایی که بعضی کانالهای ماهواره تبلیغ می‌کنند باعث دوگانگی می‌شود و فرهنگ و مذهب ما را تخطئه می‌کند البته در ماهواره انواع کانالها است و هرکس هرچه دوست دارد می‌تواند تماشا کند از راز بقا گرفته تا مسائل علمی و پزشکی. خود ما ۷۵۶ کانال داشتیم که من حدود ۳۲۰ تا از آنها را پاک کرده‌ام یعنی اینها واقعاً مخالف فرهنگ ما بودند و الآن من مشکل ندارم و دیگر دلوایس این نیستم که اگر کنترل تلویزیون دست بچه‌ها بیفتد ممکن است چیز ناجور ببینند.

In English:

The unrestrained programmes and sexual content of some of the satellite channels contradict our culture and condemn our religion. They have caused a division of culture among people. However, there are channels that you can choose from, from nature shows to scientific and medical programmes. We had access to around 756 satellite channels but we blocked 320 of them. They were completely against our culture and values. Now, I am not so much worried about my children if they happen to get hold of TV remote.

A well educated man from another focus group said:

In Persian:

الان نگاه کنید هیچ دختری، هیچ پسری شنوایی از پدر و مادر ندارد، یعنی اعتقاد و ایمان به چیزی ندارد.

In English:

At the moment you can see that young girls and boys do not listen to their parents, they have no faith nor believe in anything.

These people view satellite television as a medium that can influence peoples' lives. Yet this man and other people in the following discussion did consider that the portrayal of Western culture and values on satellite was responsible for the cultural crisis in society and the gap between parents and their children. This has led to the next question on '*How influential do you think satellite is?*'

Cultural and Social Effects of Satellite Viewing

The above statements showed that, although people were affronted and against some of the satellite programme contents, they could not bring themselves to approve of an out-right ban on satellite viewing because, and this came out at several points in the course of focus group discussions, they saw themselves as democratic and in their democratic point of view, people should have freedom of choice.

The interview was followed up by asking, 'How influential do you think satellite is?' The most dominant response was 'Very influential'.

A man said:

In Persian:

در خانواده هایی با زمینه فرهنگی ضعیف ما این تأثیر را سرعت می بینیم، در لباس پوشید نشان یا مثلاً قبلاً آرایش نمی کردند و الآن آرایش می کنند در ضمن اینها هم اطلاعات کافی ندارند و هم از نظر تکنیکی نمی دانند که چگونه بعضی کانالها را پاک کنند و نگذارند که بچه هایشان به آنها دسترسی داشته باشند. اینها مثلاً در فلان کانال مد اگر می بینند که آن خانم آمد با آن لباس و مد آرایش، اینها دقیقاً همان را در کوچه و خیابان می پوشند. ما یک همسایه داشتیم و من هر وقت که دختر ایشان را می دیدم می دانستم که ایشان در شب قبل فلان شبکه را دیده که دقیقاً به شکل مجریان آن برنامه لباس پوشیده و آرایش کرده و اینها به قدری مشکل ساز شده بودند با رفتارهای نابهنجارشان که وقتی رفتند از اینجا ماهمه راحت شدیم.

In English:

Satellite is very influential, especially among uneducated and poor families. They have neither the technical ability to block or delete those unsuitable channels so that their children do not have access to them, nor do they have the insight to recognise the negative effects it may have on their families. You can see its effects on their choices of clothing or in case of women, in their change of appearance and use of make up. They do exactly what they see on satellite. For example, if in a programme they see a certain woman putting on certain clothes and make up, then the next day they put on the same clothes and make up and go out in the street. We had a neighbour once, and every morning, just by looking at their daughter and from her choice of clothes and make up, we could tell which satellite channels she had been watching the night before. That family became very problematic especially with their anti-social behaviour, and when they moved out it was such a relief for everyone.

He was asked 'What is the link between poverty and satellite?' to which he replied:
It is the cheapest means of entertainment.

The above statement also shows the recognition of the power of education and knowledge as a strong element against this cultural trend. What is seen here is an appreciation of the structure of people's lives that promotes certain behaviours. The high level of effect of Western cultural products in Iran was partly attributed to, as the above man said, to 'social deprivation'. Thus, if social deprivation was playing as important a role in how people react to these cultural products as one would expect, a greater level of effects would surface wherever social deprivation occurred, for example, in the south. This appears to be a classic use of correlation as causation. In fact, these respondents did not use correlation to establish causation. What they demonstrated was a rather sophisticated understanding of causation. The constant occurrence of three variables offered the starting point for examining why those variables should always appear together, and then used theory to establish causation, in this case, what being uneducated and less privileged meant in terms of access to entertainment materials and cultural products. The above man was comparing the degree of influence of satellite on families with different levels of education and social class. Then, because satellite influence was uneven between families with a reasonably high level of education and wealth and those without, he ruled out the satellite as independent variable. Of course, his reasoning was never expressed in such a way, but the conclusion he reached by this intellectual process was that one had to look further to find all the determining variables in the process of cultural effect. The cultural effects of satellite, for him, must take into account the type of person who consumes these cultural products.

Following the discussion about satellite's influence another man said:

In Persian:

ماهواره از لحاظ فرهنگی صد درصد تاثیر گذاشته حتی بیشتر از آنچه که خود برنامه سازان و متولیان ماهواره فکرمی کرده اند تاثیر گذاشته و الآن طوری شده که حکومت را به زانو درآورده ، این تاثیر همان تهاجم فرهنگی است . من نمی گویم که این حکومت حکومت خوبی است اما این تهاجم فرهنگی ریشه های فرهنگی مان را نابود می کند .

In English:

The cultural effect of satellite viewing on society has been even much greater than what the satellite programme makers might have thought. It has got to a stage that has almost brought the government to its knees. And that is cultural invasion. I am not saying that the government is a good government, as I for one, am opposed to it, but

this cultural invasion is destroying our cultural roots and our identity.

A young man said:

In Persian:

این تهاجم فرهنگی روی عقاید و رفتار افراد تأثیرات مختلفی گذاشته مثلاً خانم من قبلاً چادر سرمی‌کرده ولی الآن مانتو می‌پوشد و شاید بچه‌های ماحتی‌به همین هماعتقاد نداشته باشند. در کشورهای جهان سوم این خطر حمله فرهنگی و این امپریالیست فرهنگی را می‌بینند ولی نمی‌توانند درمقابل آن مقاومت کنند.

In English:

This process of cultural invasion has changed people's attitudes and behaviour on so many different levels. For example, my wife used to wear the "Chador" but now she wears the scarf and who knows, one day our children might not even believe in the "Hijab" at all. In third world countries people can see the threat of this cultural invasion but are unable to stand against it.

A woman aged 28, from another focus group said:

In Persian:

بله روی من تأثیر گذاشته، روی مد لباس، مو و مخصوصاً تو آرایش.

In English:

Well, viewing satellite has had an impact on me. For example, in the way I dress or the way I do my hair, especially in the way I do my make up.

'On your make up style too', her husband added.

Immediately following this comment the husband said:

In Persian:

البته چون و چرا ندارد که دیدن این برنامه‌های ماهواره تأثیر خواهد گذاشت مخصوصاً در دراز مدت. هر چقدر هم که مقاومت کنید باز هم تأثیر گذار است. الآن ماها نوع زندگیمان از نظر فرهنگی و عقیدتی با نسل گذشته فرق کرده و این روند ادامه دارد و تانسلی بچه‌های ما بیشتر و بیشتر می‌شود.

In English:

Watching satellite without any doubt has a huge effect, especially in the long run. No matter how resistant you might be at first, in the end it affects you, one way or another. We have become very different compared to our parents in terms of cultural and ideological beliefs and this gap I think will be much greater between us and our children.

His wife then added:

In Persian:

برای کسانی به سن و سال ماتااثر ماهواره خیلی کمتر از بچه ها و نوجوانان است و این تأثیر در آنها خیلی بیشتر است.

In English:

It is because these effects are much greater on children and youngsters than people in our age group and above.

As one the men aged 54 said:

In Persian:

در ماهواره مخصوصاً جوانها بیشتر به برنامه های نمایشی آن توجه می کنند و بخاطر مسئله زبان، نمی توانند درک مطاب کنند و این بد هم هست چرا چون فکر می کنند دنیا همین کاباره و رقص و آواز است.

In English:

People, especially youngsters, usually watch shows and entertainment programmes, and also because of the language, most of them do not have a correct understanding of them. This is bad because now they think that the world is a night club; it is only the singing and dancing.

A woman who had two teenagers from another focus group said:

In Persian:

بعد آمدن ماهواره الآن طوری شده که جوانها فکر می کنند خارج از اینجا حالا چه خبر است یا چیزهایی را که می پوشند فکر می کنند باید همین طوری جلف بپوشند در صورتیکه وقتی می روی آنجا می بینی که آنها اصلاً اینطوری نیستند. این جوانها با درست کردن و آرایش بیش از حد سر و صورت خود می خواهند خودشان را نشان دهند ولی چقدر خوب است که ما بتوانیم مد لباس و آرایش را مطابق با فرهنگ خودمان داشته باشیم تا جوانهای ما این چیزهای این چیزهای افراطی را از خارج نگیرند یا از ماهواره نگیرند.

In English:

Watching satellite has created a situation where our younger generation thinks the West is like a 'Utopia'. With the things they wear our younger generation thinks that they should wear such undignified clothes. And when you go to the West, you see that even they would not dress in such way. Our younger generation with extreme make up and hair-do try to show off, but if we could give them indigenous fashion, something according to our culture, they would not have to go after such extreme things from satellite.

What her statement captures is that satellite programmes, because of their moral base, tend to engage viewers in debates about contemporary culture and act as a commentary on social relations. It is felt to be a general concern among some of the participants in all focus groups that what is seen on satellite might be taken as real life by those who view it, especially the younger generation. The point to express here is that in examining the woman's quote, one should notice the use of the word, "should"- 'should wear such undignified clothes' because they saw it on satellite. And as she also said, 'would not have to go after such extreme things from satellite'. What she is actually saying here is that cultural projections tell people not only about the world, but inform them as to how they 'should' live their lives. In other words, this Western cultural projection through satellite has changed their attitudes and therefore their behaviour. This seems to be a clear manifestation of cultural imperialism, which as the above woman pointed out, can be traced in the choices of clothes, make up and hair-do among the younger generation.

