

Entertainment Video and the Process of Islamization in Pakistan: Theoretical Perspectives on a Policy Imperative

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Introduction

Islamization may best be viewed as a macrolevel and a multidimensional process of the sociocultural transformation of a society. For its success and sustenance, this process has to occur in the form of an ever-evolving sociocultural movement in synchrony and in symbiosis with other institutional, politicoeconomic, and sociocultural apparatuses of a society. It therefore is our conviction that a program of Islamization begun at the top levels of government and implemented by way of legalistic pronouncements or informational implosion and/or explosion is unlikely to succeed unless it becomes a self-propulsive pervasive force located in that particular society's culture industry. Without this symbiosis, it is unlikely that the objectives of Islamization will ever reach the grass-roots level of that society, a development which would almost certainly preclude its concretization into a collective but accretive "social cognition," "social affect," and "social conation." As a result, the apparently contra-Islamic socialization potential of the modern culture industry, particularly the fare on entertainment video in Muslim countries in general and in Pakistan in particular, will continue to undermine and exert a major pull away from the objectives of any serious strategy for the Islamization of a society.

In the relevant literature, a society's culture industry refers not only to all of its various transmitter categories of intellectual and artistic elites and professionals (i.e., educators, journalists, and writers¹) but also to its media

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¹L. Pye, "Administrators, Agitators and Brokers," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 22, (1958): 342-3.

institutions² which purvey mass culture through entertainment fare.³ The present paper, in line with the culturalist approach to media theory,⁴ therefore broadly conceptualizes the mass media of communication in terms of culture industry. It is predicated on the assumption that, among others, entertainment video, by which is meant dramatized entertainment, films, and all other dramatized and fictionalized fare through such video-media as TV, VCR, and cinema, should be and can be harnessed to strengthen, disseminate, promote, and cultivate the Islamic foundations of our culture. The theoretical umbrella and the empirical evidence already exist in the video-media effects, particularly in the case of television, the tradition of mass communication research. These can be garnered to project, test, and pursue the entertainment video policy directions of what may be called the Islamic enculturation of Pakistani society. While this objective may not be successfully accomplished outside of a holistic framework of a total communication policy—a theme I have touched on elsewhere⁵—some realization of entertainment video's impact potential is possible. Moreover, this realization can theoretically sensitize us to those of its possible cultural functions and dysfunctions which might frontally impinge upon the Pakistani government's Islamization efforts.

Video-Media Effects Research and Islamic Enculturation: Towards a Nexus

Current mass communication research traditions, both liberal-plural or ontological and critical, credit mass media communication, particularly entertainment TV and by implication entertainment video, with powerful effects.⁶ While earlier investigations tended to focus largely on the immediately

²M. Horkheimer and T. Adorno, "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception," in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, ed. M. Horkheimer and T. Adorno, (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972): 120-67.

³D. McQuail, *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction* (London: Sage, 1983): 36-7.

⁴J. Curran, M. Gurevitch, and J. Woollacott, "The Study of the Media: Theoretical Approaches," in *Culture, Society and the Media*, eds. M. Gurevitch, T. Bennett, J. Curran, and J. Woollacott, (London: Methuen, 1982): 11-29.

⁵F. Khan, "The Role of Mass Media of Communication in the Process of Islamization in Pakistan" (Paper presented to a seminar on the *Role of Mass Media in Da'wah* sponsored by the International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan, June 1987).

⁶D. McQuail, *op. cit.* (1986): 180-211; G. Melischek, K. Rosengren, and J. Stappers (eds.), *Cultural Indicators: An International Symposium* (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 1984): 315-426. Additionally, G. Comstock, S. Chaffee, N. Katzman, M. McCombs, and D. Roberts, *Television and Human Behavior* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978) and the National Institute of Mental Health, *Television and Social Behavior Vol. 2—Technical*

persuasive effects of mass media in terms of particular changes of attitudes, affect, and behavior, current research conceptualizes effects as a long-term process of change in the structure of cognitions, perceptions, and opinions.⁷ The spiral of silence, agenda-setting, effects gaps research, and research dealing with social reality cultivation and media socialization effects clearly demonstrate recent concerns with the video-media dimension of the culture industry's impact potential.⁸

While information from these areas can be quite instructive in suggesting guidelines for a total communication policy, the last two areas (i.e., social reality cultivation and media socialization research) more explicitly focus on entertainment TV in particular and, by implication, on other video-media. For this reason, and because they conceptualize effects at the same level of analysis and over time, they form the topic of discussion for this paper's limited objectives.

Islamic enculturation is ultimately a long-term macrosocietal phenomenon involving the cultural transformation of social collectivities. In fact, culture may be taken as society's collective lifestyle, thought-pattern, and outlook on life. Islamic culture may be defined as all of these elements encapsulated in an Islamic vision or worldview which transcends the physical by including the metaphysical elements of existence.

