



EUROPA
TELEVISION:
THE
FORGOTTEN
CHANNEL

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Abstract

Armed with the slogan 'From Europe, for Europe', the first European television channel went to war against (commercial) American television in 1985. Satellite technology had made it possible for broadcasters to reach audiences beyond national borders. Afraid of losing their hold on their national audiences, European national broadcasters joined forces and founded 'Europa Television'. Together they set out to bring high quality television to the European people, to counter commercial pulp. Despite the channel's original optimism, it lost the battle after only thirteen months of broadcasting. Millions in funds were lost and the book on the channel was closed. Yet, over thirty years later, the dream of European television has not died. When the European Commission published 'Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture' in November 2017, it had a special role in mind for television. The Commission believed a European television channel could bring Europeans together. With the likelihood of a revival of a European channel, this is a timely investigation into the little researched Europa Television project.

Europa Television was a European broadcasting initiative of the public broadcasters the ARD (Germany), NOS (the Netherlands), RAI (Italy), RTE (Ireland), RTP (Portugal) that aired from October 1st, 1985 until November 27th, 1986. The channel broadcasted from Hilversum, the Netherlands. This master thesis answers the question of how the channel's identity was shaped through negotiations that helped build and break it. A special emphasis is placed on how the channel tried to create a European identity. Identity is considered as dynamic, the result of construction and as a negotiation between competing narratives of different actors and factors. In order to study these identity negotiations, Dutch newspaper articles, radio and television broadcasts, Europa Television records and, for the first time ever, Europa Television broadcasts were used.

As Europa Television came into being in the midst of the European Economic Communities' (EEC) attempts at creating a European identity, other studies have emphasized the EEC's role in the project. This thesis argues that claims of its heavy influence are exaggerated as the EEC had little impact on the project, notwithstanding friendly words of encouragement and a small one-time donation. Instead, it argues that the Dutch government played a crucial role in the channel's birth and demise, a role which other authors have neglected to

acknowledge. Supporting of the channel with millions of guilders, the Dutch government played a fundamental part in the channel's founding, yet their desire to protect the Dutch television system soon placed Europa Television in a difficult (financial) position.

This thesis shows that Europa Television lacked a clear identity. The channel's vague, multi-interpretable policy plans lacked direction and caused confusion among staff. Europa Television was a European channel in name but had neither defined what it considered to be European television, nor who their European audience was. The channel tried to create a sense of European identity for its viewers by emphasising a common past and religion, as well as through informing viewers about differences between cultures in Europe. However, claims that describe the channel as propaganda do not correspond with the results of the channel's images analysis. Moreover, this analysis showed a mixed representation of positive and negative images on the European Economic Community and European cooperation. This thesis also shows that there was an irreconcilable divide within the Europa Television about the commercial nature of the channel. Some actors wished to reach a niche audience with high culture programming, while other actors wanted to reach larger audiences with more popular programmes. Its mission to fight Americanization was neglected by the channel as much of its programming was American.

Finally, the thesis argues that through Europa Television experienced many setbacks from external factors and actors, the channel was not ruined through negotiations, but doomed from the start due to its flawed set up.

Keywords: European television, European identity, identity negotiation, identity dynamics, organizational identity, Europa-TV, transnational television, Dutch broadcasting.

Acknowledgements

*No man is an island
Entire of itself
Every man is a piece of the continent
A part of the main.*

John Donne was on to something when he wrote the poem quoted above in 1624. As no man is an island, I would like to thank everyone who has assisted me in writing my thesis.

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Chapter 1: The Rise and Consequences of Transnational Television

1.1 Introduction

Over the years, the European Union (EU) has supported many initiatives to create a European identity. One of these was Europa Television, the result of a consortium of five European Broadcasting Union members: the Dutch NOS, the German ARD, the Irish RTE, the Italian RAI and the Portuguese RPT. Through negotiations that were determined by European and national laws, conflicting interests and ambitions, a European channel was created in 1985. For one year, it broadcasted programmes from its studios in Hilversum.

In order to learn more about the phenomenon Europa-TV, its identity will be studied. Identity can be explained as the result of construction and as a negotiation between competing narratives of different actors and factors. It is therefore not static, but dynamic. Europa-TV is studied with a specific interest on how the project tried to create a European identity. To analyse these negotiations the actual broadcasts, the product of these negotiations, were studied, as well as the negotiations themselves both in the public and private sphere. The following question will be answered in this master thesis: how was Europa Television's identity shaped through negotiations that helped build and break the channel? To answer this question the following sub questions will be answered: 1) What do Europa-TV's images reveal about its identity? 2) In what way were Europa-TV's policies affected by different stakeholders?

Even though the Europa-TV project failed over thirty years ago, the idea of a European television channel is still very much alive for the European Union. Transnational initiatives have been used to strengthen European identity and the Union has expressed a desire to continue to support them in the future. In November 2017 the European Commission (EC) published the plan called 'Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture'. Television plays a key role in this plan, specifically the Euronews channel. The Commission has expressed its desire to 'Europeanize' and enforce the channel through financial means to combat fake news and bring Europeans together.¹ Without being a shareholder, the EU funds 36% of the channel's budget. Currently the Union is concerned

¹ European Commission. "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture The European Commission's Contribution to the Leaders' Meeting in Gothenburg," November 17, 2017, 12.

about the lack of diversity of the channel and regrets the decreased involvement of public broadcasters and the high level of non-EU private broadcasters and investors involved in the channel. In order to support quality journalism, media freedom, pluralism and transparency the Union would like to reflect and decide on the future ambitions of the channel together with the European Parliament (EP).² With the likelihood of a revival of a transnational channel this is a timely investigation into the little researched Europa-TV project.

Europa-TV was a pan-European broadcasting initiative of the public broadcasters ARD (Germany), NOS (the Netherlands), RAI (Italy), RTE (Ireland), RTP (Portugal) that aired from October 1st, 1985 until November 27th, 1986. It wished to provide sports, entertainment and news from a European perspective. The project was financed through contributions of the European Commission, the participating broadcasters, the Dutch government and through advertising revenue. The Dutch government was involved because Europa-TV was located in Hilversum and used NOS' facilities. The project was originally only broadcasted in the Netherlands to a limited number of Dutch households. Later, the project was aired via satellite yet failed to reach some European countries as they refused to cooperate. The channel was estimated to reach 4.5 million households in Europa on its highpoint. Eventually, severe financial troubles led to the demise of the project within 13 months.

Eurikon was Europa-TV's predecessor, a five-week experiment of the European Broadcasting Union that was executed in 1982. The project attempted to create pan-European television and was a collaboration of five public broadcasters, supported by the European Commission, namely RAI (Italy), ORF (Austria), NOS (the Netherlands), ARD (Germany) and IBA (UK). The broadcasts reached fifteen participating countries and was watched by a selected, invited audience with an intention to educate, entertain and inform from a European perspective. The project is of importance to research on Europa-TV as the channel's policies were modeled after the experiment, and some of the discussions about Europa-TV date back to *Eurikon*.

² European Commission, "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture The European Commission's Contribution to the Leaders' Meeting in Gothenburg.", 10 – 14.

1.2 Theoretical concepts and their context

In order to get a better understanding of Europa-TV and the context it was created in, the following texts will inform the reader of the development of the European broadcasting market and satellite television, the European Community's endeavours to create European memory and identity, and give an overview of literature written about Europa-TV. The key concepts employed in this master thesis will thus be explained within the context they are used in.

1.2.1. European Community on memory and identity

Since the end of the Second World War, politicians and intellectuals have tried to create a master narrative that could support the European project by creating a sense of a common past. A challenge that Jürgen Habermas worded as the idea that 'the citizens of one nation must regard the citizens of another nation as 'fundamentally one of us.''³ At the Copenhagen summit of 1973, the creation of European identity became a permanent point on the European Union's political agenda.⁴ Yet the result was limited to 'European citizen rights', for all citizens of member states. From 1979 onwards these European citizens gained the right to vote for the members of the European Parliament.⁵ Following Benedict Anderson's depiction of the nation as an 'imagined political community', the European identity is constructed just as the identity of any of its member states.⁶ The act of constructing takes place through narrative, in this there is not one meta-perspective that can totalize all experiences. Therefore, a narrative identity is one of pluralities.⁷ Ascribing to certain collective identities is an active, individual choice, which Anderson captures with the adjective *imagined*.⁸ In addition, the concept encompasses a number of characteristics of the community. First, even though an individual can never know all Europeans she can still

³ Chiara De Cesari and Ann Rigney, eds., *Transnational Memory: Circulation, Articulation, Scales* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 341.

⁴ Ib Bondebjerg and Peter Golding, eds., *European Culture and the Media, Changing Media--Changing Europe Series*, v. 1 (Bristol ; Portland, Or: Intellect, 2004), 12.

⁵ Derek Benjamin Heater, *A Brief History of Citizenship* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 104.

⁶ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised edition (London New York: Verso, 2016), 5-7.

⁷ Henry Venema. "Paul Ricoeur on Refigurative reading and Narrative identity." *Symposium IV* (2000): 237-248.

⁸ European Commission, and Robert Miller. "The Development of European Identity/Identities," August 2012, 5.

subscribe to being one. Second, an individual can choose to belong to several communities at the same time. Third, the importance of belonging can shift according to a specific issue, social context, and/or audience.⁹ This relates to the observation that human consciousness is a patchwork of an awareness of all kinds of identifications.¹⁰ As Aline Sierp points out, transnational European memory culture does not necessarily require that the local and national memory cultures are erased, but rather that the framework allows for diverging memories to be expressed and dealt with in a different way.¹¹

However identity is not just a construction in the mind, it is also manifested in reality. Anderson notes that three institutions -census, maps and the museum- have greatly contributed to the creation of national identities.¹² Others emphasise the importance of novels, plays, monuments, debates, films, academic scholarship, rituals, ceremonies and other cultural practices as expressions of identity. For example, the volume 'Performing the Past' edited by the historians Karin Tilmans, Frank van Vree, Jay Winter eds. explains how performative acts of remembrance are an essential way for collective identity formation and reiteration.¹³ In his essay 'Identity and Identity awareness' historian Willem Frijhoff makes the interesting argument that identity refers to not just an imagined community, but also to an actual group of people that formulate and enforces rules of belonging, role fulfilment and exclusion. Actions therefore also shape identity. As he puts it 'identity may be an imagined reality, if it wishes to be believable, it needs a minimum of interaction with "reality".'¹⁴ This reality also ensures that an individual is not completely free in constructing their own identity. Regardless of your actions, people form images that they subscribe to the individual. These assigned images interact with the self-image. Therefore identity should be studied as the interaction of perception, the identity awareness, and societal action.¹⁵ In other words, your self-presentation, how you see yourself and to which identity frames you

⁹ Richard K. Herrmann, Thomas Risse-Kappen, and Marilyn B. Brewer, eds., *Transnational Identities: Becoming European in the EU, Governance in Europe*. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 4-5.

¹⁰ Pim den Boer, *Europa: de geschiedenis van een idee*, 6th ed. (Amsterdam: Bakker, 2009), 17.

¹¹ Aline Sierp, *History, Memory, and Trans-European Identity: Unifying Divisions*, Routledge Studies in Modern European History 23 (New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2014).

¹² Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 163-185.

¹³ Karin Tilmans, Frank van Vree, and Jay Murray Winter, eds., *Performing the Past: Memory, History, and Identity in Modern Europe* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 1-23.

¹⁴ Willem Frijhoff, 'Identiteit en identiteitsbesef. De historicus en de spanning tussen verbeelding, benoeming en herkenning', *BMGN bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 107, no. 4 (1 January 1992): 614-34, 625.

¹⁵ Frijhoff, 'Identiteit en identiteitsbesef. De historicus en de spanning tussen verbeelding, benoeming en herkenning', 614-34.

are drawn, and identity frames, the social frames in which someone grows up, interact and influence each other.¹⁶ If we take a European identity as an example of how identity also manifests in reality, the 'Europe Day' on May 9th is a good example. On this day the European Union wishes its citizens to celebrate 'peace and unity in Europe', as on that day in 1950 Robert Schuman presented his ideas for European cooperation. The ideas that policy makers would like associated with the European Union, like peaceful cooperation and democracy, are celebrated in real life through various activities.¹⁷ Europa-TV was another example of European identity manifested in reality. To learn more about the phenomenon, both form and content are important. Therefore this thesis will not only look at the ideas and ideals for Europa-TV but also look at the actual broadcasts.

By the 1980s the construction of a European identity had been accelerated. For example, on an administrative level through the creation of symbols such as the Union flag and a European anthem. In 1982, the European Parliament called for pan-European broadcasting for they felt that it could contribute to creating more popular support, further political integration, and the development of 'European statehood'.¹⁸ In 1984 the European Council started to promote the idea of 'People's Europe / Europe des Citoyens', who were legible for a symbolic EC passport.¹⁹ According to the European Parliament, journalists had to learn to 'think European' to prevent the 'predominance of negative reporting' due to 'the control of mass media on a national level'.²⁰ Finally, the quest for a common 'European Culture' was pushed forward by the Maastricht treaty of 1992.²¹ The treaty defined European citizenship by giving and defining the political rights of its citizens, such as free travel and residence, the right to petition parliament, protection by diplomatic and consular authorities of any member state in a third country and the right to vote and stand for election for the European Parliament in the Member state where he or she resides.²²

¹⁶ Maria Grever and Kees Ribbens, *Nationale identiteit en meervoudig verleden* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007), 21-22.

¹⁷ Anonymous, "EUROPA - Europe Day," Text, European Union, June 16, 2016, https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/europe-day_en.

¹⁸ Karen Donders, Caroline Pauwels, and Jan Loisen, *The Palgrave Handbook of European Media Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 131.

¹⁹ Heater, *A Brief History of Citizenship*, 104.

²⁰ Donders, Pauwels, and Loisen, *The Palgrave Handbook of European Media Policy*, 172.

²¹ Bondebjerg and Golding, *European Culture and the Media*, 12.

²² Heater, *A Brief History of Citizenship*, 103-105.

A recent example of an effort to create a European identity can be found at the House of European History. The museum strives to show European Culture through Europe's past, by displaying 'the shared past and diverse experiences of European people' and the 'common ground in European history.'²³ The museum shows that identity is constructed through government officials' desire to remember or cherish certain memories collectively. This makes it an example of what Anderson and Hobsbawm described as the construction of collective memory as an invention of traditions from above. In contrast, this thesis will have a more dynamic approach to memory and identity. Following Barbara Misztal, collective memory and identities are regarded as being shaped by the 'ongoing process of negotiation' between different actors from above and bottom up.²⁴ Identity can be seen as the outcome of multiple and competing discourses and memories. Memory can be instrumentalized by political élites, yet there is also space for 'the possibility of an alternative way of understanding experience.'²⁵ This approach sees identity conceptualised as being neither stable nor constant, because of its base, the content of a group's collective memory, can change. This temporal dimension makes that social identities are regarded as being historical.²⁶ The dynamic approach to identity is incorporated into this master thesis as it studies the extent to which Europa-TV was shaped by negotiations on identity issues.

While many academics dispute the existence of a European identity, the concept is still often used in academic texts. According to Bondebjerg and Golding, Europeans share a common heritage of 'democracy, Enlightenment values, science, reason, and individualism'. Moreover, this identity is rooted in a 'common Greco-Roman tradition', making European culture 'culture of the mind'.²⁷ De Cesari and Rigney believe that the European Union attempted to create European citizens by incorporating national identities in a transnational framework. They claim this process will not be easy as there exists a strong nexus between memory and national identity.²⁸

²³ "Mission & Vision | House of European History." Accessed December 10, 2017. <https://historia-europa.ep.eu/en/mission-vision>.

²⁴ Barbara Misztal, *Theories of Social Remembering*, 1 edition (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2003), 67.

²⁵ Misztal, *Theories of Social Remembering*, 68.

²⁶ Ibidem, 67-74.

²⁷ Bondebjerg and Golding, *European Culture and the Media*, 12.

²⁸ De Cesari and Rigney, *Transnational Memory*, 342.

According to De Cesari and Rigney there is a strong connection between the future of Europe and its past. The importance of the Union is always connected to the devastation of the World Wars. The prevention of a war between France and Germany was key during the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community. While being bound to this gruesome past, Ernest Renan deems it just as important that some memories are forgotten. To create unity, Europeans must selectively 'forget' the histories that divide them and only remember those that connect them. This process has been performed in the European nation states and Renan felt it could be duplicated on a larger scale.²⁹ European identity has been linked to the idea of reconciliation both through memory and integration. Therefore memories of conflict have to be remembered in a way that acknowledges its horrors, while also changing its effect and meaning. This explains important (older) European narratives such as 'collective, transnational resistance against fascism' and 'defender of democratic values and universal human rights'. These positive narratives were countered, as a growing awareness of the Holocaust became a negative benchmark for European identity.³⁰

According to De Cesari and Rigney *Europe* represents different realities that can overlap: a geographical area, European institutions and also 'an imagined community based on shared values and traditions against a background of linguistic and ethnic diversity.'³¹ To complicate matters, different European institutions have a varying reach, for example the European Union, the Eurozone, the Schengen area and the European Broadcasting Union have different participants. Thus Europe is 'a social formation [that is] a legal and imagined frame' with 'multiple internal and external borders', that are neither national nor global, with fuzzy linguistic, cultural and mnemonic borders.³² As long as countries are free to join and leave the European Union, the Union and its citizens will have to continue to redraw their mental boundaries of what Europe is and who are citizens.³³ Berezin and Schian point out that this sharply contrasts with traditional ideas of nation, where the nation is limited to

²⁹ De Cesari and Rigney, *Transnational Memory*, 343-344.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, 344-348.

³¹ *Ibidem*, 350.

³² *Ibidem*, 350.

³³ Bondebjerg and Golding, *European Culture and the Media*, 13.

a territory. Moreover, in the European Union, nationality and citizenship do not necessarily coincide.³⁴

Krishan Kumar states one cannot speak of a European identity but claims that there is 'no doubt' that there is a European culture, with Christianity as its main basis. This criterion allows Russia to be part of Europe. Yet according to Kumar, religion has divided Europe also, as orthodoxy prevented part of Europe to 'share in the cultural experiences of the Renaissance, the Reformation, Scientific Revolution, and the Enlightenment.'³⁵ The Industrial Revolution further divided Europe just as Communism and the Cold War has done.³⁶ These dividing markers continue to make it difficult to create a single European memory culture because national and regional memories diverge.

1.2.2 Development of European broadcasting market and satellite television

At the time Europa-TV aired, broadcasting was largely dominated by the national monopolist and by national regulations. From 1920 to the late 1980's broadcasting was a public service in Europe. Television was thus closely linked to the country's culture and politics while depending on government funding.³⁷ In this context, Europa-TV's existence and success depended on national regulatory policies as well. Broadcasting regulations had been debated upon in the EP and the EC throughout the 80's. Yet, the regulatory role of the EU on broadcasting did not change until 1987, when power was transferred away from national governments.

The demise of Europa-TV did not mean the end of all pan-European projects. In 1987 members of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) created a European sports channel. This theme channel received more enthusiasm from England and was supported by the BBC.³⁸ Eurosport continues to run to this day. In 1993 the EBU created the EuroNews channel with the help of its members in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, France, Belgium, Finland, Monaco, Cyprus and Egypt. Contrary to Europa-TV, EuroNews did not have the ambition to broadcast

³⁴ Professor Mabel Berezin and Professor Martin Schain, eds., *Europe without Borders: Remapping Territory, Citizenship, and Identity in a Transnational Age* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 1-7.

³⁵ Krishan Kumar in Berezin and Schain, *Europe without Borders*, 33-63, 33.

³⁶ Kumar, *Europe without Borders*, 33-63.

³⁷ Donders, Pauwels, and Loisen, *The Palgrave Handbook of European Media Policy*, 130.

³⁸ Kenneth Dyson, Peter Humphreys, and Ralph Negrine, *Broadcasting and New Media Policies in Western Europe*, 1 edition (London: Routledge, 1988), 55.

news delivered from a European perspective. News is covered by national broadcasters and distributed to the EuroNews studio in Lyon. There the staff selects the items that it wants to air and adds an English, French, German, Spanish and Italian soundtrack. Since 1995 49 percent of its shares have been in the hands of commercial broadcasters and private investors, making it semi-commercial.³⁹

Theoretically, Europa-TV can be approached through the concept of *transnationalism*, which De Cesari and Rigney define as: ‘recognition of the significance of national frameworks alongside the potential of cultural producing both to reinforce and to transcend them.’⁴⁰ This allows for the analysis of interplay and tensions between culture and institutions and cross-border relationships that span beyond nation-states.⁴¹ An important aspect of transnationalism is the heightened interconnectivity between people and the receding economic and social significance of boundaries among nation states.⁴² Rebecca Friedman and Markus Thiels’ book ‘European identity and Culture, narratives of transnational belonging’ equates transnational identity with European identity which takes form through ‘cultural expressions and attitudes that transcend borders’.⁴³ As a concept, transnationalism does not need to be limited to ‘European’ cultural expressions, and historian Derek Heater distinguishes a higher category of belonging, namely world citizenship. Yet, unlike European citizenship, this world citizenship is more a figure of speech that carries not a legal or political status.⁴⁴ Transnationalism was first conceptualized to counter ‘methodical nationalism’ in memory studies.⁴⁵ Yet it is strongly connected to nation-states, as Riva Kastoryano points out. While supranational institutions such as the European Union challenge nation states, the Union has become a nation state on a transnational scale. Its attempts to influence the state through transnationalism is paradoxical. Even if ‘external communities’ beyond the nation-state are formed, states are still ‘indispensable structures

³⁹ Tobias Theiler, “Viewers into Europeans?: How the European Union Tried to Europeanize the Audiovisual Sector, and Why It Failed,” *Canadian Journal of Communication* 24, no. 4, 8-9.

⁴⁰ De Cesari and Rigney, *Transnational Memory*, 4-5.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, 4-5.