Another woman who had children also added:

In Persian:

الآن جوانهای مادرند از ماهواره تقلید میکنند این لباسهای غربی که این دختران خیابانی میپوشند دارند تقلید میکنند. من خودم بچه دارم و اگر برنامه ای باشد که از نظر اخلاقی نادرست باشد یا مجری لباس نامناسب پوشیده باشد، ما فوراً کانال را عوض میکنیم و یا خاموش میکنیم بدلیل اینکه من عقیده دارم که بچه هادر این سن و سال فرم میگیرند و تاثیر میگیرند از محیط و از چیزهایی که میبینند. اما به طور کلی جوانها خیلی سرکش شده اند و من برای آنها نگرانم.

In English:

What our young people do is imitate from satellite programmes. The kind of Western clothes that these "street girls" wear and everything else is copied from satellite. I have children of my own and if there is a programme that is not morally suitable or where the actors or presenters are not dressed properly I change the channel immediately because I believe in this age children are very much influenced by television and the environment. But generally speaking, our younger generation has become unruly and I am worried about them.

What was obvious in course of the focus group discussions is that adults were aware that exposure to satellite cultural products has led to a huge difference in values between generations. What the above exchange between the participants show is that their ideological, national cultural and moral values were no longer held dominant in

today's society. The new and powerful definers of culture and morality as shaped by satellite programmes distribute contradictory values to their lifestyle and ideological or national cultural beliefs.

The more examination that was done on what people were saying about social conduct, the more became apparent that major emphasis was put on an individual's performance as learnt behaviour, and that this behaviour was mainly learned from satellite television. The term 'learned behaviour' is used here to include learning how to behave by examples set by media and learning of cultural and moral codes that are brought into it, which has been in conflict with the sets of ideological and cultural values that structure judgments about behaviour in a society like Iran. Whether it is the unrestrained sexual behaviour or the inclusion of Western cultural and ideological values, such programmes have opened a door for cultural tension in the society. The exposure to such cultural products has given way to a different range of lifestyles and culture that threaten the existence of Iranian culture and have created social and cultural differentiation, as well as a generational gap and therefore, have provided grounds for cultural conflict.

The State's Policy and Punishment

In trying to establish what rights people attributed to the state in regulating cultural consumption, people were asked: 'What do you think of state's policy and punishment on viewing satellite?' Interestingly enough, all the people from this group (negotiated) were against the state's policy and its punishment regarding satellite, as they thought this has even encouraged more people to obtain and view satellite. It is interesting that the idea of cable TV emerged later in this discussion. A man from the very first focus group said:

In Persian:

یک زمان این را شدیداً پیاده می‌کردند ولی خودشان هم دیدند که این کار بسیار اشتباه بود و مردم هم بیشتر حریص شدند.

In English:

There was a time that the government was very strict about it. But now, even they have realised how wrong they were and how people got hungrier for it.

In another focus group a woman said:

In Persian:

دولت پول در می‌آورد با این جریمه ها و جمع کردن آنتن ها و دوباره دولت یا دولتیان خودشان ماهواره وارد می‌کنند یا دوباره ماهواره های جمع شده را در بازار سیاه می‌فروشند.

In English:

The government is making lots of money from these fines. They raid your homes and confiscate it but a few days later they are selling them in the black market.

The fact is that the material of the satellite channels might offend quite a lot of Iranian people, but those viewing satellite have deliberately exposed themselves to it and they do it by the method of the black market. That is, they have paid for it as a specialised contract between them and the supplier from black market. What is happening therefore is a hidden arrangement in the consumption of culture and with this, a shift in social responsibilities for the management of culture.

Her husband added:

In Persian:

من مخالف این کارم چون من فکر می‌کنم که آنها می‌خواهند مردم یک برنامه را نبینند پس بنابراین آنها می‌خواهند مردم برنامه ای را دوست داشته باشند یا ببینند که آنها می‌خواهند و این عمکرد ایراد دارد. مثلاً شما این را گوش کن و این را گوش نکن. شما اصلاً کی هستید که می‌گویید من این کار را انجام دهم. من فکر می‌کنم نگاه کردن به ماهواره یک نوع مخالفت با رژیم است و مردم اینطوری مخالفت می‌کنند.

In English:

I am against this policy, I think the government wants to control people and force people to see what they want or are allowed to see. They dictate to people who they are and what they are allowed to do. I think watching satellite is a kind of act to oppose the government.

The above participant argues that 'the state prohibition of satellite viewing means that in this society we are treated like children who can not decide for themselves and do not know what is right and what is wrong'. As it is clear from the above statement, the state's prohibition has been thought to undermine the individual's rights and has taken away the individual's freedom of choice.

A mother of four said:

In Persian:

قوانین و مجازاتهای دولت مؤثر نبوده، مثلاً ما وقتی ماهواره را گرفتیم جنبه مثبت آن را در نظر گرفتیم و

اینها که برمی‌گردند و می‌گویند که اصلاً ماهواره تو هیچ خانه‌ای نباید باشد، من استدلال می‌کنم چرا نباید باشد ما که به خارج از کشور سفر نمی‌کنیم و نمی‌توانیم آنجا باشیم خوب از طریق این خیلی چیزها را می‌بینیم و خیلی چیزها را می‌فهمیم و خیلی پیشرفت‌ها را متوجه می‌شویم یعنی اینکه ما مجبور نیستیم که حتماً برنامه‌ها و چیزهای منفی آن را نگاه کنیم، من فکر نمی‌کنم به این طریق بتوانند موفق شوند تا حالا هم موفق نبوده‌اند.

In English:

The state's punishments and bans on satellite have not been effective. When we decided to get satellite we thought of its positive side. The government's ban on satellite is not acceptable and I'd say why it should be banned? And since we do not travel abroad and we can not be there, the satellite can be a good medium for us to find out about what is going on in the outside world and to know about the latest technological advances. The state has not been successful with its policy and I do not think it ever will.

A young girl from another focus group also said:

In Persian:

سیاستهای دولت درباره ماهواره کاملاً غیر منطقی است چون ما هیچ چیزی را با زور نمی‌توانیم قبول کنیم، نه ما نه هیچ کشور دیگری.

In English:

The state's policy regarding satellite is completely irrational. They can't force us to accept anything. It won't work, not in Iran and not anywhere else.

Another participant added:

In Persian:

دولت در زمینه جمع‌آوری ماهواره شکست خورده همین الان اگر نگاه کنید روی پشت بامها می‌بینید همه دیش دارند؛ خوب؛ اینها اگر تلویزیون کابلی را با کانالهای مشخص ارائه کنند این مسئله کم می‌شود بعد هم بیايند برنامه‌هایی را خارج از این تولیدات معمول خودشان درست کنند که طبق نیازها و علایق مردم باشد.

In English:

The government, in terms of confiscating satellite dishes, has failed. Now if you look at the roof tops, you see that almost every house has a dish. The government should allow the idea of cable TV and also try to change the production of the state's TV according to the people's needs instead.

The above statements show what authority people were prepared to give to the state in controlling what they watch. What is interesting about their responses and attitude is that they reject the issue of the moral right of the state to interfere in what people watch, since the state does not provide people with any alternatives. It is clear now although the above people, as Iranians and as Muslims, would find many things on satellite offensive, they still considered themselves as being decent, and being decent means to be democratic and recognise people's right of freedom of choice. From an ideological point of view, people in this category seem to mostly fall in the Islamic Protestantism category. For them to express the protestant conception of the function of broadcasting is for them to say that the moral and social commitments of the broadcasters are necessary in order to protect and support the indigenous culture of the country and broadcast the programmes that are designed according to the requirements of the society. According to the Protestant view, the media should put people in a situation whereby they can make informed choices about which political representatives they wish to elect, which social or foreign policies to support or protest at, and what the current socio-economic trends are which affect their lives (these standpoints clearly appeared in the decoding mode among the negotiated reading sample). To express the Protestant conception of the function of broadcasting is to provide people with the information required to function in society and to provide programmes which speak to people's interests. However, the moral and social commitments of the regulator are necessary in order to produce and broadcast the programmes that are designed to meet people's cultural and socio-political needs. But any regulation of this sort, for this view, inevitably gives rise to the question concerning whose values, tastes and conception are being imposed illegitimately upon others. In such a model, public broadcasting clearly has certain duties to serve and cater to the interests and preferences of the individuals and the public and not to a certain group. The broadcasting system should be properly construed as having a remit to broadcast to and for the public at large. Thus, the general public's needs and preferences should drive the programming schedules and content, not a particular group with particular interests. According to what people stressed in this category, broadcasting media should not be under the control of the government or monopolies. The broadcasting system therefore, should work independently from the state and any particular political or ideological group. In this view, broadcasting regulation should

be concerned with programme content in terms of its indecency, offensiveness or immorality.

American Society and its Popular Culture

The interview then was moved towards a discussion about American society and its popular culture. The sample was asked 'What do you think of American popular culture and American society?'

A woman said:

In Persian:

فرهنگ و ایدئولوژی آمریکایی با ما فرق دارد ولی در یک چیزهایی را ممکن است بگیریم. مردم آمریکا در رفاه اجتماعی بالایی هستند و اکثر مردم ایران آن رفاه و امنیت و آرامشی را که یک آمریکایی دارد، ندارند و جنایت در آنجا کمتر از ایران است.

In English:

American culture and ideology is very different from ours, but I accept some elements of it. And as far as I see on satellite television, American people live in a society with a high level of security and prosperity and welfare and with lower crime rate compared to Iran.

The above response shows how the content of the media and the images provided by them can shape the audiences' perception towards the outside world. Oliveto (1994) stated that 'television viewers, particularly young people, have certain images of life in the United States which try to emulate such a lifestyle'. This false image which is not based on reality came to crash for the next participant when she actually visited the United States. She said:

In Persian:

من قبل از سفر به آمریکا فکر می‌کردم که می‌توانم آنجا خوشبخت باشم ولی بعد از سفر به آمریکا دیدم که جامعه آمریکا یک جامعه مصرفی و پوچ است و اگر جوانان مابه طرف آن ارزشها بروند به پوچی می‌رسند فقط تنها خوشم می‌آید که آنها آزاد هستند و با هر لباس می‌توانند باشند.

In English:

Before my trip to United States I used to think that I could be happy there. But when I went there I realised that American society is a consumer society, it is a vain society. But I like the level of freedom they have and the fact that they are free to dress as they wish.