The task before the culture industry in Pakistan is to instill, generate, and cultivate the totality of Islamic culture among the now largely acculturated Muslim masses. We believe that entertainment video, as defined above, can make a tremendous contribution. Such an assertion is already widely accepted in Western democracies, where entertainment video and, more specifically, entertainment TV are viewed as playing a significant role in the socialization and/or desocialization of children and adults.⁹

This leads us to the question of what we mean by socialization. One popular definition views it as those life-long learning processes and resultant products which allow the individual to become an adequately functioning

Reviews, 1982. These sources provide excellent commentary on video-media, particularly on entertainment television's effects on audience members.

⁷J. Blumler and M. Gurevitch, "The Political Effects of Mass Communication," in M. Gurevitch et al. (eds.) op. cit., (1982): 236-67.

⁸See, for example, N. Neumann, "Return to the Concept of Powerful Mass Media," *Studies of Broadcasting* 9 (1973): 66-112. Also, see G. Gerbner and L. Gross, "Living with Television: The Violence Profile," *Journal of Communication* 26 (1976): 173-99. D. McQuail, op. cit., (1983): 196-7; and J. Abel, B. Fontes, B. Greenberg, and C. Atkin, "The Impact of Television on Children's Occupational Role Learning," (Unpublished report, Michigan State University, 1980).

⁹D. McQuail, op. cit., (1983): 200.

member of a social order.¹⁰ This definition emphasizes two ideas: a) a distinction between process and product—those processes in which one engages to acquire socialization products (i.e., the beliefs, attitudes, values, norms, and customs of a culture, and b) conformity to the normative expectations found in the given social order. Not surprisingly, research into the effects of entertainment video and entertainment TV has documented strong evidence of effect on both prosocial and antisocial socialization (i.e., learning and demonstrating desirable and undesirable norms, values, and behavior patterns), consumer socialization (i.e., acquisition of knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed for functioning in the marketplace), and anticipatory socialization (i.e., acquisition of values and orientations found in the statuses and groups which the subjects aspire to join). Research has also dealt with role-specific socialization which allows audience members of entertainment TV to learn and assume specific roles in the society.¹¹

Theories on socialization through entertainment video, a prepotent element of the twentieth-century culture industry, make eclectic use of the cognitive/symbolic interactionist and the behaviorist/social learning explanations of socialization. For example, symbolic interactionists say that “self” and “society” are not distinct entities but rather that the self arises out of and is maintained in social interaction. Thus society exists in the sense of interrelated social institutions, each consisting of interrelated sets of roles. The roles and role-models offered in the world of video-media supposedly define for audience members a culture’s valuation of social roles, institutions, and a mind-set and/or behavior pattern that accretively become internalized over time.

In other words, symbolic interactionist literature assumes that entertainment video does more than merely offer continual pictures of life roles and role models. These role models are, in fact, presented through a powerful and perhaps consistent symbolic system and pattern of rewards and punishments, power relations and valuations that are vicariously learned, adopted, identified with, and internalized as the norms of a given culture.

There is considerable empirical evidence which confirms that audience members do find lessons about life and connect these with their own

¹⁰S. Albrecht, D. Thomas, and B. Chadwick, *Social Psychology* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1980).

¹¹J. Abel, et al., op. cit.; B. Greenberg, “TV and Role Socialization: An Overview,” *NIMH Technical Reviews*, op. cit. Similarly, F. Korzenny, “Style of Parent-Child Interaction as a Mediating Factor in Children’s Learning from Antisocial Television Portrayal” (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State University, 1977) and R. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (New York: Free Press, 1957) contain interesting commentary and evidence of entertainment TV and socialization nexus.

experiences,¹² and that entertainment TV tends to systematically present images of social life which strongly influence the audience members' expectations and aspirations for normative performance in their society. Entertainment TV also socializes them by instilling a sense of cultural pride and, depending upon the content and context of communication, it can potentially contribute towards prosocial and antisocial attitudes independently of other socialization agencies like family, schools, and peer groups.¹³ In addition, more than three dozen separate laboratory and naturalistic experimental investigations have clearly demonstrated that entertainment video, specifically dramatized entertainment on TV, can modify viewers' social behavior in a prosocial direction. It is thus a major source of observational learning, a setter of norms, and an agency of socialization.¹⁴

Another closely related television effects research area which conceptualizes effects at the macrosocietal level and is thus richly suggestive of entertainment video's import on a society's Islamic enculturation is the Cultural Indicators (CI) research area, which is concerned with TV's construction and cultivation of social reality. Research in this area suggests that viewers' beliefs, values, and attitudes are strongly affected by TV's commercial and entertainment programs. Such fare has become for many people in liberal-pluralist societies a prime source of socially constructed reality, which Gerbner et al.¹⁵ define as a "coherent picture of what exists, what is important, how things are related and what is right." Through the continual repetition of certain popular plots and themes with which the characters are obliged to cope, entertainment TV symbolically projects certain images of what society and reality are like. Moreover, audience members in this research tradition are seen as becoming increasingly dependent on entertainment TV for forming such impressions, since so much of the society is beyond the reach of their immediate experience.