⁴² Steven Vertovec, ‘Transnationalism and Identity’, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27, no. 4 (1 October 2001): 573–82.

⁴³ Rebecca Friedman and Markus Thiel, eds., *European Identity and Culture: Narratives of Transnational Belongings*, Studies in Migration and Disapora (Burlington, Vt. ; Farnham, Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2011), 2.

⁴⁴ Heater, *A Brief History of Citizenship*, 103-112.

⁴⁵ Astrid Erll, “Traumatic Pasts, Literary Afterlives, and Transcultural Memory: New Directions of Literary and Media Memory Studies,” *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture* 3, no. 1 (January 1, 2011): 7186.

for negotiation of collective identities and interest with the national public authorities.’ Moreover, Kastoryano points out that transnational networks have it as their objective to ‘reinforce its representation at the European level, but its practical goal is recognition at the national level.’⁴⁶ While acknowledging that transnationalism is not limited to Europe, in this thesis transnationalism will refer to actions and attitudes that transcend European Economic Community (EEC) individual member states but are limited to the borders of the EEC.

Secondary literature on Europa-TV regularly employs transnationalism of concepts akin to it. In his book ‘Transnational Television in Europe’, Jean Chalaby regularly substitutes the word *transnational* with *international* or *pan-European*. Although not defining transnationalism, he categorises *cross-border news channels* in three degrees. First, the channels that ‘tell stories beyond their border’, which are CNN International, BBC World News and AL Jazeera. Second, those that ‘tell stories within their borders’, such as EuroNews and Sky News. Third, channels that ‘tell stories about their borders’, for example Deutsche Welle-TV, France24.⁴⁷ Though strictly, Europa-TV was not a news channel, this categorization can also be applied to general transnational channels that existed in 1985. Thus, Europa-TV can be assumed to be a channel that tells stories within its borders, whereas the American CNN, the English Sky Channel and the French TV5 were channels that told stories that went beyond their borders.

In their book ‘Europe without Borders’, Berezin and Schain mention Yasemin Soysal’s description of what she calls transnational and post national identities, where people living in nation states ‘draw resources for group identity of universalist discourse of human rights and international organizations and movements. [...] A new mode of membership, anchored in the universalistic rights of personhood, transgresses the national order of things.’⁴⁸ Soyal’s theory is formed in the context of immigrants and minorities, but it could be applied to the European Union as well, especially as the EU continues to strip away part of the nation states control over its citizens.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Riva Kastoryano in Berezin and Schain, *Europe without Borders*, 80-81.

⁴⁷ Jean K. Chalaby, *Transnational Television in Europe: Reconfiguring Global Communications Networks* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2009), 173.

⁴⁸ Berezin and Schain, *Europe without Borders*, 244.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, 33-43

1.2.3. Europa-TV

Turning to the study of Europa-TV, it should be stated that available research on the topic is scarce. Europa Television is empirically studied within the context of media studies, but also studied in more theoretical, conceptual studies on identity. First the media studies context will be discussed. Europa-TV is mostly mentioned in a by-line or small paragraph. For example in journalist Ruud Overdijk's book on the development of (tele)communication and the role of digital techniques, or Kevin Grieves' academic work 'Transnational Journalism in Europe'.⁵⁰ From the end of the 1980's and during the 1990's, most authors mentioned the failure of the channel in the wider context of the development of the European broadcasting market and the development of satellite and commercial channels.

Around the turn of the century scholars used Europa-TV in their conceptual studies of transnational identity, *Europäisierung*, and European identity. Europa-TV is researched in two contexts: as an example of the (lack of) development of the European Public Sphere through media policy and as an example of transnational or European identity creation. Most of these works are based on the work of three men: Tobias Theiler, Richard Collins and Stylianos Papathanassopoulos.⁵¹

Richard Collins is a Communication and Media scholar whose book explores the television's role in fostering European cultural identity and the way public broadcasters responded to the challenges of new communication technologies. 'From Satellite to Single Market' describes how satellite television introduces competition from commercial television in Europe. He writes how public broadcasters, together with the help of the European Broadcasting Union, responded to this challenge by launching their own satellite channels. These channels Eurikon, Europa-TV, Eurosport and Euronews, are to serve as alternatives to commercial satellite television. His book is based on primary sources,

⁵⁰ Ruud Overdijk, *De mythe van de 'elektronische snelweg': van karrenpad tot snelweg, de ontwikkeling van het elektronisch wegennet* (Amsterdam: Otto Cramwinckel Uitgever, 1997), 96 and Kevin Grieves, 'Transnational Journalism in Europe', in *Journalism Across Boundaries* (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2012), 19–37.

⁵¹ Theiler, 'Viewers into Europeans?'; Richard Collins, *From Satellite to Single Market: New Communication Technology and European Public Service Television*. (Hoboken: Routledge, 1998); Stylianos Papathanassopoulos, 'Towards European Television: The Case of Europa-TV', *Media Information Australia* 56, no. 1 (1990): 57–63. Besides the works of these men, there are two articles that are exclusively dedicated to Europa-TV, one by Giulia Matticari and one by Palle Qvist. One work is written in Italian, the other in Danish. My attempts to contact the authors have failed, so I had no better translation than my own amateur one. I therefore decided not to use these articles for this thesis.

interviews with involved parties and analysis of European policies. He states in his conclusion that pan-European-TV does not bring 'spurious European cultural unity' as it does not appeal to consumers.⁵²

Collins brings forward different reasons for the failure of Europa-TV. First, it was difficult for people to receive the channel. The equipment required to receive the channel was beyond the reach of individual households. Moreover, various European countries did not allow the channel to be transmitted through its cable network. This hostility towards the channel by European countries also became visible in other ways. Collins cites the NOS' statement that the lack of success recruiting new members to the Consortium was the main cause of Europa-TV's problems. Collins gives three explanations for this lack of enthusiasm. First, he states that other European Broadcasting Union members were reluctant to join the consortium because they were occupied with their national public and did not want to spend their time and resources on a potential European audience. Moreover, he states that most found the channel too traditional. Lastly, as the European Commission was such a large investor, he suggests that some EBU members feared that the Commission would meddle with the content and management of Europa-TV, and deemed the channel as not being independent.

Europa-TV also suffered from weak programming according to Collins. Bad scheduling, due to a management that had little experience scheduling or working for a channel that had to compete for viewers and attract revenue, also played a part. Though the schedule was improved upon and stable by mid-June 1986, the damage had already been done. Moreover, Collins claims that the programs that were aired were too highbrow, operas for example. Due to a lack of funds to make their own high-quality productions, Europa-TV's programmers were developed with what was contributed to the channel by the EBU member pool. As mentioned before, EBU members were more occupied with their national audiences and donated programs that were of secondary quality. To make matters worse, he claims that even the consortium members prioritized their national audiences. Collins concludes his criticism by quoting a former employee's remark that there was just 'too much Bulgarian opera', meaning that productions were second rate and too highbrow.⁵³

⁵² Collins, *From Satellite to Single Market*, 217.

⁵³ Collins, *From Satellite to Single Market*, 141.

The wish to broadcast in four languages Dutch, Portuguese, German, Italian and English, was expensive as the costs for translations took up most of Europa-TV's budget. This left little room for producing new content or buying high quality broadcasts. The channel largely depended on advertising revenue. Without any real interest in the channel's advertising space, the high costs of the channel could not outweigh its investments. Europa-TV eventually crippled under its debts.⁵⁴ In his later work 'Television, Cohesion and the EU' Collins quoted an article's title of a German journalist that according to him epitomized the project: 'Do you know Europa-TV? A programme with high pretences and little viewers.'⁵⁵

Stylianos Papathanassopoulos, who is also a Communication and Media scholar, reviewed the history of Europa-TV and its predecessor Eurikon in his article 'Towards European Television: The Case of Europa-TV'. He based his research on EC reports on Eurikon, newspaper articles and press statements on Europa-TV and secondary sources on satellite and cable broadcasting. After the 'successful to a certain extent' five-week Eurikon experiment, Europa-TV was set up.⁵⁶ Papathanassopoulos mentions problems in the pre-operational phase, such as having to change the name of the channel due to copyright issues and having to divert from the idea to only broadcast in English, German and Dutch, and expand it to include Portuguese.

Like Collins, he is negative about the programming. He blames the failure of the channel on its inability to make its programming more appealing to mass audiences. More recent research on European entertainment formats can support both their claims, as when 'reality or 'junk TV' became popular in the nineties it was that type of format that was able to 'offer European audiences the common experiences and enthusiasm that form the elements of a single culture'.⁵⁷

The subject of the political scientist Tobias Teiler's article on Europa-TV explains itself through its title 'Viewers into Europeans?: How the European Union Tried to Europeanize the Audiovisual Sector, and Why it Failed.' In his article, he explains why the European Commission and Parliament wished to use television in a way that would serve them. By showing how their attempts to do so have played out, he illustrates that the European Union had and has 'formidable obstacles' in its way if it wants to continue forging a shared

⁵⁴ Ibidem, 116-155.

⁵⁵ Richard Collins in Donders, Pauwels and Loisen, *The Palgrave Handbook of European Media Policy*, 178.

⁵⁶ Papathanassopoulos, 'Towards European Television', 58.

⁵⁷ Bondebjerg and Golding, *European Culture and the Media*, 14-15.

European identity.⁵⁸ He based his article on documents from the European Commission and Parliament, as well as secondary sources on identity theory and the creation of a single audio-visual market.

Theiler claims that the ECC wanted to use television to make viewers into Europeans so that they would support further European integration. He uses Europa-TV as an example to show how the channel introduced Europeans to non-national programs. The idea was that this would make them less national and more connected to other Europeans. Europa-TV aimed to produce its own content to provide viewers with a European perspective. The main reason for failure that Theiler brings to the table is the vast cultural and linguistic divide in Europe. Airing national content to European audiences reduced its appeal as television programs were rooted in a certain culture that is difficult to understand for someone from another culture. Theiler calls this cultural discount effect the reason why Europa-TV failed.

Though most works have been based on Collins, Papathanassopoulos and/or Theiler, also works that (briefly) mention Europa-TV using other sources have been published. For example, Dyson, Humphreys, Negrine and Simon's book 'Broadcasting and New Media Policies in Western Europe' is not often cited and their paragraph on Europa-TV is short, but it does offer insights to the Europa-TV project. Europa Television is considered as a 'united response' of the public-service broadcasters of the European Broadcasting Union to the new competition of private operators.⁵⁹ Europa-TV was to become of superior quality and backed with a supply of programs from all the EBU members that commercial broadcasters would not be able to match. Yet, as other authors already stipulated, only five of the thirty-five members joined the consortium. Dyson, Humphreys, and Negrine give three reasons for the failure of the project. First, they mention the lack of advertising revenue, that was partially caused by having too 'high-minded' programming. Second, they mention Europa-TV's high costs due to translations. Third, they mention the persistent delays in the launch of the Olympus (Euro-DBS) satellite, which left them unable to maximize their audience. Lastly, their most important reason for the failure of the channel was the reluctance of British public-service broadcasters to get involved in a 'European' channel. According to Dyson, Humphreys, and Negrine 'Europa-TV was denied the release of English-language

⁵⁸ Theiler, 'Viewers into Europeans?', 3.

⁵⁹ Dyson, Humphreys, and Negrine, *Broadcasting and New Media Policies in Western Europe*, 55.

programming that would have probably enabled it to survive.⁶⁰ Although the sources on which this paragraph is based are not identifiable it is most likely that they are primary sources, as no English academic work on Europa-TV had appeared by the time of the book's publishing in 1988.

Maria Michalis's article gives different reasons for the failure of Eurikon and Europa-TV. She provides three explanations. First, she claims that states first need a cultural community to form a political community. She holds the EU to this standard and writes that the EU had attempted to reverse the right order and she implies that this does not work. Second, the projects were created from a 'technologically determinist, top-down vision' that overestimated the power of media. According to her, people do not come to feel connected by watching the same television content. Lastly, she claims that the projects had failed because they had not served "European' ideals', but the European Union's institutional interests. She goes on to say that that was not in the participating broadcasters' interests as they had different, national, priorities.⁶¹ Taking the European Union as living proof, Michalis claim that states first need a cultural community before they form a political community can be questioned.

As of yet, there is no research done on Europa-TV and the ambiguous role the Netherlands played in the development of the channel. As a national government, the Netherlands was involved in the negotiations that shaped Europa-TV. However, in this thesis, I argue that the role of the Netherlands stretched beyond that of the other consortium partners. Whereas both Collins and Michalis claimed that the channel had failed due to serving the EEC's institutional interests, I argue that Europa-TV was dependent on the good graces of the Dutch government. Secondary literature shows that the government supported the project through letting its public broadcaster participate, paying a substantial part of the costs and giving the project a base in Hilversum. Collins typifies the Netherlands and NOS as the most committed of the consortium. The government gave the project between 30 and 42 million guilders. The NOS contributed twice as much to Europa compared to substantially bigger broadcasters RAI and ARD, and according to Noam, it the NOS' investments were the only thing that kept the channel afloat.⁶² Yet it was the NOS that

⁶⁰ Ibidem, 55.

⁶¹ Donders, Pauwels and Loisen, *The Palgrave Handbook of European Media Policy*, 132.

⁶² Eli Noam, *Television in Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 173.

initiated the halt of the project. They felt they were bearing a too heavy and disproportional burden and demanded Europa-TV to pay an outstanding debt of 11.6 million guilders within two weeks. As the channel did not have the money, it was shut down.⁶³ Afterwards, the NOS tried to rescue the channel by wavering over almost 30 million Swiss Francs of Europa-TV's debt. However, this attempt was to no avail. The failure of the channel had profound consequences as it left the NOS with a bad aftertaste and the broadcaster refused to cooperate with later pan-European initiatives such as Eurosport, ARTE and Euronews.⁶⁴ Therefore the focus on the Dutch role within the Europa-TV project will be a useful addition to existing scholarship.

1.3 Outline of Research

In order to give structure to this thesis, the following research question is answered: how was Europa Television's identity shaped through negotiation that helped build and break the channel? To answer this question the following sub questions will be answered: 1) What do Europa-TV's images reveal about its identity? 2) In what way were Europa-TV's policies affected by different stakeholders? The conclusion will reflect on the question whether or not Europa Television was doomed from its first set up, or if negotiations with different stakeholders ruined the channel.

There will be a focus on the Dutch role within the Europa-TV project. As mentioned before my hypothesis is that of all actors and factors involved in the negotiations, it was the Netherlands that influenced Europa-TV the most. In effect, I argue that the EEC's role in Europa-TV was much smaller than Collins, Michalis and Theiler make it out to be.

1.4 Methodology and Sources

The Europa-TV broadcasts are located at the Dutch Institute for Vision and Sound. The material has never been studied before and no previous research contains analyses of Europa-TV footage. Although the collection of Europa Television broadcasts is incomplete, it

⁶³ 'Europa Television stopt uitzendingen na ultimatum NOS', *NRC Handelsblad*, 28 November 1986, day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028956>.

⁶⁴ Collins, *From Satellite to Single Market*, 141 -155.

is safe to assume the Institute holds all the material that is available on Europa Television. All inquiries for more materials from other consortium partners were met with a negative reply. The collection consists of 350 VHS tapes of unknown content. Some were labelled by Europa Television staff, yet their system was inconsistent and the labels did not always correspond with the content of the tape.

Sections that were not recordings of broadcasts, like director's tapes were excluded from the research. In total fifty tapes that did contain Europa Television broadcasts were researched, which is estimated to be about twenty percent of the available broadcasts. These primary sources have been analysed through various approaches. First of all, to see a development in the channel over time, the earliest and latest tapes were selected. Second of all, a study of the personal archive of the former Program Director of Europa-TV Klaas Jan Hindriks unearthed two viewers studies that Europa Television had ordered. To get a better understand these, the weeks in which the research was conducted were viewed. Third of all, to get a better understanding of the channel the images were analysed through various themes. These themes were devised after watching over 150 hours of Europa Television broadcasts.

Besides the personal archive of Klaas Jan Hindriks, there are no other official documents on the channel in Europe. As the Europa-TV paper archive is missing. During my internship at the Dutch Institute of Vision and Sound, I attempted to locate and create an overview of still existing documents related to Europa-TV's production and management. There might be some materials at the European Broadcasting Union, but unfortunately the EBU did not reply to my requests. The Hindriks archive contains many unpublished sources that were highly valuable for my research, such as rating analysis and speeches.

Newspaper articles and television broadcasts reporting about the channel serve as primary sources to analyse how different stakeholders' shaped Europa Television. Whereas policy documents can often be difficult to attribute to a certain person and are often the result of compromise, interviews with key actors highlight a diversity in opinions. Acknowledging that views expressed by individuals can also be the result of compromise, it is assumed that a journalist will report on that what stands out or is different to have an edge for his or her article.

All television and radio broadcasts on Europa Television in the Netherlands Institute of Sound and Vision archive between 1984 and 1987 were watched, as well as all 842 articles

that had the term 'Europa Television' and the 59 articles with the term 'Olympus-tv' and the 67 articles with the term 'Olympus Television' and a selection of about 50 of the 4167 articles with the term 'Europa-tv' from national and regional papers, published on the online Dutch paper archive Delpher.

Many of the articles were television listings with the broadcasting schedule of Europa Television. The actual articles were transcribed and stored in a database.⁶⁵ When comparing the articles listed under 'Europa-tv' to the articles under 'Europa Television' the reporting was mostly the same. Most newspapers used the term 'Europa-tv', therefore more articles could be found under that listing. Not all these articles could be read thoroughly because of time constrictions. However as most of the articles were similar in content to the 'Europa Television' one it is safe to assume that an analysis of these suffices. The selection of 'Europa-tv' articles that were thoroughly analysed where those that expressed new opinions or information on the channel. Moreover, all fifteen broadcasts watched were transcribed.

A qualitative analysis of the paper primary sources was performed. The analysis of the Europa-TV broadcasts asked for a different approach compared to written sources. In order to analyse the programs well, I have used Chris Vos' four principles for film and television analysis.⁶⁶ First, he divides analysis up into three layers: the cinematic layer, the narrative layer and the ideological or symbolic layers. The cinematic layer is the way filmic instruments are used, such as camera and sound work. It focuses on what it looks like, for example, a low angle camera view or image framing. The narrative layer is the way the narrative manifests, what the story is told through images and sound is about. The symbolic or ideological layer is the way norms and values are incorporated or reflected on through image and sound. It therefore focusses on the deeper societal meaning behind the images and sound. According to Vos meaning exists in three different ways: intentional meaning, inherent meaning and the perceived meaning.⁶⁷ To look for intentional meaning is searching for (subconscious) intentions the creator has imbedded in the product. Perceived meaning is the meaning a broadcast has for a viewer. Inherent meaning is not present in an audio-visual product, for without a creator or receiver, the product has no meaning. I am aware that in my analysis I was the receiver and was influenced by my own perspective. Unfortunately,

⁶⁵ Saskia Cluistra, Europa Television krantenartikelen - Januari 1984 tot Januari 1987, unpublished.

⁶⁶ Chris Vos, *Het verleden in bewegend beeld: inleiding in de analyse van films en televisieprogramma's* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2004). 1-9, 115-128.

⁶⁷ Vos, *Het verleden in bewegend beeld*, 8.

there are no records of other viewers' experiences of the Europa-tv broadcasts besides the reviews included in this research. Thirdly, a researcher must have knowledge of the technical workings of audio-visual media. Vos' book provided me with the necessary knowledge for my analysis. Moreover, audio-visual products must be studied within the right historical context. Therefore the context in which Europa-TV was created was studied before the broadcasts were watched. Lastly, the context in which the product was released should be analysed in order to get an insight into how this might have affected the content and look of its programmes.⁶⁸ In order to make this thesis easier to read and more accessible for an international audience I have translated all Dutch and German quotes to English.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Vos, *Het verleden in bewegend beeld*, 115 – 128.

⁶⁹ I am a proficient reader of Dutch, German and English. My translations have been checked, and corrected where necessary, by a professional translator.

Chapter 2: Broadcasting Europa Television

Europa Television officially broadcasted its programmes from October 5th, 1985 to November 27th, 1986. Of the few studies that have appeared on the subject, none have analysed the broadcasts of the channel. As these images are vital to learning more about the identity of the channel, they will be analysed in this chapter. For this the chapter is divided into four themes: the channel's branding, its representation of the European Economic Community, questions of belonging to Europe, and its representation of sameness and differences on Europa Television.

2.1 'Plenty for you to see tonight, we hope you stay with us' – Europa Television's branding

Before the channel's content can be analysed, it is important to get an idea of the look and feel of the channel. Its logo, title cards and program structure were vital to the marketing of their brand. Europa Television did not use a static logo on the top right corner of the screen, but instead showed an animated logo between broadcasts, to let viewers know what channel they were watching. The viewers' ears would be filled with electronic tones while an orange triangle slowly unfolded into a pyramid. The pyramid spun around and the Europa logo appeared front and centre. As



Figure 2.1: Logo Europa-TV

the music swelled, a triumphant horn joined the electronic tones. A white dove emerged from the pyramid, flapping its wings and exiting the stage through the right corner of the screen. Why had Europa Television opted for this logo? In order to answer this question a closer look will be taken at the static logo (Figure 2.1).⁷⁰

⁷⁰ 'Venstermap met stickers en presentatie materiaal Europa', n.d., 1.16, Netherlands Institute for Vision and Sound Hindriks Archive.

