

1. Some Comments on Media Typology, Media Preferences and Cultural Identity in Stockholm and St. Petersburg

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This article presents some background facts on the media situation in Stockholm and St. Petersburg and discusses generally some findings on the inhabitants' attitudes towards music and media genres in relation to theories and issues that have been basic to the design of the comparative project "The Role of Media for Identity and Democracy" and to the following three articles in particular.

A key approach in our study has been to relate people's media use and views on the media to other characteristics – attitudes towards a range of social issues (as regards politics, leisure, consumption, etc.), aesthetic taste and beliefs, and their background (gender, age, education, profession, etc.). On the basis of existing theoretical and empirical research, and through the comparative empirical studies in Stockholm and St. Petersburg, we seek answers to the following questions:

(1) What does the media situation look like in the two cities? In light of brief accounts of the media situation (ownership, organization and content), we primarily analyse people's access to and use of media in different demographic and socio-economic groups in the two cities.

(2) What is the importance of local, national and global media for individuals' perceptions of social processes, their cultural identity and experiences of democracy? How do these perceptions interact with people's social background and lifestyles, that is, with their other values and activities of which media use and attitudes towards the media are an integral part?

One of our central assumptions is that – despite very dissimilar material conditions – the differences between the inhabitants of the two cities as regards the interplay between people's media use and their experiences of the social world will be less marked between the St. Petersburg and Stockholm adolescents (who have grown up in media environments more similar across the two

countries than their parents have) than between the adults, who have grown up in different political systems and who have experienced the global changes of the late 20th century in radically different ways: Unlike Sweden, where adaptation of the national institutions to global changes after the 1980s has taken place continuously in a context of relative economic and political stability, Russia has undergone a radical change in its political system, followed by economic and social crises in which the media system, too, has radically changed (as regards access, ownership, content and structure of the audience), something that has had considerable impact on the life conditions of people living in Russia and their conception of social reality.

A brief account of the media situation in Sweden/Stockholm and Russia/St. Petersburg

This section outlines some overriding aspects of the media situation in the two cities. The description of the media situation in Sweden/Stockholm builds on research and statistics from sources other than our project, mainly *The Nordic Media Market 2009* and *Nordicom-Sveriges Mediebarometer 2008 and 2009* (Nordicom-Sweden's Media Barometer 2008 and 2009), both published by The Nordic Centre for Media and Communication Research (NORDICOM). A third important source is *Medieutveckling 2009* (Media Development 2009) released by the Swedish Radio and TV Authority.

The corresponding description of Russia/St. Petersburg is based on Korkonosenko's and Ruschin's previously mentioned mapping of the media situation there, as well as on writings by Vartanova and Degtereva supplemented by web statistics, primarily from TNS Gallup Media in Russia. (See references in the running text.)

In addition, we summarize a few of the statements made by the media experts interviewed in our project.

Sweden/Stockholm

Sweden is a relatively small country with a likewise small population – 9.3 million inhabitants in 2009. About 2 million live in the county of Stockholm (Greater Stockholm).¹ Compared to the position of St. Petersburg in the Russian Federation, the media situation in Stockholm is not as different from the one in Sweden as a whole, although in most places there are, in addition to national media, local radio stations and local TV channels. The daily press is also local, but two popular “evening tabloids”, *Aftonbladet* (The Evening Paper) and *Expressen* (The Express), as well as a business daily, *Dagens Industri* (The Daily

¹ Statistiska Centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden) 2009.

Industry), are of a national character.² Press published in the larger cities are also circulated in the regions to a relatively high degree. The Internet is widespread throughout the country.

The media policy in Sweden before the 1980s was often said to be “paternalistic”. However, this was valid for radio and television, which then only consisted of public service channels³ without advertising and financed by licence fees⁴ paid by listeners/viewers.⁵ The press, however, as well as film, recorded music, etc., were privately owned.

The media market in Sweden is quite different today, owing to the expansive technical media development and the increasing global or trans-national media output, which occurred hand in hand with a changed political climate and so-called deregulation from the mid-80s onwards. Public service media still exist (in general with the same overriding rules, although wordings have been changed and added), but they have competition from a large number of private, commercial radio stations and TV channels in the increasingly liberalized media landscape in Sweden. Cinema films, TV series and music are to a great extent supplied by the world’s largest media corporations.⁶ As hinted at, during the 1990s and 2000s, Internet use has also increased rapidly, which is why Sweden at present is one of the world’s most Internet-dense countries, entailing even more globalization of information and entertainment. In 2008, 84 per cent of the population had access to the Internet at home and 72 per cent had broadband connection.⁷ This, in turn, has led to an abundance of alternative platforms and techniques for newspapers, radio, television (web radio/TV, pod radio/TV, IP TV,⁸ the Internet via the mobile phone, etc.) and other media to deliver their contents, meaning, as well, that media use in the population is increasingly individualized. Furthermore, advertising has augmented considerably through

² *The Nordic Media Market 2009* (2009).

³ Besides being subjected to the general radio (and television) law, which, among other things, stated that the company’s sole right to decide which programmes should be transmitted should be exercised impartially and in a matter-of-fact manner and that an expansive freedom of expression and information should prevail, the public service media had an agreement with the State, saying, i.a., that the programmes, through quality, accessibility and diversity, should meet different needs and interests in the population, including other general rules (see, e.g., the annual report from the Swedish Radio 1977-78). Public service media were, and are still, also meant to be independent of economic, political and other outside interests. Furthermore, the programmes could (and can) be scrutinized afterwards by a special commission (The Radio Commission, nowadays the Swedish Broadcasting Commission), also on the initiative of listeners and viewers, to investigate whether the broadcast complied with the Radio and Television Act and the rules in the agreement granted by the Government.

⁴ Later TV fees.

⁵ There is one fee per household and independent of the number of apparatuses.

⁶ Sundin 2009b.

⁷ *Nordicom-Sveriges Mediebarometer 2008* (2009).

⁸ Television via broadband.

all new TV channels and radio stations – and thereafter on the Internet.⁹ In addition, Sweden is adapting to the general EU rules (the Audiovisual Media Services Directive), which among other things involves a softening of advertising rules.¹⁰

In the interviews with media experts in our project, the introductory question concerned what they considered to be the greatest changes in the Swedish media landscape during the past 20-25 years. The answers showed almost complete agreement: It is the Internet, the convergence of the media, the digitalization of production and distribution, the growth of interpersonal or so-called social media on the Internet, and the greatly increased number of radio and television channels financed by advertising, all of which mean more media competition. Another trend mentioned was that advertising has increased in the newspapers, as well, and nowadays, newspapers free-of-charge, wholly financed by advertisements, are on offer in the bigger cities (the main gratis paper being *Metro*).

To a question concerning whether the multiplied media contents have led to greater manifoldness, the experts were divided in terms of their responses according to expected (political) lines: Representatives with roots in the working-class and social-democratic movements, as well as in public service media, answered negatively or hesitantly, while representatives of the newer commercial media replied in the affirmative and stressed freedom of choice for the audience, and that the audience gets what it wants.

The experts also pointed out details in their work situations that are dependent on these metamorphoses in the media environment. What should not be forgotten in this respect are the consequences for editorial journalism. The media are forced to reduce their expenses and to increasingly try to attract the audience on the Internet without fees, which is why publicism, according to several experts, has become low-status journalism. One expert called attention to the clear shift in power from publicists to economists and technicians.

Although a number of media companies are under foreign (non-Nordic) ownership, the Nordic-owned¹¹ companies have a strong position in the region.¹² The largest of the Nordic media companies is the Swedish based Bonnier AB.¹³ Nordic media markets have long experienced a successive concentration of ownership.¹⁴ This applies to the Swedish media market, as well, of which the biggest media actors have strong positions in several Nordic

⁹ Sundin 2009a.

¹⁰ For instance, the general requirement that at least 20 minutes must pass between advertising spots is abolished for several programme types, see *Medieutveckling 2009* (2009).

¹¹ By Nordic countries are meant Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

¹² Sundin 2009b.

¹³ Sundin 2009b.

¹⁴ Sundin 2009b.

countries. Especially, the concentration of ownership within the Swedish press has pronouncedly increased.¹⁵

As for *television* in Sweden, it is, as is radio, controlled by the Fundamental Law on Freedom of Speech and by the Radio and Television Law.