Thus, for Gerbner and his CI colleagues, TV's entertainment fare becomes

¹²R. Brown, ed., *Children and Television* (London: Collier-MacMillan, 1976) contains several papers on television's pervasive influence on children.

¹³Apart from the already-cited works, see N. Buerkel-Rothfus, B. Greenberg, and C. Atkin, "Children's Family Role Learning from TV" (Unpublished report, Michigan State University); R. Filep, G. Miller, and P. Gillette, "The Sesame Mother Project: Final Report," (El Segundo, CA: Institute for Educational Development, 1971); and P. McGhee, "Television as a Source of Sex-Role Stereotypes" (Paper presented to the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Denver, CO.).

¹⁴J. Rushton, "Television and Pro-Social Behavior," in *NIMH Technical Reviews*, op. cit., (1982).

¹⁵G. Gerbner, L. Gross, N. Signorielli, M. Morgan, and M. Jackson-Beeck, "The Demonstration of Power: Violence Profile No. 10," *Journal of Communication* 29, no. 3 (1979): 177-96.

pivotal not just in discreetly informing people of their sociocultural landscape but also in shaping the background canvas of meanings and preferred ways of viewing the world. They go on to note, for example, that TV has become the central and most pervasive mass medium in many cultures. Other media are accessible to the individual only after the socializing functions of home and family life have begun. In the case of TV, however, the individual is introduced virtually at birth to its powerful flow of messages and images. Like a key member of the family, it tells most of the stories most of the time, thus gradually forming a coherent if mythical world in every home. Social reality research essentially explores this ongoing and pervasive system of cultural messages and its long-term consequences.¹⁶

Empirical evidence in this area is largely supportive of the CI researchers' theory that heavy viewers of entertainment video fare tend to gradually adjust their conceptions of social reality and cultural manifestations to the cultural patterns symbolized in its message system. Entertainment video, specifically entertainment TV, thus becomes not only an agency of symbolic socialization and control but also an agency possessing the capacity to create a "new social mythology."¹⁷

To test their hypothesis of entertainment TV's influence as regards cultivating and superimposing the video-world's culture over that of the real world, Gerbner and his associates have employed a twofold design of research: a) the message system analysis, and b) the cultivation analysis.¹⁸ The former involves monitoring dramatic programming (i.e., series, plays, comedies, movies, and cartoons) for attention, emphasis, tendency, and structure of the elements of existence or cultural representation,¹⁹ while the latter involves investigating viewers' conceptions of social reality vis-à-vis the most recurrent features of video-entertainment programming. A high cultural differential (CD)—difference in the video-world cultural manifestation of heavy and light viewers—is taken as an instance of video-cultural cultivation among heavy viewers.²⁰

Two central concepts which explain the dynamics of the cultivation

¹⁶G. Gerbner, L. Gross, M. Morgan, and N. Signorielli, "The 'Mainstreaming' of America: Violence Profile No. 11," *Journal of Communication* 30, no. 3 (1980): 10-29.

¹⁷J. Bryant, R. Carveth, and D. Brown, "Television Viewing and Anxiety: An Experimental Examination," *Journal of Communication* 31, no. 1 (1981): 106-19.

¹⁸G. Gerbner, L. Gross, M. Morgan, and N. Signorielli, "Charting the Mainstream: Television's Contributions to Political Orientations," *Journal of Communication* 32, no. 2 (1982): 100-27.

¹⁹For example, G. Gerbner, "Toward 'Cultural Indicators': The Analysis of Mass Mediated Public Message Systems," *AV Communication Review* 17, no. 2 (1969): 137-48, contains a detailed discussion on charting out "message systems."

²⁰See G. Gerbner et al., op. cit. (1982): 115.

hypothesis and are of major importance to the objectives of Islamic enculturation in a Muslim society are "mainstreaming" and "resonance." Mainstreaming refers to entertainment TV's power to cultivate a relative homogeneity or commonality of outlook across subgroups in a given social structure. The concept of resonance, on the other hand, refers to the congruence that exists between the reality contained in entertainment TV and the real or perceived social reality of the viewers. This congruence leads to a significantly boosted cultivation. Indeed, the evidence is overwhelming that at least among heavy viewers a commonality of outlook is gradually cultivated across various socioeconomic and demographic subgroupings. Similarly, empirical evidence also indicates that resonance leads to amplified cultivation effects.²¹

These are tremendously relevant concepts, particularly the concept of mainstreaming, from the standpoint of Islamic enculturation because daily experience and intuition strongly suggest that any information-centric mass-mediated attempt at Islamic enculturation in Pakistan is extremely confined and has clearly failed to overcome the stratification and structural barriers of class, cliques, and other politicoeconomic subgroups within the social structure. If this were not so, then at least in the Zia era some cessation if not outright reversal in the trend of Islamic acculturation in the society should have become visible. Similarly, the concept of resonance has clear implications for Islamic enculturation since it implies bearings on relatively enculturated subgroups and more so on energizing and reinforcing the hard core of any Islamic enculturation movement.