A man aged 38 said:

In Persian:

من فرهنگ آمریکایی را قبول می‌کنم و رد نمی‌کنم و فکر می‌کنم که ایرادی ندارد و جامعه آمریکا جامعه خوبی است و آزادی دارند البته براساس آن چیزی که در تلویزیون نشان می‌دهند و ما می‌بینیم.

In English:

I do accept the American culture and I do not reject it. Based on what I see on TV I think that American society is a good society and I admire the level of freedom they have in their society.

The same question was asked in another focus group, a woman said:

In Persian:

من فکر می‌کنم غربی‌ها بی‌بند وباری دارند و من آن را قبول ندارم من فکر می‌کنم که شیوه زندگی خودمان و فرهنگ خودمان بسیار بهتر است. در غرب بچه‌ها وقتی بزرگ می‌شوند خیلی راحت از پدر و مادر جدا می‌شوند و پدر و مادرها خیلی راحت از بچه‌هایشان می‌گذرند ولی اینجا هنوز این رابطه‌های نزدیک و این عاطفه‌ها هست و این خیلی بهتر است.

In English:

I do not accept the unrestrained aspects of Western culture and I think our culture and life style is much better. In the West, when children get to a certain age they easily move out and the parents also easily let go of them, but here we still have a very close relationship with our children and I think it is better this way.

A man said:

In Persian:

من بعضی چیزها را می‌پذیرم و بعضی را که با فرهنگ ما تفاوت زیادی دارد را هم رد می‌کنم.

In English:

I do accept some of its cultural values and reject those that, compared to our culture, are too controversial.

One of the other participants said:

In Persian:

مسلمان من روی خیلی از ارزشهایی که این برنامه ها انتقال می دهند انتقاد دارم. من عقیده ندارم که هر چه که آدم می خواند یا می بیند بپذیرد؛ من آنچه را می خوانم و می بینم تحلیل می کنم و قسمتهایی را می پذیرم و قسمتهایی را هم انتقاد می کنم و قسمتهایی را هم رد می کنم. به نظر من جامعه آمریکا جامعه «اکستریم» ها، است مثبت و منفی، ضمن اینکه مردم آمریکا به نظر من ساده لوح ترین و زود باورترین مردم دنیا هستند اگرچه جامعه آمریکا آزاد تر است.

In English:

I do criticise some of the Western cultural values, and I do believe that we should not accept everything that see or read. Personally, I analyse whatever I see or read and sometimes I accept some part of it and criticise or reject the rest. I think that American society has a great level of freedom, but at the same time I think it is the society of extremes and that American people are the most simple-minded and most credulous of them all.

A female participant from another focus group about U.S. culture said:

In Persian:

از نظر فرهنگی خیلی چیزهای آنها بهتر است و خیلی چیزهایشان بدتر است. از اینکه آنها خیلی راحت هستند و خیلی راحت زندگی می کنند خوشم می آید من تا آخر دبیرستان با چادر مدرسه می رفتم و این به نظر من دست و پا گیر بود و من شیوه زندگی غربی را ترجیح می دهم.

In English:

In cultural terms, I prefer some of American cultural values to our culture but at the same time I reject some of them as well. They take it easy in life and I like that easy going approach very much. I used to wear the "Chador" (a traditional Islamic covering for women) up until I finished high school and I found that a real struggle and I do prefer the Western way of life.

A woman in this group added:

In Persian:

من فکر می کنم یک انسان در فرهنگ غربی ارزشمندتر است تا در فرهنگ ما به عنوان یک زن احساس می کنم که در جامعه شان زنان بهتر پیشرفت می کنند و راه ترقی برای آنها باز است در حالیکه در شرکتی که من کار می کردم به من می گفتند به عنوان یک زن فقط یک حدی می توانی ترقی کنی و پیش بروی.

In English:

I think in Western culture the individual has much more value than they do in our

culture. And as a woman, I feel that in American society, women can move up and make good progress in their professions, whereas in Iran, in a place that I used to work, I was told that as a woman my progress would be quite limited.

Another woman aged 21, in response to the above comment said:

In Persian:

من آنچه را که دیده ام بجز مسئله بی بند و باری ، من فرهنگشان را قبول دارم و فکر می کنم کمتر در زندگی به خودشان سخت می گیرند و اینکه بچه هارا از خود جدا می کنند به نظر من بهتر است و آنها موفق تر هستند یعنی بچه ها بهتر بار می آیند .

In English:

I do accept Western culture, except its unrestrained behaviour; I think they have an easygoing approach in life and in my opinion, the way they let children move out at early age is better, as it will help them to be more successful later in life.

The cultural imperialism theory postulates that cultural invasion leads to a change in the symbolic meaning of a society along three dimensions (Lee, 1980; Wells, 1972). The symbolic meanings are structures of "taste, values, and preferences, views about the society, human relations, and life" (Lee, 1980, p. 104). The above response confirms Lee's assumption and indicates a shift towards Western cultural norms as the above individual prefers the Western way of childrearing rather than the traditional way.

The last few responses show how people accepted and admired at least some elements of American society and its popular culture. The imposition of one culture's value system on another is a primary concern in the rhetoric on the cross-cultural flow of the media. Smythe (1973) reported that cultivation is the purpose of a social system, while television's function is the propagation of perceptions of social reality. "...the TV 'world' reflects...[and] changes the 'real' world...the cultural products of all kinds in the 'real' world are equally to be understood as propaganda for the social system which produces them" (cited in Nordenstreng and Varis, 1973, p.50). As it is clear from the above responses, the TV 'world' of foreign programming alters the perceived reality of receiving audiences.

American Foreign Policy

The people were asked then, 'How would you assess U.S. foreign policy?'

A woman said:

In Persian:

آمریکا یک ابرقدرت است که دارد سیاستهای خودش را پیش میبرد و برای موقعیت خودش هر کاری میکند و فقط بفکر خودش و منافع خودش است، نه ما و یا کشورهای دیگر.

In English:

I think the United States as the world's superpower does absolutely everything and anything to get what it wants. All the U.S. does is according to its own interests and advantages and does not care about us or any other country.

Another Woman added:

In Persian:

من سیاست خارجی آمریکا را رد می‌کنم؛ اینها فقط به نفع خودشان عمل می‌کنند. سیاست خارجی آمریکا اصلاً پسندیده نیست، آمریکا نفت ما را به قیمت مفت می‌خرد و مغزهای ما را جذب می‌کند.

In English:

I reject its foreign policies. They are totally unacceptable and are only according to their own interests. The U.S. buys our oil with a price that is almost next to nothing and tries to get our academically gifted people on board.

A man aged 37 said:

In Persian:

من فکر می‌کنم سیاست آمریکا درست است ولی با جنگ مخالفم، مثلاً در باره عراق می‌بینیم که همه را کشتند و کشتند یعنی یک سیاستی بود که آمریکا داشت و فقط مردم عراق از بین رفتند. من اشغال نظامی را قبول ندارم. من اصلاً فکر نمی‌کنم که آمریکا دلش بحال مردم دنیا یا کشورهای خاورمیانه می‌سوزد یا در فکر آنها است، آمریکا فقط بخاطر منافع خودش به عراق حمله کرد.

In English:

I think its policy is right, except the war, as I strongly oppose to it. For example, in Iraq they killed thousands of Iraqi people. I do not approve the U.S. military invasion of Iraq and I don't think that the United States cares for people in the Middle East, nor Third World countries, nor anywhere else in the world. The U.S. invaded Iraq purely for its own interests.

In the above statement it is very important to notice that although the decoder expresses a semi agreement towards U.S. foreign policy, he affirms that the U.S. should not have invaded Iraq and that the U.S. could not change the internal political direction of any country by force. Therefore, the new Iraqi government, although it claims to be anti-tyrannical, has been imposed on the Iraqi people by the United States. Thus Iraq is seen as a new colony for the United States.

A male participant from another focus group interview also was asked: 'What do you think about American foreign policy?' to which he replied:

In Persian:

آمریکا در تعقیب منافع خودش است نه آمریکا و نه انگلیس هیچکدام برای اینکه مردم عراق را از دست صدام نجات بدهند به آنجا حمله نکردند، آنها مقاصد بشردوستانه ندارند آنها دنبال منافع خودشان هستند و فقط برحسب اتفاق ممکن است منفعتی برای مردم عراق باشد. هدف اصلی آنها این نیست، هدف اصلی این است که الان آمریکا بعد از سقوط بلوک شرق، تنها ابرقدرت جهان شده و برای این دنبال منافع خودش است و بخاطر همین است که با اروپائیا در رقابت است و آمریکا برای همین با اروپائیا اختلاف نظر دارند و آنها و کشورهای دیگر را تهدید می کنند و آزار می دهند.

In English:

The United States is only pursuing its own interests. The invasion of Iraq by the United States and England was not to free the Iraqi people from a tyranny. They do not have human intentions; all they are after is gaining power and control, and in pursuing their own interests, Iraqi people might only accidentally benefit from this invasion. The main target of this invasion is oil, power and domination. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the U.S. became the world superpower and is now bullying all the other countries, even Europe.

Another man added:

In Persian:

سیاست خارجی آمریکا با این همه کشتار و خشونت که مخصوصاً در عراق انجام داده به نظر من مردود است. اینجا بحث استعمار است آمریکا با تهاجم فرهنگی آمد جلو و در جاهایی توانست تأثیر بگذارد و در جاهایی نتوانست و آن را هم ناکافی دانست الان آمده از دو شگرد خود استفاده می کند هم تهاجم فرهنگی و هم اشغال نظامی.

In English:

I reject U.S. foreign policy, especially with regards to all the killing and violence in

Iraq. I believe what is going on here is a new age colonisation. The U.S. cultural invasion was not effective enough in some parts of the world and now the U.S. is using both methods of cultural and military invasion.

In the above statements, the U.S. is identified as a source of greatest possible threat to the world. U.S. propaganda just before and during the Iraqi war desperately tried to influence public opinion into believing that its in interest military invasion of Iraq, (the second oil richest country in the world) was the fight for freedom and democracy. However, the above statement and other responses demonstrate that the message that the broadcasting stations desperately tried to get across was not absorbed among their audiences, which is, after all, the true test of propaganda. It seems that the repercussions of such policies have damaged the U.S.'s image. As it is seen in the above statement, the U.S. is described as a warmonger, a big bully and an imperialist that does everything and anything 'in pursuing its own interests'.