The two traditional national public service TV channels, SVT1 and SVT2, as well as TV programmes produced by the educational company UR, do not only have keen competition from a large number of foreign channels via satellite and cable, but also from several new Swedish niche channels. In addition, there are slightly more than 50 regional and local channels.¹⁶ Most TV channels transmit web TV in one way or the other, as well.¹⁷ The terrestrial TV net was digitalized during 2005-2007. Other ways of receiving television are by satellite, cable, and broadband.¹⁸ With a combination of receivers, one can watch more than a hundred channels, often specialized on certain film genres, sports, etc.¹⁹

Of all the TV channels, in 2008 the “big five” stood for nearly two thirds (64%) of the viewing time,²⁰ but it is worth underlining that the remaining 36 per cent representing all other channels is a figure that has increased over time.

The five most-watched TV channels are:

- the two traditional public service channels without advertising (SVT1, 21% of the total viewing time, and SVT2, 8% of the viewing time). About two thirds of the contents on these two channels are, according to Asp, produced in Sweden (including outsourced productions) and most imported programmes are from Western countries (e.g., about one tenth from the U.S.).²¹ The relation between informative and entertainment programming is more or less fifty-fifty.²² At present, SVT also has a “family” of niche channels.
- a national privately-owned channel with advertising, TV4 (19% of the viewing time), launched in the beginning of the 1990s. According to Asp, about half of its output is Swedish produced and one third of the total programming originates from the U.S.²³ Entertainment programming out-

¹⁵ Sundin 2009a.

¹⁶ *The Nordic Media Market 2009* (2009).

¹⁷ Even newspapers, radio stations and other companies that do not broadcast traditional television, transmit some kind of web TV.

¹⁸ In 2008, the proportions of the population 9-79 years of age who received television via different ways of distribution were: cable 43%, satellite dish 30%, terrestrial 32%, broadband 7%; see *Nordicom-Sveriges Mediebarometer 2008* (2009).

¹⁹ *Medieutveckling 2009* (2009).

²⁰ MMS 2009.

²¹ The coding is based partly on programme information from the TV channels, partly on programme listings in the newspapers; see Asp 2009.

²² However, there are more programmes from other countries in SVT’s channel for children, and more Swedish output in SVT’s news channel and UR, the educational company; see Asp 2009.

²³ Asp 2009.

weighs informative programming by three to one.²⁴ TV4 has a “family” of niche channels, as well.

- two Swedish-speaking satellite channels with advertising, broadcasting from Great Britain (not subjected to Swedish law), TV3 (8% of the viewing time) and Kanal 5 (7% of the viewing time), mainly transmitting entertainment programmes from the U.S.²⁵

The young audience chooses the commercial channels to a greater extent than do elderly people, and there is a slight tendency among especially 15- to 24-year-olds towards using platforms for watching television other than via the ordinary TV set.²⁶

The principal actors on the television market are: the public service company SVT (Sveriges Television), Bonnier AB (Sweden, owning, i.a., TV4), MTG (Modern Times Group, Sweden) and ProSieben-Sat.1/SBS (Germany).²⁷

As for *radio*, the stations in Sweden at present have the following coverage:

- national radio – four channels in which the public service company Sveriges Radio (SR) (Swedish Radio) transmits its programmes, together with the public service educational company UR. These broadcasts are free from advertising.
- local radio – on the one hand, 28 regional stations belonging to the public service company SR without advertising and, on the other, 89 private local commercial stations²⁸ financed by advertising, most often organized in networks covering large parts of the country. On the whole, the latter stations do not transmit at great deal of local material, but overwhelmingly “global” and Swedish music, often with different popular music profiles and targeting specific audience segments.
- (since 1979) between one and two hundred community (or neighbourhood) radio stations with a short broadcasting range, used by non-profit associations, and the like.

As mentioned, radio can also be listened to on the Web.

Overall, the public service radio channels are more often listened to (66% of the total listening time) than are the commercial private local radio stations (27% of the listening time),²⁹ which, however, are much more popular than public service radio among young persons.

²⁴ Asp 2009.

²⁵ Asp 2009.

²⁶ MMS 2008.

²⁷ *The Nordic Media Market 2009* (2009).

²⁸ *Medieutveckling 2009* (2009).

²⁹ TNS-Sifo 2010a.

In the Stockholm area there are, besides national and neighbourhood radio, three regional public service radio stations and 12 private local radio stations.³⁰

The principal players on the Swedish radio market are: the public service company SR, the private company MTG (Modern Times Group) in Sweden, and ProSiebenSat.1 Group/SBS Broadcasting in Germany.³¹

Internationally, Sweden is ranked near the top when it comes to *newspaper* reading,³² and subscriptions to morning papers are widespread. On the whole, the printed morning papers keep their positions, although more people today, especially younger people, read papers that are free-of charge (mainly *Metro*, which claims to have the largest newspaper circulation in Sweden³³). Circulation of “evening papers” or popular tabloids, however, has seen a drastic drop since the 1980s. On the other hand, more adolescents and young adults today (2008) read “evening tabloids” on the Internet than on paper.³⁴

Contrary to the politically desirable newspaper competition, several local morning papers have disappeared. The ideal was, and still is, competition in all regions. However, of the 70 newspaper regions, there are at present only some ten that still have a situation of competition (i.e., more than one newspaper). This also means that, during the past decades, the number of newspapers has been reduced.³⁵

In 2008, there were 169 unique newspaper titles in Sweden, of which 96 published more than 3 issues a week. About a quarter of all newspapers received some financial support from the State, the goal being to strengthen local competition.³⁶

At present, very few newspapers are owned by the working-class movement/social-democrats or left-wing parties/associations (2% of the total circulation). However, when social-democratic newspapers have been purchased by other owners, most of these newspapers have maintained the political tone of their leading articles. Even so, the absolute majority of the circulation emanates from right-wing or liberal newspapers.³⁷ And although some newspapers declare themselves as “independent”, their leading articles are often still positioned politically.

In the greater Stockholm area, the biggest newspapers by readership (reach) in September-December 2009 were the following, in ranked order: *Dagens Nyheter* (The Daily News), *Metro*, *Svenska Dagbladet* (The Swedish Daily Paper), *Aftonbladet* and *Expressen*,³⁸ papers that also belong to the biggest in the country.³⁹

³⁰ TNS-Sifo 2010b.

³¹ *The Nordic Media Market 2009* (2009).

³² www.dagspress.se 2010.

³³ *Metro Business* 2010.

³⁴ *Nordicom-Sveriges Mediebarometer 2008* (2009).

³⁵ *Medieutveckling 2009* (2009).

³⁶ *Medieutveckling 2009* (2009).

³⁷ *Medieutveckling 2009* (2009).

³⁸ Orvesto 2010.

³⁹ *The Nordic Media Market 2009* (2009).

The largest newspaper companies in 2007 were Bonnier AB (based in Sweden), Schibsted ASA (Norway) and Stampen AB (Sweden).⁴⁰ These three owner groups own almost 60 per cent of the total newspaper circulation in Sweden.⁴¹

To this may be added that, in 2007, there were 155 consumer magazines, of which the majority were monthlies/quarterlies and about 10 per cent weeklies. New interest titles are continuously being introduced and discontinued. The biggest magazine publishers in Sweden are Aller (based in Denmark) and Bonnier (Sweden).⁴²

According to *Nordicom-Sweden's Media Barometer 2008*, the shares of the total media time that the *population* 9-79 years of age in Sweden spent on different media this year were 33 per cent on listening (mostly to the radio), 30 per cent on viewing (mostly television), 19 per cent on using the Internet, and 18 per cent on reading (somewhat more time on newspapers than on books and magazines, respectively).⁴³

In all likelihood due to the growth of the Internet, it seems that, during the past ten years (1998-2008), the audience has spent less time on certain media, among others, radio. However, the proportion (reach) who listen on an average day is still roughly the same. Moreover, the reported time spent on television and newspapers, on the whole, has been the same during the period mentioned.⁴⁴

On the other hand, we can see more significant changes within different age groups. Among older people, traditional TV viewing has increased during recent years, while traditional TV use has diminished somewhat among young men, probably due to their use of computers and the Internet.⁴⁵

Russia/St. Petersburg

Russia, or the Russian Federation, is the largest country in the world when it comes to territory (i.e., 38 times bigger than Sweden), and the media situation for its 141.9 million inhabitants (2009)⁴⁶ (ca. 15 times more residents than in Sweden) is more varied in different regions and cities. With its population of ca. 4.7 millions inhabitants (including suburbs),⁴⁷ St. Petersburg is also bigger than Stockholm.

