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The system of TV management in Russia: Development, Problems and Perspectives*

*Julia Rozanova***

The article is focused on the transformation of TV management system in Russia during the post-Soviet decade. The author's goal is to analyse the particularities of development of TV broadcasting and the system of TV management in the age of change Russia experiences today. The first part of the article presents the history and state-of-the-art of the Russian TV system, with its problems, deficiencies, and achievements. A brief description of peculiarities of the Soviet TV system is given, and the relationship between TV and the State is shown. The second part of the article is dedicated to analysis of the current system of management of TV by the State. In concluding an ideal theoretical model of TV management is shown, and certain European practices of TV regulation are mentioned as worth serious consideration and application in Russia to achieve a more harmonious and optimal system of TV management.

In diesem Artikel wird die Transformation des Fernsehmanagementsystems in Russland dargestellt, wie sie seit Ende der sowjetischen Ära verläuft. Die Autorin verfolgt das Ziel, die Entwicklungsbesonderheiten und das Managementsystem in den Zeiten des Wandels zu analysieren. Im ersten Teil werden die Geschichte und der Augenblickliche Entwicklungsstand des russischen TV-Systems mit ihren Problemen und positiven Leistungen präsentiert. Dies schließt eine Darstellung der Beziehungen zwischen Fernsehen und Staat ein. Der zweite Teil ist einer Analyse des aktuellen Managementsystems des russischen Fernsehens gewidmet. Zusammenfassend wird dann ein Idealmodell des Fernsehmanagements dargestellt, wobei der Blick auf europäische Modelle der Fernsehregulierung gerichtet wird. Daraus könnten sich wertvolle Ansätze zur Entwicklung eines optimaleren und harmonischeren Systems des TV-Managements für Russland entwickeln.

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With the development of modern communications technologies TV became one of the key tools of influence on socio-cultural processes and public conscience, and due to the economic crisis in Russia, when only 1 out of every 15 people in Saint Petersburg subscribes to a newspaper[1] it became nearly the only tool. TV has a great impact on the forming and development of public opinion, value system, public goals, norms of behavior (including those in political sphere), lifestyle and consumption habits. Consequently to such power over the minds of viewers, TV is a very efficient political channel of influence on the society. Politicians and scholars became aware of that soon after TV was born, and gradually nearly every country understood the necessity to create a system of management and regulation of TV broadcasting, in which the State should play a more or less major role.

During the post-Soviet time a lot of different forces and groups of influence, often opposite in ideology and strategic interests, got access to TV. They are the founders and owners of TV-channels, who want not only profits but also economic and political power. That is the State, which is supposed to represent and guard the interests of the nation. These are the trans-national corporations, the biggest advertisers willing to pay millions of dollars for the best evening time and creation of programs which would be a good background for their products. Last but by no means least these are politicians, political parties and various political organizations which represent the interests of certain social, financial, political, cultural etc. elites. They all are trying to use TV in their struggle for power.

The researchers of many countries dedicated many a volume to the problems of functioning of TV, trying to answer the question: is TV a good or an evil in the system of modern civilization? G. Gerbner, D. Altheide, D. Slater, W. Elliot, M. Mayer, D. MacQuail, D. Kellner, S. Head, V. Vilchek, Vl. Sappak, B. Firsov, A. Yurovski, E. Bagirov, S. Muratov and many others frantically seek the ways and methods of softening the negative consequences of TV broadcasting and developing its huge creative potential to promote the integration of society, support the social order, ensure the cultural independence of a nation, develop the national culture and educate and foster the feeling of citizenship in people. But as different types of owners of TV in Russia have different interests and goals, as the system of laws is most unstable and imperfect, the system of values, norms and socio-cultural patterns poured on TV-viewers from the screen is contradictory, heterogeneous, mosaic, and TV in Russia becomes the catalyst of uncertainty, of social tension and destruction of social foundations. Within this framework of research which takes place all other the world, in this article

[1] From the report of the President of the Russian Journalists' Union V. Bogdanov "Human Rights and a Journalist's Ethic Norms" //The works of the conference "Cultural Policy and Mass Media in Russia. Political and Social Aspects", Moscow, 1998.

the author has a goal to analyze the particularities of development of TV broadcasting and the system of TV management in the age of uncertainty Russia experiences today.