A male participant from another focus group about U.S. foreign policy also said:

In Persian:

از نظر کلی آمریکا درست مثل یک قلدری شده که میگوید هر کاری من میگویم باید بکنید و به این شکل هم دارد به همه دنیا زور میگوید.

In English:

Regarding U.S. foreign policy, I think that United States is acting like a bully, and by using violence tries to impose its unjust view on the world.

Another man said:

In Persian:

آمریکا می خواهد اینطوری مطرح کند که من در دنیا حرف اول و آخر را باید بزنم و تمام دنیا باید زیر سیطره من باشد.

In English:

'The United States is trying to propound that the U.S. must have the last word in every global matter and the whole world must be under its supremacy and rule.

A male student from another group regarding the US foreign policy said:

In Persian:

الان بعد از فروپاشی شوروی سابق آمریکا می خواهد خود به عنوان یک منجی مطرح کند و تمام رسانه ها هم

در دست خودش است و هر جوری بخواهد عمل می‌کند. من نمی‌گویم آنجا آزادی نیست، شاید تا اندازه ایی آزادی بیان هم باشد بعضی افراد حتی بعضی و کلا و وزرا ممکن است که در آمریکا سیاست دولت را زیر سؤال ببرند. من فکر میکنم در آنجا شفاف سازی هم هست، بحث اقتصاد را هم من منکر نیستم و از نظر علمی هم آمریکا زبانزد است منتها آمریکا بگونه ایی دارد از این قضایا استفاده می‌کند و می‌خواهد خود را به عنوان ناجی در دنیا مطرح کند و می‌خواهد ابر قدرت محض باشد چون یک رقیب داشت شوروی، و آن را کنار زد و الان برای منافع خودش و غنی سازی صهیونیسم کار می‌کند.

In English:

Now and after the collapse of the Soviet Union the United States is trying to present itself as a saviour, and with help of the media, which it has the total control over, it can do whatever it wants. I am not saying that there is no freedom in the United States. There may be some degree of freedom, and even inside the America there might be some people who question the government's policy. I think there are some degrees of transparency. I do not deny the economic and scientific advances of the United States but the thing is, the U.S. is using these advantages to present itself as a world saviour and wants to be the world superpower, and since it somehow got rid of its rival Soviet Union, is now working towards its own and Zionist interests.

The above responses illustrate the different feelings and perceptions that all these people hold towards American culture and foreign policy. Although the above people had accepted or admired some aspects of American culture and society, they absolutely dislike its foreign policy, particularly with regards to the invasion of Iraq. Their attitude towards U.S. policy was a generalised statement with no attempt to justify or interpret its performance as being fair or just. In spite of U.S. cultural imperialism and its aggressive propaganda, it seems that the United States has a much difficult road ahead if it wants to win the hearts and minds of the people. The above responses offer a concrete illustration of quoted criticisms of U.S. foreign policy by active audiences who, despite its cultural appeal and continuous propaganda efforts, resist its foreign policy. Although the U.S. propagandist programmes are based, in part, on the assumption that U.S. popular culture and display of America's material success would impress Iranian audiences and persuade them to agree with its foreign policy, the above results indicate otherwise.

People's Response to VOA

People's response to VOA was examined in the second set of focus groups, and although covering some of the same ground as the first set of focus groups, tended to concentrate on how people responded to VOA and its propaganda.

The second wave of groups was used to explore people's opinions and assessment of the two news stories from VOA and examine how successful the U.S. has been in its propaganda activities. The results of the content and discourse analysis confirm that the way in which VOA uses propaganda and political language serves the interests of U.S. foreign policy. The results from the content and discourse analysis show how VOA is engaged in an elaborate scheme to manage Iranian public opinion and score its foreign policy's success, especially concerning the Iraqi war. These attempts also provided the pretext for an exaggeration of the situation inside Iran. Therefore, it was decided that some of the recorded news materials from VOA would be shown to all the groups in the second set of focus group interviews not only to be used as points of discussion, but to also see how the participants would respond to the news and how they would interpret the broadcasting station that reports them. As mentioned earlier, the chosen news stories were about the comments made by Hussein Khomeinie, the grandson of the late leader of the Islamic Republic, and a report about Iraq's situation after the U.S. military operation.

After watching the news materials participants were asked their opinion and interpretation of the news. From the very first group a man said:

In Persian:

در اینجا این سعی می‌کند مسایلی را توجیه کند و هدفی را دنبال می‌کند. در این خبر (نوه خمینی) می‌خواهد بگوید که یک شکافی در میان سران مملکت بوجود آمده که این فرد که می‌توانسته در ایران از رفاه بیشتری برخوردار باشد، این را می‌گوید که آمریکا در عراق دموکراسی و آزادی آورده بگونه‌ای که این فرد می‌گوید "من اگر کنار کاظمین دستفروشی بکنم برایم بهتر بود". اینها همه این را دنبال می‌کند که می‌خواهند بگویند با اشغال نظامی آمریکا در عراق دموکراسی به شکل واقعی اتفاق افتاده یعنی این خبر این را دنبال می‌کند.

In English:

Here they are trying to justify something and obviously have a target and a hidden agenda. The news about Khomeini's grandson is trying to convey that there is a split within the government in such a way that even someone who could have a rather convenient life in Iran would say: "I'd rather be a street seller in Kazemein (a holy city in Iraq)". These are all to say that the U.S. invasion of Iraq has brought real

democracy to the country.

The above statement is a typical example of conscious reading where the decoder is clearly aware of the existence of the encoder's dominant intention. Here the decoder has forwardly examined and questioned the decoder's intended meaning and has successfully analysed why the decoder had set such an underlying message as he says: "They want to say that the military invasion of Iraq has brought real democracy to the country, and that is what this news is trying to convey". In this case, and in the process of such an exploration of decoder and encoder's standpoints, communication and dynamics between them become much more complicated and profound rather than simply persuasive

All the people in the negotiated group were highly critical of the government and the state's TV news coverage, especially about Iraq. At the same time, almost all of the sample's responses to the VOA and the way that the station covered the Iraqi war illustrated a mutual critical feeling and perception towards its news coverage, which was considered to be 'according to the United States's interest, supporting U.S. foreign policy and portraying a favourable picture of the U.S. government'.

For example a participant in this group said:

In Persian:

من اولین بار است که این صدا را می‌شنوم و نمی‌توانم بگویم که این حتماً صدای خود ایشان باشد به طور کلی درباره صدا و تصویری که آدم می‌بیند این نیست که اینها حتماً صحت داشته باشند. در کشورهای غربی با امکاناتی که در اختیار دارند به عناوین مختلف خبرها را طبق منافع شخصی خودشان دستکاری می‌کنند. این خبر حتی اگر صحت هم داشته باشد نظر شخصی يك فرد است و مردم ایران اینطوری فکر نمی‌کنند در حال حاضر که عراق در سخت‌ترین شرایط است و هر روز درگیری و ناامنی است من حتی نمی‌خواهم نزدیک عراق بروم چه رسد به اینکه در آنجا زندگی کنم. این خبر فقط در راستای منافع آمریکا و در جهت توجیه اشغال عراق است.

In English:

This is the first time that I've heard his voice (Khomeini's grandson) and I can not tell if it really is his voice or not, and generally speaking, hearing a voice or seeing a picture of somebody does not mean that the news is true. In Western countries, with all the technologies that they possess, there is a tendency to change the news according to their interests and this news (referring to the news about Khomeini's grandson), even if it is true, is a personal opinion that Iranian people do not believe.

At the moment, Iraq is in such a harsh situation with all the fighting and insecurity that is going on. I do not even want to go anywhere near Iraq, let alone live there. This news is only justifying the U.S.'s invasion of Iraq and is in support of U.S. interests.

In the above statement, there is a strong sense of suspicion about the first news (Khomeini's grandson), which is commonly shared among the whole sample. Here, this sense of distrust is not only expressed towards VOA but towards all Western media as well. This is extremely important to note; during the period covered by this chapter, Western and American media output and propaganda were consistent on making U.S. involvement in Iraq much easier to accept. Therefore, the above viewer accused the Western media of changing the nature of the events and manipulating them according to their interests. In the above statement, VOA is identified as trying to justify American policy.

A young woman, regarding the news that she had watched, said:

In Persian:

من به سیاست علاقه ندارم و بی تفاوت اخبار نگاه می‌کنم درباره خبر نوه خمینی من اصلاً نمی‌دانم که این صدای ایشان بود یا نه ولی اگر صدای خودشان بوده ، می‌خواهد بگوید اوضاع عراق در حال حاضر بهتر است در باره خبر بعدی نمی‌شود گفت به طور کامل صحت دارد یا نه ولی من فکر می‌کنم که تا حدودی درست است و من احساس می‌کنم اوضاع عراق تا حدودی بهتر از قبل شده .

In English:

Personally I am not interested in politics and I watch news inattentively. In the news about Khomeini's grandson, I don't know if it was his voice or not, but if it was, it says that the situation in Iraq is getting better. About the next news (Iraq's situation), although I can not say the news is completely true, I feel that Iraq's situation is better than before.

The above statement shows a typical negotiated reading where the decoder is totally focused on her feelings and understanding. In the above statement, although the decoder partly rejects the news, there is no tension in her reading process and this lack of tension seems to make the reading an easy process.

Another male in this group said:

In Persian:

در ارتباط با خبر عراق من فقط امنیت و آرامش دیدم و آدم فکر می‌کند که عراق یک کشور باثبات و یک کشور

آرام و امن است و این را دارد به بیننده القا می‌کند و تلقین می‌کند به بیننده که عراق یک جای خوبی شده است من با دیدن این خبر و با دیدن خبرهای دیگری از تلویزیون های دیگر که تصاویر بمب ها و کشته ها را نشان می‌دهند می‌بینم که اینها دارند دروغ می‌گویند و واقعیت را طور دیگری نشان می‌دهند این شبکه فقط نشان می‌دهد که آمریکا که آمد عراق به یک کشور آرام و خوب بدل شده. در ایران هم فقط جنگ و خونریزی را نشان می‌دهند و من بیننده از این دو تا به این می‌رسم که هر دو طرف دارند از این در جهت سیاستهای خود بهره برداری می‌کنند .