Like in Sweden, the media landscape in Russia has seen radical alterations since the mid-80s, however much more marked by dramatic political, social and economic changes. In 1985, President Gorbachev proclaimed *glasnost* (more

⁴⁰ *The Nordic Media Market 2009* (2009).

⁴¹ *Medieutveckling 2009* (2009).

⁴² *The Nordic Media Market 2009* (2009).

⁴³ The total time that the public devotes to mass media is the sum of the time spent on each medium. Thus, the total time does not take into account that two media may be used at the same time; see *Nordicom-Sveriges Mediebarometer 2008* (2009).

⁴⁴ Sundin 2009a.

⁴⁵ MMS 2008.

⁴⁶ Federal State Statistics Service 2009.

⁴⁷ Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007.

openness for citizens to express their views) and the process of freedom of speech continued when the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991. The transition to a market economy and privatization was complicated by a number of factors, not least economic and political, which also affected the media. A well-known fact is that business “oligarchs”, part of the new financial élite, came to annex and operate many media and other parts of the industry during the Yeltsin years (1991-1999), and with that strongly and one-sidedly supported different politicians and their own careers,⁴⁸ also called the “media war”.⁴⁹ The rapid rise of capitalism led to great economic divides in the population as well, which were reinforced by the stark economic crisis of the late 1990s, when many production sectors more or less collapsed and inflation ran wild. A large part of the population was made destitute. Since 2000, the state has been working to re-establish its control, particularly over the big TV channels in the process of building up the country.⁵⁰

When the St. Petersburg media experts interviewed in our study answered the introductory question regarding the greatest changes in the Russian media landscape during the past 20-25 years, many of them mentioned the huge development of television, from three to four channels during the Soviet era to the large number of channels today, state, private and a mixture of these – federal, regional, and foreign – transmitted via terrestrial channels, cable and satellite. Also emphasized was the large number of thematic channels (culture, children, sports, information, nature, etc.).

Similarly, the number of radio stations has increased from only a few via wire broadcasting to a large addition of FM stations (most of them music stations).

A few experts pointed out the fact that there are now independent and even partly oppositional media, such as certain newspapers and the radio station Echo of Moscow, owned by Gazprom. In addition, new types of newspapers, such as business papers and newspapers free-of-charge, have appeared. On the other hand, the circulation of newspapers has become tiny – there has been a sharp increase in the number of editions, but a sharp decrease in the number of readers.

The importance of the Internet is underlined by several experts, but not at all to such a great extent as by the Swedish media experts. The Internet and broadband are less spread in Russia, where Internet access was estimated to 27 per cent in March 2009.⁵¹ However, in Moscow and St. Petersburg, more than half of inhabitants aged 12+ used the Internet in 2008 at least once a month

⁴⁸ E.g., Vartanova 2009.

⁴⁹ Koltsova 2006.

⁵⁰ Vartanova 2009.

⁵¹ Internet World Stats, March 2009.

(and more from home than from work).⁵² One aspect of the Internet mentioned is that it entails a whirlwind of local, national and global information. Like in Sweden, several negative consequences for journalism were also emphasized (see Article 5).

In response to the question of whether all these media have led to pluralism of media contents, many more of the Russian than the Swedish media experts stressed that there are now many possibilities to choose, but from the worst instead of the best – there has been a reduction in quality and an abundance of superficial entertainment that can easily be sold and received. (Worth underlining is the fact that sensational journalism has developed much more rapidly in Russia than in Sweden.) Other examples receiving negative comments were American cartoons and films, and the number of celebrities instead of common people in the media output. The manifoldness of such media contents is not related to freedom of speech, one expert says.

According to Korkonosenko and Ruschin,⁵³ the contemporary Russian media system enjoys a widely developed legal environment, which has been elaborated in accordance with Western-European standards.⁵⁴ It combines the guarantee of freedoms and necessary restrictions under the conditions of freedom. However, Korkonosenko and Ruschin mean that some years ago the Russian media were freer, although it is difficult to judge precisely whether this resulted in a democratic or anarchistic way of reporting.

When it comes to plurality of ownership, there are great differences between the press, radio and television. According to official statistics in 2006, the state sector in the Russian broadcasting industry did not amount to more than 10 per cent.⁵⁵ However, Korkonosenko and Ruschin say that, in reality, the state con-

⁵² Yandex 2009.

⁵³ Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007.

⁵⁴ The Constitution of the Russian Federation (1993) establishes freedom of speech and information in the following forms (Article 29): (1) Everybody is guaranteed freedom of thought and speech; (2) no one can be forced to express his opinion and convictions or to deny them; (3) every one has the right to freely search, receive, and produce information by any legal means.

The Constitution establishes “freedom of mass information” (compared with the narrow definition “freedom of mass media”). Censorship is prohibited. Press freedom is also stressed and developed by special media laws, first of all the Mass Media Act (1991, with consecutive supplements). At the same time, some strong bans are included in the Constitution as well as some special acts (for example, on propaganda and agitation that evoke social, national, religious and other sorts of hate, appeals to criminal actions, war propaganda, and so on, according to international legal standards and treatments).

Among the essential limitations, it is important to mention the anti-libel articles (the Criminal Code) as well as the protection of persons and organizations from defamation (the Civil Code). The information law rigidly restricts penetration into private life and the dissemination of personal data – see Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007, Korkonosenko 2000, Arapova, Kuznetsova & Ledovskih 2007.

⁵⁵ Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007.

trols all main federal TV channels, such as Perviy Kanal (Channel One), RTR (Rossiya - Russia), and NTV (Independent Television). Also, there is administrative pressure on the private TV channels, as well as problems of transparency in their functioning. Regional channels often function as affiliates of the integral state broadcasting net, and Moscow financial groups support the most popular regional channels. Thus, as a whole, television is the most pro-government medium.⁵⁶

Furthermore, Korkonosenko and Ruschin state (like several of our interviewed media experts) that censorship exists in non-official forms, mostly of a political and administrative nature. As surveys of professional associations reveal, only 40 per cent of the media exist in real market conditions, while others receive subsidies of all kinds. However, some researchers suggest that only 15 per cent of the print media operate very close to a situation of market independence.⁵⁷ The map of print media looks more pluralistic than that of the TV sector due to the myriad of small owners. But several private publishing houses hold strong positions in Moscow and the provinces. Most of them stand close to the government and are quite loyal to the ruling administration (Gazprom-media, Prof-Media of Interros, Intermedia group, etc.). The essential problems for independent journalism, Korkonosenko and Ruschin say, are due to the growth of media empires.⁵⁸

Vartanova and Smirnov write⁵⁹ that, in the few years leading up to 2010, more than ten powerful media holdings operated in the country, the largest media proprietors being: Gazprom-Media, Prof-Media, The Russian Federation Broadcasting Company, and System of Mass Media. They often embrace different kinds of media and are also connected to non-media businesses.

Foreign capital – primarily in the print media and in advertising – has been expanding and regional media markets have developed.⁶⁰ Advertising has been growing fast, as well, but in 2006-2008, the law “On advertising” appeared, among other things regulating the maximum acceptable advertising volume and setting it at 15 per cent.⁶¹

Regarding *television*, there are approximately 200 Russian channels (national and regional, terrestrial, via cable and satellite). All channels are allowed to advertise.⁶² Foreign “global” channels, such as CNN, Euronews, Discovery and MTV, are also accessible.

In April 2000, 60 per cent of the population had the opportunity to watch only four federal TV channels, and nearly 15 per cent did not have access to

⁵⁶ Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007, Ilchenko 2005.

⁵⁷ Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007, Pulia 2004.

⁵⁸ Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007.

⁵⁹ Vartanova & Smirnov 2009.

⁶⁰ Vartanova & Smirnov 2009.

⁶¹ Vartanova & Smirnov 2009.

⁶² Vartanova & Smirnov 2009.

television. The main obstacle was the poor condition of old equipment. However, according to government plans, by 2015 the analogue TV system will have been completely replaced by a digital one.⁶³ In 2008, it appears that 3-4 per cent did not have access to television – at least in the bigger cities.⁶⁴

According to Radkevich at the analytical centre Video International in 2006, 60 per cent of inhabitants in the biggest Russian cities (St. Petersburg included) lived in multi-channel households, i.e., with more than fifteen TV channels.⁶⁵ The corresponding figure in our own survey in St. Petersburg (the suburbs excluded) was still higher in autumn 2007 (more than 80%).