First, the channel's name stood out. Its spelling is interesting because it is the way Europe is spelled in a lot of languages. For example, in the languages of the four of the five consortium partners: Dutch, Italian, German, Portuguese, but also in Spanish, Danish, Norwegian and Swedish, among others. In English, Europa refers to the mythological Greek princess the continent of Europe was named after. The other symbol in the logo, the triangle, was likely another reference to Greek mythology. The top of the triangle was gold, that same colour as the background to the text. The mountain shape, in combination with the caption of the image, were references to Mount Olympus: home of the twelve Greek gods. In referring to these two phenomena in Greek mythology, the channel was referencing to Europe's common past. The dove is a common symbol for peace. Peace was also

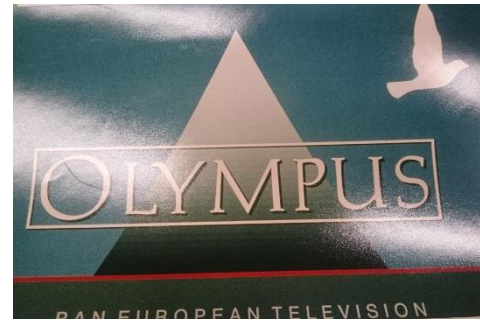


Figure 2.2: Logo Olympus-TV

important in the narrative the European Economic Community, that saw itself as the bringer of peace and stability after the Second World War. Compared to standards of modern television, the slow unfolding of the logo and the futuristic sounding that music accompanied it, does not give the feel of a new and exciting channel. This statement also holds true when comparing this introduction to the channel's original intro and logo. This leader was featured in a NOS news reports on the first airing of Olympus-tv on March 1st, 1985.⁷¹ Here sweeping, upbeat music and trumpets accompanied the Olympus logo and a man's voice announced: 'This is Olympus Television.' It was more colourful, the animations moved quicker, and the music was livelier. Plus the announcer's deep voice gave it a sense of importance. Looking at the Olympus logo (Figure 2.2), it is obvious that Europa Television's logo closely followed the original design.⁷² With the name Olympus, the mountain logo made much more sense. The font for the lettering stayed the same, yet the channel's tagline was changed from 'Pan European Television' to the more vague 'Television for the Olympus Satellite'. Why did Olympus become Europa Television and why did the channel change its outlook? The channel itself did not explain this change in the examined broadcasts. For this we have to turn to its policies, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

⁷¹ Digital Archive The Netherlands Institute of Sound and Vision, 476744.

⁷² 'Venstermap met stickers en presentatie materiaal Europa'.

Europa Television began and ended the day with an overview of the upcoming programmes. It did so through showing an overview of the day stating the time, the title of the program and the title of an episode in English. By looking at these programme announcements, it becomes clear that Europa Television was experimenting with its broadcasts. In its oldest remaining broadcast, from December 12th, 1985, its programme was displayed while electronic music played in the background. However, on February 26th 1986, Europa Television logo played and after it a continuity announcer read the programme displayed onscreen. In October of the same year, the music was gone. Closedowns were dealt with in a similar fashion, the programme for the next day appeared on screen with or without it being read out loud in English or Dutch. The continuity announcers lacked consistency as well, alternating between men and women, speaking either English or Dutch, each with different presenting styles. The Dutch announcer Ilse Wessel announced the programs by giving some background information and sometimes wishing the viewer a 'good night', whereas the Brit Simon Barret had a more playful approach. For example, as he announced the programmes for the next day he said: 'After handball, we present a documentary. Precisely what it is about we'll find out tomorrow as it is called 'the best kept secret''.⁷³ Another example was him saying 'that is our programme [for today] I hope you can join us for at least *some* of its time'.⁷⁴ As this emphasis on the word *some* comes across as a little reproachful, this might have been a reference to bad ratings. Only near the end of Europa Television's broadcasts, October 1986, consistency was implemented. The announcements were straightforward and read in Dutch, without music playing in the background. The weather was no longer read by the announcer but accompanied by music.

Europa Television used much of its airtime to promote itself, giving an insight into how they presented themselves. On screen the static Europa-TV logo appeared, its correspondence address below and a message was played. In February, the channel presented itself as 'an initiative of the European Broadcasting Union to bring programmes to your living room, via satellite', asking viewers to write them if they wished more information or had suggestions.⁷⁵ In March the channel used the same description and added: 'From Europe to

⁷³ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape untitled, broadcasts dated from March 3rd, 1986.

⁷⁴ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 601.

⁷⁵ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 444.

Europe.⁷⁶ The channel also ran a longer promotional piece that did not paint a flattering image of the channel. It announced itself to be in the 'pre-operational phase' stating that program schedules frequently had to be altered at the last minute, 'usually due to technical reasons'.

*The growth of a television organization takes time, but we hope that in the foreseeable future Europa television will become an interesting addition to the existing national television stations.*⁷⁷

Judging from the tapes watched, these last minute changes would have been very noticeable to the loyal Europa Television viewer. Often, announcements made the night before did not correspond with the actual programme of the next day.⁷⁸ The same could be said for the frequent technical problems. For example, the channel often used the movie Dawn Flight when there was a problem with the schedule. After ten minutes of airing the movie, 'the next programme will begin at 22:00' was flashed on the screen. After fifteen minutes the movie was cut off, a commercial break started, and a scheduled programme began.⁷⁹ Live broadcasts got cut off or the original audio track ran in sync with the dubbed track, making it difficult to hear either one, and sometimes broadcasts had not sound at all.⁸⁰ These problems continued after the preoperational phase. For example, the basketball match Leverkusen - Nashua Den Bosch was aired for a few minutes without visuals.⁸¹ Not all problems were technical. An example of such a problem was border customs. On October 14th, 1986 Europa Television had to disappoint soccer fans because problems with the Spanish customs had delayed the footage of the match between FC Barcelona and Espagnol.⁸² The channel asked for patience and expressed hope that Europa-TV 'will become an interesting addition to the existing national television station' in the 'foreseeable future', implicitly stating that the current programming was neither interesting nor an addition to existing national broadcasting, thus displaying a lack of confidence by its creators. The

⁷⁶ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 671.

⁷⁷ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 685.

⁷⁸ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 669, broadcast from March 15th, 1986.

⁷⁹ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 699, broadcast from March 16th, 1986.

⁸⁰ There are many examples of this happening, the following is a selection of tapes. Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tapes 675, 680, 645.

⁸¹ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 2017.

⁸² Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 2027.

observation that programming was not consistent throughout the channel's broadcasting life, refutes Collins claim that Europa-TV's schedule was settled by June, 1986.⁸³ Though Collins was right that some elements of the programming, such as the news, were fixed in the schedule by June, the programming still lacked consistency.

Judging from their promotional videos, the channel had (re)gained confidence in October 1986. A year after the official launch, the channel presented a new schedule that was filled with the 'thousands of hours of interesting and captivating programmes' the channel had at its disposal due to its 'unique European cooperation'.⁸⁴ Broadcasting would now be horizontal, which meant that the same programmes would air at the same time on the same day dividing the hours into specific sections for music and sports.⁸⁵ These promos often were aired instead of a commercial break for the number of advertisers had drastically dropped in October. Commercial breaks went from five or six commercials to one, maybe two. Only Wang and Nissan commercials sometimes aired after regular programming. The next chapter will go into detail as to why Europa-TV experienced this dramatic drop in advertisers.

New programmes, produced exclusively for Europa Television were aired, such as 'Film Premiere', a magazine on films, and 'Look', a lifestyle programme. 'Look' aired once a week, lasted half an hour and was distinctly different from anything Europa Television had aired before. The episode aired on October 13th, 1986 showed various products and how they should be used.⁸⁶ For example, running shoes with a microcomputer, male beauty products and desensitization pods. The item on men's beauty products was like an aggressive sales pitch. For example, its' opening line was: 'in 1986 a head covered in wrinkles really cannot be expected to charm or be considered attractive.' This item made it clear that men should start using tonics, gels, pre and after shave cream, mascara and eyeliner in order to be desirable. Another section showed a man and a woman at a casino. In their underwear. They walk around provocatively. Some electronic music played in the background, but nothing was being said. After a minute the tagline 'Bodygood, it may all be seen' was shown on screen. The couple kept walking around in the casino in see through, lace, cotton with polka dots and other types of underwear while the camera zoomed in on

⁸³ Collins, *From Satellite to Single Market*, 141.

⁸⁴ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 2016.

⁸⁵ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 2016 - 2018.

⁸⁶ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 2025.

their private parts. In total, the item lasted for four minutes. The last item showed a man packing his suitcase for a business cruise. He and his colleagues were shown having a swell time walking, talking and drinking, in various outfits accompanied by background music. In the end, Jacques van Gils men's fashion logo appeared on the screen. Again, the viewer was to be enticed to buy these products. As the last three examples have made obvious, this lifestyle magazine can be considered one long commercial break disguised as a programme filled with sponsored content. This was very different from the 'hours of captivating television' from its public broadcasting partners. Which leaves the question, why did Europa Television commission such a programme? And why did it want to show this to their European audience?

2.2 European Economic Community Propaganda? Europa-TV's representation of European Cooperation

Collins claimed that politicians and television executives from countries participating in EBU were afraid a European channel would not be independent of the EEC, and become, as one Irish television executive put it in 1984, 'real propaganda'.⁸⁷ It is therefore interesting to see how Europa Television represented the EEC and European cooperation in general. Of the analysed material, the only programmes aired about European Cooperation were commissioned by the channel itself. Europa Report aired infrequently, at varying times and was produced by a Belgian company. Topics included the Danish referendum on the Treaty of Rome, pollution in the river Rhine and the Airbus project. The episode on the Danish referendum on the Treaty of Rome explained the arguments for and against signing the Treaty.⁸⁸ The arguments were not presented in such a way that signing the treaty was the only reasonable option, which could have been expected from a pro-EEC channel, especially one that would be employed for spreading propaganda.

The Airbus episode was narrated by a voice-over and supported by the infographic, images of for example the Airbus flying and of its plants.⁸⁹ It lasted thirty minutes and also used material from an interview they had with the Senior Vice-president of Airbus Industry,

⁸⁷ Collins, *From Satellite to Single Market*, 111-112.

⁸⁸ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 645.

⁸⁹ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 672.

Jürgen Thomas. Airbus Industries was the result of an aviation cooperation project from the 1970s. The programme discussed the origin of the project, the partners involved and the share of each partner in the project. It took the viewer on a tour of the different production halls in Europe and discussed its future.

The project was presented as a success story. The programme's stance was perfectly summarized in the opening statement:

For some 12 years, the products of European cooperation have been flying through the world's airspace. [...] The Airbus has proven that high level, pan-European cooperation can both function and do so with success.

The narrative is one of perseverance against all odds. Despite stiff competition in the form of the American company Boeing, the underdog Airbus has stood her ground. The cooperation was presented as a solid relationship and the best way to use 'the partners' resources and possibilities', without many 'restrictions on activities'. It had not all been 'plain sailing', with passenger stasis and a decrease in the number of planes. The hardships were presented as something that brought the partners closer together. The fierce competition had convinced the partners that cooperation in the future was 'inevitable'.

The 'Europeanness' of the project was emphasized several times, for example in the narration: 'in this way, a real form of European cooperation is being attained'. Visually it was also emphasized. When moving from one production hall to the other, the program first showed a map of Europe to show where the places were located and then cut to footage of a factory. Interestingly enough, Airbus admitted that it was 'not of course entirely European. An important set of [electronic] parts came from another continent, the United States of America.' Eager to uphold the European illusion, the narration went on: 'however, in essence, the project remains a European one as the last year's non-European experience shows.' This referred to failed negotiations with an Indonesian airline to join the venture, meaning that the stakeholders of the company remained solely European. In the episode there was room for some criticism by its American competitor Boeing on Airbus Industry. The company had accused Airbus that it was 'too subject to covered government interventions and subsidies'. This argument was immediately countered by Airbus'

statement that Boeing received covered pre-financing from the US government. The Airbus official also explained why the loans they received were perfectly legal while further discrediting Boeing. So while there was some criticism, it was countered and put away as 'harsh business tactics' from Boeing, a company that felt threatened by Airbus. The episode, therefore, contributes to the idea of the importance and success of European cooperation.

The episode about the pollution in the Rhine shined a dimmer light on European cooperation.⁹⁰ The Rhine had become 'the sewer of Europe' and Germany, France and the Netherlands had completely failed to solve this problem despite years of negotiations, a treaty and a committee overseeing the execution of that treaty. While the EEC had ordered polluters to pay for their pollution, governments provided funds to potassium mines to solve their spoliation, which caused forty percent of the Rhine's pollution. This arrangement was unlawful yet the EEC had not acted against it. A Dutch professor of law and president of the Rhine foundation, dr. d'Oliveira was interviewed to explain how he was determined to solve a problem European diplomacy had failed to. Already, he had successfully sued the mines for polluting the drinking water of twenty million people and got Dutch market gardeners, who used Rhine water to grow their vegetables and fruits, financial compensation. No high praise for European cooperation or the EEC in this episode, with the exception of the note that dr. d'Oliviera was only able to win his case due to existing European laws.

2.3 Who belongs to Europe? Representation at Europa Television

Another way to get more of an insight into how Europa Television represented Europe, is to see whom it considered European. Therefore, it is interesting to see how the channel dealt with a country whose belonging to Europe was quite ambiguous: the Soviet Union. For this, an episode of the documentary 'Profiles on Russia' is used as a case study. The fifty-minute episode 'Siberia' was aired on March 1st, 1986.⁹¹ The episode had an English soundtrack and a Dutch voiceover that both ran at the same time. The end credits were cut off by the start of another Europa Television programme. Therefore, no information about the creators and producers of this documentary is available, making it more difficult to determine with what

⁹⁰ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 665.

⁹¹ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 669.

intention this documentary was produced. Nevertheless, whatever the intentions of its unknown creators were, all programmes that aired were reviewed by Europa Television staff beforehand. Therefore, it can be assumed that its message fits the channel's attitude towards the Soviet Union.

Before coming to an analysis of this episode, a brief overview of its content will be given. The information in the episode was given by a narrator and through the recorded images. Though many people were featured in the episode, none of them were interviewed. The episode began with some facts about Siberia like its enormous size, sweltering summers and freezing winters while showing images of the landscape. The documentary then cut to life in its capital Irkutsk, explaining the history of the city as a wealthy trade hub and then cut to the city's cathedral to show part of a service. It went on to show people walking on the streets of Irkutsk, while the narrator explained the city has 500.000 inhabitants, most of whom were below thirty, and an energy research centre as well as a university making it equally important in modern day Siberia. After mentioning that the that the city used to be the last stop for people that were banished to Siberia by the Tsar, making it the home of criminals, murders and intellectuals, the episode showed a merry wedding party to show that 'nowadays Irkutsk is a lively, wealthy totally different city.' Again, switching to the city's history, the narrator explained that the completion of the Trans Siberia railway changed the character of the city, turning it into an industrial powerhouse 'in just a few decades.' After examples of the industry, images of the coal mining city Novosibirsk were shown. The final city that was highlighted in the episode was the university city Akademgorodok. Built in 1957, specifically for scientists, the narrator describes it as a 'futuristic city' while images show the strappings of daily life.

The narrative of the episode is very positive. Life in Siberia was portrayed as 'vibrant, diverse and young', its people 'anything but rigid and gloomy', and the area 'hospitable' and 'open to future change'. Its riches were called 'too long to list them all' and Akademgorodok was described as 'the biggest think tank in the world', that has the best equipment in the world and a 'pleasant, relaxed atmosphere'. The only thing negative mentioned about this Soviet paradise was the climate. Clearly this calls for critical assessment, first by analysing what was being said and shown and then by identifying what was left out.

The documentary series was called 'Profiles on Russia' and not 'Profiles on the Soviet Union'. This is interesting because according to a TV guide of the time, there is also an episode on

Lithuania. Historically, Lithuania was not part of Russia and just the title of the series alone brushed over the fact that it was forced to be part of the Soviet Union.

The narration made several attempts to compare and equate Siberia with Europe, or the Western World. First, by putting historic events side by side, such as the conquest of Siberia by the Kozaks and the 'entering' of the Spaniards to the Inca empire. Second, by comparing a scene from daily life to 'any other city', which equipped with the 'equivalent of a French flea market' where everyone went to bargain hunt. Lastly, the industrial city of Novosibirsk was compared to the American industrial city of Chicago. On the other hand, the documentary did use the term 'European Russians' when describing part of the population of Siberia, therefore, explicitly making a distinction between those people and the other peoples of Siberia.

It is also important to see if what was said corresponded with what was being shown. Returning to the example of the 'French flea market' that made Irkutsk like any other city, a long line of people waiting in front of a building was shown. When knowledgeable about Russia's economic situation in the second half of 1980, one might rightly ask the following question: were these people really bargain hunters? Consumers waiting in line for products is very much in accordance with the imagery of the final years of the Soviet Union. While other parts of the documentary first showed the outside of a building and then moved on to the inside, for example the scenes of the cathedral, Irkutsk museum and the wedding, the 'flea market' was only shown from the outside. It might be possible that the market did not show happy consumers spending their money freely on good deals.

The picture of the academic utopia Akademgorodok might also not be as pretty as was suggested in the documentary. The city's glory days were in the past. In the 1970s Brezhnev had reduced science to 'the servant of the economy and military'.⁹² A clue to this attitude can be seen in the documentary when it showed a group of teenagers in a lab in Akademgorodok. The narrator stated that: 'students can use the newest equipment, on the condition that their research, like all research, contributes to the life of the ordinary citizen.' Brezhnev had also severely restricted the freedom of scientists, yet this remained unmentioned in the documentary.

⁹² Oliver Wainwright, "Step into Silicon Forest, Putin's Secret Weapon in the Global Tech Race," the Guardian, January 5, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2016/jan/05/silicon-forest-putin-secret-weapon-global-tech-race-siberia-russia>.

When looking at what is not being said, the restrictions of the Soviet regime, or the actual communist system in general, were big absentees from the documentary. Whereas Tsarist labour camps were mentioned, Stalin's gulags were not. When the history of the region is told, no mention was made of the Russian Revolution. There was no indication in the narrative that viewers were watching a documentary about a communist state, except for the obvious giveaway mention of the five-year plans.

It is striking how differently the Soviet Union was portrayed in a Sony commercial that also aired on Europa Television. From the start of the channel until March 1986, almost

Figure 2.3: Stills of Sony Commercial

every commercial break included a Sony commercial. Depicting various scenes such as one of an astronaut flying through space, enjoying the wonders of a Sony camera, and one of an aerobics class enthusiastically bopping around. Regardless of the effort put in those commercials, one truly stood out. In a room that immolates the look of the UN General Assembly the speaker behind the marble podium prepared himself to give an important speech and as applause rises from the people sitting in the semi-circle, he said: 'Today is a historic occasion'.⁹³ As the television viewer was on the edge of its seat he went on to say 'the announcement of the revolutionary Sony video 8 system.' As viewers



Source: *kijkreclame4u*, Reclame - Sony (Video 8), accessed 12 July 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkotLZsPciY>.

sunk back into their seats after realising they were watching a commercial, the speaker went on to explain the ingenuity of the system. He showed off a small cassette, videorecorder and video camera. A cutaway from the speaker revealed the Soviet delegation holding up

⁹³ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 433. The same commercial aired on Dutch television with Dutch subtitles and can be viewed through this link *kijkreclame4u*, Reclame - Sony (Video 8), accessed 12 July 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkotLZsPciY>.

gigantic video cameras and its representative screaming outraged in broken English: "Russian video big, no small." The speaker disregarded his action, turned to the room and said as he leaned down on the podium and took off his glasses: "Will Sony Video 8 become THE international system? Your votes please". His statement was met with cheers from an elated audience of men in formal wear from all over the world jumping up and down, clapping and screaming 'yes, yes, yes!'. The USSR representative rose and banged his headphones against his desk shouting 'NJET NJET!', while his assistants hid behind their gigantic video cameras. While other representatives could be seen laughing at the USSR's performance, the speaker said, 'I hereby declare Sony Video 8, the world standard'. After an image of the Sony products was shown, the USSR representative could be seen leaning the room and saying: 'let's go home, Sony wins.', while a caption on the screen said, 'Compare and Sony wins.'⁹⁴ The USSR's technology, and with it the country itself, was regarded as outdated and inferior. The speaker's references to 'the international system' and 'the world standard', were a play at the USSR's communist system and the liberal market economies that Sony targeted for their products. The USSR representative was portrayed as a rude, aggressive child that stands idly by as Sony proved its superiority.

Another approach to the Soviet Union can be found in Europa Television's news. The Soviet Union was not in the news every day and only rarely addressed its foreign policy. In broadcasts from 12 – 16th of October 1986 its withdrawal from Afghanistan was mentioned, as well as its participation in the Reykjavík summit.⁹⁵ Reporting on events was matter-of-fact in character. The troops would leave 9 years after the invasion and the Reykjavík summit results were presented and not commented on. When comparing the time spent in the news on the USSR, a country that geographically might be considered part of Europe, to the time spend on the United States, a country that was geographically not part of Europe, it is singular that the USSR gets a lot less airtime. Like with the USSR, the US' foreign policy was reported upon, only much more frequently. Of course, they were mentioned in relation to the Reykjavík summit but when their Energy Secretary visited the Middle East to promote nuclear energy (March 7th '86), its Minister of Defence had talks with the prime minister of

⁹⁴ Despite Sony's video 8 system becoming 'the new world standard', Europa Television's archived broadcasts are not recorded on VCR tapes, but on VHS tapes from Sony's competitor JVC. Regardless of this failure, in this commercial, the USSR was the losing competitor.

⁹⁵ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS 2021 – 2029.

New Zealand and India (October 14th, '86) it was covered as well.⁹⁶ Domestic affairs were also reported, for example on December 12th, 1985 it was mentioned that Porto Rico, a US territory, became connected to a network that allowed its inhabitants to make calls abroad.⁹⁷

2.4 European culture vs. local customs – Representation of sameness and differences on Europa Television

Come rain or shine, Europa Television always aired a weather report. In the first few months, they used an image of a weather satellite on which the shape of Europe was outlined. It followed the geographical notion of Europe, including a part of the USSR. The weather was read by the continuity announcer that first discussed the weather in Europe and then the weather in the country where it was broadcasted, the

Figure 2.3: Weather map of Western Germany



Source: Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS 2021

Netherlands. In October 1986 Europa-TV employed different images. The weather was not read out anymore, but a map of Europa was shown with numbers and symbols indicating the weather and music playing in the background. After that, cut-outs of that map were shown with weather specification. For example, Portugal and Spain's weather was shown, France and Italy's weather, Scandinavia's, United Kingdom and Ireland, and Western Germany and Austria's weather. Except for Norway, Sweden and Finland, all these countries belonged to the EEC. As can be seen in Figure 2.4, the weather in East Germany was not predicted, and the country was even cut off the specification map. This choice makes it clear that weather-wise, communist countries were not considered Europe.