In English:

In the news about Iraq, all I could see was peace and security. It tries to convey that after the U.S. invasion, Iraq has become a peaceful and secure place. But when I see the pictures of bombardments and of dead people that the other TV stations broadcast, I can see that VOA is lying here and is trying to hide the truth. This station only tries to justify the U.S. invasion of Iraq and to convey that the U.S. invasion of Iraq has changed the face of country and has turned it to such a peaceful and nice place. However, in Iran all of the state's TV channels broadcast pictures of killing and fighting, and I, as a viewer, can see that both stations' news are biased in accordance with their supported government policies.

A University lecturer from another group said:

In Persian:

به طور کلی تمام رسانه های خبری وابسته به یک گرایشی هستند و آنها هر کدام آن چه را که مد نظر خودشان است القاء می‌کنند. هر دو خبر به نظر من القاء ضدیت با سمت دیگر است و دور از واقعیت است در خبر نوه خمینی آن را بزرگ کردند و من صدای ایشان را هرگز نشنیده ام و این را تأیید کنم و یار د کنم. در خبر عراق این شبکه نشان می‌دهد فقط صلح و صفا است و رژه رفتن و آموزش و آرامش است در حالیکه سمت دیگر قضیه را که انفجار بمب ، قتلها غارتهاست را نشان نمی‌دهند. در داخل ایران هم در چند سال اخیر دیده ام که خیلی از چیزهایی که گفته می‌شود در صد زیادی از آن با واقعیت تفاوت دارد.

In English:

Generally speaking I think all of the media are dependent on a supporting body and tend to portray the news in the way that they want and according to their interests. In my opinion, both news broadcasted by VOA are far from the truth and portray animosity towards the Iranian regime. In the news about Khomeini's grandson, they tried to magnify the problem and because I've never heard his voice before, I can not tell if it is his real voice and that the news is genuine. Therefore I can not accept nor reject it. In the news about Iraq, all I could see was peace, security and marching,

whereas it failed to show the other side of matter which is bombardments, killings and plundering. However, the media output inside Iran is far from truth as well.

A young male student said:

In Persian:

من در مورد صحت خبر نوه خمینی شک دارم ، نه صدا را می شناسم و نه تصویر را ممکن است در صدی از آن واقعیت داشته باشد . مسلماً هر حکومتی به دنبال منافع خودش است و برای توجیه آنها و مشروعیت دادن به سیاستهای خودش ، يك سری دلایل خاص برای افکار عمومی می آورد . در مورد خبر عراق من آن صلح و صفا و آرامشی را که در عراق نشان داده شد به طور کامل قبول ندارم همینطور این را هم قبول ندارم که تلویزیون ایران نشان میدهد که همش جنگ و خرابی و گریه وزاری است .

In English:

I am doubtful towards Khomeini's grandson. I do not know his voice or picture and I think that only some parts of this news is correct. And I know that every government, in order to legitimise and justify its policy, usually makes up some reasons and explanations to sway public opinion.

About Iraq's news and all the peace and security that was broadcasted, I should say that I do not believe and accept it totally, as I do not believe the state's TV image of Iraq, which tries to convince us there is nothing going on in Iraq but fighting and moaning.

Another man said:

In Persian:

اگر این خبر (خبر نوه خمینی) درست باشد که من در اصل آن شک دارم با نشان دادن این خبر می خواهند بگویند که اوضاع ایران نابسامان است و مشکلات بیشتر از عراق است ، در حالی که اینطور نیست . در عراق پس از اشغال وضعیت مردم بدتر شده و مسلماً بدتر هم خواهد شد چرا که اشغالگران فقط بد نبال منافع شخصی خودشان هستند و حتی اگر هم آرامشی را در آنجا ببینیم ممکن است آرامش قبل از طوفان باشد و یا اصلاً ناآرامی ها را نشان ندهند . صدای آمریکا مسلماً گرایش دارد و شکی در آن نیست . و رسانه های اینجا هم ایده آل نیستند .

In English:

If this news (Khomeini's grandson) is true, which I doubt it is, they just want to say that the situation in Iran is worse than it is in Iraq and we all know that is not the case. The living conditions of the people in the occupied Iraq is going from bad to worse because the occupiers are only after their own interests, and even if we see some sort

of peace show on TV, it either may not be permanent or they are not showing the full extent of conflict. Voice of America is definitely biased, and there is no doubt about that. However the media inside Iran are not ideal either.

A woman from this group said:

In Persian:

من خبری را که در مورد اوضاع عراق دیدم را اصلاً باور نمی‌کنم چون می‌دانم در کشوری که پای بیگانه وسط بیاید هیچ وقت روی آرامش را نخواهد دید این سربازها می‌توانند هر کاری بکنند و کسی نمی‌تواند حرفی بزند و از لحاظ سیاسی و اجتماعی هم هیچ امنیتی در عراق نیست حالا می‌خواهند خیابانها را آرام نشان بدهند یا خیر ولی مطمئناً صحنه جنگ و درگیری را نشان نمی‌دهند .

In English:

I do not believe the reports that they broadcast about Iraq at all because I know for sure that in an occupied country there is not any peace and security, as the occupiers can do absolutely everything and anything and nobody can say anything. Also, there is no social or political security in Iraq, and even if they show quiet and peaceful streets, it does not change anything because they definitely do not broadcast anything about the conflict.

The above statement was picked up by another participant who added:

In Persian:

در مورد اوضاع عراق همه ما می‌بینیم حتی کسی که بی‌سواد هم باشد و هیچ خبری هم نداشته باشد ، اطلاع دارد که اوضاع عراق به چه جوری است ، الان آمریکا آنجا را اشغال کرده و مردم عراق دارند از کمبودهای مختلف می‌میرند ولی آنها را نشان نمی‌دهند هیچکس به آنها توجه نمی‌کند آنها به فکر منافع و موقعیت خودشان هستند و به این پایین دستها و زیر دستها توجه نمی‌کنند .

In English:

About the situation in Iraq, even the most ignorant people know what is going on there and how the United States has occupied this country and how people are dying but nobody cares for them. The occupiers are only after their own interests and benefit and do not care for these poor people.

Another woman from this group added:

In Persian:

من به بحثهای سیاسی و اخبار سیاسی علاقه ای ندارم و این را هم بگویم که من به هیچ خبرگذاری اعتماد

ندارم ، شاید اگر اخبار را هم گوش نمی دهم دقیقاً برمیگردد به این نکته که به هیچ کدام از اینها اعتماد و اعتقاد ندارم ، دقیقاً میدانم که سیاست یک بازی است و این صحبت‌هایی که مجری تلویزیون میکند دقیقاً طراحی شده و این جنگ اگر هست یک دست‌هایی پشت پرده هست و این جنگ واقعی نیست این یک صحنه سازی از افکار چند تا آدم است که دارند برای دنیا برنامه ریزی میکنند و برای همین اصلاً اعتقاد و اعتمادی ندارم و اخبار گوش نمی‌دهم ، میدانم همه اش بازی است .

In English:

I am not interested in politics and I have to say that I do not trust any news agency. I do not watch news and perhaps the reason for this is that I believe none of them. I know that politics is a game and the things they say on TV have been designed. And if there is a war it is not a real war, it is only a show put on by a few people that plan for the whole world and try to programme and control the world's events in the way that they want. There is a conspiracy going on and that is why I do not watch the news, because I know it is only a game.

In the above statements, both VOA and state's TV news are considered to be manipulative, government-controlled and biased. In here the viewers consciously recognise the underlying agenda and the way that viewers are being tricked into a psychological mind game that tries to influence and direct the viewers' opinion towards their desired conclusion. It seems that VOA, by ignoring the truth about the conflict and by not showing the picture of the devastation, has damaged its own credibility in a way that the state propaganda has been able to use this American dissemblance as ammunition for its own propaganda. However, the viewer also has rejected the state's propaganda for the simple reason that it did not reveal the whole truth.

The above view is commonly shared amongst the sample and in fact, seems to be the most dominant view about VOA. The following statements clearly demonstrate the above fact. The last two statements assume a polarisation between the media coverage and public opinion. It is in the context of this assumed polarisation that the media are believed to be government-controlled and thus people feel betrayed by them. In the above statements, although the pattern might not be clear, the situation being referred to could signify resistance to dominant intentions and preferred meaning advocated by both VOA the state's media and express it clearly and accurately, as one of the participants mentioned that 'they are trying to justify their supported government's action and policy'. In here however, the decoders are able to catch the core preferred

meaning and show some resistance towards it, but they do not reject it completely. They, according to their own background experience and knowledge, tend to accept some part of it.

A man from another focus group said:

In Persian:

صدای آمریکا نمیتواند اخباری که می گوید بی غل و غش باشد و مقداری وابستگی به کشوری که این شبکه در آن هست وجود دارد در خبر دوم (اوضاع عراق) این وابستگی به شهود بود و خبر اول (نوه خمینی) هم چیزی را میخواست القاء کند ، و یک مقدار به دیگران حرف خوراندن سیاست این خبرگزاری است .

In English:

The news broadcasted by Voice Of America is not the true version of events and is deceitful and biased in favour of the home country of the station. This dependency and bias was very clear in the second news report (news about Iraq). In the first news report (Khomeini's grandson), they clearly tried to instruct something here and it seems that ramming a political view down the audiences' throat is the station's policy.

The above man voiced his objection against VOA for pushing an agenda that is 'rammed down people's throat'. The idea of an agenda 'being pushed' is been stressed by other people too. Whether it is the inclusion of U.S. political views and the portrayal of support for U.S. foreign policy or the inclusion of Western cultural modes, they are massively criticised by the sample.

The above statement shows that not telling the whole truth about the conflict has backfired on VOA and how the devastating nature of the Iraqi war, supported by the revealing and graphic television footage from other stations (such as Al-Jazeera and the state's news), have demonstrated the devastating part of the U.S.'s involvement in Iraq. In these circumstances VOA was forced to confront one of the principal challenges facing propagandists operating in war-time conditions. For the VOA to ensure that its own credibility remains untarnished, it needed to report all aspects of the conflict, good and bad, at a time when more and more Iraqi civilians are being killed everyday. Instead, VOA showed that it was obligated by its responsibility to the U.S. government to explain and justify American policy. Therefore, as it is expressed in the above statement, VOA is seen as working alongside the U.S. government and according to its interests.