State support is given not only to the state-run Russian Federation Broadcasting Company, but also to Perviy Kanal and NTV. Because regional media cannot survive without state support, such support is provided by the local governments.⁶⁶

The most watched TV channels in Russia are the three state-controlled channels mentioned above (Perviy Kanal, Rossiya and NTV), together making up about half of the audience's total viewing time. However, if we add the channels STS and TNT, the "big five" stand for two thirds of the viewing time.⁶⁷

According to audience ratings for St. Petersburg, the first places belong, like in the country as a whole, to the national companies RTR, Perviy Kanal and NTV with their local affiliates. After them, the largest regional channels follow, with 6-8 per cent of daily viewing shares: STS (based in Moscow) and Pjatyj Kanal (Channel 5, based in St. Petersburg), the last-mentioned channel after 2006 broadcasting over all Russia.⁶⁸

A content analysis of five TV channels (national NTV, national Perviy Kanal, national RTR, regional TRK "Peterburg", later Channel 5, and regional STO, later TV100) made within our project by Ruschin⁶⁹ and valid for ten separate days in 2006 showed that news was proportionally most prevalent on the national channels. Furthermore, 60 per cent of the content was entertainment/drama (ranging from 51 to 75% between the five channels). The category entertainment/drama consisted, in its turn, of ca. 30 per cent TV serials, ca. 20 per cent TV films and ca. 10 per cent editorial entertainment.

In the study, "production country" was registered for TV films and TV serials (i.e., about half of the total TV time) when such information was available in the programme listings. Slightly more than half of the time (of the TV films and serials) when "production country" was registered consisted of domestically produced programmes, while about one tenth of the time consisted

⁶³ Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007.

⁶⁴ Public Opinion Foundation (FOM) 2008.

⁶⁵ Радкевич (Radkevich) 2010.

⁶⁶ Vartanova & Smirnov 2009.

⁶⁷ Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007, TNS Gallup Media 2006 and 2010.

⁶⁸ Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007.

⁶⁹ Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007.

of productions from European countries and nearly 30 per cent of productions from the U.S. TV films and TV serials from countries other than Russia, Europe and the U.S. were very few.

These findings can be related to another analysis conducted by Degtereva,⁷⁰ comparing the content in 1986, 1994, and 2004 of two state-controlled TV channels (Perviy kanal and RTR) and two privately owned channels (Ren-TV and STS). This study shows that the state-controlled channels heavily increased their proportion of entertainment, especially fiction, during the period, while the two commercial TV channels had transmitted a great deal of fiction since their start.

The author draws the conclusion that two factors in particular have been active in promoting more entertainment on the Russian channels – globalization (of films and serials especially from the U.S., and also the import of different TV formats) as well as the influence of domestic politics: Since state control increased during the 2000s for the national TV channels, entertainment became both profitable and politically safe for the media.⁷¹

Degtereva carried out a corresponding analysis of four Swedish TV channels – the public service channels SVT1 and SVT2 and two private commercial channels, TV4 and TV3 – showing that the public service channels in Sweden retained their diversity during the period (but lost audience). TV4 and TV3 transmitted more fiction than SVT1 and SVT2 did, but it was only TV3 that did so to the same extent as the four Russian channels.

When it comes to *radio*, over 96 per cent of the population in Russia have access to at least one radio station.⁷²

The radio stations most listened to in St. Petersburg in October-December 2009 were Dorozhnoye radio (Road radio), Europe +, Retro FM, Autoradio and Russkoye radio. A few years earlier, the federal Radio Rossiya was the channel most listened to. However, of the great many radio stations, no single channel or channels seem to totally dominate radio listening.⁷³

A comparison of characteristics of different age groups shows that the older age groups (50+) prefer more traditional stations, which have a long history of functioning via wire broadcasting (federal Radio Rossiya, federal Mayak – Lighthouse, regional Radio Petersburg). Younger people clearly prefer relatively new broadcasters, moreover those in the FM range (such as Dorozhnoye radio, Europe + and Love Radio). It is important to remark that foreign broadcasters, such as Radio Liberty and BBC, have lost their former influence in Russia, which characterized the late years of the Soviet period.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Degtereva 2007.

⁷¹ Degtereva 2007.

⁷² Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007.

⁷³ TNS Gallup Media 2009.

⁷⁴ According to Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007.

According to the Federal Agency on Press and Mass Communications, until the end of 2005, there were 50,621 *print media* (national, regional and local newspapers, journals, magazines) registered in the Russian Federation (compared to about 16,000 ten years earlier).⁷⁵ However, only half them were actually in operation.⁷⁶

Nevertheless, in 2006, the daily circulation of Russian newspapers reached 21.5 million copies, meaning less than 0.15 copy per capita in the country. That is an extremely small figure (and much smaller than in Sweden). The typical trend in the print market over the past ten years has been a larger share of retail sales accompanied by a heavy drop in subscriptions.⁷⁷

Of the national newspapers, the most popular are those that have regional editions, usually in the form of inserts: in 2006, *Komsomolskaya Pravda* (Komsomol Truth⁷⁸), *Trud* (Labour), *Argumenty i fakty* (Arguments and Facts), *Moskovsky komsomolets*.⁷⁹ According to TNS Gallup Media, the most-read paper in 2008, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, is also the most-visited newspaper site online.⁸⁰

Of the general informative daily publications, the most popular newspaper in St. Petersburg during 2005-2008 was, like in Russia as a whole, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, followed by *Sankt-Peterburgskiy vedomosti* (Saint Petersburg News) and *Rossiyskaya gazeta* (Russian Newspaper).⁸¹ According to Korkonosenko and Ruschin, however, circulation of the former large, serious St. Petersburg dailies focusing on social issues, for example, *Sankt-Peterburgskiy vedomosti*, *Nevskoye vremya* (Neva Time), *Smena* (Shift), and *Vecherniy Peterburg* (Petersburg at Evening), has become abnormally small. The regional versions of the largest federal newspapers enjoy similar or slightly higher circulation. On the other hand, newspapers that are free-of-charge, a relatively new type of press for Russia, have won public attention. The most successful of them, such as *Extra-Balt*, *Center plus* and *Astok-press*, have achieved high circulation, building their market strategy on low advertising prices. Periodical journals with special interest profiles are also often in demand (e.g., the weekly *Panorama TV*, the monthly *Mebelny salon*).

It should be emphasized that, in the beginning of the new millennium, St. Petersburg ranked low among Russian territories in terms of the number of paper copies per one thousand inhabitants.⁸² A report from 2009 states that the total circulation of print titles in St. Petersburg and its outskirts was 2.5 copies

⁷⁵ In the beginning of 2009, 51,725 print media were registered, according to the same source, the Federal Agency for Press and Mass Communications.

⁷⁶ Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007, Seslavinsky 2004.

⁷⁷ Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007.

⁷⁸ *Komsomol* was the youth division of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. *Komsomolet* = member of *Komsomol*.

⁷⁹ Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007.

⁸⁰ TNS Gallup Media 2009.

⁸¹ Gortis 2009.

⁸² Korkonosenko & Vinogradova 2004.

during a month for each citizen 16 years of age and older – a figure that seems to show even less reading than in Russia generally. Furthermore, local print titles make up 23 per cent of the whole turnover.⁸³

In sum, the print market, not least in St. Petersburg, has become more diversified and many magazines are targeted to special groups. However, most newspapers and journals have a diminishing number of faithful readers. Even the free-of-charge press does not enjoy its former popularity. Only business newspapers, which are addressed to specific target groups, have kept their audience (*Delovoy Peterburg* – Business Petersburg, *Kommersant* – The Businessman). The decreasing role of printed media in people's ordinary life could be seen as a world trend during the second part of 20th century. But in St. Petersburg, it accelerated after 1991.⁸⁴

According to Reibman in 2008, the shares of total time devoted to the media in Russia were distributed in the following way within the *population* 12 years of age and older: 41 per cent to listening (mostly to the radio), 45 per cent to viewing (mostly television), 8 per cent to reading and 6 per cent to using the Internet.⁸⁵ Compared to Sweden, the figures seem to show that TV viewing and radio listening make up relatively much more of the time spent on media in Russia than in Sweden, while Swedes devote proportionally more of their media time to reading (especially newspapers) and using the Internet. This is also confirmed by our own data collection in Stockholm and St. Petersburg, the results of which are presented in this anthology (see Article 2).

Media preferences in Stockholm and St. Petersburg in the light of some theoretical positions

Media and democracy in the age of globalization

Economic, political and cultural globalization has evolved over centuries. These processes, however, have intensified dramatically over the past two decades parallel to the emergence of digital media and other communication technologies. The fact that the media both are woven into an intricate interplay of economic, political and cultural processes of globalization and are key operators in these processes has been interpreted differently in different theories.