While the CI research of message system analysis and cultivation effects has originated in the liberal-pluralist research tradition, something similar to it exists on the other side of the philosophical divide as well. Specifically, among the Marxist or the critical approaches to communication research, the culturalist theorists conceptualize the mass media impact on society in terms of a strong process of consensus production. With them, consensus production and formulation is achieved through "signification," which involves constructing particular meanings around events through both their manifest contents and the ways in which the messages are presented, such as marginalizing, downgrading, and delegitimizing alternative constructions of reality.²²

²¹See J. Bryant et al., op. cit., 1981; G. Gerbner et al., op. cit., 1980.

²²T. Bennett, "Media, 'Reality,' Signification," in Gurevitch et al., op. cit., (1982): 285-308 has an excellent discussion of the concept of signification and the media's role as an active agent of reality formation rather than passive reflectors of the existing reality in society as some minimalist scholars of media effects research would have us believe. While Bennett has confined himself largely to signification within the framework of print media, J. Fiske and J. Hartley, *Reading Television* (London: Methuen, 1978) discuss signification and how

There is thus one undeniable meeting point between the CI work and the theory of signification in the critical school of communication research: the assumption that enculturation or ideology formulation happens in a mass-mediated symbolic environment. Clearly, as mentioned above, the video-world of dramatized entertainment can be prepotently symbolic in that it presents, through a symbolic message of casting, characterization, fate, and storytelling, its own reality. This includes images of home and family, community and society, power and weakness, violence and peace, crime and morality, corruption and correction, life and death and, in short, all material and nonmaterial, physical and nonphysical aspects of a culture and their complex interrelationships. Through this steady process of symbolic storytelling, entertainment video socializes society into those roles and values which matter.

In Pakistan, the video-media has gradually gained a pervasive reach. For example, Pakistan television (PTV) alone has extended its reach to 86.4 percent of the Pakistani population.²³ Its reach is even greater if one takes into account the ever-increasing VCR use by individual Pakistanis. Although the exact data on VCR use are not available,²⁴ some preliminary findings in a small semiurban township of about one hundred thousand inhabitants indicate an ominously pervasive trend. The approximately forty video centers located there each circulate on the average fifty movies per day. In other words, about two thousand movies per day are introduced into a social structure that comprises hardly one hundred thousand inhabitants. And what does the VCR fare overwhelmingly consist of—imports of Urdu-language movies from India and English-language movies from Hollywood. One should also not forget that in addition to this, close to sixty percent of all dramatized entertainment on PTV comes from the United States.²⁵

Hence, it is not an exaggeration to say that the video-media industry in Pakistan (i.e., TV and VCR) is a wholesale distributor of images and messages packaged not only outside of Pakistan's cultural borders but also outside of the specifically Islamic elements of its culture. But no government or private institution has ever tried to compile a profile of the culture that

ideology might be formulated through it within the context of such video-media as television. Also, see S. Hall, "Encoding and Decoding in Television Discourse," CCS occasional paper, 1973; and C. MacCabe, "Discourse, Cinema and Politics," *Screen* 19, no. 4 (1978).

²³H. Rashid, *Pakistan Television Corporation Limited: Ptv. Basics*, (Karachi: Ptv-CSO, 1989) contains data on transmissions and population coverage.

²⁴Mass Communication Research Center (MCRC) at the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Gomal University. D. I. Khan has now generated a data-set on VCR use in a small semiurban town, but that awaits detailed analysis.

²⁵See F. Khan, "Violence on Television in Asia: A Case of Pakistan," *Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre (AMIC)*, Singapore (1989): 5, (mimeo).

is being purveyed. Instead, whatever images, lifestyle patterns, or cultures are being cultivated are overlooked as long as PTV earns revenues from its commercial sponsors and as long as the government profits from VCR license fees. This is exactly where the danger lies, because the video-media's dramatized fiction shows and defines connotatively and/or denotatively for many viewers how and why things work. Specifically, it presents the Rambos and the pygmies, the heroes and the villains, the wrong-doers and the victims in the present-day struggles of cultures in the world.

Policy Imperatives

The above discussion and review of relevant research underscores the necessity of considering the entertainment video aspect of the culture industry as an important component in any serious strategy of Islamization. It also suggests the possibility of a very close linkage between Islamic enculturation and entertainment video, and draws attention to what might be called the Islamically acculturating dysfunction of the current entertainment video element of Pakistan's culture industry.