Another woman from this group said:

In Persian:

درباره صدای آمریکا و اخبار و برنامه های تحلیلی و سیاسی اش این یک زمانی بود که طرف توجه بود و کسانیکه خیلی به اخبار اهمیت می دهند بعد از دیدن صدای آمریکا و تجزیه و تحلیل اخبار آن دیگر برایشان بی تفاوت شده و دیگر به اخبار آن توجه نمی کنند .

In English:

There was a time when VOA news and its political analysis were popular among the people. But after a while, and after watching its news and analysis, people especially those who follow and watch news regularly, have lost interest in VOA and do not take any notice of it.

The above responses indicate that VOA, by supporting and justifying American policy and by ignoring the devastating part of the conflict, has lost its credibility among its Iranian audience. The sample's responses offer complexity in their perspective on interpreting the news and on their judgments of VOA's performance. The responses show that people were highly objective and considered the qualities and accuracy of the VOA news in relationship to their own perspective and to the circumstances.

The sample responses demonstrate how U.S. propaganda and its effort to create a favourable opinion, especially in support of the Iraqi war, has failed. For the duration of Iraq's war, VOA found itself having to compete with contradictory reports that were broadcast not only by the Iranian regime's media, but also by some other stations in the region. The controversial and shocking images of Iraq's war that characterised the output of these stations meant that VOA itself, surreptitiously a part of the psychological operations, had suffered a loss of credibility since it could no longer be trusted by its Iranian audiences.

Such propaganda activities by VOA of course have its limits, and these limitations are based on a number of facts already discussed, including being much too economic with the truth and their failure to sufficiently understand and adopt to Iranian society. Perhaps a conclusion that can be drawn from this is that if the VOA was less propagandistic and softened their hard-line, it would not have lost its credibility. The diplomatic role carried out by VOA to ensure that the government's foreign policy would be executed and understood world-wide is well identified amongst the Iranian sample, as VOA is considered as a propagandist agency and as the voice of the U.S. government.

7.12 Oppositional Reading

Oppositional reading is the most profound and seems to be met by the strongest resistance from decoders. In this category, the decoder is capable of grasping the core intention of the encoder and the preferred meaning embedded in the text correctly and interprets it in an oppositional way.

The data obtained from the focus group investigation shows that of the total of the 94 people that participated in the 19 focus groups interviews, only 6 people were oppositional readers. In this group, all the participants consciously rejected U.S. foreign policy and its popular culture, lifestyle, or any other social aspects of its society and supported the government and its policies.

Government Policy and Punishment

A 50 year old participant, about the state's regulations and punishment towards satellite, said:

In Persian:

ما نمی‌توانیم بگوییم که غلط است من این را می‌گویم که آنها که در رأس کار هستند چیزی را می‌بینند که من نمی‌بینم، من هر ساعت در دادگاه نیستم، من هر ساعت تو زندان نیستم، من هر ساعت در دارالتأدیب نیستم ولی مطمئنم که آنها همه این مشکلات را کنار هم گذاشته‌اند و یک چنین عقیده و سیاستی را در پیش گرفته‌اند.

In English:

We can not say that the state's policy is wrong. I believe that those who are in charge definitely have their reasons to adopt such a policy. I do not know what is going on in the courts, in prisons or in juvenal detentions everyday, but I am absolutely sure that the government has put this entire problem together and has decided to adopt this policy for a good reason.

Comments in this group indicate the ideology that colours people's perception towards the media and the role of the government in controlling them. People in this group seem to believe that the purpose of the state and its regulations is to maintain and cultivate the character of its citizens, including the moral and social virtues required for them to lead their lives. In this respect, as the above statement shows, regulation should be directed by the right religious values. The state should shape and guide people's choices and characters towards what is good for them, which is

retuning to their Islamic roots and traditions. According to them, it is the state's job to regulate and control society to promote the social and religious virtues required to lead a pure life, and thus nothing, as a matter of principle, remains outside the jurisdiction of the state.

American Culture and Ideology

A woman said:

In Persian:

من فرهنگ آنها را قبول ندارم وایدئولوژی آنها را رد می‌کنم وبر طبق چیزهایی که می‌بینم یااز دیگران می‌شنوم می‌بینم که خوشایند نیست فرهنگ آمریکا فرهنگ برتر نیست و آزادی آنها فقط در حد بی‌بندوباری است.

In English:

I do not accept American culture and I reject its ideology, as according to what I've seen or heard it is not even pleasant. I believe that American culture is not the superior culture and that their freedom is only limited to unrestrained behaviour and activities.

Another participant said:

In Persian:

فرهنگ وشیوه زندگی غربی را قبول ندارم این بافرهنگ ایرانی ما مغایرت دارد و می‌بینم که این چه تأثیر منفی روی خانواده ها و جامعه می‌گذارد.

In English:

I do not approve of the Western culture and lifestyle, which are in contradiction with our Iranian culture. I can see that this has had such negative effects on our families and on our society.

The above statements show the extremely low and negative evaluation of Western culture by the people in this group. This idea is a representation of the extremist philosophy. This concept, which is the ideology of the ruling authority in Iran, agrees that the primary function of the media is to Islamise the country, and move Iran back to its roots, traditions and culture, which is of course, according to the state's interests and is limited to their perception of Islam. And this is with the ignorance of the pre-Islamic culture of Iran, which is deeply rooted into the nationalist sentiments of

Iranians. Under this perception, the purpose of the state is to protect and promote the conditions required to cultivate and promote the ruling class's version of religious, political, and cultural values. They agree that intrusions into privacy are justified on the grounds that moral and social behaviour, if unacceptable and against their own sets of religious principles, should be exposed. To preclude certain kinds of programming on the grounds that they are obscene in some way is dependent upon a moral judgment. Thus, through this view, obscenity provides grounds for censorship.

U.S. Foreign Policy

A participant said:

In Persian:

این چیز معلوم است که آمریکا می‌خواهد تجاوز کند و تجاوزگر است شما ببینید چه در افغانستان و یا هر جای دیگر که پا گذاشته خون بپا کرده. آمریکا اگر کمک فکری در جهت پیشرفت کشورها ارائه می‌داد ایرادی نداشت ولی می‌بینیم که می‌خواهد زور بگوید.

In English:

It is clear that the United States is an aggressor and a trespasser. You can see that there has been bloodshed in countries such as Afghanistan or anywhere else that the U.S. has set foot in. It would have been acceptable if the United States would have given mental help to other countries, but as we can see, the U.S. is only extorting and bullying other countries.

The above statement shows very strong criticism towards U.S. foreign policy, which is directly in agreement with the state's political position and propaganda. In the above statement, the U.S. is shown as destructive and as the ultimate threat to world peace and also to all of humanity. In the above statement, the participant demonises the U.S. and accuses it of being an aggressor and trespasser. However, this view could account for all the oppositional forces against the state. In this perception, individuals are divided into two categories, as they are either insider or outsiders and in this case, the state can suppress and punish them. This perhaps portrays the doctrine of the clerical regime; you are either with us or against us, there is no middle ground in this concept, and no room for democracy.

Responses to VOA

A young student regarding the VOA news said:

In Persian:

در باره خبر نوه خمینی، چون ایشان یک شخص مذهبی بوده اند و آقای خمینی هم در زمان قبل در ایران یک انقلاب اسلامی بپا کرده اند من فکر می‌کنم ایشان به آنجا رفته اند چون یک شهر مذهبی است و می‌خواستند که در آنجا مثل پدر بزرگشان با توجه به شرایطی که عراق دارد یک انقلاب بپا کنند ولی در این کانال آمریکا این یک جور دیگری جلوه داده شده .

In English:

About the news on Khomeini's grandson, I think that because he is a religious figure he went to that Holy city to bring an Islamic Revolution to Iraq, as his grandfather did in Iran years ago, but VOA has tampered the news and has turned it completely around.

Another student, after viewing news clips of VOA about Iraq, when she was asked to give her opinion about the news she said:

In Persian:

به نظر من اگر 'وی-او-ای' آن ناآرامی‌ها و آشفتگی‌ها را نشان می‌داد در این خبر، این چیزهایی که می‌خواستند به خورد مردم بدهند باورکردنی تر می‌شد، چون حقیقت این است که شاید در گوشه هایی از عراق هم امنیت باشد ولی بیشتر مردم عراق الان عذاب می‌کشند . وضعیتی که مردم عراق در زمان صدام حسین داشتند وضعیت خوبی نبود ولی به نظر من باز بهتر از وضعیت کنونی عراق است .

In English:

In my opinion, if the VOA had broadcasted the fighting and conflicts, all those things that they tried to ram down people's throats would have been more believable. The truth is that although there might be a few quiet spots there, the Iraqi people are suffering now. The thing is that people's condition under 'Saddam's' regime was not good at all, but I believe that it was better than the situation that they are in at the moment.

Another participant from this group said:

In Persian:

درباره خبر نوه خمینی من خیلی شکاک هستم و فکر می‌کنم شاید کسی جای ایشان صحبت کرده چون واقعاً مشخص نبود و اینکه مطرح کردند که در ایران آزادی نیست، من مخالفم به نظر من در اینجا آزادی هست مخصوصاً برای مسئولین این خبر فقط می‌خواست نشان بدهد که وضعیت عراق در حال جنگ از وضعیت

ایران بهتر است که اینطور نیست و ما این را می بینیم و می فهمیم و درک می کنیم این سیاست پشت پرده اینها را ولی حتی اگر این خبر هم صحیح باشد به نظر من ایشان با رفتن به عراق اشتباه کرده و حتی نوه خمینی هم ممکن است اشتباه کند و نظری که داده من کاملاً مخالفم.

In English:

I am very suspicious about the news on Khomeini's grandson and I think that his voice has been imitated and that it was not him speaking. In this news it was stated that there is no freedom in Iran but this is not true. In Iran we have freedom, especially for government officials. I believe that VOA only wanted to say that the situation in invaded Iraq is better than it is in Iran, but we understand and can see the hidden agenda. Moreover, even if this news is true I still disagree with what he said and I believe that he has made a mistake by going to the U.S.-invaded Iraq and it shows that even Khomeini's grandson would make this mistake.

Another woman said:

In Persian:

به نظر این خبر خیلی دور از ذهن است که این فرد بخواهد با آمریکا تماس برقرار کند و بخواهد خانواده خود را زیر سؤال ببرد و مثلاً بگوید این اسم امام خمینی حالت یک باری است روی دوش من. من فکر نمی کنم یک هم چنین حرفی را بزند یا بخواهد اینقدر صریح بگوید که من درباره امنیت خانواده و کشورم و ملت ایران شک دارم و نگران هستم من فکر نمی کنم اینطور باشد به نظر من این خبریک خبر ساختگی است.