In the Soviet Union TV was a centralized hierarchical system, governed from the single center. The whole system of the Soviet TV, which embraced the Central, republican and local TV broadcasting, was subordinate to the State Committee of Radio and TV broadcasting of the Council of Ministers of USSR. This Committee had several hundred departments in different regions. The Central TV was a Sate monopoly structure of TV programmes production and broadcasting. The peculiarity of state management of TV was that the Central TV was not divided into channels. There were broadcasting editorial groups, which produced or ordered TV programme material for all the programmes (I, II, III and IV) of the Central TV. Similar broadcasting editorial groups or departments existed in republican TV-centers (there were 78 such TV-centers in the Russian Federation and 52 in the other Soviet republics) and in the local broadcasting studios. The chief management principles were financing from the state budget, the state production and broadcasting monopoly, centralized hierarchical structure and state control of the programs' contents.

The Soviet TV was not, as can frequently be heard today, only an ideological weapon of the Communist Party, though it undoubtedly played a very important role in the legitimization and support of the State's power and execution of the social control, as TV in any country always does (many authors wrote about this, see, for example, G. Gerbner, D. Altheide, D. Slater and W. Elliot, M. Mayer etc.)[2]. TV in the USSR was trying to educate a citizen and bring up a personality, even if it was not always and not everywhere done right. The decision-making monopoly in broadcasting policy, which belonged to the governing Party structures, inevitably increased the role of personal influence, the civil position and opinion and preferences of high officials. That monopoly prohibited free access to TV for any politician, representative of science, art or culture who had an alternative point of view. "It is a feature peculiar to any kind of monopoly, no matter how efficiently it is run and how wise and kindly are the members of the boards and committees in charge of it"[3]. Nevertheless while realizing the ideological goals of bringing up a new, perfect, clever, educated, strong person, "a builder of Communism", TV made the achievements of high culture open to the broad masses of the population. "Being a composite element

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[2] Gerbner G. "Charting the Mainstream: Television Contributions to Political Orientations" / Journal of Communication, Spring 1982, p. 100 - 127

Altheide D. "Media Logic and Social Interaction" / The Sociological Quarterly, 1993 Vol. 34 Num. 1, p. 53 - 70.

[3] Head Sydney "World Broadcasting Systems. A Comparative Analysis" / Belmont., - Calif, 1985. P. 91.

of the journalism, the soviet TV was an integral system consisting of three sub-systems, three program types according to three genres of broadcasting: publicistic (social and political journalism) - commented event, report, essay, sketch; cultural (broadcasting of films, TV drama, operas and ballets) and scientific. Highlighting the important events of social, economic and cultural life, TV was a means of education, entertainment and bringing up. It was for the society a separate kind of art, and also a means of popularization of works of art: cinema, theater, literature, music"[4]. Stimulating the cultural life of the people, taking part in forming the public conscience, TV solved the goals of aesthetic education of people and cultural enlightenment. Soviet TV gave many positive examples and images. We should mention here the authors and hosts of cultural and publicistic programs, whose names and works compose the treasury of classical soviet TV: I. Andronikov, a very well-known scholar of art and literature, who created a regular program "Irakliy Andronikov presents" in the genre of lecture-report (from the Pushkin, Glinka, Gorky, A. Tolstoy museums), essay (talks about Lermontov) and sketch (Reminiscences from the Big Hall of Conservatoire); the splendid researcher of cinema art G. Avenarius, and his famous TV magazine "The Art" and the regular program "The History of Cinema". "As host of his personal cultural programs, G. Avenarius always addressed the viewers with the noble finesse of expression of thought, with a gentle artistic manner, his speech was inspired and emotional and at the same time reserved, never passing the verge between simplicity and primitivism"[5]. According to the memoirs of TV critics, when one of Avenarius' programs was broadcasted, the viewers postponed rendezvous, put babies to bed earlier than usual, put pillows upon telephones - so that nothing could disturb them when they "watched Avenarius". "The personal programs of G. Avenarius attracted the whole audience of Russia not only because the material was interesting. The viewers were fascinated by the very personality of that man, his devotedness to the art, his deep erudition, more felt than demonstrated"[6]. According to the data we got during our survey, today many TV programs' hosts and stars are treated quite differently, and the viewers are most irritated by biasedness and insincerity of hosts (32%) and their mannerist and mocking style (28%).

TV publicist programs of the soviet times not only drank from the springs of Russian and world culture, drawing from these sources the content material, but also had a moral and spiritual background, was rooted in the traditions of the Russian critical thought and the Russian Enlightenment, founded by Radishev,

[4] "The Problems of TV". Ed. by E. Bagirov / Moscow, Iskusstvo, 1976. P. 7.

[5] Yurovski A. "Television - Research and Solutions. Essays on History and Theory of Soviet Television Journalism" / Moscow - Iskusstvo, 1975. P. 131.