Traditionally, the mass media (press, radio, television, etc.) have mainly been national and regional/local, an essential factor in individual nations' political and economic functions, thus contributing to a common cultural identity as a prerequisite for the existence of the nation-state. In recent decades, a series of

⁸³ Association of Print Products Distributors 2009.

⁸⁴ Korkonosenko & Ruschin 2007. Figures on reading of St. Petersburg press April 2008-December 2009 can be found at TNS Gallup Media 2009.

⁸⁵ Райбман (Reibman) 2008.

centripetal tendencies in the world's power structures, i.a., involving cultural hybridization (and glocalization) and increasing interdependence of different parts of the world economy, has become prominent in the academic discourse. These trends have accelerated after the 1980s in light of the progressive spread of more and more technologically sophisticated media, which enable rapid communication between individuals and groups of people, thus changing their perception of time and space, and of what is private and public.⁸⁶ Radio, television and Internet penetration to broad social groups have in themselves contributed to the gradual change in society's economic and political structures as well as in individuals' beliefs and behaviour. The question, then, is whether the rapidly growing media supply leads to greater political and cultural pluralism, implying that more and more people improve their living conditions and possibilities to influence the social events, and thus, to greater democracy.

The explosive growth of the media has gone hand in hand with increasing media concentration, primarily associated with the expansion of the advertising industry (an important engine enabling trans-national companies to conquer new markets). The global media market is currently dominated by trans-national conglomerates that own the major movie studios, television networks, a variety of satellite channels, most of the global music market, significant shares of the publishing houses and commercial journals, etc. McChesney,⁸⁷ among many others, points out that advertisers' interests have impact on media contents, i.a., by avoiding controversial topics in an effort to maximize the audience (or audience segments). This tendency also characterizes editorial contents, a development that is detrimental to the integrity of media messages.

Thus, several commentators have suggested that the growing trans-national concentration of ownership within the media field – implying increasing growth of mass production targeting increasingly larger audiences – leads to cultural homogenization and degradation of the democratic foundations of society. A recurring theme in the research has been the ideological meaning and function of the media messages, as the media content is supposed to – consciously or unconsciously – be influenced by the interests of the economic, political and cultural elite, thus underpinning reproduction of the social structure that urges audiences to comply with the status quo.⁸⁸ Several media researchers have also pointed out that the advertising dominance in combination with increasing

⁸⁶ E.g., Meyrowitz 1985.

⁸⁷ McChesney 2002.

⁸⁸ Early critics in this regard were the Frankfurt School representatives Horkheimer and Adorno ([1944]1981), who argued that mass mediated popular culture is standardized and passively consumed (without being questioned and analysed), thus cementing the social hierarchy. In their view, the overall effect of the culture industry is anti-enlightenment, in which the technology becomes an inhibitor of consciousness and prevents the development of autonomous, independent individuals who can assess social events and make decisions – a precondition for a democratic society.

concentration of media ownership means that the growing number of media are more and more characterized by superficial uniformity of media contents in a similar light and entertaining form that also characterizes factual programming and news coverage.⁸⁹ Given the monotonous, popular and digestible media products spread over various parts of the world, people are exposed to similar ideological repression.⁹⁰

Other researchers, however, have in various ways questioned the homogenizing potential of the media concerning people's world views. Some post-modern theorists, for example, have argued that technological development has shaped the media so that all meaning has been evacuated from the media content – at least for the viewer zapping between different TV channels with a flow of rapidly changing, unrelated images neither referring to an “external” reality nor connoting any ideological stereotypes.^{91, 92} People (who are increasingly using the virtual reality of the media) are thereby thought to be lost in the growing sea of information and targeted messages from the political and economic field, and are living in a state of stupefaction without any possibility to distinguish between reality and media constructions. In social terms, these trends involve stylistic and discursive disintegration without a prevailing norm, a fragmentation of “real” social relations and ongoing dissolution of people's historical thinking (i.e., the ability to proactively understand history).⁹³

On the other hand, there are several research trends that question the homogenizing impact of the media as well as their systematic influence on the representations and actions of individuals. For instance, many researchers (also from the commercial sector) have sought to demonstrate that the media generally have a marginal impact, as different media users actively select media content in accordance with their individual interests and backgrounds in order to satisfy various social and psychological needs (cf. for instance, the “uses & gratification” model). Other researchers pointed out early on the importance of individuals' concrete personal relations and group belongings to the degree of media influence, i.e., that personal influence outweighs media influence.⁹⁴ And especially since the late 1970s, many critics representing the Cultural Studies and Reception traditions have challenged the ideas of the media's ideological influence, pointing out that the role of the media in the reception process must be studied in the social context where the backgrounds of audiences, their experience and living conditions play an important role, which means, among

⁸⁹ E.g., Murdock & Golding 1997.

⁹⁰ E.g., Herman & McChesney 1997.

⁹¹ The MTV music videos are a typical example in this connection.

⁹² Baudrillard 1986, Jameson 1991.

⁹³ Jameson 1991.

⁹⁴ E.g., Katz & Lazarsfeld 1955.

other things, that the same media message can be decoded and put into practice in a variety of ways.⁹⁵

Meyrowitz' theory⁹⁶ represents still another view, arguing that the electronic media, especially with the emergence of television, has meant a radical change in people's values and life styles, which in turn has profoundly changed the structures of society in a more and more democratic direction, towards equality between different groups. The idea is that electronic media affect traditional social hierarchies through the direction and pattern of the flow of relevant information that is becoming increasingly accessible to the population through television (and digital media). The media development, in his opinion, has altered the logic of the social order – by altering the way we send and receive information and also by restructuring the relationship between physical and social space. In our common sphere of action, it becomes difficult to distinguish hierarchical status, characterized by gender, age, social position, ethnicity, and so on. Aspects of group identity, socialization, and hierarchies that were previously dependent on physical locations and special experience have thus been changed by electronic (and digital) media, according to Meyrowitz.

With the Internet, questions of media and democracy have accelerated, not least among politicians and in the public debate. In this enormous flow of information streams and changing networks that constitute the Internet, all who have access can contribute and seemingly redirect the flow. However, until now, few researchers have been able to single out any signs of increased civic participation on the Internet. Boyd means that people primarily seek out like-minded individuals on the Net and, thus, do not gain access to the views of people who think otherwise. This also means that even if everyone can create and participate on the Net, the attention participants receive is not divided equally. At present, few get attention, and it appears that the flows of information move in such a way as to reinforce social divides.⁹⁷ Bearing in mind the many social (communication) media on the Internet, it is likely that a great deal of Internet activity, at least among young people, instead functions as self-confirmation and, thus, to strengthen the identity.⁹⁸

Media and cultural identity

The academic discourse on cultural identity has evolved in parallel with mainstream media research and the concept has been given a variety of meanings and explanations. As Kellner points out,⁹⁹ the concept of identity in itself is a social construction, an arbitrary concept aimed at highlighting and drawing

⁹⁵ E.g., Hall 1980.

⁹⁶ Meyrowitz 1985.

⁹⁷ boyd 2009.

⁹⁸ boyd 2007.

⁹⁹ Kellner 1995.

attention to some analytical or classification tasks. For instance, one can distinguish between personal identity (comprising the unique combination of background and life experience of the individual) and social identity, embracing the process of identification with and the feeling of belonging to different groups (gender, class, ethnicity, a special group of friends, etc.), cultures, countries, global society, etc. (a process that also entails differentiating oneself from others).

The global, national and local media contribute in different ways to shaping identity. With the spread of global media and the (allegedly) weakened position of the nation state, many researchers and debaters have expressed concern that (national) identity is becoming more loosely anchored and may disappear. Morley and Robins¹⁰⁰ also consider the dynamics of identity formation as a factor in the political and economic power struggle (e.g., the importance of creating an European identity in the context of strengthening the European Common Market).

Two aspects of the academic discourse on the concept of “identity” are of central importance for our project – aspects related to Bourdieu’s theory, as well as to some critics of the postmodern media culture, for instance, Kellner.

In Bourdieu’s theory of the social determinants of cultural tastes and lifestyles,¹⁰¹ social agents’ identity can be seen as a correlate to their economic and various kinds of symbolic capital that is revealed in their habitus (and lifestyles) and that defines the agents within the specific fields where they have investments and are struggling for some specific profits. Identity can be viewed as a fluid concept in time and space, depending on the different social fields in which the social agents become involved, and it should thus be related to these fields’ specific investments and established norms and rules.