In English:

I think it is unbelievable for someone like him (Khomeini's grandson) to contact the U.S. and put his own family under such scrutiny and say that the 'Khomeini's name is a heavy burden for me'. I do not think that he would say something like that and in such explicitness say that he is concerned for the safety of his own family and for the people of his country. I do not think that this news is true and in my opinion, it is made up.

A female participant from a different focus group said:

In Persian:

این اخباری که پخش شد در جهت طرفداری از آمریکا و سیاستهای دولت آمریکا است مثلاً در مورد خبر نوه امام خمینی من فکر می کنم که صدای ایشان را تقلید کرده اند چون فقط عکس او را نشان دادند ولی اگر فیلم ایشان بود من می توانستم قبول کنم من خمینی را دوست دارم و نوه ایشان را هم دوست دارم و ماعمرأ توهین

به آنها را تحمل نمی‌کنیم شاید گرانی اذیت بکند ولی هیچکس نمی‌تواند بگوید که خمینی را دوست ندارد، ما
• اورادوست داریم •

In English:

The news that was broadcasted by VOA clearly shows a favourable bias towards the United States and explicit support for the U.S. government's policy. In the news about Khomeini's grandson, I would have believed it if they had shown a film of him, but seeing as it was only a picture and a background voice, I think that it is false and that they have imitated his voice. I like Khomeinie and I like his grandson too and we would never tolerate any disrespect towards them. There might be some problems in the country, but no one can say that she/he does not like Khomeinie. We like him.

Another participant when asked about the VOA news coverage said:

In Persian:

معلوم است که اهدافی پشت اخبار 'وی-او-ای' هست و اهدافی را دنبال می‌کند که در راستای سیاست دولت
آمریکا است •

In English:

Obviously there are some hidden agendas behind VOA news. Its news coverage shows a favourable bias towards U.S. government policy.

A woman from this group said:

In Persian:

به طور کلی اخبار این شبکه و خیلی از رسانه های خارجی دیگر کاذب هستند به نظر من این کشورها برای
خبر دادن یک سری دروغ و سیاست دارند که با خبر قاطی می‌کنند مخصوصاً مسائل و مشکلات را بزرگ-
نمایی می‌کنند برای بهره برداری در جهت منافع خودشان •

In English:

Generally, I think that the news broadcasted by VOA and other Western stations are not the true version of events. I think these stations mix the news with lies and their stations policies and hidden agendas and magnify the problems that we may have inside the country and use them in their favour.

Another participant added:

In Persian:

سیاست آمریکا نیرنگ و خیانت است، مثلاً در مورد اوضاع عراق به نظر من همان جریان قبل یعنی همان

جریانی که در زمان صدام حسین ایجاد شد دقیقاً دارد همان تکرار می‌شود. آن زمان آنها آمدند صدام را گذاشتند و حالا که دیدند که این مهره سیاهشان دیگر نمیتواند برایشان آن اوضاعی را که می‌خواهند ایجاد کند آن را برداشتند به اسم اینکه او خیانت کرده به مردمش و چون بالآخره مردم عراق هم از آن اوضاع خیلی ناراضی بودند و خوشحال بودند که او عوض شود، درحقیقت آنها مردم را گول می‌زدند که آنها می‌خواهند برای مردم وضعیتی جدیدی بوجود بیاورند ولی به نظر من الان هم با برداشتن او و گذاشتن فرد جدیدی دوباره همان وقایع تکرار می‌شود یعنی برای مردم هیچ فرقی نمی‌کند و تازه شاید بخاطر این جنگ وضع بسیار بدتری هم برایشان ایجاد شود.

In English:

The U.S.'s policy is the policy of deception and betrayal. For example, in Iraq we are witnessing the repetition of the same process that brought 'Saddam' to power some years ago. At that time when the United States brought him to power, and when they saw that he was of no use to them any longer, they decided to change their puppet, and in doing so, labelled him as treasonous to his own people, and because the Iraqi people were not pleased with him they were happy to see them get rid of him. However, the truth is that the U.S. has deceived people. They told people that they wanted to change their condition for better. However, it is clear that by replacing an old puppet with a new one, people would gain nothing, and due to the war, they might even end up in a worser situation than before.

The above statements show such strong resistance in their oppositional interpretation, which is directly against the encoding meaning. The above statements also show that people in this category appeared to be rather defensive in their standpoints and more innovative and critical. In the responses, VOA is considered to be a U.S. government-controlled station, which only tries to justify and support U.S. foreign policy. And because the VOA is propagandistic and hard-line, it therefore, has no credibility. Through their perception, media broadcasting should ensure that broadcasting practices and programmes inform and educate people on the right kind of beliefs and religious values that do not contradict their beliefs. In this concept the media has a duty to serve people's preferences only where those preferences conform to or promote the ruling class's position; otherwise, such broadcasting service should not be allowed. People in this category, as it can be seen in their comments, believe in the total control and monopoly of the state's media broadcasting to ensure that informative, educative, cultural, social and religious perceptions of people are guided and shaped by theocratic requirements.

7.13 Conclusion

The focus group results indicate that Iranian people prefer domestic programmes to those of foreign programmes. The findings also reveal that when people had the opportunity to choose between Western programmes and domestically produced ones, the majority chose indigenous programming because of the cultural relevance of the material. However, they stated that regarding the dull and boring state-produced programmes and the biased nature of its news broadcasting, they were left with no choice but to turn to the programmes available via new distribution systems, such as satellite.

This chapter has been concerned with the responses and reactions of audiences towards Western values, modes and news coverage, which are conveyed to them through satellite televisions. The focus group findings demonstrate how people actively interpreted the media messages. The results show that most people, although accepted some aspects of American culture, rejected its foreign policy.

It is recognised that the effect of the media is perhaps a difficult content for identifying their influences because the culture and ideas that the media try to convey are interpreted by audiences with different personal experiences and socio-ideological backgrounds. The focus groups results indicate that respondents' opinions were divided on the issues raised in the interviews and were based on the individual's own values. These individual values appeared to be linked to their ideological beliefs rather than educational background or sex.

As advancing technologies allow more channels to become accessible, imports or in case of Iran, the flow of these cultural products via advanced communication technologies, especially through satellite televisions, will most likely remain available one way or another. It is very important to note that the way in which people react to the media's message is very much according to the given set of cultural codes and values, as well as the socio-economic and political variations that dominate their society. These contributing factors vary from one culture to another and affect the way that people react to a given message. This makes the media's effects far more complex than can possibly be generalised through a simple model.

Conclusion

The main objective of this thesis was to revise the cultural imperialism thesis through a case study so that it is applicable to the current situation and contemporary arguments. This ambition has been achieved by interweaving the subject on two levels. First, this study reviewed the cultural imperialism theory in the light of active audience's perspective and analysed the mixed and contradictory dynamics of reconstruction, adoption and resistance of international media. Second, this study has looked at the Iranian expatriate and Persian language satellite televisions and has isolated and examined the activities of Voice of America and Jaam-e-Jam International.

This study tried to revise the cultural imperialism theory and identify its weaknesses and limitations and identify the areas that could be developed within its infrastructure. It examined the notion of cultural imperialism, and through a critical review of the notion, demonstrated that international relations are still based on inequality and dependence rather than interconnectedness and interdependence. However, the outcome of this uneven balance, according to the cultural imperialism thesis, is homogenisation of culture. In this respect, the cultural imperialism argument seems to ignore the complexity of the processes of culture and fails to explain the anti-imperialism movements, local dynamics and resistance within dependent societies. This study, by examining the process of cultural imperialism through the emergence of modernity and advent of capitalism in Iran, demonstrated the local dynamics and resistance of the Iranian people. This was verified in the anti-imperialism movements throughout the history of Iran. It demonstrated how Iran has been engaged with the West and cultural imperialism throughout its history, and how people have resisted Western cultural and political domination.

This study established that the process of cultural transfer is much more complicated than the cultural imperialism argument credits. What the imperialist argument seems to ignore is that apart from the external factors, there are internal elements that can

determine the role and structure of television in a country and among them are: socio-political structure, economic system, historical background, and ideological and cultural environment. In an attempt to understand the complexity of the argument, this investigation analysed the historical emergence and the contemporary phase of television in Iran. It demonstrated that blaming the West and the U.S. alone for the spread of Western culture in Iran leads one to fall in an easy category of traditional cultural imperialism. The regime's direct efforts to implement its ideological and political perception through television programmes, along with the strict control and censorship that apply to the content of news, are among the main factors that have driven people towards obtaining foreign news and cultural products via satellite. This effort by the regime seems to work as internal factor which has accelerated the process of cultural imperialism in Iran.

This thesis also identified that the cultural imperialism thesis appears to place too much emphasis on the economic factors and underestimates the role of political power in the process of cultural imperialism. The argument does not actively acknowledge the important role of political power as a force behind cultural imperialism since the power is never exerted only through military and technological control, but always through discursive control as well. In order to present the relationship between international politics and international media broadcasting, this study has examined the activities of two of the Persian language channels broadcasting from the United States; VOA and Jaam-e-Jam International. It has assessed and analysed the underlying agenda, the attitude, and the encoded messages of these stations through a combination of content and discourse analysis. The results of the content analysis sample showed that both VOA and Jaam-e-Jam stations were highly political and propagandistic in their news coverage. Also, the results of discourse analyses demonstrated that during the period under examination, both VOA and Jaam-e-Jam in their objectives, applications and approach were similar, as both used a positive approach towards the U.S. government and its foreign policies. The analyses showed that both stations were located within the overall propaganda and psychological warfare strategy during the studied period. This demonstrated how a state's political intentions have been augmented by the use of satellite television broadcasting, making an invaluable contribution to its policy.