'World Watch' was another programme continued to be aired despite constant programming changes. Commissioned by the channel and created and presented by Dan Damon, this current events program brought five minutes of 'news that can be predicted

⁹⁶ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS 665 and 2027.

⁹⁷ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS 433.

about tomorrow', with 'items of the world agenda and the times of when decisions are being taken'⁹⁸ For example, foreign leaders visiting each other, ministers of finance visiting the Middle East to sell their goods, EEC summits and event inside European countries, such as strikes or elections. Moreover, some episodes contain information that has no obvious connection to the EEC one of its member states or another country located in Europe, like the aforementioned Porto Ricans being able to telephone abroad or the IMF being discontent with the behaviour of the president of Zaire or the decision of the United States to promote natural gas domestically.⁹⁹ News on countries was accompanied by a map, accentuating diversity. Overall World Watch reported on supranational conferences and filled the rest of its airtime with national stories. Interestingly, the EEC was little reported on, except for announcements on commencements of meetings and noting was shared about their conclusions. Just as little was reported on the European Parliament and the European court, with the exception of the EEC taking Western Germany to court to break its *Reinheitsgebot* on beer.¹⁰⁰

In Dan Damon's other programme on current events Agenda, European issues were discussed. These were issues that had to be solved in a European context or issues that took place in an EEC member country and directly affected the EEC. The setup of the programme was simple. Damon picked a topic and invited two guests that had conflicting opinions on the matter. He took turns asking them questions and, in the end, he led his guest to discuss with each other. For example, he had a Spanish journalist and a former NATO general discuss whether Spain should leave NATO on the eve of the Spanish referendum and an executive from the Portuguese TAP airline discussed flight safety with the British head of Airline Users Committee.¹⁰¹ This way the viewer was exposed to different opinions within Europe and could make up his own mind on the issue. The programme formula changed when the channel rebranded itself in October 1986. The programme still dealt with current events, but no longer discussed them or showcasing speakers with conflicting opinions. Three different issues were dealt with through mini-reports. Damon was no longer present on screen but

⁹⁸ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 685 and 433. 433 translated from Dutch: 'Dit is World Watch een programma van Europa Television met agendapunten en tijdstippen waarop besluiten worden genomen in de wereld.'

⁹⁹ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 685 and 433.

¹⁰⁰ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 633.

¹⁰¹ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 669 and 699.

served as a narrator. The events were also more loosely related to Europe. For example, on October 13th, 1986, the programme dealt with the consequences of sanctions against South Africa for black Africans, the violent attack on Rajiv Gandhi and the role of lobbying in the English press.

Europa Television programmes also highlighted the differences between European countries, through airing programmes that showed local events or local culture. For example, an Irish amateur triathlon with a local presenter who commented on the people participating in a very familiar fashion. 'Don't forget your banana Dan' to a man he introduced as a 'businessman from Limerick'.¹⁰² In the end, the winner of the triathlon was shown being hugged by his grandmother. No context was given for the non-Irish viewer, leaving those viewers a possibly little clueless as to what they had watched. Another amateur event was the Dutch sport *kaatsen*.¹⁰³ Here the commentator was very aware of the viewers needing context. Moreover, he connected this local Dutch tradition to a broader, European past. *Kaatsen* was introduced as a 'very ancient game'. Originally played by the Greeks and later spread to countries in Western Europe, where it was called 'pelotta' or 'jeu de poume'. It was introduced as the forerunner of tennis and points out its similar scoring system. The sport had become 'extinct', except in West Friesland a province in the north of the Netherlands. In Friesland *kaatsen* was 'part and parcel', like their cattle. During the broadcast the rules of the game were explained. This episode was not only used to explain the sport, but also to explain Frisian culture. It very cleverly played with differences and similarities, by showing European wide history of the sport, but by also highlighting what it meant to a specific culture at that time.

Like in the episode on *kaatsen* and Europa-TV's logo, ancient Greek culture was referenced to emphasize a common European past. Young children were also introduced to ancient Greek myths through the animation '*Götter und Helden Der Antike*'.¹⁰⁴ Ancient Greek culture was not the only culture that is seen as shared. The different live broadcasts from the Holland Festival highlighted cultural performances from all over Europe and presented it as something European.¹⁰⁵ Many music documentaries were also approached as part of a

¹⁰² Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 699.

¹⁰³ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 'ZL-REG 20-11-85 deel 1'.

¹⁰⁴ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 433.

¹⁰⁵ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 668.

common culture, such as *Musik aus dem Kloster*, where Mozart was performed at an Austrian monastery.¹⁰⁶ In *Almenac* European culture was presented in a manner akin to national culture, highlighting in five-minutes a person, piece of art or a cultural movement. These short profiles gave information on the phenomenon and explained why it was so important for European culture. These included French actor and singer Yves Montagne, writer Charlotte Bronte, philosopher Francis Bacon and Leopold Sedor Segur.¹⁰⁷ A common culture was not only sought out through arts but also through modern pop music. The programme Countdown was aimed at a European audience who wanted to see their pop heroes live on stage or watch the latest videoclips. Minor differences between the countries were acknowledged by airing a top-3 from a specific European country daily. Some of those songs would be popular in more European countries, but other songs' success would be limited to their country of origin. This way Europeans were introduced to new sounds.¹⁰⁸ Lastly, Europa-TV used Christianity as a common demeanour. It celebrated '450 years of Reformation' through the broadcast of a service in Geneva, aired 'U-Turn', a gospel music programme, and 'More To It', three minutes of religious reflection.¹⁰⁹ Through Christianity, Russians could be considered Europeans, but non-Christian excluded. Moreover, as Kumar stated, by seeing it a unifier, people ignored the divide it brought to Europe.¹¹⁰

2.5 Concluding remarks

Europe-TV did not have a consistent look and feel during the time that it aired, due to the many changes made to the channel and technical mistakes. It desired to be a channel from Europe for Europe. Looking at the way Europa Television presented the EEC and European cooperation, a mixed image arose that was at times positive and negative at others. It remains unclear which countries Europa Television considered to be European. Sometimes the USSR was presented as being similar to Europe and is included in the weather maps,

¹⁰⁶ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 645.

¹⁰⁷ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tapes 2022, 2025, 2027, 2029.

¹⁰⁸ Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tapes (a selection) 645, 601, 2016, 2018.

¹⁰⁹ '450 Jaar reformatie', *Nieuwsblad van Het Noorden*, 17 May 1986, day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011011625> and Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Europa Television collection, VHS tape 2021, 2022.

¹¹⁰ Kumar, *Europe without Borders*, 33.

other times the USSR and other communist countries were not represented at all. Europa Television portrayed the countries that belonged to the EEC as countries with their own culture, but with shared roots, by highlighting differences while at the same time emphasizing similarities.

Chapter 3: A Cacophony of Opinions

As is reflected in its broadcasts, Europa-TV's path was not straightforward. While only broadcasting for thirteen months, its history ran longer. This chapter focusses on the channel's story from 1984 to November 1986, the story behind the broadcasts. This period can be divided into four parts. 1984 to March 1985 were months of preparation, March to October 1985 the channel was airing experimental broadcasts, October 1985 to February 1986 were the pre-operational months of broadcasting and April to November 1986 were the first and also final months of official broadcasting. However, as the previous chapter has shown, Europa-TV's identity had significantly changed in the final months of the channel. This chapter will establish that the Europa-TV's original idea of being a European public broadcaster had died before the channel's end, in October 1986. It will also expose how the Dutch government was crucial to the birth and demise of the channel, more so than any other party. Due to time constraints this chapter will not deal lengthily with the channel's bankruptcy and the settlement of its affairs that run into 1987. As this thesis focusses on how Europa Television's identity was formed through negotiation, this chapter will identify stakeholders in the debate and see how their opinions and demands shaped the channel. For this, newspaper articles and television broadcasts reporting on Europa Television are used to unearth these opinions. Just focusing on negotiations in the Dutch media gives a limited picture. After all, not all negotiations play out in the media and what is said in public might differ from what goes on behind closed doors. To shed a light on these semi private negotiations documents from Europa-TV's employees will be used. As will be explained later in this chapter, the media's reporting on Europa Television is overwhelmingly negative. Not only are there more reports on Europa-TV's failures compared to its achievements, but the writers often display their negative attitude towards Europa Television. While this is telling of how Europa Television is experienced by its (re)viewers, it is important to note and take into account that the Dutch association for daily newspapers publishers and the Dutch association for journalists actively campaigned against Europa Television.¹¹¹

¹¹¹ "Mediawet is voor kranten onverteerbaar," *Trouw*, March 27, 1985, day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010820116>., "Forse kritiek van uitgevers op mediawet," *Het Parool*, March 27, 1985, day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010831429> and "Journalisten vrezen commerciële omroep," *Trouw*, May 31, 1985, day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010820471>.

Before the different debates on Europa Television are analysed, a short chronology on the channel will be given. If there is one thing the EEC, European public broadcasters and individual European governments agreed on, it is that Europeans needed to be protected from American television channels and productions, and have their European (cultural) identity protected. Throughout the reporting on Europa Television the quest to counter Americanization was mentioned and often evoked as the main argument for the creation of the channel.¹¹² Secondary literature also supports this claim.¹¹³ Interestingly Theiler observed that in order to promote the idea of European identity the EEC enhanced this fear of Americanization. By making European identity something to be defended, they made the notion of its existence self-evident, moving it away from the realm of contested concept.¹¹⁴ There are different ways of looking at European television. Any production made in Europe can be considered European. European television culture could in this case simply be preserved by producing more television in Europe. Others, of which many will be introduced in this chapter, felt that European television was a league of its own, with a unique character that should have its own channel. Satellite technology would make it possible to broadcast for this channel to reach a new type of audience beyond nations' borders: a European one.

The EBU had started to experiment with the creation of a European channel through the 1982 Eurikon project. Afterwards, EBU members formed a work-group to explore the possibilities of a permanent channel. The group was sceptically called 'the flying turtle' because one of its members thought it more likely for a turtle to fly than for a European channel to be created.¹¹⁵ The NOS was one of the driving forces behind the Eurikon project and had its representative Klaas Jan Hindriks start working on the development of a European channel under the working title 'European programme on satellite'. The NOS' passion for European television was shared by the Dutch government, in the form of the

¹¹² Selection of articles in which this is mentioned; Ale van Dijk, "Slag om de huiskamer," *Het Vrije Volk : Democratisch-Socialistisch Dayblad*, May 24, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010961725>, "Nos krijgt 35 miljoen om Europees satellietprogramma te maken," *NRC Handelsblad*, May 28, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028144>., Boogerman, Eric. "NOS krijgt miljoenen steun voor Europees satelliet-tv-programma," *Leeuwarder Courant : Hoofdblad van Friesland*, May 28, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010565437>. Désirée Crommelin, "Europese tv-gedachten van Carlo Ripa Di Meana," *NRC Handelsblad*, December 22, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KNRC01:000030242>.

¹¹³ Collins, *From Satellite to Single Market*, 93-94

¹¹⁴ Theiler, 'Viewers into Europeans?', 10-11.

¹¹⁵ Wim Dussel, "Klaas Jan Hindriks gelooft heilig in Europa Television," *Nieuwsblad van Het Noorden*, October 5, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011011453>.

Dutch minister for Wellbeing, Public Health and Culture (VWC) L.C. Brinkman. The Dutch government agreed to support the project with 35 million guilders and granted it an available transponder (channel) on the European Communication Satellite (ECS-1).¹¹⁶ This enabled the channel to start broadcasting before the launch of the Olympus satellite.¹¹⁷ The European Space Agency was to release this a large broadcasting satellite in 1987 and had reserved a transponder for a European channel.¹¹⁸ The channel aired three trial broadcasts before its first official broadcast on October 5th, 1985.¹¹⁹ Mid November the NOS ordered Europa Television to pay 7.3 million of the 11.5 million guilders standing debt it had with its facilities agency.¹²⁰ Unable to pay, the NOS stopped submitting Europa Television's programmes to its satellite on November 28th, thereby making it impossible for Europa Television to air.¹²¹ Negotiations to solve this problem lasted until well into 1987 and despite

¹¹⁶ "Brinkman geeft de NOS miljoenen voor Europees satellietprogramma," *Trouw*, May 28, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010819811>, "Europese tv NOS volgens 'Sky-Channel-formule' mét reclame en mogelijk samenwerking met commerciële maatschappijen," *Het Parool*, May 28, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010832773>, 'Nos krijgt 35 miljoen om Europees satellietprogramma te maken', and Boogerman, 'NOS krijgt miljoenen steun voor Europees satelliet-tv-programma'.

42 million Dutch guilders in 1984 translates to roughly to 34 million euro in 2018. "Value of the Guilder / Euro," accessed May 23, 2018, <http://www.iisg.nl/hpw/calculate2.php>.

¹¹⁷ "NOS krijgt kanaal op Europese satelliet," *De Telegraaf*, January 12, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011206786>, "Europees tv-programma wellicht nog voor zomer," *NRC Handelsblad*, January 12, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028079>, "NOS neemt kanaal van Euro-tv over," *Trouw*, January 12, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010821530>, "NOS huurt kanaal van Euro TV op ECS-satelliet," *De Volkskrant*, January 12, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010879277>, "Olympus begint nog dit voorjaar met uitzenden," *Nieuwsblad van Het Noorden*, January 14, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011011215>, "Europees tv-program vóór zomer van start," *Nederlands Dayblad : Gereformeerd Gezinsblad / Hoofdred. P. Jongeling ... [et Al.]*, January 21, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010569850> and "Europese tv nog dit start voorjaar van," *Limburgsch Dayblad*, February 18, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010593479>.

¹¹⁸ "Britse satellieten veroveren de ruimte," *Leeuwarder Courant : Hoofdblad van Friesland*, May 19, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010565430> and "Is Europa-tv publiekszender of commerciële organisatie?," *Leeuwarder Courant : Hoofdblad van Friesland*, February 17, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010565966>.

¹¹⁹ Nico van der Maat, "Eerste uitzending Europese televisie," *Het Parool*, February 26, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010831404>, "Testuitzending Olympus op 5 mei uitzending ook op Groninger CAI ondanks een overvol kabelnet," *Nieuwsblad van Het Noorden*, April 30, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011011318>, "Olympus-tv komt met proefuitzendingen," *Leeuwarder Courant : Hoofdblad van Friesland*, June 4, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010565748> and "Europa Television begint met aanloopprogramma," *Nieuwsblad van Het Noorden*, October 5, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011011453>.

¹²⁰ "Europa-tv krijgt nog een week om schulden bij NOS aan te betalen," *NRC Handelsblad*, November 22, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028952>.

¹²¹ "Europa Television stopt uitzendingen na ultimatum NOS," *NRC Handelsblad*, November 28, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028956>.

an attempt to restart of the project, Europa Television never broadcasted another episode.¹²²

In the next part of the channel an analysis will be made of the different voices in the Europa-TV debate and how they contributed to the shaping and eventual downfall of the channel. As Europa-TV's was continuously changing, each period will also show how stakeholders affected its identity.

3.1 Idealism, ambition and opposition: Planning Olympus from May 28th, 1984 to February 28th, 1985

As mentioned in the introduction, the NOS had helped prepare the 'European programme on satellite'. In this building phase, three stakeholders were key: the Dutch government, Dutch cable companies and the Europa-TV consortium.

3.1.1. The dedicated government – the Netherlands

Interestingly enough, the European channel was first introduced to the Dutch public not by the channel itself, but by the Dutch government. This illustrates the earlier claimed importance of the country in the project. The Director-General of the Dutch ministry of WVC announced that the Dutch government, faced with the threat of commercial channels, would financially support a European channel to allow 'public broadcasters in its pluriformity to continue to play their role.'¹²³ The project could not wait for the launch of the Olympus satellite because 'too much ground would be lost to commercial television.'¹²⁴ The government's funding would allow the project to start an experimental programme sooner

¹²² "Advocaat start ontslagprocedure schuuld Europa-TV ruim f 53 miljoen," *Het Vrije Volk : Democratisch-Socialistisch Dayblad*, January 14, 1987, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010962304>, "Consortium blijft bestaan NOS en ARD nemen afscheid van Europa-tv," *NRC Handelsblad*, February 5, 1987, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000034842> and "Europa-TV keert terug in april, maar NOS en ARD staken deelname," *Leeuwarder Courant : Hoofdblad van Friesland*, February 6, 1987, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010566263>.

¹²³ 'Brinkman geeft de NOS miljoenen voor Europees satellietprogramma'.

¹²⁴ Ibidem.

led to the project's headquarters being placed in Hilversum, the home of Dutch broadcasting.¹²⁵

The channel would air an evening programme, 'like Sky Channel', that was 'diverting and informative' with shows, sport and news aimed at a European audience.¹²⁶ The government committed to donating 7 million guilders yearly retroactively from 1983 to 1988. The money would be taken from the general reserve of the Dutch public broadcasters' fund. Nine million guilders short on their budget, the NOS had to find advertisers and sponsors 'somewhere' in the Netherlands or Europe.¹²⁷ Director-General explained that from 1988 onwards the channel would be able to support itself by airing about twenty minutes of commercials each evening. Despite their financial dependence on authorities and commercial enterprises, he stressed that the channel was to remain independent.¹²⁸ The Minister of Brinkman of WVC expressed his delight in the creation of the channel because there was a 'clear need' for a channel that could bring programmes with a European dimension.¹²⁹

When in January 1985 the Dutch commercial subscription channel 'Euro-tv' filed for bankruptcy, a transponder opened up at the ECS-1 satellite.¹³⁰ Different parties showed interest, such as the commercial RTL. The Dutch government gave the transponder to the European channel.¹³¹ This gift from the Dutch government put a lot of pressure on the channel. Expecting it to be used immediately, the launch was moved up from fall to summer,

¹²⁵Nos krijgt 35 miljoen om Europees satellietprogramma te maken', "Hoofdkwartier Olympus in Hilversum," *Nieuwsblad van Het Noorden*, December 19, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011011205> and Fred van Garderen, "Hans van Der Werff over Europese tv: Olympus brengt aanvullend programma op het nationale," *Nieuwsblad van Het Noorden*, January 9, 1985, Day edition.

¹²⁶ 'Europese tv NOS volgens 'Sky-Channel-formule' mét reclame en mogelijk samenwerking met commerciële maatschappijen'.

¹²⁷ Ibidem.

¹²⁸ "Europese tv NOS volgens 'Sky-Channel-formule' mét reclame en mogelijk samenwerking met commerciële maatschappijen'.

¹²⁹ "Nos krijgt 35 miljoen om Europees satellietprogramma te maken." and Gerard Sonder, 'Telefonisch interview met L.C.Brinkman', *Avro-Magazine* (AVRO, 27 May 1984), 670067, Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision.

¹³⁰ Though its name might suggest it, the channel did not have pan-European ideals or a positive European message it wanted to spread. Its' concept was similar to that of the Dutch subscription channel 'FilmNet' that aired movies.

"Euro-tv loopt stuk op hoge kosten," *Trouw*, January 9, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010821527>.

¹³¹ "'NOS krijgt kanaal op Europese satelliet', "NOS neemt kanaal van Euro-tv over", and "NOS huurt kanaal van Euro TV op ECS-satelliet."

with short experimental broadcasts in the spring.¹³² This put the channel in a weak position, as they had not sorted out how to bring in commercial revenue.¹³³

With the transponder secured, the next step was making sure people were able to receive the channel. The ECS-1 satellite signal could only be received directly by a large satellite dish that was too expensive for individuals. Luckily the Netherlands had a large television coil network. Cable companies owned large dishes and could relay the signal through their network. In February minister Brinkman forced cable companies to transmit the channel to their subscribers. He had deemed it a 'public channel', raising its status equal to that of the national public channels Nederland 1 and 2, and the public Flemish BRT channel, requiring cable companies to transmit it.¹³⁴

3.1.2. The angry crowd – Dutch cable companies

The cable companies responded to the news with one emotion: anger. Different newspapers report on their intent to 'forcefully resist' the minister's decision.¹³⁵ They did not understand how Brinkman could ban foreign stations with Dutch content and push this channel with 'foreign elements' at the same time.¹³⁶ In their eyes the channel was commercial, 'no different' than Sky Channel, thus lacking precedent for obligatory broadcasting.¹³⁷ This discussion was not just a matter of principle. Public channels were exempted from paying a transition fee. By treating the channel as commercial, cable companies could charge them a fee. Moreover the companies argued that they did not have money for investments required, as they did not want to, and in some cases could not, raise viewer fees.¹³⁸ The companies were closely entwined with, sometimes owned by, local government. Therefore

¹³² "Europees tv-programma wellicht nog voor zomer," "Europees tv-program vóór zomer van start," "Europese tv nog dit start voorjaar van," and "Olympus begint nog dit voorjaar met uitzenden."

¹³³ "Olympus begint nog dit voorjaar met uitzenden."

¹³⁴ "Eerste uitzending op 6 oktober Brinkman: Olympus straks via alle katelnetten," *De Telegraaf*, February 21, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011206820>.

¹³⁵ "Plan Brinkman wekt woede van kabelexploitanten verzet tegen verplicht doorgeven van Olympus," *De Telegraaf*, February 22, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011206821>, "Europees satellietprogramma voorlopig alleen via kabel-tv Amsterdam," *De Telegraaf*, February 27, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011206825> and Nico van der Maat, "Eerste uitzending Europese televisie."

¹³⁶ "Plan Brinkman wekt woede van kabelexploitanten verzet tegen verplicht doorgeven van Olympus."

¹³⁷ Nico van der Maat, "Eerste uitzending Europese televisie."