[6] Yurovski A. "Television - Research and Solutions. Essays on History and Theory of Soviet Television Journalism" / Moscow - Iskusstvo, 1975. P. 125.

Gerzen, Saltykov-Shedrin, Uspenskiy, Gorkiy and Kolzov. TV showed, developed and promoted high moral, patriotic, ethical and value ideals, brought up a Man and a citizen who is proud of his Motherland. TV assisted the integration of individuals into the society, making viewers know, be concerned with and accept the national moral values, the heroic historical events. "The Stories of Heroism" – a regular program hosted by the writer S. Smirnov, was dedicated to the unknown and deeply moving pages of the war history, to the well-known heroes and those whose deeds remained unpraised, to the greatness of the people's courage and patriotism. Later S. Smirnov organized a TV anthology "Feat" which told about the heroes and the great people of the days of peace – scientists, cosmonauts, researchers, hard-working people of high moral standards. TV was the most popular, that is, common to the whole people, kind of art. "Just as it is not right to derive the popularity of a newspaper from its circulation, the number of copies produced, we cannot evaluate the popularity of TV solely by the number of TV sets in the country. Though the latter is important, we should lay stress on the quality features – what ideas are in the programs' content, to what extent they represent the interests and aspirations of the people, whether the representatives of the people take part in the functioning of TV"[7]. Great attention was paid to the interests and education of the children and the young people. Special high quality educational programs were broadcasted for them: anthologies "Young Pioneer", "Knowledge", "Sport and physical training", "The Origin of Life on the Earth", series of programs on history of Soviet and foreign cinema, music, theater, painting, geography etc.

In 1990 started the transformation of management on all levels of society, beginning with the State and the Government, and commercial TV appeared. Its motto was: not earn money for life, but exist in order to earn good money for its owners.

As professor Nikolay I. Driakhlov noted in his article "Tradition versus Modernity"[8], the result of perestroika in Russia was the social, economic and political crisis, the reasons and causes of which lie in the negation, neglect, disregard and scorn towards the past experience, history, traditions, habits, patterns of thought and values of the Russian culture. Having radically extirpated traditions and exchanged them for new borrowed socio-cultural patterns, the Russian society has in a great degree lost its huge social strength and potential for rational modernization. "Perestroika destroyed Russian traditions, neglected national values, history, political culture, great achievements in different spheres of science, culture, industry, technology,

[7] Yurovski A. "Television - Research and Solutions. Essays on History and Theory of Soviet Television Journalism" / Moscow - Iskusstvo, 1975. P. 79-80.

[8] Russian Society in Transition, ed. by Ch. Williams, V. Chuprov and V. Staroverov, Dartmouth, England, 1996.

suppressed the feeling of national dignity and pride"[9]. That was most obviously manifested by the process of creation of commercial TV, when the continuity, succession of time was torn, every good thing which was in the system of the state-owned and State-operated TV was rejected and swept aside, the traditions of the Russian journalism were broken, destroyed and neglected, together with the legacy of the Russian culture and the interests of the society and the State. The first commercial structure in the Russian television space was the channel "2X2". That private enterprise was founded by the state, to be more precise, by the State Committee of Radio and TV Broadcasting. The channel got no financing and donations from the state and functioned only on revenue from advertising. The founding fathers and managers of the new channel were state officials and a group of young and energetic entrepreneurs – former stars of a popular TV show "Club of cheerful, smart and ready-witted" (KVN). Due to the state support the channel had access to the state program funds and imported programs, bought for the money of the state – films and animated cartoons, video-clips. Consequently the channel signed a contract with the "Super Channel" TV company, and got the right to retransmission of programs, including news. This moment can be called the beginning of westernisation (americanisation) of Russian TV.

Then in 1993 the State in the person of the Moscow city Administration, and private companies and entrepreneurs close to it founded the Moscow Independent Broadcasting Corporation (MNVK), which received the broadcasting license on the frequency of the 6th central terrestrial national channel. Thus the TV-6 channel was born, which also got access to Ted Turner's library with the support of the state officials. In the same year 1993 the President's Decree created the biggest non-state commercial TV channel existing today – NTV. The financial background of the channel was constituted by the private capital, the originators were banks and commercial structures. Soon after strong media support of NTV channel ensured President's victory on the 1996 Presidential elections, NTV got (free!) the right of twenty-four-hour broadcasting on the frequency of the 4th central terrestrial channel, which had previously been divided between NTV and non-profit cultural and educational TV channel "Russian Universities". As we see, the leading politicians and high state officials played a leading role in the processes of transformation of TV in Russia, in the open or hidden way supporting the interests of the high TV business. In connection and along with the economical and budget crisis of 1992-93 there was commercialization and transformation of the main state channels – ORT and RTR. Having come across the lack of money to finance the work of the channels, the new Russian political power let the state owned