One important issue that now must be addressed is this: given the theoretical underpinnings, as suggested above, how can we use video-media to promote Islamic enculturation in Pakistan? This is an extremely complex question, and any attempt to answer it will have to lean heavily on, and perhaps draw the best from, the methodological and theoretical dynamics of the broad research parameters mentioned above. One simple, though not simplistic, possibility which suggests itself is that of adding a strong inbuilt Islamic Socialization Potential (ISP) component to Pakistan's entertainment video industry. An immediate challenge for such an approach would be the creation of an ISP index for a unit of programming as well as for an aggregate system of entertainment video messages. Once developed, such an index could serve as a guideline/touchstone or a content gate-keeper for the production and infusion of dramatic programming into the system.

Basing ourselves on the assumptions of media socialization, TV's construction and cultivation of social reality, and the culturalist and signification perspectives of media effects research, our theoretical expectation would be that a continual and repetitive infusion of an entertainment video message system having a high ISP score will eventually lead to the Islamic enculturation of those members of society who are heavily exposed to it. While frequent watchers can be institutionally manipulated through content monopolization, infrequent viewers are likely to be caught up in the normative spiral of silence

generated by the newly formalized mainstream.²⁶ According to the assumptions of the spiral of silence theory, infrequent viewers are likely to be influenced by a change in their perception about the distribution of normative values in society.

Although our theoretical proposition of the entertainment video's impact potential for achieving the Islamic enculturation of society appears simple, it hides more than it reveals. Specifically, it is predicated on a variety of research prescriptions and institutional resource inputs that will only appear if there is a real commitment to Islamization at the highest levels of government. For example, the strategy suggested here covers only the entertainment video aspect of the culture industry, and is thus only a necessary "affective" condition for the relevant cognitive or informational media fare to work on and exploit; it is in no case a sufficient condition for realizing the objectives of Islamic enculturation at the societal level.

Apart from the necessary legislative and constitutional provisions, other necessary (but not sufficient) communication components in this multiple causation linkage would be the cognitive or informational Islamic fare which would have to dominate the culture industry in the form of an informational explosion and/or implosion. Thus, a total communication policy would have to be devised for regulating the content of domestic productions as well as finding a way to deal with the internationally touchy issue of communication and other cultural imports. That implies having in place an institutional cultural import structure manned by trained cultural personnel entrusted with determining, monitoring, and improving, in conjunction with the indigenous structures of the local culture industry, the ISP levels of the cultural imports to be injected into the system.

Again, having such an institutional apparatus in place will not be easy unless there is economic cooperation, probably along the lines of the European Economic Community (EEC) but much more intense and extensive, among Muslim countries so that an Islamic resource pool of information economy can be created. This is very critical to the Islamic enculturation of a society, for cultural hegemony and the international homogenization of cultures have an extremely close linkage with the extant global economic arrangements determined and dominated by such concepts as economies of the center and the periphery, transnational corporations and transborder data flows, economic dependency and cultural invasion, and the all-embracing concept of an information economy.²⁷ Only a truly strong Muslim economic block can make

²⁶E. Noelle-Neumann, "The Spiral of Silence: A Theory of Public Opinion," *Journal of Communication* 24 (1974): 43-51.

²⁷The concept of information economy implies the central role played by informatics and information in the central economies' informational piracy of the peripheral economies of

its cultural voice heard and realize a cultural integrity and societal enculturation amidst the synchronizing cultural epidemic ensuing from "informatics," direct satellite broadcasting, and DBS (direct broadcast system) technology.²⁸

Moreover, suggesting the development of a cultural import filtration mechanism through a message system analysis technology based on an ISP index should not sound exotic, because the New World Information Order controversy has now become more solidified around issues of cultural synchronization and cultural dissociation.²⁹ Cultural synchronization results from a monopolistic use of communication technologies and control of information flows by a world chain of transnational corporations. To Hamelink, it is a process which originates in the metropolis-satellite structure of the world economy and implies that a particular type of cultural development in the metropolitan countries is persuasively communicated to the developing countries in a unidirectional and basically synchronic cultural traffic. It therefore threatens cultural autonomy, since the exogenously developed techniques, symbols, and social patterns are introduced into a national culture more on the basis of the metropolis' interests and needs than on the host country's needs and environments. Earlier on, we cited data showing that approximately sixty percent of all dramatized entertainment on PTV consisted of American imports, and that this figure did not include commercial Hollywood VHS movies.

In short, it is precisely for these reasons that the present paper posits research-based institutional apparatuses to regulate and monitor cultural imports. Such a development will help the indigenous cultural industry to deconstruct and supplant the hegemonic and homogenizing cultural influences of foreign cultural imports.