¹³⁸ "Kabelexploitanten voorzien drastische tariefsverhoging kabel. Europees tv-programma per satelliet," *Limburgsch Dayblad*, February 25, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010593485>.

they often needed permission from the municipality if they wanted to raise their fees. Voters would not appreciate this rise, making councils reluctant to do so.¹³⁹ Even if companies and municipalities were to come to a conclusion to air Europa-TV, it would take a very long time before the channel could reach the viewers. The company Casema estimated that the city council of The Hague's discussion on a five cent raise in subscription fee would take several months.¹⁴⁰ Even without discussions, it would take months to get the channel into Dutch homes. Even those willing to extend their network could not be ready in time as there were only two months between Brinkman's announcement and the first broadcast.¹⁴¹ The only available option on short notice was replacing one of the commercial channels they transmitted with Olympus. This might have been exactly what Brinkman was after, as he suggested just that in his reaction to the commotion. He reiterated that Olympus was not a commercial channel that it would be 'a medium for the exchange of European cultural heritage', totally different from Sky Channel or Music Box.¹⁴² Brinkman's choice of words is interesting because by considering the broadcasts shared in the project as European heritage, he uses these national expressions to create a sense of cohesion among Europeans. By empowering Olympus through heritage politics he could use the channel to drive away commercial channels which he did not consider to be European heritage. In truth, it was a symbol politics of a minister that was known to dislike commercial television with little actual power behind the decision. As long as the new Dutch media law was not in place he had no way of forcing the companies to transmit the signal. The law was a revision of the outdated media regulations from the sixties and continued to be discussed all through the

¹³⁹ "Olympus-tv van start in twintig gemeenten," *Het Vrije Volk : Democratisch-Socialistisch Dayblad*, March 1, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010961960>.

¹⁴⁰ 'Europa-TV start morgen met dagelijkse uitzending', *Het Parool*, 4 October 1985, day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010831461>, Dussel, 'Klaas Jan Hindriks gelooft heilig in Europa Television', 'Europa Television begint met aanloopprogramma', "Europa-Television óók in Sittard", *Limburgsch Dayblad*, 5 October 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010611444>, Tom Rooduyn, 'Ondertitelverbod Europe Television "een ramp"', *NRC Handelsblad*, 7 October 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000029930>, Nico van der Maat, 'Europa Television moeizaam van start', *Het Parool*, 7 October 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010831463>, M.T. Meyer, 'Europa is op de buis al verenigd', *Nederlands Dayblad : Gereformeerd Gezinsblad / Hoofdred. P. Jongeling ... [et Al.]*, 15 October 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010569721>, Ale van Dijk, 'Europa-TV gaat in drie talen uitzenden', *Het Vrije Volk : Democratisch-Socialistisch Dayblad*, 11 October 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010962150>.

¹⁴¹ "Plan Brinkman wekt woede van kabelexploitanten verzet tegen verplicht doorgeven van Olympus", "Testuitzending Olympus op 5 mei uitzending ook op Groninger CAI ondanks een overvol kabelnet".

¹⁴² Maat, 'Eerste uitzending Europese televisie'.

channel's existence and only come into place in 1988.¹⁴³ This discussion will have contributed to the vehement statements that continued to appear in the papers well into June 1985.¹⁴⁴

Interestingly, Europa-TV had not been made aware of the minister's decision. Programme director Klaas Jan Hindriks responded with mixed emotions to the decision saying that they had not asked for it and though he saw its benefits, he had rather that 'the quality of a programme should be of such a level that cable companies actually want to transfer it.'¹⁴⁵ Six days later Europa-TV's Hans van der Werff latched on to Brinkman's arguments that Europa-TV was to be 'more attractive' as it allowed for 'the exchange of European cultural heritage'.¹⁴⁶ The NOS temporarily solved the transmission problem by airing the channel's content in their own airtime in the morning on the Dutch Nederland 2 channel until October 5th.¹⁴⁷

The noncompliance of the cable companies would have far reaching consequences as it resulted in a limited reach of the channel in the Netherlands. Its first trial broadcast was broadcasted to 650.000 households of the four million Dutch households connected to the coil. In June of the next year, this number had only increased to 1.5 million.¹⁴⁸ This low number of connections made the channel unattractive for advertisers.

3.1.3. The ambitious new born – Europa-TV consortium

¹⁴³ "Historie Televisie 1980 - 1989 - Beeld En Geluid Wiki," accessed June 5, 2018, https://wiki.beeldengeluid.nl/index.php/Historie_televisie_1980_-_1989.

¹⁴⁴ "Exploitanten kabelnetten in verzet tegen Olympus," *Trouw*, June 28, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010820445>, "Vloed van reacties op kabelenquête gemeente," *Het Vrije Volk : Democratisch-Socialistisch Dayblad*, July 16, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010962086> and Ale van Dijk, "Schild," *Het Vrije Volk : Democratisch-Socialistisch Dayblad*, July 2, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010962074>.

¹⁴⁵ "Eerste uitzending op 6 oktober Brinkman: Olympus straks via alle katelnetten".

¹⁴⁶ "Europees satellietprogramma voorlopig alleen via kabel-tv Amsterdam".

¹⁴⁷ ibidem.

¹⁴⁸ "Bereik Europa-TV blijft toenemen," *Leeuwarder Courant : Hoofdblad van Friesland*, June 9, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010566058>.

Six months after Directorate-General Verhoeve's announcement, the channel presented itself to the press on December 18th 1984 in Hilversum.¹⁴⁹ This presentation, a second press conference, press releases and interviews give an indication of what was planned for the channel. The NOS had found the public broadcasters ARD (West-Germany), the RAI (Italy) and the RTE (Ireland) willing to participate in and financially commit to a total of 50.2 million guilders at an EBU meeting in Geneva.¹⁵⁰ The four tried to attract more partners from the EBU, who were free to join the consortium whenever.¹⁵¹ Their intentions for the channel were clear: 'to form a bulwark against the commercial pulp that, via satellite, will fill the European television screens.'¹⁵² The channel's name was derived from the name of the satellite that would eventually broadcast their programme in 1988: Olympus. Their logo was the, in the previous chapter introduced, mountaintop and fluttering dove.¹⁵³ Starting in October Olympus would air 5.5 hours of television, increasing eventually to a ten hour programme.¹⁵⁴ They would air EBU materials, own productions and air live sports and political events such as a soccer match or American president Reagan's visit to the European Parliament in May.¹⁵⁵ The partners wanted to air European news, culture, information, sports and a limited offer of amusement.¹⁵⁶ European news would be aired daily and programmes on tourism, transport and traffic, European food and cooking and finances

¹⁴⁹ Henk Gelder van, "Binnen een jaar begin van Europese televisie," *NRC Handelsblad*, December 19, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000027707>, "Europa-tv mogelijk eind '85 de lucht in," *Nieuwsblad van Het Noorden*, December 19, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011011205>, "Hoofdbureau Europees satelliet-tv-project komt in Hilversum," *Leeuwarder Courant : Hoofdblad van Friesland*, December 19, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010565611>, "Satellietproject nu vanaf najaar '85 te ontvangen. Europees tv-programma komt half jaar eerder op de buis," *De Telegraaf*, December 19, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011206049>, Afra Botman, "'Europese' televisie begint najaar 1985," *Trouw*, December 20, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010821255>, "Europees tv-station eind 1985 de lucht in," *Nederlands Dayblad : Gereformeerd Gezinsblad / Hoofdred. P. Jongeling ... [et Al.]*, December 20, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010628064>, "Olympus," *Het Parool*, December 20, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010833432>, "Europees televisiestation wil eind 1985 al uitzenden," *De Volkskrant*, December 21, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010879312> and "Over een half jaar Europese tv," *Het Vrije Volk : Democratisch-Socialistisch Dayblad*, December 19, 1984, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010961902>.

¹⁵⁰ Gelder, 'Binnen een jaar begin van Europese televisie', and "'Satellietproject nu vanaf najaar '85 te ontvangen. Europees tv-programma komt half jaar eerder op de buis'.

¹⁵¹ Garderen, 'Buiten Beeld Hans van Der Werff over Europese tv'.

¹⁵² 'Olympus-tv van start in twintig gemeenten'.

¹⁵³ Bert Klaver, "Hilversum het technisch hart van 'Europe TV,'" *De Telegraaf*, September 21, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011206999>.

¹⁵⁴ 'Olympus-tv van start in twintig gemeenten'; "Europees satellietprogramma voorlopig alleen via kabel-tv Amsterdam"; Olympus-tv van start in twintig gemeenten'.

¹⁵⁵ "Over een half jaar Europese tv." and Maat, 'Eerste uitzending Europese televisie'.

¹⁵⁶ Gelder, 'Binnen een jaar begin van Europese televisie'.

weekly.¹⁵⁷ Each night would have a theme. Monday would be sports night, Tuesday would be drama night, Wednesday entertainment evening, Thursday film and filmmakers evening, Friday would be centred around European politics and culture, Saturday would be for the youths and Sunday's for ballet, music, dance performances and a programme on 'ecclesiastical issues and religious affairs'.¹⁵⁸ Europa-TV made use of subtitles or dubbing would make every broadcast accessible for each country it aired in.¹⁵⁹

NOS employee responsible for European affairs Hans van der Werff stressed the complimentary nature of the channel in an interview. The Monday sports themed night would not repeat Sunday's matches that 'could be watched elsewhere' but show a programme that would focus on 'trends in European sports'. Olympus' news was not to replace national news, but to enhance it by bringing more in-dept information with a 'European tinge', solely on topics that were of a 'European nature'. The same went for the other programmes. In interviews and the Hindriks archive there is no straightforward answer to the question what this European tinge was or what topics were of a European nature. There are however clues. When explaining the channel's schedule, Van der Werff explained that the films would, 'of course', be European, meaning no showings of 'Rocky' for Olympus viewers.¹⁶⁰ An internal document explained that a state visit from the Dutch queen to Spain would not be considered European news unless she did 'something controversial'.¹⁶¹ During the Eurikon experiment some journalist wanted every European to receive information about other European countries. Others believed news should be limited to a short impression of important events, so that viewers would not get too much 'insignificant' information. A short mention of the Irish Parliamentary elections could trigger an Irish viewer to turn to national broadcasting to learn more about it.¹⁶² Clearly, Europa-TV had gone down the latter road, judging from the World Watch news. Though some of their own productions gave more in-depth insight into European issues, they were extremely limited. This again stressed the complimentary role the channel committed to play to national

¹⁵⁷ Nico van der Maat, "Verbod voor tv-satelliet Olympus," *Het Parool*, March 2, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010831408>.

¹⁵⁸ 'Olympus-tv van start in twintig gemeenten'.

¹⁵⁹ Ibidem.

¹⁶⁰ Garderen, 'Buiten Beeld Hans van Der Werff over Europese tv'.

¹⁶¹ *An editorial policy and Philosophy for Europa-TV news*, K.J. Hindriks Archive, box 1.11, Netherlands Institute for Vision and Sound.

¹⁶² Richard Dill, 'Anmerkungen zum OTS-Experiment', *Satelliten-Kommunikation*, 1983, 63–65, K.J. Hindriks Archive, box 1.13, Netherlands Institute for Vision and Sound.

broadcasting. As to what programmes were considered to be European, it seems that with regards to dance, classical music, ballet, opera and theatre performances this meant that productions were made in Europe. These productions were probably on the mind of minister Brinkman and Van der Werff when they spoke of European cultural heritage exchange. Yet as the previous chapter has shown, this idea of European culture exchange was not executed flawlessly as Europa-TV also aired many American dramas and film.

The channel's target audience was described in different terms. According to Klaas Jan Hindriks, the channel aimed at people 'that want to be informed beyond borders on news, politics, sports and art.'¹⁶³ He wished Olympus to be the television version of 'International Herald Tribune, Times and der Spiegel'.¹⁶⁴ The *Volkskrant* described the audience as those 'with a higher education, with a high income'.¹⁶⁵ When Chris Smeekes, the director of the STER company responsible for the sale of all commercials on Dutch public television who was also involved with the channel, was asked about the target audience he responded that it would be a 'small portion of the public that was internationally orientated', 'not your average Joe'.¹⁶⁶ In later interviews Hindriks chooses to include 'all the people between Israel and New-Found land, and from South-Siberia to Tunis', as Europeans, giving him an audience of at least three hundred-fifty million households. This audience would be reached in 16 European languages, of which he considered Arabic to be one. At the same time, he believed Europa-TV continued to be aimed at a selective audience, 'people interested in international affairs'.¹⁶⁷ Paul Beugels felt their programmes should appeal to Western and Eastern Europe.¹⁶⁸

The different interpretations of 'Europe', as well as no clear consensus on the concept of European identity, made the use of these words in policy documents and interviews problematic. This lack of clarity likely resulted in confusion, giving the channel no clear sense of direction.

¹⁶³ "Olympus."

¹⁶⁴ Gelder, 'Binnen een jaar begin van Europese televisie'.

¹⁶⁵ "Europees televisiestation wil eind 1985 al uitzenden".

¹⁶⁶ Gelder, 'Binnen een jaar begin van Europese televisie'.

¹⁶⁷ Dussel, 'Klaas Jan Hindriks gelooft heilig in Europa Television'.

¹⁶⁸ "Is Europa-tv publiekszender of commerciële organisatie?"

3.2 Trial and many errors: trial broadcasts from March 1st until October 5th, 1985

In this second phrase the channel presented itself on the screen for the first time. During these trial broadcasts one factor, Dutch, European and international law and one actor, the Dutch media, had a major effect on Olympus/Europa-TV's identity.

3.2.1. Restrictions and a lawsuit - the channel in legal trouble

After Olympus' first trial broadcast, the Dutch copyright organization BUMA-STEMRA ordered them to stop further broadcasting. The channel had neglected to pay for broadcasting rights nor had they contacted BUMA-STEMRA, who had to learn about Olympus' broadcasts in the news.¹⁶⁹ The scheduled broadcasts were cancelled. They were replaced by a test card so that the cable companies could experiment with the broadcasting and at the same time not violate any rules.¹⁷⁰ Late April Olympus reached an agreement with BUMA-STEMRA and would air another trial broadcast on May 5th.¹⁷¹ Reports on the conflict do not explain the outcome, Freewave magazine reported that Europa-TV had to start paying for copyright 'because they were a satellite channel.'¹⁷² This unexpected expense was a setback as Olympus had expected to be exempted from the fee like other public channels.

In September the television channel was contacted by Olympus, the Japanese camera manufacturer who held the rights to the name. The manufacturer did not want to become associated with the project and ordered it to change its name. The channel agreed to have its name changed and its logo removed from all images.¹⁷³ Olympus had been caught off guard by this development, as the Japanese manufacturer had not objected to the satellite named Olympus, after which the channel was named. Paul Hendriksen told *de Telegraaf* that

¹⁶⁹ "Uitzending Olympus door problemen maand vertraagd," *De Volkskrant*, March 2, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010879086> and "Auteursrechten Olympus zijn nog niet geregeld," *De Waarheid*, March 4, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010378480>.

¹⁷⁰ Maat, 'Verbod voor tv-satelliet Olympus', "Uitzending Olympus door problemen maand vertraagd" and "Auteursrechten Olympus zijn nog niet geregeld".

¹⁷¹ "Testuitzending Olympus op 5 mei uitzending ook op Groninger CAI ondanks een overvol kabelnet." and "Satelliet-Tv Olympus Hervat Op 5 Mei Proefuitzendingen," *De Volkskrant*, April 17, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010879061>.

¹⁷² 'Auteursrechten Olympus', *Freewave: Driewekelijks Media Magazine*, 6 May 1985, accessed 04-08-2018, http://freewave-media-magazine.nl/?page_id=2547.

¹⁷³ "Olympus-TV gaat Olympsat heten," *Limburgsch Dayblad*, September 4, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010611335>, 'Olympus-TV gaat Olympsat heten', *Nieuwsblad van Het Noorden*, 4 September 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011011395>.

even though legally speaking the channel had a convincing case they chose 'not to hang around in European courts' because they had 'more important business at hand'.¹⁷⁴ The newspaper headlines revealed the distress this must have caused at the Olympus headquarters. For days different names for the channel surfaced: 'Olympsat', 'Europe Television', 'Europa Television', 'Europa-TV', 'Europa-TV', 'Europa-TV', 'Europe tv' and 'Europa Televisie'.¹⁷⁵ Eventually, the channel went with 'Europa' instead of the English 'Europe'. According to a spokesperson, this was because 'the continent where we live has always been known as Europa throughout all of Europe, not just in the Netherlands.'¹⁷⁶ The name change was not only a nuisance because of a loss of brand awareness, it was also a large financial setback. The channel needed new logos, new leaders and edit Olympus out of their other footage. This would cost hundreds of thousands of guilders.¹⁷⁷ Both these claims must have caused a lot of difficulties for the channel and the channel was therefore off with a bad start. Europa-TV must have hardly recovered from the previous shock when disaster struck. Ten days before the channel would start airing, minister Brinkman announced that the channel was violating the Netherlands' media policy and would not be allowed to subtitle its programmes in the Netherlands. Brinkman stated that he could not change the cable regulations that would allow for Dutch subtitles under foreign programmes. The ban on commercials was being fought in court by the Dutch union of advertisers, and the minister wished to wait for the result of the procedure.¹⁷⁸ What had driven Brinkman to this decision? Klaas Jan Hindriks stated he had always known about the channel's advertisements and subtitles. The Director General had even included these features in his first announcement of the channel. Moreover, Brinkman himself had defended the channel's commercial policy on television. He stated that because the channel was 'clearly international' and public, its commercials not exclusively aimed at the Netherlands, and its

¹⁷⁴ "'Olympus' omgedoopt tot 'Europa-Tv,'" *Het Vrije Volk : Democratisch-Socialistisch Dayblad*, September 18, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010962116>

¹⁷⁵ 'Olympus-TV gaat Olympsat heten', 'Olympus-TV gaat Olympsat heten' and "Olympus-TV gaat Olympsat heten," and "Olympus-Tv wordt straks Olympsat," *Leeuwarder Courant : Hoofdblad van Friesland*, September 4, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010565827>, "'Olympus-Tv Heet Nu Europe Television', "Europees tv-project Olympus gaat verder als Europa Televisie," *De Volkskrant*, September 17, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCD:010878932>, "'Olympus" omgedoopt tot "Europa-TV" and Klaver, 'Hilversum het technisch hart van "Europe TV"'.
¹⁷⁶ "'Olympus' omgedoopt tot 'Europa-Tv.'"
¹⁷⁷ Klaver, 'Hilversum het technisch hart van "Europe TV"'.
¹⁷⁸ 'Europa-TV start vol handicaps', *Het Vrije Volk : Democratisch-Socialistisch Dayblad*, 27 September 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010962124>.

not be broadcasted and had to be replaced last minute with lower quality, Dutch programmes. The channel had to use English subtitles in the meantime.¹⁸⁷ With the minister refusing to reverse his decision, the channel also started dubbing programmes. This way the channel could continue to air its commercials and have Dutch viewers understand the programmes. Yet at a high price, the 5 million guilders for a sound channel took up a substantial part of the budget.¹⁸⁸

Even before its official start the channel had suffered damage from stakeholders, especially the Dutch government. Its commercial activities were interpreted to be for profit by parties such as cable companies and BUMA-STEMRA. They ascribed the channel a commercial identity and this image had led to unexpected financial setbacks. With chaos at the Hilversum headquarters, financial losses and a new name, Europa-TV was off to a rocky start.

3.2.2. A useless birthday present – Europa-TV's bad press

Criticism was abound in the press. Right after its first press conference *Trouw* reporter Afra Botman challenged the Europeaness of the 'pan-European project', as there were only four countries participating. Moreover, she believed that if Olympus TV was the answer of the EBU broadcasters to commercial television, it was not the right one.¹⁸⁹

During the trial broadcasts journalist Fred van Garderen of *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden* wrote a crushing review entitled 'Klaas Jan, Inc', referring to Garderen's believe that Olympus was the personal vanity project of Klaas Jan Hindriks. With technology and his skill for words Hindriks 'lured' in a German, Italian and Irish television station and founded Olympus. Van Garderen hated the channel. Hindriks had promised something 'different than anything we know', but there he was watching 'the same item twice about a man that we already see too much: Ronald Reagan. Reruns of reruns.'¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ 'Kamer wil voor Europa-TV Nederlandse ondertiteling', *De Volkskrant*, 2 October 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010878897>.

¹⁸⁸ "Europa-TV stopt experiment en wordt armlastig volwassen."

¹⁸⁹ Botman, "'Europese" televisie begint najaar 1985'.

¹⁹⁰ Fred van Garderen, "Klaas Jan BV," *Nieuwsblad van Het Noorden*, May 7, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011011320>.

Another disappointed journalist wrote that ‘Olympus feels like the bad birthday presents’ that must have been expensive and meant for him, but was useless. He called for the end of this ‘nonsense’ channel: ‘Give us BBC, CBC, ABC, NBC and if need be TB¹⁹¹, but not this expensive picture book and bad English lessons.¹⁹² Moreover, Ale van Dijk called Olympus an ‘elitist project’ in the socialist-democrat newspaper *Vrije Volk*.¹⁹³

Two weeks before its official start, reviews were still bad. Ruud Verdonck of the *Trouw* had watched a report on a symposium on satellite transmission in Rotterdam. He understood that it was a trial broadcast and he could ‘pardon a mistake or six’, but by the end of the broadcast he was so frustrated with the microphones that were not working, clips that were not started and failed connections that he ‘threw a brick through his television’.¹⁹⁴ Moreover, he resented the commercial nature of the broadcast, especially as this ‘Olympus toy’ was paid for by the Dutch taxpayer.¹⁹⁵ The programme had received soft sponsoring. For example, one item was about the Jongenelen company and the Jumbotron television they sold, in return Jongenelen had recorded the symposium for Olympus.¹⁹⁶

Unfortunately for Europa-TV, reviews did not improve after the official start of the channel. The only compliment they received was about their films. A journalist called Europa-TV ‘a worthy alternative for classic film lovers who prefer the original language above dubbing’. The journalist was not impressed with their other offerings: ‘for those who do not enjoy Thunderbirds [1962], the Persuaders [1971] and sports, this channel has little to offer.’¹⁹⁷ Victor Lebesque of the *Volkskrant* agreed with her. Europa-TV had films of ‘reasonable quality’, but the rest was ‘deplorable’, with ‘mostly worthless series, cartoons, documentaries about the beautiful nature and sports, lots of sports.’¹⁹⁸ He mocked the idea that Europa-TV supposed to be a cultural shield of European public broadcasters against

¹⁹¹ The author is referring to tuberculosis with TB.