In this connection, it is important to remember that Bourdieu’s theory postulates that every society is divided into social classes on the basis of social agents’ tastes (the generative principles of which are the agents’ habitus) and corresponding lifestyles and value systems. Taste is structured along the two central dimensions *economic* and *cultural* capital, which are correlated with different symbolic resources (corresponding to different tastes) to which low or high symbolic values are attributed in a given society and at a given point in time. People with similar tastes are situated close to each other in the social space and vice versa. Agents who have different attitudes towards legitimate symbolic values are situated far from each other in the theoretically constructed social space.

Bourdieu asserts that his model is universal, although the exchange values of the symbolic goods are dynamic and could be structured differently in different countries and periods. What is highly estimated in one country and at a certain

¹⁰⁰ Morley & Robins 1995.

¹⁰¹ E.g., Bourdieu 1979, 1994.

point of time (i.e., associated with the legitimate culture of a society) could be ascribed a low value in another country or period.

It seems at first glance that Bourdieu's theory conflicts with the thoughts of several critics of the postmodern media culture, who point out that the development of the media in the end of the 20th century (and in the early 2000s) implies access to a multitude of TV channels saturated with advertising and superficial entertainment promoting commercial messages. According to Bourdieu, social agents' tastes and positions in society are largely determined by factors such as their social origin, education, profession, and the like. However, some post-modern thinkers mean that such factors, which have been constitutive for the more stable pre-modern and modern identities, are no longer decisive in the postmodern landscape.

The importance of media for human identity has been stressed by a number of media researchers (inspired by Hall among others),¹⁰² who have pointed out the complexity of the reception process and stressed agency over structure, i.e., that different groups use popular culture in a productive manner. In this context, it has been said that in the postmodern, fragmented society, it is not possible to have one stable identity as previously, but that the diverse media output facilitates the process of identity creation and the possibility to choose different identities. One example is Fornäs,¹⁰³ who states, based on West German socialization theory and British subculture theory, that young people in late modernity are culturally "without ties", something that increases their reflexivity, opportunities and prerequisites to create their own unique lifestyles.

However, following the research tradition of the Frankfurt School as well as Barthes' semiology, Kellner¹⁰⁴ stresses media's ideological influence. He sought to compare the identity structure of different eras. Compared to earlier periods, in which identity was a function of the individual's specific role in society and the system of myths that oriented people to find their place in the community, and thus in which identity was normally rooted in the individual's occupation/profession and public function (cf. Bourdieu's theory), the postmodern identity is said to be increasingly linked to and developed within leisure and consumption, where television and newer media play a key role in structuring the personality and thus shaping contemporary media users' thinking and behaviour. An ever-increasing range of fiction, various hybrid forms of factual and fictional media content, as well as advertising, invite the receiver to identify with ephemeral and hedonistic lifestyles, suggesting that identity is not given but constructed, and that one can easily change identity, which is a question of choice of style and behaviour and not of moral qualities or social position. In this way, the identity is destabilized while media are integrating the individual

¹⁰² Hall 1980, Hall & du Gay 1996.

¹⁰³ Fornäs 1995.

¹⁰⁴ Kellner 1995.

into an increasingly globalized, market-oriented social order. Thus, while the media culture provides sources for the construction of identities and for empowerment, resistance and struggle, the power and dominance relations in media and society are also produced and reproduced in the processes of identity building.

Comments on some findings on the distribution and structure of media preferences in the two cities

As hinted at, the present project has been designed on the basis of our previous research. Since the beginning of the 1990s, we have carried out a series of comprehensive lifestyle studies indicating that Bourdieu's model of social space is basically valid in Sweden¹⁰⁵ – despite the fact that postmodern culture has gained more and more ground, the latest development of the consumer society being characterized by the rapid spread of global media imbued with advertisements and entertainment. In the comparative analyses in this anthology, we will, among other things, test our empirical data against both Bourdieu's and Kellner's lines of thought.

A central question related to Bourdieu's and Kellner's views is to what extent the increasingly consumer-oriented media industry is in any way related to people's identity construction (i.e., their apprehension of themselves and others) in interplay with – or in opposition to – other social factors connected to people's social background and life experience. The distribution (percentages) of answers to the questions in our quantitative surveys shows that the lifestyles of the respondents from the two cities differ in several respects, which (from Bourdieu's perspective) indicates that the symbolic resources may work differently in St. Petersburg and Stockholm, even if this fact in itself does not overthrow Bourdieu's theory according to which the market of the symbolic resources could be partly structured (related to each other) differently in the two cities. With this in view, we have carried out a number of multivariate analyses in each of the four samples in our quantitative surveys in an effort to unmask some common features of these structures as a basis for explanation of such lifestyle differences.

Tables 1:1-2 in the end of this article compare the correlation patterns within two groups of variables for the young respondents in each city – how willingly the respondents listen to a number of music genres and how important it is to them that the media treat different given issues – obtained in two parallel analyses. The variables included in the Tables are ordered in groups obtained by way of factor analyses defining some central dimensions (factors) that explain an essential part of people's dispositions in the areas of interest, thus reflecting a few orientations in the value system of the analysed groups of respondents. Our idea has been to reduce the original number of variables to a few comprehensive

¹⁰⁵ Petrov & von Feilitzen 1995, Petrov 2000, Petrov & von Feilitzen 2005.

dimensions, which explain an essential proportion of respondents' music and media preferences.

One central finding is that the music and media taste of the adolescents from Stockholm and St. Petersburg are structured in a very similar way. Repeated analyses with the adult respondents result in similar groupings (factors). In other words, the correlation patterns binding the symbolic values are quite similar in the two cities. These similarities in the structures of values suggest that the tastes in the two cities are subjected to the same social constraints independent of the differences in the distributions of separate music and media preferences and in the distributions of cultural and economic capital in the two cities.¹⁰⁶

Corresponding analyses have been made for several other groups of variables treating political, aesthetic and consumer issues in the questionnaire. Some of them are briefly presented below in this article (see the groupings of variables within Figures 1:1-5) and some in the following three chapters.

The factors displayed in Tables 1:1-2 can be further reduced (and sorted) along two or three relatively independent central factors that explain a large share of the variations in people's answers about/evaluations of the separate music genres (or concrete music pieces as was the case in our music study in 1995) and about media contents, thus defining some central tendencies in socially conditioned taste that could be related to Bourdieu's and Kellner's theories. The taste of a single individual could largely be considered to be a unique combination of her/his varying attitudes towards these three general styles.

In the case of music taste, we can speak of two central dimensions that (in conformity with our earlier studies) could be called "serious" and "popular" music. "Serious" music is strongly associated with classical (European) music (i.e., symphonies, operas, etc.) and correlates more or less positively with, among other things, church music, jazz, blues and folk music. The other central factor, "popular music", is quite diverse and can with advantage be split into two sub-factors – "traditional" and "modern" popular music (for instance, old hits and dance band music, on the one hand, and the varying music styles spread by popular media channels and targeting young people, on the other).¹⁰⁷

Further analyses clearly demonstrate that, by analogy with the music genres, the preferences for media contents ("How important is it for you that the media treat the following issues?", "How willingly do you watch the following kinds of TV programmes?") also can be divided into "serious" and "lighter" contents

¹⁰⁶ At the same time, these structures correspond to results from our earlier lifestyle studies focusing on music taste and attitudes towards the Internet and other media in Sweden.

¹⁰⁷ In our music study in 1994-1995, the music genres as well as the central factors (dimensions) were also extracted by way of factor analyses, whereby the three central factors, "serious music", "traditional popular music" and "modern popular music" proved to be stable, i.e., they were on the whole independent of the underlying concrete music examples, evaluated by the persons participating in the study. Thus, the factors seem to reflect three main orientations in the value system of the population in Sweden.

(e.g., TV theatre, scientific programmes, factual programmes versus soap operas, cookery programmes, reports on celebrities, etc.), and that the corresponding genre groups, especially the “serious” ones, are correlated with each other, meaning that people who like “serious” music most often also have a positive attitude towards “serious” media contents. The correlation structures initially made on the basis of the adults’ answers proved to be valid also for the young people, especially concerning the correlation between the “serious” styles. Moreover, the analyses show that the “serious” genres and media contents are strongly correlated with such background variables as education, profession and (partly) income, indicating that Bourdieu’s model is valid in Stockholm and St. Petersburg, as it was in Sweden in the 1990s.