Furthermore, our theoretical proposition also subsumes a strong need for policy research in the field of mass communication in the country. For

the Third World which allows the Western economies a headstart in preemptive economic decision making and planning vis-à-vis the Third World. See J. Luc-Renaud, "From Cultural Imperialism to Trans-Border Data Flows: New World Information Order Redefined," (Paper presented to ICA, Chicago, 1984). Additionally, there is an excellent exposition of the theoretical nexus between economic dependency and cultural imperialism in L. Chin-Chuan, "Economic Dependency and Cultural Imperialism," in L. Chin-Chuan, *Media Imperialism Reconsidered: The Homogenizing of Television Culture* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1980).

²⁸For a good discussion of the cultural impact of DBS technology, see Y. Littunen, "Cultural Problems of Direct Satellite Broadcasting," *International Social Science Journal* 32, no. 2 (1980): 283-303.

²⁹C. Hamelink, *Cultural Autonomy in Global Communication: Planning National Information Policy* (New York: Longman, 1983), sees cultural dissociation rooted in a firm national information policy as an antidote to cultural synchronization. The concept of cultural dissociation, to him, comes as an active choice for information policy makers against imitation of foreign cultural systems adequate for a country's specific environment.

that, of course, a necessary institutional infra- and suprastructure will have to be provided. This institutional resource structure, which may be called a National Institute of Mass Communication Policy and Research (NIMCPR), will have to be of a multidisciplinary nature because mass communication research, unlike sociology or psychology, is a "variable-field" that shifts levels of analysis and borrows the best concepts from level-fields of sociology, psychology, anthropology, and political science. In other words, Muslim sociologists, psychologists, social statisticians, and even semiologists of substance will have to be represented in the institution if it is to really assist communication researchers.

Structurally, the NIMCPR will have to be integrated with such video-media elements of Pakistan's culture industry as PTV and probably a national council of VCR, cinema production, and imports. The dramatized productions of these institutions will need to be carried out in a research and development mode in accordance with the NIMCPR's policy and research needs.

Its primary research agenda would be to develop and test, through research and development, an ISP index employing perhaps a two-pronged research strategy: a) to monitor, profile, and arrange the introduction into society of a high ISP-content message system, and b) to determine the long-term cultivation effects through theoretically grounded audience surveys. This two-pronged strategy implies an integrated research strategy as well as an integrated "research and transmission strategy" followed by audience surveys for a cultivation analysis of the results. The ensuing data will then be used by the NIMCPR to develop an ISP index. There is, moreover, a strong feeling among communication research experts that the powerful social effects of mass media inputs are more likely to occur within developing societies where conditions of content-monopolization or government control of contents often exist, or where there is little or no opposition in the mass media to the diffusion of values and public images.³⁰ The implication here is that the culture industry has to be relatively free of the content-determining influence of the commercial interests and capitalist forces of a market economy and then made subservient to the NIMCPR's cultural diffusion and Islamic enculturation imperatives.

Some Approaches to Developing an ISP Index

No concept can be reliably and validly measured or operationalized

³⁰P. Lazarsfeld and R. Merton, "Mass Communication, Popular Taste, and Organized Social Action," in *The Communication of Ideas*, ed. L. Bryson (New York: Institute of Religious and Social Studies, 1948): 573-4.

without an adequate prior conceptual explication. Hence before an index (which is nothing but an operational definition or measurement criterion of a concept at a lower order of abstraction) can be formulated, an exhaustive conceptualization of the ISP concept as implied by our theoretical proposition is in order.

In preliminary terms, we can at least suggest an outline of the concept's boundaries. The acronym "ISP" may be defined as the aggregate capacity of the message system of entertainment video, or dramatized entertainment through the video-media, to create a positive affect for Islamic culture among viewers and/or create in them a sense of identification with it. The ISP of a message system is by no means a substitute for the message of Islam as contained in its earliest sources, but rather the ability of the entertainment video's message system to clearly link its fiction-based production with Islam's sociocultural, politicoeconomic, and moral and value systems which figure in an individual's and/or a group's daily functioning and their interrelationships within and across societies.

For example, an instance of ISP may be said to have occurred when a message system demonstrates the viability, success, and universality of Islamic values in an event- and/or problem-based struggle of competing values. It is only when audience members see the virtue of such Islamic values as power, efficiency, honesty, social unity, brotherhood, knowledge, achievement, and so on demonstrated, and when they see the roles tangibly rewarded and role-models properly enacted, that cultivation or enculturation through the gradual internalization of values is likely to take effect. Moreover, another instance of ISP will result from a credible portrayal of a collective pattern of organic casting, characterization, and fate. A steady, repetitive, and continual depiction of the symbolic triumph of Islamic values coupled with its abstract cognitive presentation is likely to slowly deconstruct the alternative conceptions of non- or anti-Islamic social reality, its normative and value structures and prescriptions, and its aura of invincibility as the ultimate antidote to the problems of modern civilization.