[9] Russian Society in Transition, ed. by Ch. Williams, V. Chuprov and V. Staroverov, Dartmouth, England, 1996, p. 96.

companies engage into private commercial activity. That was the beginning of an advertisement boom. New types of programs appeared, such as games, shows, and other entertainment programs, which ensured high rating, and consequently the inflow of advertisement revenues. Advertisement created the so-called "shadowy", half-legal ways of earning money on TV. The commercialization of the 1st channel (ORT) became the fact that only required legal recognition. It was achieved in November 1994, when the President's Decree was issued. This Decree transformed the state TV and Radio Company into the Public joint stock Company ORT, where 51% of shares belong to the state and is Federal property, and 49% belong to a group of banks and commercial structures. In reality the legal terminology of reorganizing state TV into public concealed the gratuitous privatization of the main TV channel, which is received on the territory of the whole Russia and several other states. The owning of such channel can bring huge profits and is the mightiest means of political influence, where great interests are at stake. The 1st national state TV channel de facto became a commercial TV channel, controlled by private business. Quite complicated relationship has been established between the state and the private enterprise in the TV sphere – suffice it to remember how much TV helped B.N. Eltzin win the presidential elections in 1996, and the tremendous role of ORT and NTV channels. Thus commercial TV supports politicians – and the latter don't interfere, when commercial TV makes money. In 1998 advertisement brought 480 million dollars to the Russian TV[10].

Commercialization of TV implies not only the growth of advertisement time (in average it constitutes 12% of all the broadcasting time on the main central terrestrial channels[11]). It also means that during the best (prime) time are broadcasted the programs, which are the best advertisement background, and have the highest ratings – that is, light entertainment programs. The programs that do not attract the mass audience big enough to ensure high rating figures were closed – and these were usually cultural or educational programs with a niche audience. In addition to that much money is required to produce cultural and art programs, documentary films, and the state does not give this money, neither do the sponsors, who prefer to finance entertainment programs for commercial reasons. Not only there are less and less cultural and educational programs in the schedule. Even those that remain, become more and more common, everyday, trivial and aim only at making viewers buy certain goods.

The content of the commercial TV's programs is determined by the goal of earning as much money as possible. As has quite correctly been said of the essence of the work of Commercial TV's producer: "Our aim is to produce

[10] According to the data of RARA (Russian Association of Advertising Agencies), Advertisement World, № 1-2, 1999.

[11] Ibid.

trash"[12]. In this connection most programs are milling the wind, are detrimental, contrary to the common human values and human rights. The most glaring example, showing to what extent TV ignores all moral and ethical norms in its pursuit of profits, is, according to the respondents' opinion[13], the broadcasting of materials containing sharp criticism, on the edge of blackmail, leveled at the Russian politicians. The respondents evaluated such practice as follows:

Table 1: The respondents' opinion on usage of TV for hidden political games (the demonstration on TV discreditable materials on Y. Skuratov, the State Prosecutor).

It is a winning of democracy (people must know the truth)	5%
It is a violation of human rights	23%
It is a demonstration of TV's corruption (every kind of criticism is paid for by those who benefit from it)	72%

The respondents who value freedom of speech very high, treat corruption very negatively, as it means the violation of democratic value of social justice, and unequal opportunities due to unethical ways of influence, bribes and blackmail.

According to the opinion of the members of the club "The Free Word" (V. Posner, V. Tolstykh, A, Guseynov, A. Panarin etc.), commercial TV cultivates moral laxity, permissiveness, worship of the golden calf[14]. Our respondents believe that all spheres of broadcasting witness it, but most alarmingly – news and analytical programs about current affairs.

Quite a lot of viewers believe TV is venal and corrupt. 25% of the respondents called ORT channel corrupt, the venality of ORT was mentioned by 18% of the respondents and only the TV channel "Culture" is considered patriotic. In the eyes of the respondents TV has trampled moral and ethical norms (71% of the respondents mark that their main concern is the propaganda of sex and violence which has flooded TV screen). The negligence of TV to the needs and wants of

[12] Jonston Carla B. International Television Co-production. Col. Univ. Press, N.Y., 1992, p. 219.

[13] The data of the pilot study done by the author, the sample includes 50 respondents aged between 25 and 55, working in an educational establishment, a telecom company, an advertisement agency, a factory and a sales company; the data verified by the results of the expert study (depth focused interviews and questionnaires) conducted among the analysts of the State Duma and the TV channels.