In such a way, our studies show that “serious” factors correlate with the hierarchical structure of society (in terms of economical and especially cultural capital) and are decisive for people’s attitudes towards not only music genres and other media contents, but also for people’s leisure activities.

For example, one explanation of the fact that highly educated people and high officials more often like “serious” music than other persons may be that the more advanced or complicated character of such genres requires training in order to understand the symbolism. Such an assumption may also explain the positive correlation between “serious music” and people’s interest in global political issues and the sciences, etc. However, another reason for the above-mentioned finding may be the socially conditioned unconscious will to confirm one’s social position and delimit oneself from other social groups or classes, in the way Bourdieu discusses.¹⁰⁸

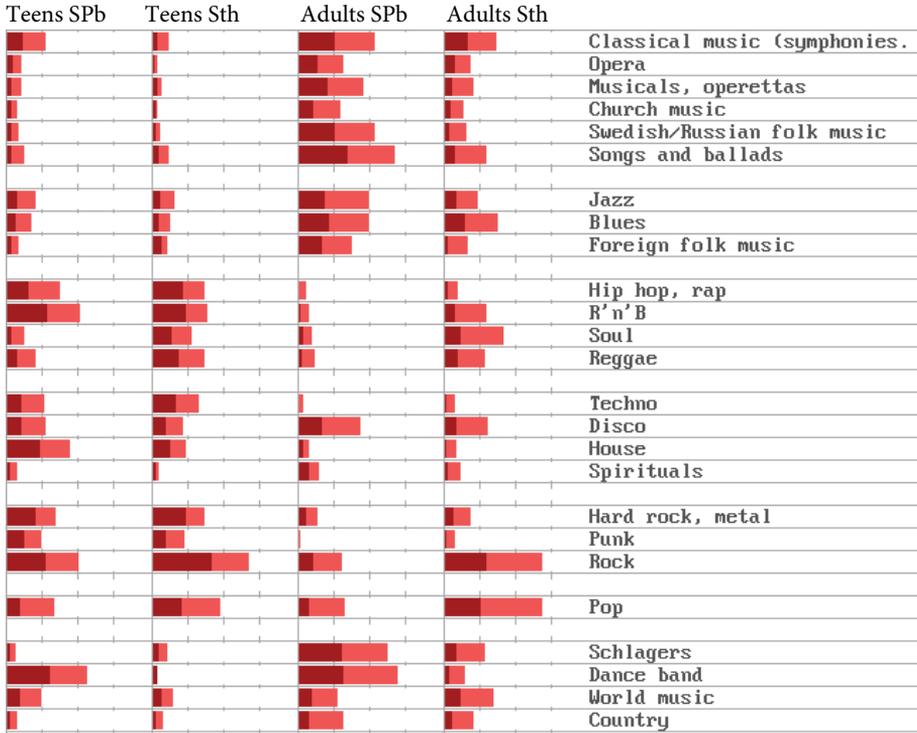
However, in our studies, preferences for “lighter” media contents are not anchored in the same way in social classes.

Figures 1:1-5 display not only the structure of music taste and media preferences, but also the distributions (percentages)¹⁰⁹ of the answers in Stockholm and St. Petersburg to questions measuring attitudes towards a number of media contents. It is evident that there are several differences between the age groups and, not least, cities.

¹⁰⁸ I.a., Bourdieu 1979.

¹⁰⁹ However, as explained in the Appendix “Additional Description of Methods” we have chosen not to write out the exact percentage figures in the diagrams.

Figure 1:1. How willingly do you listen to the following music genres? (by age and city, cumulative per cent)



very willingly willingly

The vertical lines/marks represent every 25 per cent.

Figure 1:2. How important is it for you personally that the media deal with the following areas? (by age and city, cumulative per cent)



very important rather important

The vertical lines/marks represent every 25 per cent.

One hypothesis is that the growing consumer society, including the increasingly commercial media landscape that to a more or less great extent has replaced the traditional socializing institutions, is a circumstance at least partly explaining such differences in the results, not least in Stockholm, which implies (in accordance with the above-mentioned postmodern positions) that background variables such as people's social origin, education and profession are becoming irrelevant in the process of identity construction. It is, on the other hand, obvi-

ous that the radical political and economic changes in Russia have influenced the symbolic system in several respects: Many values that have been at a premium during the Soviet era are denied by the new liberal ideology and vice versa. However, such values have a double life in the value system of the St. Petersburg inhabitants, especially the adolescents, who are divided between the new official ideology spread by the Russian postmodern media and the past ideology, an inseparable part of the life experience of their closest personal environment, which is often in obvious disaccord with the media messages.

Support for the postmodern positions in our studies is, thus, that there are no or weak (positive) correlations between people's positions in society (education, practical vs. theoretical study programme, etc.) and their attitudes towards modern popular music styles, "lighter" media genres and corresponding lifestyles (for instance, choice of clothes) spread by a media industry that promotes consumption in a Baudrillardian sense¹¹⁰ (i.e., as manipulation of signs that has nothing in common with satisfaction of natural needs, see Article 4).

The question then is how these kinds of mediated popular culture affect people's views on society and on themselves. The group discussions that followed up the quantitative surveys indicate that a large proportion of especially the Russian participants are (in accordance with the above-mentioned Baudrillardian position) deadened by the growing media buzz through which political and market forces are trying to affect their behaviours in major societal realms, and often deliberately seek to shield themselves from media messages. Many of these participants pointed out that they are aware of the ideological function of the mass media, but indicated that they are not affected by such pressures. However, several results from our quantitative and qualitative studies (discussed in the three following articles) suggest that the implicit political or market messages of popular culture in fact have an impact on the intended target groups, thus shaping perceptions of and beliefs about the social world and human nature, beliefs that support (or reinforce) the established power relations.

Thus, our studies support, on the one hand, the views of Kellner and postmodern thinkers who propose that identity construction in a developing consumer society and as regards popular culture is becoming more loosely tied to the individual's traditional background and the social hierarchy in which s/he is positioned. At the same time, the consumer society apparently influences the individual's view of her-/himself and of others. On the other hand, our studies show that there are, in accordance with Bourdieu's theory, basic relations between cultural taste and preferences and societal structure when it comes to the socially "legitimate" culture and "serious" genres.

Against this background, it is important to point out that the proportion of respondents who devote themselves to "high" culture activities, such as going to

¹¹⁰ Baudrillard 1986.

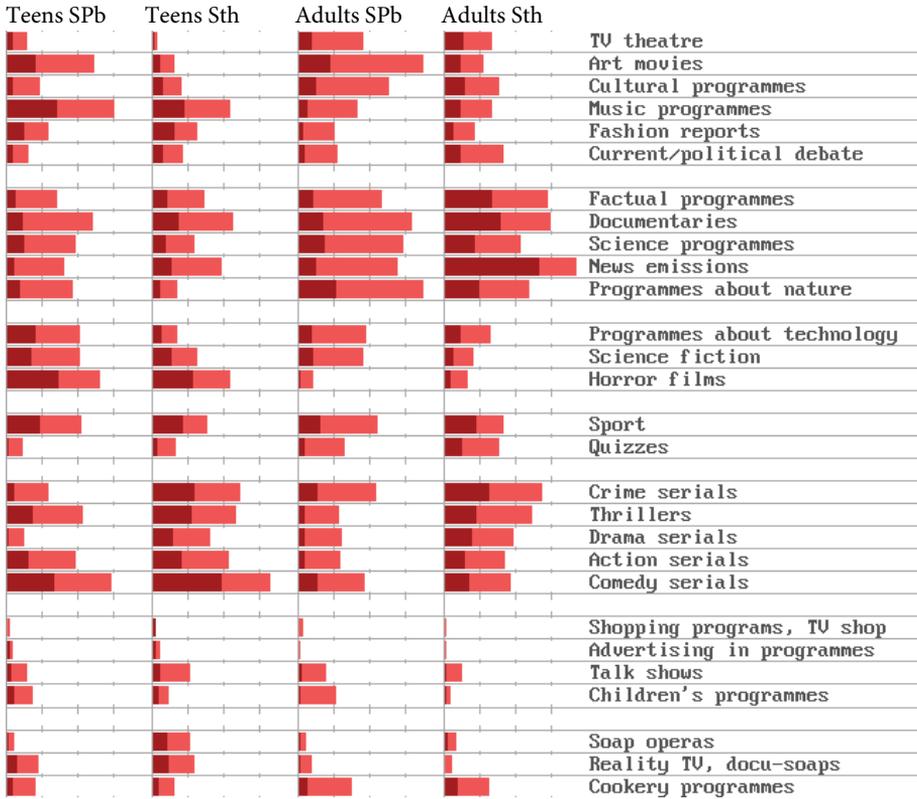
the theatre, opera, concerts, and museums, is greater in St. Petersburg than in Stockholm, a connection that could be explained by Soviet traditions, as well as by the fact that the output of this kind of entertainment seems to be greater in St. Petersburg than in Stockholm. It should also be mentioned that a considerably larger proportion of Russian respondents have marked that they like opera, symphonies and other kinds of socially “legitimate” or “serious” music genres.