At a higher level of abstraction, the concept is nevertheless subsumed into the broader concepts of Islamic theology, eschatology, and philosophy. However, it does become a distinct dimension in itself at a lower order in the form of common communal, societal, familial, and filial value-manifestations defining, determining, and ordering human relations at the individual, collective, state, and global levels. In a sense, the ISP of a message system becomes evident in the fictional struggle of cultures portrayed through the dramatized entertainment of the video-media, a fictional video-world which will be required to progressively encompass a range of human values ordering contemporaneous human relations at all levels in the contemporary world.

To sum up, the conceptual boundaries of an ISP may be said to be determinable from the following:

- 1) An ISP is a symbolic capacity of not just a single programming unit but of the entire message system to be infused into a society through the entertainment video component of the mass media. Its objective is the Islamic enculturation of audience members.
- 2) It is not synonymous with or a surrogate for Islamic theology, philosophy, and eschatology, although it does share a broad relationship with these.
- 3) At a lower order of abstraction, it is manifested in the event-and/or problem-based symbolic demonstration of the Islamic value system in the fictional struggle of cultures portrayed in the entertainment video programming.
- 4) It is absorbed via an aggregate, repetitive, continual, and accretive pattern of the credible symbolic triumph of Islamic culture, its values, roles, and role models. This creates an aggregate positive affect among audience members of an intensity that simply needs, if at all, cognitive inputs for a social manifestation of conation.
- 5) These cultural values will need to be enacted through an aggregate pattern of casting, characterization, and fate (i.e., elements of existence and structure of human relationships including assumptions, contexts, and points of view).

Operational Implications for the Index

The above attempt at an ISP conceptualization has several implications for its valid operationalization. First, the index has to be multilayered and multidimensional, and probably additive, for it has to capture a wide variety of distinctive and common values, roles, and production characteristics as well as the attributes of programs, themes, story-situations, and roles. It must also be able to handle such casting dimensions as characterization types and images along with their depths and frequency of portrayals.

A second, and of course challenging, job would be to identify sets of values general enough to encompass many specific classes of value-enactments, such as behaviors and other verbal and nonverbal statements and contexts. Since that would require a high level of creative abstraction and selection, it is therefore quite a challenge in its own right for Muslim social scientists.

Some directions in this regard can be found in the work on human values done by Western scholars like the anthropologist Kluckhohn, who considers values to be conceptions that influence the selection from available alternative modes, means, and ends of actions by individuals and groups.³¹ Rokeach speaks of terminal values, by which he means desirable ends, and instrumental values, by which he means preferred modes and means.³² While Rokeach's classification of values into means and ends is conceptually appealing, it fails to give any role to values in regulating human psychological functioning and the structure of social relations. For example, Chu and his colleagues view values not just as conceptions of the desirable but also as the "fundamental building blocks of the cognitive, affiliative, and social dimensions of human experience."³³

A decision will also have to be made concerning the terms of analysis to be used for a video-message system. Although there could be any number of strategies, probably a creative combination of the terms of analysis—duly modified by our objective of developing an ISP index—employed by the CI message system analysis approach,³⁴ Chu et al.'s approach of modes of value analysis,³⁵ and Fiske and Hartley's semiological analysis approach of signification would perhaps be useful.³⁶ Combining all of these with a close laboratory or field experiment setting that might employ test measurement procedures in a pretest-posttest experimental research design might also prove useful.

At any rate, CI researchers begin by addressing the question of general terms of collective cultivation concerning existence, priorities, values, and relationships given in collectively shared public message systems. Their main terms of analytical measures, which imply considerable heuristic value for developing an ISP index are: 1) attention, 2) emphasis, 3) tendency, and 4) structure.³⁷ Attention is the result of the selection of phenomena to be observed. A measure of attention is an indication of the presence and frequency of subject elements (i.e., topics, themes, values, and so on) in a message system. Emphasis establishes a context of priorities of importance or relevance. The context of emphasis sets out a field of differential appeal for audience members

³¹C. Kluckhohn, "Values and Value Orientations in Theory of Action," in *Toward a General Theory of Action*, ed. T. Parsons and E. Shils (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952).

³²M. Rokeach, *The Nature of Human Values* (New York: The Free Press, 1973).

³³G. Chu, Alfian, and M. Pabottinggi, "Cultural Values in Television Drama," (Paper presented to an East-West Center workshop on Evaluation and Planning for Satellite Communication Research, Honolulu, July 1979, p. 3).

³⁴See G. Gerbner, op. cit., (1969): 144-6.

³⁵See G. Chu et al., op. cit., (1979): 3-4.

³⁶J. Fiske and J. Hartley, op. cit., (1978): 59-67, 88-100.

³⁷G. Gerbner, op. cit., (1969): 144.

in which certain things are emphasized. Measures of emphasis feature certain topics and/or themes and/or values as the major points of the entertainment video's fictional world. Tendency broadly refers to the directionality of presentation and the explicit or contextual judgment of qualities of phenomena expressed in the presentation.