Another objective of this thesis was to examine the cultural imperialism theory in the light of the active audience's perspective. This study confirms that in regards to the media power, the cultural imperialism argument offers an almost omnipotent view of the media that cannot be thoroughly justified. What it offers in terms of the media's power to affect cultural change is a dominance and transmission-based model, which seems to fail to theorise the power of audiences to creatively subvert the power of global media. What makes sense in regard to certain aspects of the debate, such as the conglomeration of ownership, reutilised production, and possibly formatted content, does not apply in terms of the audience and effects. Even assuming the homogenisation of media messages due to concentrated ownership and Western bias, cultural imperialism denies the power of the audience to interpret the message and read the possible encoded meaning. This study, by undertaking focus group investigations, tried to investigate and empirically examine the audience's interaction in a process in which media messages are interpreted. The primary purpose of the focus group investigation was to examine the cultural impacts of satellite television programmes and their possible effects on their Iranian audiences. It was concerned with the responses and reactions of audiences towards Western values and modes and news coverage that are being conveyed to them through satellite televisions (Jaam-e-Jam and VOA). The focus group findings demonstrated that people actively interpreted the media messages. The data obtained from focus group interviews demonstrated that the majority of participants (79 out of 94), although consciously rejected U.S. foreign policy, had a tendency to accept its popular culture, lifestyle, or some other social aspects of its society, such as democracy and social welfare. Therefore, it seems that in spite of U.S. cultural imperialism and its propaganda, the responses offer illustration of quoted criticisms of U.S. foreign policy by active audiences who despite the U.S.'s cultural appeal and continuous propagandist efforts, resist its foreign policy.

This study recognises that the effect of the media is perhaps a difficult content in which to locate their influence because the culture and ideas that media try to convey are interpreted by the audiences with different personal experiences and socio-ideological backgrounds. The focus group investigation showed that respondents' opinions were divided on the issue raised in the interviews and were based on the individual's own values, which in turn appeared to be linked to their ideological beliefs rather than educational background or sex.

Significant differences were identified between parents and their teenage children throughout the focus groups investigation. The focus group results indicated a tendency of teenagers and young adults to evaluate U.S. culture and policy rather positively. The answers given by the sample of this category showed a very high evaluation of American society, its popular culture and its foreign policy. What is evident from people's comments in focus group interviews is that current cultural flows produce both cultural homogeneity and socio-cultural conflicts, which is demonstrated in social and cultural conflicts and a generational gap in Iran. This socio-cultural conflict emerges as a result of the penetration of cultural imperialism.

Appendix 1:

Content Analysis Classifications, Categories, Units and Definitions

Definition of Categories and Units of Analysis:

News:

This main classification would include the news segments broadcast under whichever category. The main categories here are: news briefs, main news bulletins, and news related programmes.

News Briefs:

Usually these are news segments broadcast every day before the main news bulletin. The duration of these segments range between 3 to 6 minutes, during which a quick run through of the day's events and main news stories are presented in brief without any reports. Sometimes they would be accompanied by some picture inserts with LVO (Live Voice Over).

Main News Bulletins:

These are lengthy news segments (between 25 to 30 minutes long). The bulletins present more detailed news, accompanied by reports and, in certain occasions a studio interview with an analyst or a political activist. This category is strictly applied to the VOA news service. VOA runs a daily bulletin.

News Update:

This is applicable only to Jaam-e-Jam International and is equivalent to the main news bulletin in VOA. Since the 27th of June when the station cancelled its daily main news bulletin, a different system of news presentation has been used as news update, which would include segments including field reports on some selected news, business updates, and sports news. They would also include a segment presenting pictures of events running with their original sounds and without a vocal commentary on them. In Jaam-e-Jam International these updates are broadcast every day, except for Sundays.

Leading News items:

These would include the first three items of the news brief or bulletin and the first item in the case of the main news bulletin and the first report in the news updates case. The choice of these items in particular is to examine the priority news items in the channels in relation to the countries involved as well as the main themes stressed in the news agenda. This category includes six different sub-categories for that effect:

Item Orientation:

This would analyse the item orientation in relation to the region or country presented.

A national news item would be related to the origin country of the station (in both cases the United States).

An Iranian related item is a news item that deals with the country or an issue related to the country.

Items under the Middle East deal with mainly the Arab Israeli conflict, and will also include Turkey.

Islamic countries include Pakistan, all Arab countries...etc. These are grouped as such since an Iranian audience would usually associate themselves with the Middle East and Islamic countries in general.

The War in Iraq is a unit by itself because during the time of the study it was on top of the news agenda all over the world, and also because of its nature which makes it item of importance to the Iranian audience.

International items would include any other news items not related to the above mentioned classifications. In this case, the name(s) of the country(s) will be mentioned so that at the end of the analysis there would be some kind of an assessment to which countries received most attention.

Item Duration:

This sub-category is meant to examine the time devoted to such items and how would the item's duration (if ever) differ depending on the orientation of the news items and its theme. It is grouped under three main levels: from 30 seconds to one minute, and between one and two minutes, between two and three minutes, and more

than three minutes in duration. This would show the importance of certain issues compared to other subjects and in related to the overall time of the bulletins.

Source:

This sub-category is to define the sources of news whether they are international news agencies, station's own resources including field reporters and stringers, or officials in the form of interviews or anonymous sources.

Style of Presentation:

This would complement the previous sub-category because it would either include units of analysis such as presenter only, presenter and LVO, in-house or field reports, or a live/studio interview. This would present the degree of analysis and opinions, presentation offered without bulletins.

Type of News:

This would include the kind of issues considered as priority items, being internal news of the country discussed, Iran's relations with other countries, or international issues in general.

Theme of News:

This sub-category analyses the type of news that also are considered on top of the news agenda, including protocol news, conflicts and disasters, general political issues, economic, social or any other category.

News Oriented Programmes:

This is the second main classification. It would include programmes that deal with issues in an analytical form. This analysis could be presented in form of historical backgrounds, assessment of current situations, debates between opposite opinions, or simply stating these opinions. This category will include current affairs programmes, commentary and debates programmes, press reviews, or documentaries. Sub-categories and levels of analysis under this category are similar to those of the news category. However, there are few more additions: frequency of broadcast (daily, weekly, monthly...etc.), sources of news (purchased or local production or mixture of

both). These added sub-categories are included to correspond to the nature of programmes as being different from that of news and to stress the analytical nature of programmes when applicable.

Features Programmes:

This classification covers all the light feature programmes including films and talk shows. The choice of this category is to assess the features agenda set by the stations and whether they do correspond to the fact that they are Iranian channels or if there are other factors that would determine their choices. Usually editorial and managerial policies of channels do not specify certain means of handling features and entertainment programmes however, it would be important to know how these items are being chosen in terms of their orientation and the way they are presented.

Advertising and Promotions:

This main classification would assess the economic orientations of the channel, especially so in the case of private channels. Types, frequency, and nationality of advertising, can help in assessing the financial orientations of the channel and how it would affect the station's handling certain issues and topics (whether political or economic). The promos are thought of here as propaganda items for the channel, its programmes, or other countries. Promos are used as fillers most of the time, but the degree of concentration or repetition would indicate affiliations and orientations.

NEWS

1. News
 - a. Brief
 - c. Main Bulletin
 - d. News Period
2. Leading News items (first 3 items + first item after the break)
 - 2.1. Item orientation
 - a. National/ U.S. news
 - b. Iranian news

- c. Middle East and Islamic nations
- d. War in Iraq
- e. International news

2.2. Duration

- a. 30-60 seconds
- b. 60-120 seconds
- c. more than 2 minutes

2.3. Style of Presentation

- a. Presenter only
- b. Presenter + LVO (news insert)
- c. Report
- d. Presenter + live/studio interview

2.4. Source

- a. News Agencies
- b. Station's own resources
- c. Government and/or official sources
- d. Other (e.g. interviews)

2.5. Type of news item

- a. U.S. Internal/local/national
- b. Iran's relations with other countries
- c. International relations with Iran
- d. International news

2.6. Theme of news item

- a. Protocol
- b. Conflicts/disasters/...etc.
- c. Political
- d. Economic
- e. Sports
- f. Social
- g. Other

News Oriented Programmes

1. Type of Programme

- a. Current Affairs
- b. Documentaries
- c. Commentary/Debate
- d. Press reviews
- e. Other (including business and sports)

2. Frequency of Broadcast

- a. Daily
- b. Weekly
- c. Bi-weekly
- d. Bi-monthly
- e. Monthly

3. Sources

- a. Purchased materials
- b. Local production
- c. Mixture of both

4. Style of Broadcast

- a. Live/satellite transmission
- b. Pre-recorded
- c. Both

5. Style of Presentation

- a. Narration
- b. Presenter(s) + reports
- c. Presenter(s) + guests
- d. Straight forward interview(s)
- e. Mixture of styles

6. Issues Presented

- a. Political
- b. Economic
- c. Sports
- d. Others

Regions and Countries of Interest

- b. National/ U.S. news
- c. News about Iran

- d. The Middle East and Islamic nations
- e. War in Iraq
- f. International

7. Themes Presented

- a. Conflicts
- b. Historical accounts
- c. Iran-international relations
- d. Middle East conflicts
- e. Islamic countries' related issues
- f. Other (environment/development/natural disasters...etc.)

Advertising and Promos

Advertising

- 2. Average of advertising within a broadcasting hour
 - a. News hour
 - b. Programme hour
- 3. Frequency of advertising
- 4. Nationality of advertising (if available)
- 5. Programmes' sponsorship
- 6. Availability and percentage
- 7. Type of programmes
- 8. Nationality of sponsor (if known)

Promos

- 1. Availability and frequency
- 2. Purpose of promos
- 3. For the channel
- 4. For countries
- 5. For programmes
- 6. For daily/weekly schedules
- 7. Messages portrayed
- 8. Fillers (frequency, types and styles)

Appendix 2:

RECORDING TIME TABLE

VOA

Day	Programmed
Monday (5-7-04)	Main news bulletin
Tuesday (29-6-04)	News and Views + Next Chapter
Wednesday (7-7-04)	Main news bulletin + Roundtable (especial programme about student uprising)
Thursday (1-7-04)	News and views
Friday (2-7-04)	Main news bulletin + Roundtable
Saturday (3-7-04)	News and views
Sunday (4-7-04)	Main news bulletin

Jaam-e-Jam International

Day	Programmed
Monday(28-6-04)	Stop sign
Tuesday (29-6-04)	Yarane Azadeh
Wednesday (30-6-04)	Kelisayeh khanegiyeh Iranian (Iranian home church) + Day and Night (news update)
Thursday (1-7-04)	Porchoneh + Day and Night (news update)
Friday (2-7-04)	Wave TV + Aahanghaye darkhasti

Saturday (3-7-04)	World of sport
Sunday (4-7-04)	Day and Night (news update) + Kelisayeh Khanegiyeh Iranian

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