[14] "Can TV be free from moral (the stenographic report of the sitting of the club "The Free Word"" / Nezavisimaya gazeta – szenarii, № 5(14), April 1997.

people causes distrust to TV in our viewers. 67% of them declared they do not trust TV.

Table 2: The respondents' opinion about the objectivity and unbiasedness of news and current affairs analytical programs.

News and analytical programs are most often deliberately biased, contain the information beneficial for those who paid for it	68%
Sometimes are biased, and express the journalists' personal viewpoint.	32%
Adequately and justly inform of the current events and provide a weighted, unbiased and fair analysis.	5%

It is worth to note that the results of our pilot study coincide with the data of a sociological research conducted in the USA, where 65% of respondents did not trust TV in 1998.[15]

Commercialization of TV has sharpened the problem of erosion of national culture, which is aggravated by two groups of factors: first, classic cultural and educational programs are oozed out of the broadcasting schedule; second, there is an increase of direct or indirect import of the cheapest American program material not of a very good quality (soap operas, serials, shows, games). These processes cause alarm and anxiety in all the European countries, where the public worries that the American mass culture and primitivism reign on the screens, and the historical and cultural potential of the center of the modern civilization is not reflected in the TV schedule. But in the countries of the Western Europe national culture is protected by the competition between the state (public) and commercial (private) TV, the existence of laws which guard public morals and limit the quantity of imported programs and TV's commercial activity. In Russia there are no such mechanisms of defense, there is no opposition of commercial and public or state TV, because all central TV channels in Russia are commercial (even the state channel RTR lives on advertisement revenue).

On the whole more than half the respondents (56%) regard soviet TV the Golden Age in the history of this media, and are quite critical in evaluation of the recent changes which took place in the post-soviet time:

[15] A. Kachkaeva, the report on the conference "Cultural policy and the mass media", Moscow, 1998.

Table 3.The respondents' evaluation of changes which took place on TV, in comparison to the soviet epoch.

TV became worse	14%
TV became better, more interesting, highlights burning problems.	26%
TV became vulgar	60%

To fully realize the scope of problems connected with the transformation of the Russian TV system, it is expedient to pay attention to the analysis of the experts' survey, which is regularly executed during the 3 years (since 1996) by the "Nezavisimaya Gazeta". TV programs are evaluated by the experts of the first rate – such outstanding people in the world of culture and art, scientists, as playwright Alexandre Galin, writer Victor Rozov, Correspondent Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences Georgy Shakhnazarov, political scientist and analyst Andranic Migranyan, People's National Artist of Russia Leonid Bronevoy, People's National Artist of Russia Mikhail Ulianov, the famous ballerina of the Bolshoy Theatre Nina Ananiashvili, theatre producer Yuri Lubimov, the director of the Arts Musium named after A.S. Pushkin Irina Antonova. The sample is representative and is the voice of the people, as besides the greatest figures in culture and science it includes a worker from Kemerovo, miner Alexandre Komov, a secondary schoolteacher Olga Komleva, a Deputy of the State Duma, the leader of the political movement "The Women of Russia" Ekaterina Lakhova. The experts who represent different layers of society express grave anxiety at the condition of management of TV and the consequent problems of the national culture. The experts ask the vital question: can national TV fulfill its goals if it blackens and smears national culture, national history, the people of Russia and goes astray from the high principles of morality and ethics. The experts note with great pain and distress that there are practically no educational programs on TV, which was much assisted by the liquidation of the channel "Russian Universities". The broadcasting time was given to NTV, and endless games, shows and political chewing gum cannot replace cultural content of the programs. In the schedule of the main channels most part of the time is given to the poor quality, vulgar, silly and obscene films, with lots of scenes of sex and violence. The programs for the young people are non-professional, vulgar and lax. News and analytical programs become more and more dull, and they feel the burden of political orders becomes heavier. The journalists hosting the programs become political weapons, and the channels become more dependent on their owners – the businessmen fighting for political power. News programs are often tendentious and biased, do not give serious and objective

analysis. The experts noted that there are so many bad, amoral, dull programs because TV is torn away from the people, its life and problems. The worst programs chosen by the experts are:

- Biased and made by special orders information programs,
- Entertainment programs, games, where "dirt a-la USA is poured on the screen", "The Empires of obscenity";
- Soap operas, vulgar films and serials of poor quality;
- Philistine, narrow-minded programs on any topic, which do not reflect the real social tension;
- Vulgar and banal pop-music on the screen – neither rock, nor jazz;
- Thrillers, films with lots of violence scenes.
- It is worthy to note that the best programs, according to the experts' opinions (and 80% of the best are arts, education and enlightenment programs, and essays about culture and cultural life, and only 20% are news, analytical programs and current events) are founded on the legacy of the great people of Russian and foreign culture. The best programs frequently derive the material from the past of the Russian history, which gives high examples of moral feats, the aspiration for moral ideals. The best programs are kind, based on the universal human values. It is good that on the screen there still are programs about animals, travels and voyages, famous and outstanding people – academician Dmitriy Likhachev, poet Bella Ahmadulina, actor Mikhail Ulianov, singer Muslim Magomaev, Poet Vladimir Visozki… the best programs give an alternative to the barbarous, heartless and cruel reality, the catharsis helps viewers become closer to the great achievements of art and culture. Those news and analytical programs, which were called the best, follow the traditions of the Russian journalism and give deep and truthful evaluation to social controversies, cultivate love for the Motherland, national history, speak about suffering and everyday heroism. Unfortunately, there are very few such programs in the schedule, according to the experts' opinion. The best programs of the Russian TV are:
- Russian and foreign films from the treasury of the world cinema, dedicated to the heroic deeds, nostalgic films of the past about the fortunes of people;
- Documentary and publicist programs about the life of famous outstanding people of the past and the present – the great workers of culture, art, science;
- Cultural and publicist programs and documentary films about literature, music, painting, cinema, theatre, and broadcasts of operas, orchestra music concerts, interviews with outstanding personalities;
- Scientifical and educational enlightenment programs about history, the heroic pages of the past epochs;

- The recitals of musicians and readings of poets, writers, meetings with painters and actors;
- Retro documentary films about the soviet past;
- The reports about the outstanding events in social and cultural life;
- Interviews, meetings, discussions in which outstanding politicians, or other great people take part, dedicated to the most vital problems of our days;
- Analytical programs, dedicated to sharp social problems, where famous and respected people – the conscience of the epoch - take part in discussion;
- Programs about travels, voyages, and animals;
- The forecasts of outstanding sports events (championships of the country, Europe or world).

The saddest thing is that enlightenment, cultural, arts, educational programs in the spirit of the best traditions of the Russian journalism, constitute only from 2,34 up to 8,23% of time schedule on different channels (according to the data of the information and analytical department of the advertising agency Video International), films constitute from 20 up to 28,76% of air time (but here serials, thrillers and hits are included), and the lion's share of the air time is constituted by the entertainment programs (from 35,17 up to 41,55% on different channels). To our mind, the following conclusion of the experts is very important: TV is a too mighty means of social, political, cultural influence on the civil society, to let the politicians give it as a present to the clever and loyal businessmen. The model of ungoverned TV is absolutely unacceptable for Russia. But unfortunately many politicians and high officials do not fully realize the negative consequences of the absence of control on the programs' content and the functioning of TV in terms of protection of morals, ethics, universal human values. The hard fortune of certain laws that will be mentioned later serves as evidence.

What is the role played by the government in the control of TV? It is very difficult to give a single unambiguous answer to this question. On one hand, the advertisement revenues make TV financially independent. On the other hand, TV is a powerful means of power and a tool of political games. The opinions on who manages the central terrestrial channels and determines their policy, expressed by the respondents questioned by the author, are divided as follows:

Let us address to the legal side of the problem. The management and control of TV is executed on the ground of the Constitution of the Russian Federation (Article 29), the European Convention on Defense of the Main Human Rights (Article 10), passed by the European Community in 1990. This Convention is in practice in all the member-countries, and is the basis for development of the national media laws and the principal document for the European Court. The Convention was ratified by the State Duma and the President of Russia on the

28th of February 1998, and came into effect on the 5th of May 1998. According to Article 15 Paragraph 4 of the Russian Constitution it became the composite part of the Russian legal system. That means it must be taken into consideration in the legislative process. The main laws currently in force in Russia and regulating TV broadcasting are:

Table 4. Whose interests do these channels serve? (select more than 1 alternative)

TV channel ORT TV channel RTR

The state	46%
Private enterprises (Russian)	23%
Political elite	36%
Foreign advertisers	23%
Public interests	9%

The state	36%
Private enterprises (Russian)	23%
Political elite	23%
Foreign advertisers	18%
Public interests	18%

TV channel NTV

The state	18%
Private enterprises (Russian)	23%
Political elite	41%
Foreign advertisers	41%
Public interests	0%

The Media Law. On the ground of the Civil Code of Russia a civil suit can be proceeded if Articles 43, 44 and 46 of this law have been violated (in cases concerning the defense of honor, dignity and business reputation, and Article 46 deals with the right to reclamation). On the ground of the Criminal Code of Russia provides for the criminal liability for propaganda of sex and violence, pornography and appeal to unauthorized actions).