Gerbner distinguishes between a critical tendency (i.e., an overall measure of the favorable-unfavorable judgment in the comparative study of message systems) and a differential tendency (i.e., one indicating a directionality of judgment in several different dimensions). Structure, on the other hand, is that aspect of the presentation's context which reveals relationships among elements.³⁸

Structure may reveal "causal" or "proximal" relationships which are called "clustering." Gerbner and his colleagues chose to focus on proximal structuring and tried to explicate the "implicit" logic in clustering as a property of a large message system not easily available to scrutiny. For example, Gerbner notes:

. . . the reasoning employed in the assertion that "John loves Mary and will marry her" (whether expressed in a sentence, a story, a series of visual images etc.) is apparent in that single statement. But if we compare two large message systems and find that the proximal occurrences of the words or concepts of "love" and "marry" are significantly more frequent in one than in the other, we have discovered an element of comparative linkage or structure, and a kind of "logic" that would not be revealed by inspecting propositions.³⁹

On the other hand, Chu et al. have identified three modes of value analysis for the content of television drama: thematic analysis, holistic value analysis, and critical incident analysis. In a thematic analysis, the unit is a value theme explicitly stated during a character's dialogue in a "value statement." However, "descriptive statements" are excluded. In a holistic value analysis, a story is studied in its entirety for an understanding of its major values. For this, coders first identify the major characters in each play and ascertain their relationship(s) to each other. Each character's value orientations are then subjectively identified, after which value conflicts and their resolution are analyzed. The third mode of analysis, critical incident analysis, involves dividing a play into several critical incidents considered essential to the plot.

³⁸Ibid., 146.

³⁹Ibid.

Each incident consists of interactions among several characters who form a clearly delineated unit. The coders can then analyze the values expressed by an individual character within each critical incident to see what the values are, whether there are value conflicts, and how they are resolved.⁴⁰ Fiske and Hartley's semiological approach relates the theory of semiotics to the practical world of television. They show how TV and film production techniques can be used to construct "denotative" and "connotative" meanings around "signs" through the use of such semiotical techniques as metaphors, metonyms, paradigms, and syntagmas to achieve "first order," "second order," and "third order" signification.

Therefore, to create a message system for Pakistan's entertainment video industry and to develop an index which can reliably measure the ISP of a message system and which has face and content validity, if not construct validity to begin with, a researcher must draw upon the best elements of the above approaches. The three operational strategies mentioned above may not be looked at as alternate or competing methods, but perhaps as methods which tap different points of the manifest-latent content and reality continuum. Whereas Chu et al. confine themselves to coding various ranges of manifest values (or in Gerbner's jargon "causal structures") in dialogue, Fiske and Hartley deal overridingly with the connotative or symbolic or "proximal structures." The CI message system analysis strategy tries to span both the manifest and the symbolic in its three-tiered broad coding instrument of programs, characters, and violent incidents.

However, their coding instrument fails to tap any explicit dimension of character or program values, as they rather infer these from the structural dimension implicit in the character and violent incident instruments. Nevertheless, the CI use of personality differential scales to identify the key differences between the violent and the nonviolent, between those who had a happy fate and those who did not, and between the killers and the killed is instructive. The use of value differential bipolar scales for the major characters, along with a measure of both manifest and latent "Muslimness" as implicit in nonverbal cues and context orientations, might enhance the content validity of the prospective index.

Additionally, attention will have to be given in the proposed index to capturing the images of family structures and relations in addition to portraying the major characters' relationship and interaction with other sociologically extant groupings in contemporary society such as schools, peer groups, and occupational and professional groupings.

The above discussion of the possible dimensions to be considered for

⁴⁰G. Chu et al., *op. cit.*, (1979): 3.

inclusion in the prospective index is intuitive at best and is not based on any pretense of completeness. Exactly what items should be included or what weight should be given to which dimension or sets of items in the ultimate composite index has to evolve from a sustained program of message system analysis and cultivation research probably in a research and development format, triangulating content analysis with experimental and survey research designs and utilizing such sophisticated statistical techniques as item analysis, factor analysis (allowing due consideration to factor-rotation procedures), cluster analysis, and multidimensional scaling procedures.

**من إصدارات المعهد العالمي
للفكر الإسلامي**

**الخطاب العربي المعاصر
للأستاذ
فادي إسماعيل**

تقديم د. طه جابر العلواني



تبشر هذه الرسالة بولادة تيار المستقبل الفكري للأمة،
الذي يستوعب حقائق العصر ويفهم دلالات التراث الإسلامي
وقيمه، ويولد التراكمات الفكرية والثقافية التي يحتاجها جيل
الصحة الإسلامية المعاصرة.

غلاف عادي: ٧٫٩٥ دولاراً

١٨٠ صفحة