¹⁹² Stoker, “Opampus,” *De Volkskrant*, June 10, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010879001>.

¹⁹³ “Exploitanten kabelnetten in verzet tegen Olympus.” “Vloed van reacties op kabelenquête gemeente,” and Dijk, “Schild.”

¹⁹⁴ Ruud Verdonck, “ON / OFF,” *Trouw*, September 17, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010828241>.

¹⁹⁵ Ruud Verdonck, “ON / OFF,” *Trouw*, September 17, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010828241>.

¹⁹⁶ Ruud Verdonck, “ON / OFF,” *Trouw*, September 17, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010828241>.

¹⁹⁷ Rooduyn, ‘Europa-Tv’.

¹⁹⁸ Victor Lebesque, “Europa-TV, het schild ende betrouwen,” *De Volkskrant*, February 8, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010878793>.

‘American pulp television that it threatened to bury old Europe in’ and an economic shield that would make sure that commercial channels would not ‘grab unspent European advertising revenue commercial stations for themselves’. Yet he clearly did not believe Europa-TV to succeed in any of these goals.¹⁹⁹

Europa-TV received more criticism for using ‘ripe material’, such as episodes about Dutch soccer club Ajax’s glory years and videoclips from the sixties. The reviewer stated that the outdated material would make young viewers chortle.²⁰⁰ Judging from the analysed broadcasts, the ripe material comment can be extended to most of Europa-TV’s other content. Most films, dramas and documentaries were mostly more than a few years old. Even in June 1986, Henk van Gelder called the channel ‘cheap’ ‘boring’ and ‘predictable’.²⁰¹ The rather intense, negative comments about the channel’s performance were not limited to a specific press outlet. It begs the question why journalists reacted the way they did. Interestingly they were not negative about the idea of European television, but about the execution. This position remained unchanged throughout the channel’s existence. A good example is an article titled ‘the boring bankruptcy of a sensible enterprise’ that defended the channel’s premise but condemned its execution.²⁰² Negative reviewers were not Eurosceptics. On the contrary, they actually wanted the channel to be different from national broadcasters but were disappointed when they felt they were presented with a, lower quality, similar offering. They mocked them for not making true on grandiose promises like the millions of connected European households.²⁰³ Like other parties before them, they also viewed Olympus as a commercial enterprise, and disliked them for it. This dislike was fueled by the fact that Brinkman had subsidized the channel. Despite Olympus’ efforts, the negative reporting outweighed their positive press, giving it a bad reputation. With coverage like this, it is likely that readers and viewers opinion and perception of the channel was negatively influenced right from the start. A blow from which Europa-TV was unable to recover.

¹⁹⁹ Ibidem.

²⁰⁰ Roelof Hoekman, ‘Buiten Beeld: clips van toen’, *Nieuwsblad van Het Noorden*, 4 January 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011011523>.

²⁰¹ Henk Gelder van, “Televisie-achteraf: ingevette dames,” *NRC Handelsblad*, June 12, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000029352>.

²⁰² Gerard Geradts, “Europa-TV:’t saaie bankroet van een zinnige onderneming,” *De Volkskrant*, November 1, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCD:010879174>

²⁰³ “Bereik Europa-TV blijft toenemen.”

3.3 High claims and disappointment: broadcasting from October 1985 to February 1986

On October 5th, 1985, Europa-TV started its pre-operational daily broadcasts. For this period the EEC and Europa-TV's performance in the Dutch media played key roles in the shaping of the channel.

3.3.1. Symbolic supporters - The European Economic Community

So far the EEC has been rather absent from this analysis. This is because contrary to Theiler, Michalis and Collins claims, the EEC was little involved with the channel. Just after the first trial broadcasts, some member of the European Parliament showed support for the channel during a debate on the plans of the European Commission for the next five years. The Dutch socialist EMP Phillie Viehoff argued the channel should be supported financially by the Commission as it was a joined production from various European countries, aired in various European countries and stemming from the European Broadcasting Union. She felt the channel offered the EEC 'the unique opportunity to create more mutual understanding between European citizens and give people a better knowledge of our work.' The Dutch Christian Democrat EMP Bouke Beumer agreed with her, stating that the channel best suited the criteria the European Parliament had formulated for European television.²⁰⁴ Despite this initial support and further enthusiasm about getting 'an extra podium for their message', the European Parliament was not willing to pay for that podium.²⁰⁵ This must have been a shock to Europa-TV, as in February 1986 one of its board members had announced that the Parliament was going to donate 5 million guilders to the organization.²⁰⁶

Besides counting on the European Parliament for financial support, Europa-TV had also requested millions of guilders in support of the channel from the European Commission.²⁰⁷ In February 1986 it was reported that the channel expected a contribution of

²⁰⁴ "Europees pleidooi voor Olympus-tv," *Het Vrije Volk : Democratisch-Socialistisch Dayblad*, March 13, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010961984>.

²⁰⁵ "Europa-TV stopt experiment en wordt armlastig volwassen."

²⁰⁶ Lebesque, 'Europa-TV, het schild ende betrouwen'..

²⁰⁷ "Nederland moet verbod op ondertitels uitleggen."

7.8 million guilders.²⁰⁸ By June Carlo Ripa di Meana, the European commissioner for culture had announced that the channel would receive 3 million ECU (7.2 million guilders), spread out over a few years. It was to be a one-time contribution because according to him, budget cuts had made it impossible to make a structural commitment.²⁰⁹ In the end, the commission only transferred 800.000 ECU just before the channel collapsed. In an interview in December, 1986 Ripa di Meana looked back on his actions regarding Europa-TV. He had spent two and a half years trying to get the money and when it was finally there, the money had come 'too late'. He regretted this delay because he stated he had always and still believed in 'a multilingual channel that would accelerate European integration.'²¹⁰

The European Parliament and the European Commission were quicker to support the channel when the Dutch minister Brinkman barred it from having subtitles. The Commission warned the Dutch government that if it did not allow for subtitles on foreign commercial channels within two months, it would take the country to the European Court of Justice. At the same time, the ban on subtitles was already being fought at the European Court by the Dutch liberal EMP Gijs de Vries on the grounds of its violation of the European Green Paper.²¹¹ Despite being cornered, the Dutch government upheld their regulations, arguing that television was a national matter.²¹²

Gijs de Vries became a passionate orator on Europa-TV's behalf. He gave several interviews and his message is exemplified by a speech he gave at a conference on the future of media. Here he painted a grim picture for the printed press and national broadcasters. Satellites, cable and dish antennas would quickly change the media landscape, drowning out public broadcasters. While at the same time giving a more positive message of companies willingness to spend millions on advertisements on a European channel. With his efforts he emphasized Europa-TV's *raison d'être*.²¹³ Like the EEC and Dutch government before him, he

²⁰⁸ "Is Europa-tv publiekszender of commerciële organisatie?," *Leeuwarder Courant : Hoofdblad van Friesland*, February 17, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010565966>.

²⁰⁹ "Onderzoek minimum aan randvoorwaarden Europees mediabeleid," *Leeuwarder Courant : Hoofdblad van Friesland*, June 16, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010566064>.

²¹⁰ Désirée Crommelin, "Europese tv-gedachten van Carlo Ripa Di Meana," *NRC Handelsblad*, December 22, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000030242>.

²¹¹ "Nederland moet verbod op ondertitels uitleggen."

²¹² "Kabelregeling in strijd met Europese verdragen," *Limburgsch Dayblad*, December 13, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010611414>.

²¹³ Jaap Delterne, "Nederland proeftuin Europese televisie," *De Telegraaf*, February 11, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011206811>, Ruud Verdonck, "De Nederlandse omroep moet in het Europese gareel gaan lopen," *Trouw*, February 12, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCD01:010820079>. "Kamer wil voor Europa-TV Nederlandse

used the threat of commercial television to create a need to defend European public television.

Meanwhile, the EC was developing guidelines for European television, without borders and one standard. Like increasing the requirements for programmes, except for news, sports and commercials, made within the EEC, from 30% to 60% and commercials kept to a maximum of 9 minutes an hour. Commercials for alcohol and tobacco should be banned and broadcasters should spend 5% of their budget on productions of independent producers. These rules were created to protect public broadcasters as they met these requirements easily. It would keep out 'channels that work cheaply because they buy non-EEC soap series and use a lot of commercials.'²¹⁴ These proposals were not necessarily cheered on by Europa-TV, as they feared it would bring national rules, which had worked against them, to a European level.²¹⁵ The ministers of Culture did not meet the EC's sense of urgency to protect European productions and television. They rejected their proposed rules, stating that television regulations were a national matter.²¹⁶ This showed that the EEG had, despite their discussions and plans, little real power over television. With European governments not eager for European television (regulations), it is not strange that Di Rippa was only able to give Europa-TV a single contribution after two and a half years of negotiations. With this small, single unconditional donation and the EP's unwillingness to support the channel financially, the EEG can hardly be called a large investor. Especially not to the extent that some EBU members needed to fear the EEC interfering in matters of content and management, making the channel 'dependent on European political institutions.'²¹⁷ Collins' assessment that Europa-TV did not attract more partners because it was too closely connected to the EEG is therefore far-fetched.²¹⁸

ondertiteling." "“Nederland wordt van leesvolk kijkvolk,” *NRC Handelsblad*, March 7, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028702>.

²¹⁴ Wynold Verwey, "Vrijheid van tv-uitzendingen in EG bepleit," *NRC Handelsblad*, March 20, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028713>.

²¹⁵ Rooduyn, 'Europa-Tv'.

²¹⁶ "Onderzoek minimum aan randvoorwaarden Europees mediabeleid."

²¹⁷ Collins, *From Satellite to Single Market*, 116.

²¹⁸ Ibidem.

3.3.2. Promoting Europa-TV – how Europa-TV talked about itself in the press

Europa-TV tried to get a positive image through interviews, press releases and an advertisement, with the aim to promote and explain what the channel was about. For example, a page filling advertisement (Figure 3.1) showed what the channel wanted to be: ‘From Europe. For Europe’.²¹⁹ A new channel was born. Not just any channel, a ‘real alternative, a really different channel’.²²⁰ With high quality programmes, ‘no ordinary American series, no quiz shows, and no droning repetition of sales promoting videoclips.’²²¹ Instead, the viewers would

be treated to the best European television had to offer. In such a way that it appealed to the ‘Irish, Portuguese, Danes and Dutch’.²²² Yet even in an advertisement, Europa-TV was unable to keep its troubles from the public. It stated that every European country would receive in their own language ‘if politicians cooperate’.²²³ This indirectly referred to the Dutch government’s subtitle ban. Moreover, there was a disclaimer saying due to problems with cable companies not all were carrying the channel.

Regarding its identity, the advertisement stated that the Dutch viewer did not only get an extra channel, ‘but also an extra nationality: the European!’²²⁴ Other articles that appeared surrounding the channel’s launch stated that its daily news would be ‘averse to national angles’, present facts ‘important to Europe as a whole’ and Europa-TV would only air European films because ‘Europe still has its own cultural identity, of which its’ continued

Figure 3.1: Europa-TV Advertisement.



Source: “Advertentie vanavond om 6 uur gaat Europa de lucht in,” *Nieuwsblad van Het Noorden*, October 5, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011011453>

²¹⁹ “Advertentie vanavond om 6 uur gaat Europa de lucht in,” *Nieuwsblad van Het Noorden*, October 5, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011011453>

²²⁰ *ibidem*.

²²¹ *ibidem*.

²²² *ibidem*.

²²³ *ibidem*.

²²⁴ “Advertentie vanavond om 6 uur gaat Europa de lucht in.’

existence is of immense importance'.²²⁵ Later in the year they would bring 'more elaborate European news programmes'.²²⁶ The channel was not straightforward why they wanted to ascribe the European identity to its viewers. Moreover, in this piece they do not employ the previously identified tactic of implying that the European identity is something to be defended. Instead, they implied that it was created, that had not existed before the channel's launch. The *Nederlands Dagblad* reported the channel aimed to 'increase the unification of Europe'.²²⁷ Interestingly enough, in an interview in *NRC Handelsblad* Hindriks gave two months later he explicitly stated that he did not want Europa-TV to become a channel for the promotion of the idea of European unification. 'We want to be a fully fledged international channel, in which differences within Europe are highlighted.'²²⁸ This latter statement was also reflected in internal policy documents, that did not mention working towards unification.²²⁹

Despite the profile Europa-TV employees might have envisioned for the channel, its identity was not only shaped by its employees. As stated before, identity is also ascribed. Its employees worked hard to contradict the ideas that had surrounded the channel. First of all, it had to shake its commercial image. Therefore they continued to spend much time justifying the decision to dedicate 10% of airtime to commercials. For example, they ensured readers that they would be following the commercial codes of the EBU and Council of Europe to ensure that advertisers could never influence the channel's content.²³⁰

The channel also continued to address Dutch concerns that Europa-TV would be competition for public broadcasters and endanger advertisement revenue for them. They kept referring to 'a solid report' that had stated there was more demand for commercials than there was airtime in Europe. This way Europa-TV would not take away commercials

²²⁵ Meyer, 'Europa is op de buis al verenigd'.

²²⁶ 'Europa-TV start morgen met dagelijkse uitzending', Dussel, 'Klaas Jan Hindriks gelooft heilig in Europa Television', 'Europa Television begint met aanloopprogramma', 'Europa-TV begint aanloopprogramma', 'Europa-Television óók in Sittard', Rooduyn, 'Ondertitelverbod Europe Television "een ramp"', Maat, 'Europa Television Moeizaam van Start', 'Meyer, 'Europa is op de buis al verenigd' and Dijk, 'Europa-TV gaat in drie talen uitzenden'.

²²⁷ Meyer, 'Europa is op de buis al verenigd'.

²²⁸ Rooduyn, 'Europa-TV'.

²²⁹ The following is a selection of documents mentioning the channels aim to highlight European differences: 'European TV " A Pan-European Progr. on Satellite, the History of Europa-TV "', n.d., 1.08, The Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision Hindriks Archive; Klaas Jan Hindriks, 'Europa-TV " A Lost Cause " by K.J. H. Mei 1987', May 1987, 1.09, The Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision Hindriks Archive; 'An Investigation into a Concept - Venstermap Met Beschouwingen over Olympus TV (Ook Wel Aangeduid Als Europa-TV)', n.d., 1.13, The Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision Hindriks Archive.

²³⁰ Meyer, 'Europa is op de buis al verenigd'.

from Dutch public broadcasters.²³¹ It also kept making readers aware that commercial television would be a threat to the public broadcasting system, and that Europa Television was the only answer to this problem. Lastly, it kept assuring that the bad quality of the channel would only be temporary. They kept referred back to the channel being in the testing phase, that was originally from March 1st to October 5th 1985 but was stretched to January 1st and eventually April 1st 1986.²³²

Employees continued to talk about its great potential, promising the highest quality in the near future and taking on airs by saying for example that it could ‘no longer take all those little national interests into account now that they were a full-fledged European channel’ and that ‘in the future you cannot imagine a world without it.’²³³ It was the inability to fulfil these promises that made journalists critical of the channel. Collins drew a similar conclusion with his previously mentioned ‘Do you know Europa-TV? A programme with high pretences and little viewers’ summary of the situation.

3.4 Conflict, crisis and downfall: Europa-TV April – June 1986

The analysis of the final period of Europa-TV’s history is more inward looking. It will be illustrated the channel’s poor finances and internal conflicts about the channel’s identity contributed to its downfall.

3.4.1. Unbalanced books – Europa-TV’s finances

The immediate cause for the end of Europa-TV was the channel’s inability to repay a large debt to the NOS. The channel’s financial situation had always been challenging, right from the start of the project. Its budget was based on contributions from the partners and advertising revenue. The NOS had spent much effort finding partners to join the consortium and share the costs. In this, Hindriks had had a tough time finding ‘likeminded spirits on a European level’, yet remained optimistic.²³⁴ Saying they might have started small, but ‘Eurovision also started with five countries and now they have thirty-two members!’ He felt

²³¹ Dussel, ‘Klaas Jan Hindriks gelooft heilig in Europa Television’.

²³² Garderen, ‘Europa Television: de opkomst van een satellietzender’ and Rooduyn, ‘Europa-Tv’.

²³³ Dijk, ‘Europa-TV gaat in drie talen uitzenden’ and Dussel, ‘Klaas Jan Hindriks gelooft heilig in Europa Television’.

²³⁴ Dussel, ‘Klaas Jan Hindriks gelooft heilig in Europa Television’.

Europa-TV would become like Eurovision: 'everyone *knows* it, you *cannot* imagine a world without it.'²³⁵ Though many were interested, few were willing to pay.²³⁶ Over time Spain, Greece, Belgium, Scandinavian countries and England were rumoured to join the consortium. Turkey was even announced as having joined the consortium in several articles, yet after October this partner inexplicably disappeared from the reporting.²³⁷ England and France 'had made it clear that they were not interested'.²³⁸ This was likely because both countries had developed their own supranational channel, TV5 and Superchannel. Spain and Belgium were said to have 'some national problems'.²³⁹ Collins explained that Belgium and Ireland had national laws that did not allow them to relay of the Europa signal.²⁴⁰ Interestingly enough this meant that the efforts of RTE, one of the consortium partners, went unnoticed in their home country for the entirety of the channel's broadcasting life.²⁴¹ To make matters worse, the three partners that had joined the NOS did not come through with their financial guarantees after the channel had already started their trial broadcasts.²⁴² Due to the Dutch government eagerness for the channel to start broadcasting, the channel was unable to build an advertisement sales strategy. They started broadcasting without having sold one advertisement, yet hopeful about 'positive signals from international advertising agencies'.²⁴³ The NOS board wanted to delay the project, partly because of the

²³⁵ *ibidem*.

²³⁶ "Rustige start van Olympus tv," *Het Parool*, June 6, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010831336>, "Olympus-tv vijf oktober echt van start," *Het Parool*, June 27, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010831354>.

²³⁷ 'Fred Emmer weg bij het NOS-journaal', 'Fred Emmer weg bij het NOS-journaal', 'Brinkman houdt vast aan verbod ondertiteling Europa Television', 'Europa-TV begint aanloopprogramma', *Leeuwarder Courant : Hoofdblad van Friesland*, 5 October 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010565854>.

²³⁸ Eelco Meuleman, "Media-ministers in Wenen bespreken 'creativiteitscrisis,'" *NRC Handelsblad*, December 8, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000030194>, "Adverteerders gaan in beroep tegen kabel-uitspraak rechter," *De Volkskrant*, June 11, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010879002>, "'Auteursrechten Olympus nog niet geregeld', Eelco Meuleman, "Dalende lift," *NRC Handelsblad*, August 4, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000030086>, "Satelliet-tv vormt geen gevaar voor omroepbestel," *NRC Handelsblad*, March 7, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028300> and Ale van Dijk, "TV 5 wil Franse taal en cultuur uitdragen," *Het Vrije Volk : Democratisch-Socialistisch Dayblad*, June 20, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010962064>.

²³⁹ Rooduyn, 'Ondertitelverbod Europe Television "een ramp"'.
²⁴⁰ Collins, *From Satellite to Single Market*, 111.

²⁴¹ 'Projections (in Mio. of T.V.-Homes) -Rapporten/Stukken m.b.t. Advertising/Reklame/Promotie/Sponsoring 1985-1986.', n.d., 19.02, The Netherlands Institute for Vision and Sound Hindriks Archive.

²⁴² Gijs de Swarte, "Complete chaos bij Europa-TV," *Het Parool*, April 21, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010832460>.

²⁴³ 'Rustige start van Olympus tv'.

partners not paying their share, and party because they had been unable to find more partners to share the startup costs with.²⁴⁴

The project did continue as planned due to two changes. First of all, Europa-TV had decided to start attracting advertisers themselves, after STER director Smeekes had given up on the European STER organisation because he felt that the channel would never get enough advertisers.²⁴⁵ Judging from the analysed broadcasts, the channel succeeded to fill its commercial airtime for the first six months of the channel's existence. Second of all, the consortium found a new partner in RTP, the Portuguese public channel. Portugal had only one television channel and Olympus was to be transmitted terrestrially to become its second. This prime position in Portuguese living rooms made Olympus much more attractive to advertisers. The NOS put aside its concerns and had its commissioner Henk Spaan assure that Olympus would 'without a doubt' start on October 5th.²⁴⁶

The first few months of official broadcasting the management had been very positive about Europa-TV and its potential to make a lot of money with advertisement. For 1986 Europa-TV worked with a budget of fifty to sixty million guilders. The yearly contribution of the consortium members was about fifteen million guilders. On top of this, the members gave a contribution to programmes, facilities and staff. The Dutch government paid for the use of the satellite and as mentioned before the channel expected the EC to contribute about ten million guilders. In addition, the head of advertising Art Rooymans expected twenty million in advertising revenue.²⁴⁷ In February new board member Paul Beugels showed a different, bleaker picture of its finances in an interview with the *Volkskrant*.²⁴⁸ He explained that if the foundation 'Richtig Mediabeleid' were to win the case against minister Brinkman and the channel had to pay back his donation, it would mean the end for Europa-TV.²⁴⁹

In order to improve its situation, the channel needed to reach more households. The more connections the channel had, the more money it could ask from its advertisers. Its head of advertising had predicted that by 1990 Europa-TV would have twenty-five million

²⁴⁴ "Olympus – Tv 5 Oktober van Start."