- The Federal Advertisement Act.
- There are also the Law of State Support of the Mass Media, which provides TV certain tax discounts;
- The Law of Licensing Certain types of Business Practice, which sets the general principles of licensing extended to TV; the Copyright Law is connected with the production and widespreading of program material.

Different Amendments to these laws are constantly discussed in the State Duma. For instance, the Amendment to the Media Law was passed in the first reading. The fate of a very important Law of TV and Radio Broadcasting is now uncertain. It is suggested to include in it a series of requirements to the genre structure of the schedule, to the content of the programs. But at present these requirements are worked out by the Federal Service of Television of Radio

(FSTR) in the process of issuing licenses. In this connection there are controversies between the legislative and the executive branches of power. The former believes all the requirements to licensing must be determined in laws. Only then will the efficient regulation and management of TV be possible.

The Committee of Culture of the State Duma became the initiator and the author of the Law on Higher Soviet of Defense of Moral and Ethics in TV and Radio in Russia. The prototype of the body this Law proposes to create is the French Higher Audiovisual Soviet. The Law contains ethical requirements and criteria of regulation of the programs' content in terms of public morals and ethics, the defense of honor and dignity of the state and the nation, and also limits on the quantity of foreign imported TV programs. This is done to protect national culture and support the workers of culture and art. The Law was passed by the state Duma, ratified by the Soviet of the Federation, but the President laid Veto on it, so it cannot be put into practice. Even our pilot study shows that the viewers are very anxious about the permissive attitude of the State towards TV, when TV helps destroy the moral and ethical norms, and is the catalyst of erosion of he national culture. Many viewers consider the State's primary goal to ensure the control over the TV programs' content:

Table 5. The viewers' attitude to the State control of TV broadcasting.

Definitely negative, any kind of government's interference into the functioning of TV is a violation of democracy and freedom of speech	23%
Rather positive than negative, if the State control is executed in limited cases	68%
Definitely positive, state regulation is a must	14%

Table 6. The State should regulate and limit (the choice of more than one alternative is possible)

The personal remarks politicians shoot at each other, blackening and insulting the dignity and honor of people.	32%
Films with obscenity and violence scenes	38%
News	0%
Remarks (of any participants), discrediting the dignity and insulting the state and the nations	28%
Things impossible from the point of public moral (e.g. the shows about the minorities with alternative sexual orientations)	78%

The management of TV and the control from the executive power is effected at present first of all by FSTR. The FSTR's activity is primarily connected with a

huge and very complicated instrument of regulating TV through licensing. But in Russia due to imperfectness of the legal system, which has been mentioned earlier, this instrument is still in its babyhood. The control of the TV channels' commercial activity (the sale of airtime to advertisers), which is for the Channels the main and often the single source of income, is effected by the Antimonopoly Committee of the Russian Government. This institution has a right to law fines and use other penalties to the channels, even to withdraw the license. But the Media Law says it is possible to use up to 25% of broadcasting time for adverisement, thus offering practically unlimited capacities. The Ministry of Communications of Russia should also be mentioned here. It is in charge of control of technical issues of using the broadcasting frequencies.

According to the experts I have interviewed (the analysts of the Committe of Culture and the Committee of Informational Policy of the State Duma), de facto the state TV channels (RTR and Culture) are operated by the President's Administration, although by law these channels are state Unitarian enterprises and are founded and de ure controlled by the government, and financed from the state budget. In reality the President's Decree about nominating the director of the channels or other high executives has great power, and so the experts pointed that the Administration of President has great impact on the program policy of the channels and the programs' content. As a result these channels become the most powerful tool of political and electoral struggle.

At the end I would like to make certain conclusions. Russian TV has undergone radical transformation, which has no precedent in any other country. Having become a money-making institution, TV has destroyed the traditions of the national journalism, lost connections with history and culture, almost lost moral background, and ceased to form national self-consciousness. Unfortunately in Russia there is no yet the mechanism of balancing the interests of the state, society and private capital in the sphere of TV functioning, and ion this connection TV ceased to perform its spiritual, educational, ethical functions. Moreover, TV has assisted the loss of the Russians of their patriotism, entity and national pride. This is the consequence of quick privatization and permissive attitude of the state to the cynical and non-scrupulous businessmen's takeover of TV. That is why the absence of the state regulation, when TV functions only according to the free market laws, is most dangerous for such a powerful institute of influence on the public conscience, as TV.

How to overcome the abiss between the present Russian TV and the interests of the people and the state? Which type of TV management is the most efficient?

An American researcher Sydney Head in his book "World Broadcasting Systems: A Comparative Analysis" offered an ideal type of TV management. It is based on the balance and agreement of interests of all the subjects involved in the process of the social functioning of TV, that is TV channels, TV community (journalists), private capital, society and the state. In the ideal model the form of

property also must be mixed. The pluralistic broadcasting systems whose activity is determined by more than one goal (the public good, the desire of political influence, profit) are more efficient, because they fulfill the interests and needs of much more agents of TV's social functioning. In the ideal case the access to TV must have different groups and individuals, having different ideas. Financing must also be done from multiple sources, to avoid political and economic pressure on TV. The system of legal control and regulation must guarantee social responsibility of TV, ensure the observance of principles of social justice and freedom of speech, defend the nation's cultural independence, and guard the social, moral and ethical health of children and assist the integration of society.

Are there any ways for Russian TV to come closer to the ideal?

According to the results of in-depth expert interviews with the representatives of all groups, involved in the process of social functioning of TV (politicians - representing the State, TV viewers - the audience and journalists and managers working on the main TV channels - broadcasters), it is reasonable to recommend for Russia to study further the experience of Western Europe, especially of such countries as the UK, Germany and France, in the sphere of TV management and creation of mechanisms of agreement of interests of the society, TV and the State. Above all, the experts recommend to seriously consider the application in Russia of the following West European practice of TV regulation.

A half of TV channels should realize the needs and interests of the society through the institute of public TV broadcasting, standing on two democratic pillars: public financing from the money of the tax-payers and public control by special advisory Public Councils, independent from all three branches of power. Thus the State would be kept at least at some distance from the process of managing TV. At the same time the introduction of license fee for TV viewers or a special tax for owners of TV should be done very cautiously, as it can be efficient only after the system of public control over TV is created. Otherwise money will never reach the TV channels, but will become just another burden on the tax-payers. In general, it might be good for Russia to study and implement the West European mechanism of creating competition between public and private TV, and strengthen public TV as a rival and a counterbalance to the interests of private capital.

In Russia it would be reasonable to consolidate in laws the regulations concerning the unbiased and balanced informing the society about all the topics of public life and presenting in adequate proportion of all viewpoints on all the components of public discourse - be it political, cultural, economic or social issues. It would be better to aim at reaching unbiasedness and balance of presenting information within each and every channel.

Time limits should be introduced to demonstration of programs which can harm the child's psychology, and to demonstration of programs containing scenes of sex and violence, shifting them to nighttime.

The experts stress that the responsibility of the TV channels to realize the public interests should be not only for public, but for all TV channels regardless of the form of property or management. The laws, principles of management, regulations and rules of the game should be the same for all the players on the broadcasting field (according to the general democratic principles of social justice and equality of possibilities and conditions for all the TV channels). However, not everybody in the State Duma and Presidential Administration agrees to that.

We clearly understand that at present in Russia the following reasons make it very difficult to reach the agreement of interests of all the participants of TV's social functioning and to consolidate it in laws.

The first reason is the almost traditional, historical controversy and struggle between the legislative and the executive branches of power - between Presidential Administration and the Parliament (State Duma). There is continuos political struggle between Parliament and the Presidential Administration connected with the process of creation of a system of laws which should regulate the relations between all the participants of TV's social functioning. This struggle is a struggle for political influence - whether these laws will better serve the interests of Duma or of the Presidential Administration. And TV is a very efficient means of such influence, and none of political forces wants to be defeated.

The second reason is the lobbying against the laws regulating TV broadcasting by the broadcasters - proprietors of TV channels and top managers holding the major positions on the channels. For these people it is more beneficent to work with the statute of Licensing, passed by the Government. The broadcasters are quite right in assuming that once the laws regulating relations in the sphere of TV broadcasting are passed, they will limit their today's freedom of making money.

Thus in Russia there is a single, but the major prerequisite of attaining the ideal, socially efficient type of TV management by Sidney Head - that is, as one of the experts during an in-depth interview put it, "the stop of the "Silent revolution" which continues in Russia and never comes to an end", the stabilization of political and economic situation in the country.

Still, there are new hopes connected with the recent changes in Russian political sphere. The elections to the State Duma at the end of 1999 brought new people to the Parliament. The new leader, Vladimir Putin, is heading towards Presidential elections in Spring 2000. These politicians of the XXI century -

they may come to agreement - and that is what the socio-cultural phenomena, like TV, need most of all.

Whether Russian TV will become closer to the ideal model – the future will show.

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