²⁴⁵ Ale van Dijk, "Olympus-tv begint met de jeugd," *Het Vrije Volk : Democratisch-Socialistisch Dayblad*, June 28, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010962071>. and Dijk, 'Europa-TV gaat in drie talen uitzenden'.

²⁴⁶ 'Olympus-tv vijf oktober echt van start'.

²⁴⁷ Garderen, 'Europa Television: de opkomst van een satellietzender'.

²⁴⁸ Lebesque, 'Europa-TV, het schild ende betrouwen'.

²⁴⁹ Ibidem.

connections.²⁵⁰ Two weeks after that announcement, his estimation had gone down dramatically to six million.²⁵¹ Despite Rooymans scaling down in his estimate, a journalist questioned if that was even reasonable. Sky Channel had been able to connect with five and a half million households after four years. It worked with a lower budget than Europa-TV and expected only this year to make a profit. It was quite difficult to get advertising revenue and therefore risky to be heavily dependent on it.²⁵² Rooymans gave no explanation as to why he adjusted his figures. There were some clues to be found in the articles. Connections had been growing slowly in the Netherlands due to the problems with cable companies, at that time the channel could only reach 900.000. West-Germany was a difficult country, as different *Bundesländer* had different broadcasting laws.²⁵³ Another example is that Portugal had joined the consortium, but the channel did not start airing in the country. The country had had elections and, unexpectedly, decided to 'study the matter again'.²⁵⁴ It would not be until May 5th 1986 that Europa-TV aired in Portugal.²⁵⁵

When Rooymans was fired in April, he blamed the low number of connections on 'painful mismanagement'. Only one person had been responsible for making them. This had dire consequences, as their 600.000 connections in the Netherlands were not enough to entice advertisers. Rooymans came up with a scheme where advertisers could advertise for free for a few months if they signed a declaration of intent that they would start paying in April, under the condition that Europa-TV would a minimum of 6 million connections. Reaching only 1.8 million led the exodus of Europa-TV's advertisers. In the end, only two stayed.²⁵⁶ One of those, WANG, payed in 'natura' by providing the Europa-TV headquarters with computers.²⁵⁷ Where Hindriks expected the channel to do well after it took over attracting advertisers, its policy was a disaster. This explained why after April only a few commercials aired. Europa-TV was walking on thin ice. Viewer studies showed that by the

²⁵⁰ Jaap Delterne, 'Europa-TV: cultuur verkoopt niet', *De Telegraaf*, 3 February 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011207111>.

²⁵¹ 'Is Europa-tv publiekszender of commerciële organisatie?'

²⁵² 'Is Europa-tv publiekszender of commerciële organisatie?'

²⁵³ Garderen, 'Europa Television: de opkomst van een satellietzender'.

²⁵⁴ Swarte, 'Complete chaos bij Europa-TV'.

²⁵⁵ Tom Rooduyn, "Het vallen en opstaan van Europa Television," *NRC Handelsblad*, May 5, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028670>.

²⁵⁶ Swarte, 'Complete chaos bij Europa-TV'.

²⁵⁷ Gijs de Swarte and Roelfien Sant, "Europa Television aan rand afgrond," *Het Parool*, September 22, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010832640>.

end of March, 47.1% of the people that could receive the channel watched it sometimes.²⁵⁸ While that might sound impressive, the average viewing time for an entire evening was 3.11 minutes.²⁵⁹ The *Trouw* article summarized the channel's predicament starting April well, 'Europa-TV quits experiment and reaches adulthood impoverished.'²⁶⁰

The articles referring to the channel's poor finances worried the Dutch minister Brinkman enough to get personally involved. He demanded a meeting with the executive board to discuss how the Dutch government's funds were being spent.²⁶¹ By June Europa-TV's reach was somewhat improved, but still disappointing. In Norway, only 200.000 people had cable, of those people 60.000 could now receive Europa-TV. The channel now had three million connections in the Netherlands and Portugal combined, 320.000 in Denmark, 100.000 in Germany, 50.000 in Sweden, 17.500 in Luxemburg, 15.000 in Finland and in the city of Zurich, increasing their range with another 220.000 households.²⁶² This showed the importance of the DSB satellite. Unfortunately for Europa-TV, its release was pushed back from the, in 1985 expected, release in 1986/1987 to 1988, in 1986.²⁶³

From the start Europa-TV had made expensive choices. Faced with the minister's ban, the channel decided to broadcast in English and Dutch. As the previous chapter has shown, the dubbing was not executed all across the schedule. Sometimes technical difficulties would make a language track start later. Europa-TV was offered the two language channels in the Netherlands, but cable companies did not buy the extra facilities that would allow viewers to choose a language. Dutch viewers, therefore, received the standard English language channel. Feeling empowered by the European Commission's disapproval of the ban on subtitles, even by end December staff did not worry about this, because they expected it to be lifted quickly.²⁶⁴ Because of the immense cost, only children's programmes and the five-minute news segment 'World Watch' were dubbed.²⁶⁵

²⁵⁸ Instituut voor Marktinformatie InterView, 'The Europa-TV Audience, Deel 2 Maart 1986', March 1986, 2.03, The Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision Hindriks Archive, 22.

²⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, 25-27.

²⁶⁰ "Europa-TV stopt experiment en wordt armlastig volwassen."

²⁶¹ *Ibidem*.

²⁶² 'Bereik Europa-TV blijft toenemen'.

²⁶³ Jaap Delterne, "STER maakt kans op satellietreclame markten," *De Telegraaf*, February 25, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011206823> and Marcel Haenen and Eelco Meuleman, "Uit de lucht gegrepen: het korte, chaotische bestaan van Europa-tv," *NRC Handelsblad*, December 6, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000030193>.

²⁶⁴ Garderen, "Europa Television: de opkomst van een satellietzender."

²⁶⁵ Rooduyn, "Europa-tv: Brinkmans 'hek om Nederland' slopen."

Despite these costs and their uncertain situation, the channel introduced a German and Portuguese language channel in January 1986. Interestingly enough, the channel had started to air in neither Germany nor Portugal. No explanation for this decision can be found in the Hindriks archive or in the press. Papathanassopoulos explained RTP that had made the Portuguese channel a condition to its joining the consortium.²⁶⁶ These language channels costed millions. On top of this, the programmes would be subtitled in these languages. This took up a very substantial part of the budget, that already had an at least eight million hole in it.²⁶⁷ More stories of mismanagement arise in February 1986. Though many statements were personal attacks on the character of the executives, some do show clear examples of bad decision making. When Europa-TV had to get a new logo to replace the Olympus one, which already cost thousands of guilders, they forgot to buy the rights from the designer. This meant that every time Europa-TV aired or printed the logo, it had to pay him a fee.²⁶⁸

By April they had also returned to an old idea to get more advertising revenue by founding the 'International Foundation for Support of Europa Television' together with the NOS and a representative from the Dutch public broadcasters, Mr Bordewijk of Veronica. The foundation should serve as a European version of the Dutch STER company. Smeekes the STER director was to be its president, but he had up to that point not accepted his nomination.²⁶⁹ In the end, nothing was reported on the foundation, and with no internal documents found, it is likely the organisation never took off. To make matters more complicated, papers from the Hindriks archive show that by June 1986 the channel had opted for another strategy. It had hired the Scottish 'Airtime International' to sell its commercial airtime.²⁷⁰ Despite the channel's efforts, there were no signs that it was able to attract advertisers. Reporting on the bad state of Europa-TV's finances had been ongoing since February and by September newspaper reporting on the channel eminent death started, through articles like the aptly titled 'Europa-TV at the abyss'.²⁷¹ In a confidential document directed at the board, Airtime International expressed that it could not do its best

²⁶⁶ Papathanassopoulos, 'Towards European Television', 59.

²⁶⁷ "Europa-TV stopt experiment en wordt armlastig volwassen."

²⁶⁸ Gijs de Swarte and Roelfien Sant, "Europa Television aan rand afgrond," *Het Parool*, September 22, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010832640>.

²⁶⁹ Cor van Groningen and Theo Jongedijk, "Europa-TV niet voor rechter te krijgen," *De Telegraaf*, April 22, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011207177>.

²⁷⁰ Airtime International, 'Europa Board Report - Rapporten/Stukken m.b.t. Advertising/Reklame/Promotie/Sponsoring 1985-1986', October 1986, 19.02, The Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision Hindriks Archive.

²⁷¹ Swarte and Sant, 'Europa Television aan rand afgrond'.

work because ‘the very future of Europa is widely reported as being in jeopardy’, openly questioned by Brinkman and the channel ‘denigrated’ by the Dutch press.²⁷² They recommended Europa-TV partners to invest more in the channel ‘for some time to come’, as they should not expect much from advertising.²⁷³ They stated that those who had handled advertising before them had made ‘at best totally foolhardy, at worst commercially irresponsible’ estimates.²⁷⁴

An option to increase income that did not involve advertising or attracting more partners was selling the programmes Europa-TV had produced itself. Yet these programmes were expensive to make and there was no idea whether there was enough demand. Though staff mention that several programmes such as an international affairs discussion programme ‘International Editors’, a programme reporting on the ongoings at the EEC ‘Brussel Today’, the international news ‘Europa News’ and a business programme, were in the making, none of these ever saw the light of day.²⁷⁵ Moreover, when looking at broadcasts from February onwards very little new programmes had been produced by Europa-TV. It is therefore not surprising they did not go down this risky road but looked for sponsors. Richard Dill, one of Europa-TV’s executives, wanted to interest large companies, like the Dutch airline KLM, to sponsor programmes through its title role. Dill was also investigating taking out loans as an option.

Smeeckens of the Dutch STER stated that the channel was ‘dead’ in the eyes of advertisers. The channel had requested a 5 million guilders loan from minister Brinkman, which he had refused. By October one of its executive directors, Gerard van Vliet gave an interview in which he argued for the continuation of the channel in an interesting way. He stated that cancelling Europa-TV was ‘just as expensive as continuing for three years’. He made this statement in reply to Brinkman, who said that he would decide in December whether or not the Netherlands would continue to support the channel. With its finances unimproved Brinkman’s withdrawal of support would mean the end of the channel.²⁷⁶ From

²⁷² Ibidem, 3-4.

²⁷³ Ibidem 4.

²⁷⁴ Ibidem, 2.

²⁷⁵ Rooduyn, ‘Ondertitelverbod Europe Television “een ramp”’, ‘Fred Emmer weg bij het NOS-journaal’, Rooduyn, ‘Europa-TV’, Gelder, ‘Binnen een jaar begin van Europese televisie’, Dussel, ‘Klaas Jan Hindriks gelooft heilig in Europa Television’.

²⁷⁶ “‘Opheffen Europa-TV net zo duur als drie jaar doorgaan,’” *Leeuwarder Courant : Hoofdblad van Friesland*, October 27, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010566178> and “Opheffen Europa-TV

November 1st onwards, newspapers started to write eulogies for the channel: 'the bankruptcy of a useful enterprise', 'Europa-TV will likely disappear before January 1st'.²⁷⁷ By November 22nd the NOS demanded the channel to pay an outstanding bill with its facility centre of 12 million guilders.²⁷⁸ When the channel did not have the money, the NOS literally pulled the plug on the station on November 27th 1986.²⁷⁹ Without the ability to broadcast, this was the end of the channel.

3.4.2. Jealous neighbours – Dutch Broadcasters

The discussion on Europa-TV's identity was complicated by Dutch broadcasters. They protested the channel because they feared it would take away from their commercial revenue.²⁸⁰ Moreover, they believed it to be a commercial channel that had, therefore, no place in the Dutch public system.²⁸¹ It is safe to assume this drove the channel to change its programming. When Klaas Jan Hindriks announced a new schedule, he stated it would not 'compete with any national channel' and was 'totally different from Sky Channel' and was received positively by 'different concerned parties'.²⁸²

In October 1985 the Dutch public broadcasters were still not on board and Hindriks tried to pursue them to cooperate with a new argument. He argued modern technology cannot be stopped 'so as the commercial broadcasters grow, why not also the public broadcasters?'²⁸³ He urged these broadcasters and the Dutch press to see Europa-TV as an opportunity before

net zo duur als drie jaar doorgaan," *Limburgsch Dayblad*, October 29, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010611101>.

²⁷⁷ Gerard Geradts, "Europa-TV: 't saai bankroet van een zinnige onderneming," *De Volkskrant*, November 1, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010879174> and "Europa-tv zal waarschijnlijk voor 1 januari verdwijnen," *NRC Handelsblad*, November 20, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028950>.

²⁷⁸ 'Europa-tv krijgt nog een week om schulden bij NOS aan te betalen' and "Europa-TV krijgt week uitstel," *Leeuwarder Courant : Hoofdblad van Friesland*, November 22, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010566201>.

²⁷⁹ 'Europa Television stopt uitzendingen na ultimatum NOS'.

²⁸⁰ "Mediawet is voor kranten onverteerbaar," *Trouw*, March 27, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010820116>, "Forse kritiek van uitgevers op mediawet," *Het Parool*, March 27, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010831429> and "Journalisten vrezen commerciële omroep," *Trouw*, May 31, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010820471>.

²⁸¹ "NOTU tegen invoering derde tv-net," *Het Parool*, April 5, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010831437>.

²⁸² Dijk, "Olympus-tv begint met de jeugd."

²⁸³ Dussel, 'Klaas Jan Hindriks gelooft heilig in Europa Television'.

it was too late, and an American or Japanese channel would be ‘floating above Europe, unwilling to work with them, leaving the press powerless.’²⁸⁴ However, this time he let slip that he thought it possible that the channel would take a few percents of the commercial revenue from the Dutch broadcasters.²⁸⁵ Dutch broadcasters, therefore, continued to fear national competition from Europa-TV.

Only one Dutch public broadcaster saw Europa-TV as an opportunity. Veronica made Europa-TV a co-producer for its popular music programme ‘Countdown’. Europa-TV aired the programme Sunday to Friday and Veronica would air the highlights on its Dutch timeslot on Saturday. This way Europa-TV got a popular programme and with a European audience Countdown was able to attract bigger artists.²⁸⁶

What complicated the matter is that the Dutch public broadcasters were also a part of the board of NOS. If Europa-TV was to succeed, it would take away viewers and commercials from their own programmes and if it were to fail it would have wasted money from the, according to the journalist, ‘already destitute’ broadcasters.²⁸⁷ If broadcasters really were destitute is disputable. With all the broadcasters in favor of a third channel, it is likely that broadcasters were not as destitute as they or journalists implied them to be.²⁸⁸ It is more likely that these complaints about Europa-TV were used as a bargaining chip in a larger argument they were having with the minister on his new media policy and the renegotiation of the broadcasting subsidies.²⁸⁹

At a conference on the future of print media and television the director of the NOS made a surprising remark. He stated that he could not foresee European television

²⁸⁴ Rooduyn, ‘Ondertitelverbod Europe Television “een ramp”’.

²⁸⁵ Rooduyn, ‘Ondertitelverbod Europe Television “een ramp”’.

²⁸⁶ “AVRO vraagt opnieuw om zendtijd satelliet Europa Television,” *Leeuwarder Courant : Hoofdblad van Friesland*, May 20, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010566041> and “AVRO wil opnieuw op satelliet Europa-TV,” *Limburgsch Dayblad*, May 21, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010611015>.

²⁸⁷ “Europa-TV stopt experiment en wordt armlastig volwassen.”

²⁸⁸ Erik Jurgens, “Hollands dagboek,” *NRC Handelsblad*, April 20, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028256>, Dijk, “Slag om de huiskamer,” “AVRO vraagt opnieuw om zendtijd satelliet Europa Television,” and “AVRO wil opnieuw op satelliet Europa-TV,” “Veronica wil radiostation op satelliet,” *Trouw*, April 17, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ABCDDD:010827575>, Tom Rooduyn, “Veronica wil elke dag,” *NRC Handelsblad*, May 31, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028696>, Fred van Garderen, “Zes maal per week Countdown ‘het is net een krant,’” *Nieuwsblad van Het Noorden*, February 3, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011011548>, and “Countdown ‘voortaan zes maal per week,” *Limburgsch Dayblad*, January 30, 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010639030>.

²⁸⁹ Jurgens, “Hollands dagboek,” and “Weg uit de slangenkuil,” *Leeuwarder Courant : Hoofdblad van Friesland*, May 23, 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010565739>.

succeeding in the future because of ‘cultural and linguistic difference, a lack of programmes and advertising revenue and a preference for national programmes.’²⁹⁰ He, therefore, predicted that Europa-TV had ‘no chance of surviving’ after the three-year testing trial after which it had to be self-sufficient. Stating that the only competition the national broadcasters would face would be satellite channels that were transmitted through the cable.²⁹¹ With jealous broadcasters in its board and a hostile director, the NOS was an even more tight package in finding a right balance between culture and entertainment, and popularity and unpopularity.²⁹² It is likely that the Dutch public broadcasters in their board had a hand in the decision to prematurely quit the consortium once it became apparent that Europa-TV was going to cost more money.

3.4.3. Commerce vs culture – the Europa-TV staff debate

A conflict arose amidst the Europa-TV staff about a vital part of its identity, its commercial nature. As can be seen in the following analysis this debate got fuelled by the criticism and expectations from different stakeholders. In the first few months of the channel, various Europa-TV employees gave interviews. They might have emphasised different aspects of the channel, but there were no conflicting statements. By December 1985 tensions between employees started to surface in the media. The board secretary Paul Hendrikse, responsible for advertising and marketing, had quit because he ‘could not get behind the increasing foreign influence on the channel.’²⁹³ In February the head of advertising Ad Rooymans bluntly stated that ‘culture did not sell’ and that Europa-TV had to add more popular programmes to its offer. This went against the channel’s principles of using high culture to ‘fighting against American pulp’, revealing Europa-TV’s internal debate: should the channel become commercial?

How was it possible that there was such a divide within the same organisation on their formula? Europa-TV had a wide set up from the beginning and not a clear definition of what it would and would not air. It was centred around concepts that were free for interpretation, such as the abovementioned ‘information, diversion and culture’ and

²⁹⁰ “Nederland wordt van leesvolk kijkvolk”.

²⁹¹ “Nederland wordt van leesvolk kijkvolk”.

²⁹² “Europa-TV stopt experiment en wordt armlastig volwassen”.

²⁹³ Rooduyn, “Europa-tv: Brinkmans ‘hek om Nederland’ slopen.”

‘European, complementary, independent, verbally accessible and original’.²⁹⁴ Though generally its audience had been defined as ‘the more educated viewer’, Europa-TV also wanted to show ‘a very large amount of sports’ and a European song contest for national songs, that were more aimed at the general audience.²⁹⁵

Papers from the Hindriks archive reveal, that this discussion dated back to the Eurikon experiment. Richard Dill wrote that there was a dispute among the Eurikon participants on what the channel’s attitude towards national television would be, dividing them into two groups: the competing and the complementary. Those in favour of a competing channel wanted to air favourites such as ‘the best artists and most exiting soccer matches’ to draw in as many viewers as possible. Those who preferred a complementary channel were satisfied with a two or three percent audience share because they feared that if all channels would become competing channels, it would mean the end of diversity on television. In their eyes, a European channel should serve a niche audience that offers something ‘different’ and ‘special’. Dill considered himself to be one of the ‘niche theorists’.²⁹⁶ Though the channel had started out with this high culture format, Europa-TV hoped that ratings would improve due to these ‘concessions to the taste of the audience’, so that they could more easily sell commercials. Rooymans believed that changing its format would lead to 20 million guilders in commercial revenue, of which 4 million would be coming from the Dutch advertising market. This was especially important because Europa-TV would have to become self-sufficient.²⁹⁷

Interestingly enough, minister Brinkman had stated in a note on the new proposal for the media law that the channel’s finances would not, ‘for an unacceptably large portion, consist of commercial revenue.’²⁹⁸ This was very surprising, as like subtitles, this had always been part of the channel’s plan. It is therefore very unlikely that the minister had never known about this intention. Instead he might not want to have a channel that was fully dependent on advertising revenue, as his actions were watched by the ‘Richtig Media’ foundation.

²⁹⁴ Rooduyn, ‘Ondertitelverbod Europe Television “een ramp”’ and Lebesque, “Europa-TV, het schild ende betrouwen.”

²⁹⁵ Rooduyn, ‘Ondertitelverbod Europe Television “een ramp”’

²⁹⁶ Richard Dill, ‘Anmerkungen zum OTS-Experiment’, *Satelliten-Kommunikation*, 1983, 63–65, K.J. Hindriks Archive, box 1.13, Netherlands Institute for Vision and Sound.

²⁹⁷ Delterne, “Europa-TV: cultuur verkoopt niet.”

²⁹⁸ “Is Europa-tv publiekszender of commerciële organisatie?”

To make matters more difficult, the ministry had or could not indicate what acceptable percentage would be.²⁹⁹ Incidentally, Europa-TV's need for this much commercial revenue had been partially Brinkman's fault. Contributions of the consortium partners were insufficient for the type of channel Brinkman had demanded. He expected a 'varied schedule consisting of information, entertainment and culture, directed at the citizen in the EEC'.³⁰⁰ This would qualify as a type A channel. Yet the channel was financed much lower on the level of a type B theme channel.³⁰¹ Whereas Collins claimed that the desire for a type A programme came solely from the consortium partners, this shows that Brinkman also had a large hand in it. As Brinkman's support to the channel was conditional and Europa-TV's survival dependent on him, they had to take his stance seriously. If Europa-TV were to succeed in getting Rooyman's prediction of 200 million in advertising revenue, government and public broadcasting contributions would pale in comparison. Thus this 200 million amounts to Brinkman's 'unacceptably large portion' of financing through commercial activity, thereby prompting Europa-TV to change their strategy.³⁰² This amount of revenue would have made the channel independent from the Dutch government, something that was likely to be unacceptable for Brinkman who wanted to keep controlling the Dutch television offer.

Journalists noticed the tensions and called the staff out for contradicting each other. For example Ad Rooymans, who according to one journalist talked like 'he was in the service of a purely commercial enterprise' and sounded like he 'had been trained by Sky Channel'.³⁰³ On the other end of the spectrum was Paul Beugels who had always advocated for more culture within the NOS. He denied that Europa-TV had a commercial character because of their mixed finances, and profits that were invested directly in their programmes. He felt that Europa-TV should not copy Sky Channel or Music Box by airing more popular programmes. Though Europa-TV's audience was small for commercial standards, it was big enough for him. Beugels was not open for changes. He responded to Rooymans that his idea would 'never happened'.³⁰⁴ Europa-TV was to 'transfer culture' and to 'produce culture'.³⁰⁵

²⁹⁹ "Is Europa-tv publiekszender of commerciële organisatie?"

³⁰⁰ "Is Europa-tv publiekszender of commerciële organisatie?"

³⁰¹ Collins, *From Satellite to Single Market*, 95 - 96.

³⁰² "Is Europa-tv publiekszender of commerciële organisatie?"

³⁰³ Lebesque, "Europa-TV, het schild ende betrouwen."

³⁰⁴ "Is Europa-tv publiekszender of commerciële organisatie?"

³⁰⁵ Lebesque, "Europa-TV, het schild ende betrouwen."

These words echo the Europa-TV's advertisement where they ascribe themselves the role of creators and transmitters of European culture. This indicates that people like Beugels had the upper hand during the channel's launch, but now that the channel was not doing so well, others started to speak up.

In contrast to Beugels, advertisers were not happy with the channel's small audience share. With the channel depended on advertising sales to survive, Rooymans' 'concessions to the taste of the audience' might not have been such a bad idea from a financial perspective. Paul Beugels thought a fifty-fifty split was responsible, while Klaas Jan Hindriks felt that the current division of 20% public funds and 80% advertising revenue was the way to go.³⁰⁶ The previously mentioned Richard Dill had also started to play a role in the discussion when he became the deputy executive manager of Europa-TV. He was still a niche theorist but wanted to strike a compromise between 'a heavy and very European programme' that did not draw enough viewers or the interest of advertisers, and Rooymans' idea.³⁰⁷

Even before Rooymans, another Europa-TV employee had gone against the channel's policies. Willem van den Berg had criticized Europa-TV in *de Telegraaf* in October 1985 for not being commercial enough in his capacity of head of Sport at EBU. In the changing television landscape, big sporting events like the Olympics, World Cups or Wimbledon were getting increasingly commercial. Loosing these events could spell the end of public broadcasters. In order to come up with enough funds, public broadcasters had to work together on a European level and embrace commerce in a more advanced way than Europa-TV was doing.³⁰⁸ An internal document revealed that van den Berg was also employed as head of sports at Europa-TV, yet the article did not mention his involvement at the channel.³⁰⁹ This indicates that the disagreement about Europa-TV's commercial nature dated back to its start. Moreover, it also points out a potential problem with Europa-TV staff. Most of their high ranking employees like Beugels, Braun and van Vliet were also employed by the public broadcasters ARD, NOS, RAI, RTP and RTE, or in this case by the EBU. Therefore these employees had to balance the wishes of both employers. The abovementioned

³⁰⁶ Rooduyn, "Het vallen en opstaan van Europa Television."

³⁰⁷ "Is Europa-tv publiekszender of commerciële organisatie?"

³⁰⁸ Fred van Garderen and Peter Hofstede, 'Adieu Hilversum: de lachstuij van Samaranch', *Nieuwsblad van Het Noorden*, 24 October 1985, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011011512>.

³⁰⁹ 'Lijst van medewerkers Europa-TV', n.d., 1.12, Netherlands Institute for Vision and Sound Hindriks Archive.

interview with Beugels is a good example of this. Employed partially by the NOS, he was rather careful in his expectations of the channel and fixed to the programmes original formula, as to not to alert the NOS and Brinkman. While Klaas Jan Hindriks and Ad Rooymans on the other hand were only interested in making Europa-TV a success. This was reflected in the bolder statements and estimates they permitted themselves to make. Van den Berg's comments also show that Europa-TV was stuck between the Dutch minister pushing for culture and the EBU pushing for commerce.

The discussion took an ugly turn when Ad Rooymans was put on non-active after massive arguments with his superiors. In a sensational interview entitled 'complete chaos at Europa-TV' he slandered the channel by making defamating remarks about his superiors. They would act 'authoritarian and downright rude' to staff, many staffers had taken sick leave and 'obedience was extracted through threats of suspension or dismissal.'³¹⁰ Most of the employees replied with 'unfortunately no comment' to journalist's inquiries while others only agreed to talk anonymously, as the triumvirate Van Vliet, Braun and Dill had decreed a media boycott. Which was followed by all but Rooymans. Therefore, most of the negative account about working at Europa-TV were echoes of Rooymans' interviews. This can mean two things. He either opened a wound and allowed more people to, anonymously, step forward, or journalists kept using stories that he kept putting out while preparing for his court case against the channel.

He tried to sue the channel because he felt that his endeavours to attract more advertisers had been thwarted by two new managers that had arrived in December: Richard Dill (ARD) and Ernesto Braun (RTE). Dill had scolded him for his free advertising system, without giving an alternative plan and Braun had walked into a meeting Rooymans had with potential advertisers, stating that 'they did not need advertisers', prompting the advertisers to leave.³¹¹ Dill had done something similar during a meeting with Shell, Philips and KLM and another deal with a beer brewer. In the end their relationship had deteriorated to such an extent that he only communicated through memos with both men. Rooymans continued to attract attention as he tried to fight his suspension in court. He claimed that the board of Europa-TV was deliberately sabotaging the channel so that they could reboot it in Munich or Rome. According to Rooymans' lawyer P.J. Signer, facilities were already set up in both cities.

³¹⁰ Swarte, 'Complete chaos bij Europa-TV'.

³¹¹ Ibidem.

Though no other employee of Europa-TV directly reacted to this statement, Hindriks did admit in an interview that he feared that the biggest European countries got the biggest say in the project and move the project to Italy or West-Germany.³¹²

By June 'palace revolutions created a mood of uncertainty' and 'time and again other officials appear that all have a different view on policy'.³¹³ Yet some sort of compromise seemed to have been struck. The channel would be financed through advertising revenue 'for the most part', moving away from the original hundred percent, but also from the proposed 50/50 of Paul Beugels.³¹⁴ A maximum of twenty percent of the airtime could be devoted to commercials. This was a very large share compared to public broadcasters and their original 10%. Moreover, it would be against the 15% the Europa Commission had proposed.³¹⁵ As the financial section already showed, the alternative solutions to what Rooymans was proposing, sponsoring and selling its programmes, remained fruitless. Though no announcements were made about it in the media, in the end Europa-TV gave in to commerce and started to air programmes such as the lifestyle programme highlighted in chapter one, with sponsored content. This went against 'holy statute' Hindriks had referred to in October, that stated that programmes could not be influenced by sponsors.³¹⁶ In the end, commerce briefly won but was also the reason for the channel's downfall.

After the channel's bankruptcy, more employees started to speak. In December, one employee Frances Mechan wrote to *NRC Handelsblad*, after they had used a quote from Rooymans to paint an unflattering portrait of Dill, saying he had slammed his fist on the table and called an employee's work 'shit' in a 'heavy German accent'. The letter shed a different light on Rooymans story and how it was reported. Mechan accused the journalist of 'printed gossip' and blamed newspapers for printing Rooymans stories 'continuously' for months without asking Europa-TV for their side of the story. Her own experiences at the channel were much happier, she had been met with 'patience and understanding'.³¹⁷ However, in a television interview, several employees gave more examples of mismanagement and the chaos resulting from it. Ozin Rademakers, a creator, called the

³¹² Rooduyn, "Het vallen en opstaan van Europa Television."

³¹³ Gelder, "Televisie-achteraf: ingevette dames."

³¹⁴ "Bereik Europa-TV blijft toenemen."

³¹⁵ "Bereik Europa-TV blijft toenemen."

³¹⁶ Rooduyn, 'Ondertitelverbod Europe Television "een ramp"'.
³¹⁷ Frances Mechan, "Brieven: Europa-Tv," *NRC Handelsblad*, December 18, 1986, Day edition,

<https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000030239>.

management 'too weak', and mr. Eksteen, programme buyer, said the management 'had no vision', because 'no one really knew what they were doing' and therefore gave 'no directions'.³¹⁸ Rooymans was therefore not the only unsatisfied employee that had suffered from the lack of vision within Europa-TV.

Though many articles describe this split, they do not give answers as to what direction Europa-TV went in. Judging from the material broadcasted in October 1986, it looked like the channel's commercially oriented staff had won the tug war. When the consortium was presented with a commercial rescue plan for the channel, the NOS and ARD decided to leave the project while the RAI, RTP and RTE accepted the plan.³¹⁹ This showed that in the end the divide had become unrepairable. Though whether or not this was due to the NOS dislike for commercial television or the Dutch government's doing remains to be seen. When the Dutch broadcasters AVRO and TROS wanted to take the NOS' place in the consortium, Brinkman did not allow them to because Dutch public broadcasters were not allowed to participate in commercial television.³²⁰

3.5 Concluding remarks

Throughout its birth and demise Europa-TV's identity was affected by many different actors and factors. Especially those from the Netherlands played a crucial role in the channel's identity. Minister of VWC's vital, initial support came with conditions that forced that channel to go a certain direction, as did his interpretations of the Dutch media law. The commercial image that was ascribed to them and reinforced by different Dutch actors such as the media, led to a lot of unexpected costs and ill will towards the channel. Although the EEC wish for a European channel had inspired the creators of Europa-TV, its financial commitment to the channel was not significant. Despite difficult circumstances, Europa-TV staff had also a role to play in the channel's downfall. Mismanagement, vague policy plans

³¹⁸ Kokkeel, *Europa-TV*, Veronica Nieuwslijn, accessed 11 August 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3GAxl-rD9Y>.

³¹⁹ 'Europa-TV gaat zonder NOS en ARD toch door', *De Telegraaf*, 5 February 1987, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011207419>.

³²⁰ 'NOS dreigt met boycat van Europa-TV', *De Telegraaf*, 20 November 1986, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011207357> and 'AVRO mag NOS niet vervangen in Europa-TV', *De Telegraaf*, 15 April 1987, Day edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011207478>.

and continuous conflicts on the identity of the channel led to financial losses and bad publicity.

Chapter 4: Conclusions

By 1985, satellite technology had made it possible for broadcasters to reach audiences beyond national borders. This constituted an opportunity as well as a threat to public broadcasters, who desired a wider audience and feared commercial competitors. Moreover, European governments feared their national broadcasting landscape to be ruined by Americanization, while also seeing satellite television as an opportunity to spread their own culture. In this context, EBU members were positive about a European channel as a shield against American influences. However, the project and its execution lacked both in consensus as well as a universal desire to join among the EBU members. This unwillingness to join the consortium can have several explanations. First of all, the perception of threat by the public broadcasters, leading them to turn inward and prioritising investments in their national channel. This would explain why most EEG countries, except for Belgium and Ireland, allowed the channel to be transmitted through their cable network. They might have valued the channel, but too little to invest in it through participation. It does, however, not explain why RTE invested in the channel without being able to air it in Ireland. Maybe they felt they could get a good return on their investment, once the channel reached millions and in this way earn enough money to give the broadcaster more security. Second of all, it could be that the inward look of national public broadcasters made them dislike the idea of a pan-European public broadcaster. Lastly, public broadcasters might have liked the idea of a pan-European channel but disliked its Europa-TV's execution finding it too commercial or not commercial enough, or simply find its programming not attractive. This links to Dyson, Humphreys, Negrine and Simon's argument that some EBU partners found Europa TV's channel not modern enough.

Turning to the negotiations that affected Europa TV this thesis has identified many stakeholders. First of all, the EEC. While Europa-TV came into being in the midst of their attempts at creating a European identity, this thesis has shown that the project was not orchestrated by them. The EEC resolution for a European channel inspired Europa-TV creators, but despite friendly words of encouragement and a one-time donation, the EEC had little impact on the project. This runs counter to Collins, Michalis and Theiler's claims of the project being as heavily influenced by the EEC. Collins even claimed politicians and

television executives from countries participating in EBU considered the channel propaganda, which does not correspond with the results of the media analysis. Moreover, analysis of Europa-TV broadcasts showed a mixed representation of positive and images on the EEC and European cooperation.

Second of all, while Collins acknowledges the NOS and the Dutch government as being the most committed to the consortium, he has neglected to acknowledge the extent with which the Dutch government played a crucial role in Europa TV's birth and demise. Where he saw the channel fail due to too much reverence for Brussels' good will, it was the Dutch government that placed demands on the channel and in whose good graces the channel had to remain. The Dutch support proved to be a double edged sword. Without the government's donation and use of a transponder, the channel could not have started as early as it did. On the other hand, this start seemed premature as the plans for both programme formula and advertising sales did not exist yet. As a result of their bad financial position from February onwards, the channel was wholly depended on Brinkman's approval, the withdrawal of which meant the end of the channel. In order for the channel to receive support from the Dutch government, it had to perform as a type A channel, while being budgeted as a type B channel. Judging from its programming, Europa TV complied to his wishes. At the channel's start, this had been enough for the channel to air in the Netherlands. Yet by October, Brinkman reinterpreted the Dutch media law and barred the channel from using Dutch subtitles, with dire consequences for scheduling and finances.

Though initially enthusiastic about supporting a project that would offer its citizens a European perspective, the Netherlands national interests soon triumphed over championing Europa TV. The government's investment was continually questioned by parliament and eventually by the government itself. Where minister Brinkman first believed the channel would bring employment to the Netherlands and boost its audio-visual industry, it mostly brought him a headache. Protesting cable companies refusing to execute his transmission order and Europa TV's semi commercial status weakened his position. Where Europa TV believed itself to be the only way to combat commercial television and give public broadcasting a chance, Brinkman believed that shunning all commercial television was the best policy by upholding measures such as the subtitle ban. He also suddenly insisted that the channel would have mixed financing, instead of the initially planned self-financing

through advertising revenue. Moreover, it is likely that when presented with a more commercial rescue plan for the channel, the minister did not allow the NOS to continue with the project. A decision he repeated a month later when forbade the AVRO and TROS to work with a commercial channel.

Third of all, the NOS. The idea of a pan-European channel had been on its agenda for a long time. Its employees spearheaded European news exchange, the Eurikon experiment, and eventually Europa TV. Once its aspiration had become reality, the NOS grew increasingly uncomfortable with the commercial nature of the channel and the money it had to spend on the project. Moreover, the NOS board consisted of other Dutch public broadcasters that, except for Veronica, feared the competition of the channel. They actively voiced their disapproval of the channel and protested the funds it had received from the Dutch government, fuelling the debate in parliament and the media. Like the Dutch government, the NOS eventually turned its back on the project. This is not strange considering the close relationship the national broadcaster had with the government.

Fourth of all, while the Dutch government had a direct influence on Europa TV's policies, other actors shaped the channel's identity by ascribing it a commercial nature. Jealous Dutch public broadcasters, cable companies and BUMA-STEMRA all had a vested interest in categorizing the channel as commercial. With the media disliking its commercial nature as well, the channel eager yet unable to shake this commercial branding. Moreover, almost all commentators disliked Europa-TV's content and wrote, sometimes very harsh and crude, opinion pieces. As such, these critiques do not stem from a dislike of the channel's idea, but rather from a poor execution thereof. Another reason for the criticism were the commonality of technical mistakes. The negative press harmed Europa TV's cause as it made the channel unattractive to viewers and advertisers.

Lastly and most surprising was Europa-TV's lack of sense of its identity. The channel's vague, multi-interpretable policy plans lacked direction and caused confusion among staff. Europa-TV was a European channel in name but had not defined what it considered to be European television, nor who their European audience was. This was illustrated through various examples such as its attitude towards Russia and the weather maps used. The images also

support Europa TV's statements that the channel was not designed to promote European integration. Even then, taking in account Europa TV's policy documents, its broadcasts and interviews with staff, it can be concluded that the channel tried to create a sense of European identity through creating a sense of common European identity for its viewers by emphasising a common past and religion, as well as through informing viewers about differences between cultures in Europe. Its widely accepted mission to fight Americanization was neglected by the channel. It is striking how much of its programming was American and how much time the news spend on internal American affairs.

The lack of clarity surrounding Europa-TV's identity was further complicated by a debate that had been simmering under since the Eurikon project surrounding a burning question: how commercial should Europa-TV be? Judging from its October 1985 broadcasts about consumer products filled with sponsored content, very. It could be argued that Europa-TV was driven to this more commercial approach due to financial difficulties. At the start Europa TV employees were convinced of the (commercial) success the channel would become, expecting millions of advertising money. With technology on their side, they would be able to reach millions of viewers through the Olympus satellite. They felt they could conquer the world with their high culture programming. However, as the channel starts to air and few households were reached, viewer ratings were low and paying advertisers nowhere to be found their formula became a problem. This was largely due to the financial set up of the channel. The EBU partners wanted a European channel to fight commercial television, but they wanted it at the lowest cost possible. The meager contributions of the partners made the channel dangerously dependent on advertising. As the channel was on friendly terms with Sky Channel, they could have known this to be a problem. As Europa TV had a more expensive programme set up, the idea that the channel would become self-sufficiently in five years was too ambitious. However, with no partners willing to join the consortium and the existing partners not wanting to contribute more, the channel had to start appealing to larger audiences and become more commercial.

As discussed in chapter one, there is no such thing as 'the' identity. This holds true for an entity such as Europa-TV as much as it does for an individual. The research of this thesis has shown that the channel constantly changed over time. First of all the channel's actual content was analysed. Studying the result of the negotiations between the different

stakeholders, laid to bare the many issues Europa-TV had to deal with. It showed that even the channel had no grasp of its own identity. It is therefore important to note that through the process of negotiation, identity is not only shaped by external actors, but also by internal dissonance.

As for the question whether Europa Television was doomed from the start or ruined by negotiations with different actors and factors, the answer is not straight forward. There were some obvious flaws in Europa TV's set up. The article titled 'Europa Television was born out of fear, not out of conviction' sums one of its problems up nicely.³²¹ A lot of the channel's problems were due to the rushed nature of the project such as the lack of advertisers, lack of policy direction and a clear identity. Maybe given more time, the channel's policies could have been improved and more advertisers attracted. Waiting until the Olympus satellite launch would not only have given the channel a large reach, it would have allowed them to use subtitles in the Netherlands. This would have made the channel not only more attractive to advertisers but would also have saved much money. More money and practice might have meant higher quality programming, which might have made EBU partners more eager to join. Moreover, the Dutch press was open to the idea of European television and they could have responded more positively to the channel. Yet, it might not have prevented Europa TV's bad management. With the higher ranking officials also working for national public broadcasters, they would still not have the channel's best interests at heart, nor the experience of running a more commercial channel. With more advertisers, it is not likely that the channel would have appeared less commercial. Therefore it could still have expected a backlash in the Netherlands. However, as the programme was no longer dependent on cable companies and the Dutch government for distribution, this might not have been a problem. In the end, therefore the EBU partners who did not join the consortium and the Dutch press who believed in the idea of European television, but did not like Europa TV's execution, might have been right.

³²¹ Eelco Meuleman, 'Europa-Tv Werd Geboren Uit Angst, Niet Uit Overtuiging', *NRC Handelsblad*, 20 November 1986, Dag edition, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNRC01:000028950>.

Discussion

In my research, I have tried to avoid making judgments on broadcasts quality and appeal. Collins, Papathanassopoulos, Michalis and Theiler all make claims about the quality of Europa Television's broadcasts as well as their appeal. I was not able to devise an instrument to measure the quality and appeal of the channel. It would be interesting if someone were to do this and address their judgements.

This study could have been enriched by a variety of materials, but due to time constraints these were not included. Originally, European perspectives were to be included. Various primary EEC sources on transnational television and Europa TV are available at the archive of the European Commission and European Parliament. The EBU has an archive that may hold primary sources. Perspectives from ARD, RAI, RTP and RTE were also to be included, but their archives do not hold any Europa TV materials. Media coverage about the channel in the consortium countries could have been investigated, but as the channel was not broadcasted in Ireland and Italy and only reached a small number of German households, it is not likely that much was reported on the channel. A large audience was reached in Portugal, so this might be worth investigating for someone who masters Portuguese.

As for the national perspective, it would have been interesting to have included materials from the ministry of VWC. The Dutch National Archive holds various materials on the Dutch Media Policy negotiations, that might include documents on Europa TV. This could shine a light on Brinkman's change of heart and see what the government thought of the project behind closed doors. A closer look at the NOS' internal discussion is unfortunately not possible, as their archive does not contain any documents not already included in the Hindriks archive.

I was not able to include all newspaper articles on the channel that were available on Delpher. As mentioned before, there are still 4117 unexamined articles listed under the term 'Europa-TV'. Though many of these articles are announcements of its schedule and copies or extremely close related versions of the articles mentioning 'Europa Television', they might reveal something interesting. The same goes for the Europa Television broadcasts. I have only viewed 150 hours of television, that is 40 of estimated 150 VHS' containing broadcasts.

Moreover, once the broadcasts are digitized and its programmes identified and catalogued, it would be interesting to conduct a quantitative analysis of the type of programmes Europa Television aired and how that changed over time. This way Europa TV's move towards more commercial television might become visible.

I have read almost all of the over 4000 pages of the Hindriks archive. In order to process them all, I would have to write another thesis. Because there is no system in the way these documents are archived and many of them are not dated, it was very difficult to work with, especially because there was so little known about the channel. Now that I have uncovered much through my analysis of the Dutch media, another researcher will find it much easier to navigate the archive and date and categorise the documents. The archive offers a wealth of documents on the EBU, board meetings, viewer statistics, policy documents just waiting to be used and I would heartily encourage anyone to work with it.

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