The Stockholm respondents, on the other hand, have a more positive attitude towards many types of popular music and media contents than the St. Petersburg inhabitants have, something that seems to largely depend on the fact that the consumer society in Sweden is more advanced than that in Russia (see Article 4 for an in-depth discussion).¹¹¹

The respondents’ attitudes towards the concrete TV contents could be explained in the same terms (Figure 1:3). The statistical correlations show, for example, that a greater proportion of the Stockholm respondents than the St. Petersburg respondents like soap operas, drama and crime serials. From another point of view, one might say that the situations and problems described in these kinds of content lie closer to the Swedish than to the Russian way of life. However, such a hypothesis implies assumptions about the nature of the corresponding content available in both cities, something that has not been studied in our project.

¹¹¹ A study in 2002 comparing Estonian/Tartu University students and Swedish/Södertörn University students found, in a similar manner, that the Tartu students were more oriented than the Södertörn students were towards highbrow canonized culture regarding music (classical music, jazz) and literary genres (classical novels and poetry), while the Södertörn students adhered to a taste structure oriented towards the (mass-produced) youth culture. At the same time, the Tartu students had a generally broader taste pattern, also including popular culture, while the Södertörn students’ taste was more narrow, limited to mass-produced popular culture. See Bengtsson & Lundgren 2005.

Figure 1:3. How willingly do you watch the following TV programmes?
(by age and city, cumulative per cent)



very willingly willingly

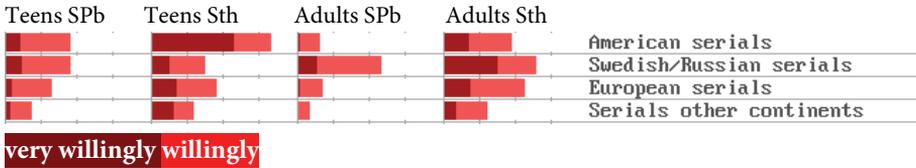
The vertical lines/marks represent every 25 per cent.

It should be mentioned that many St. Petersburg participants in our group discussions complained that the new Russian TV productions of this kind (which during recent years have replaced earlier popular Latin American serials) are still quite unprofessional. It is also interesting to point out that U.S. produced movies and TV serials are considerably more popular among the respondents in Stockholm than in St. Petersburg, while the Russian teenagers and adults are more fond of their national production than are their Swedish counterparts. “People like more *real* situations, close to their life”, one informant comments. “Probably the contrast between the prevailing Hollywood TV fiction and reality is not so big in Sweden”, she continues.

As mentioned, people used to watch Latin American serials avidly when they were previously imported to Russia. It seems that such series corresponded better than North American serials do to people’s life conditions in Russia,

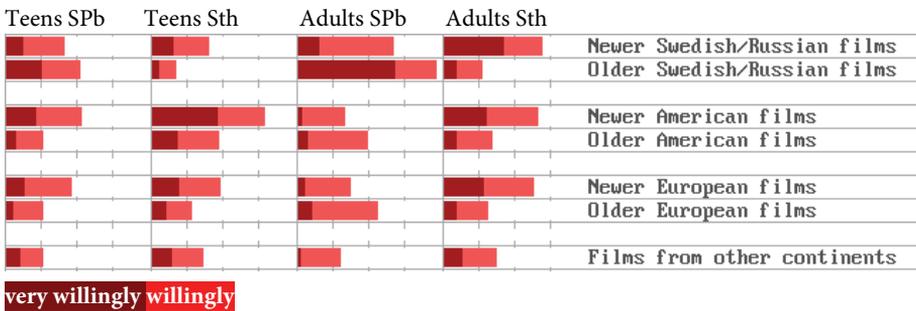
which newer Russian productions are trying to depict with differing degrees of success. The North American lifestyles, as represented in films and serials transmitted over the world, do not seem to have affected Russian audiences as much as the Swedish audiences – see also the preferences expressed in Figures 1:4-5.

Figure 1:4. How willingly do you watch TV serials from the following countries? (by age and city, cumulative per cent)



The vertical lines/marks represent every 25 per cent.

Figure 1:5. How willingly do you watch the following films? (by age and city, cumulative per cent)



The vertical lines/marks represent every 25 per cent.

Since the 1990s, the number of nationally produced TV series has also increased on Russian TV channels, while series from the U.S. have diminished.¹¹² In light of the fact that the consumer society is still new and relatively undeveloped in St. Petersburg, it is interesting to emphasize the positive correlations in our studies between the respondents’ interest in soap operas, on the one hand, and a number of variables measuring different kinds of consumer values and behaviour, on the other.

The correlations turn when it comes to TV programmes dealing with music, science and technology, as well as art movies (by new or well-known directors) and TV theatre. These genres, which are primarily associated with the “legitimate” culture in society, seem to be much more in vogue among people in St. Petersburg than in Stockholm. One explanatory factor is that the status of the

¹¹² Degtereva 2007.

last-mentioned subjects was much stronger in the Soviet Union than in the West, where consumer-oriented media products have long competed with traditional culture. Naturally, consumer values change rapidly in times of transition. Such processes were often commented on by the participants in our group discussions – primarily by those in the elderly generation in St. Petersburg who belong to the cultural *élite* – who said that “the *culture* is dying”, “*material values* are prevailing”. These judgements were made from the perspective of the old value system transmitted, i.a., by the family, the educational system and other social institutions, values that continue to live and stand out as more prominent.

After *perestroika*¹¹³ and the collapse of the Soviet system, West European and American neo-liberal values have been largely promoted by dominant political and economic powers in Russia and have become part of a new ideology that permeates the Russian mass media of today. Personal material success, mainly embodied in having previously inaccessible objects as a car and the newest technology, has become an important dimension in many Russians’ consciousness. This could explain the greater interest in corresponding TV/media content (i.e., cars, new technology, and the like).

Another difference between the media preferences in the two cities concerns Stockholmers’ greater interest in media content that deals with a number of social/political questions such as “gender equality”, “development assistance policy”, “refugee and immigration policies”, “corruption” and “economic inequalities in society”. It appears that Swedes to a greater extent than the inhabitants of St. Petersburg consider it important that the mass media deal with these issues, which, on the other hand, seem to be more imminent in the Russian society of today.

Via television and other media, the present government in Russia is giving prominence to the country’s economic growth, emphasizing that Russia is doing well, while the majority of the population faces serious everyday problems. At the same time, the media output is saturated with sensational reports, *tchernukha* (seamy side), depicting the ugly parts of the reality without negative connotations. Many Russian people identify themselves with these negative stories and do not want to experience extra trouble by watching similar programmes. This could also explain why the Russian youths in our study more often than the youths in Sweden consider it important that media content consists of reports on music trends, the glamorous life of celebrities, etc., as an escape from the hard, everyday reality. Based on the results reported in Article 3, it is evident that a considerable proportion of the St. Petersburg (and probably the whole Russian) population, due to political and economic changes, has

¹¹³ *Perestroika* = restructuring, i.e., the political and economic reforms introduced by President Gorbachev in 1987.

become alienated from the political discourse, especially as defined in the Western consciousness.

On the whole, as in our previous research, factors associated with the traditional legitimate culture of society (e.g., great interest in classical music and others forms of “high” culture, in global political issues, etc.) correlate positively with background variables such as high education level, theoretical study programme and – in a broader sense – people’s place in the social hierarchy, which in its turn is related to their possibilities to influence social development and to their welfare (towards the end of the first decade of the 21st century, the place one has on the welfare scale is still very important in St. Petersburg and Russia). In this way, one can note that Bourdieu’s theory of coherence between social agents’ tastes and lifestyles, on the one side, and society’s power structure, on the other, is valid in 2006-2007 both in Stockholm and St. Petersburg – despite the ideological and economic transformations that have occurred, especially in Russia, during the past decades.

On the other hand, it seems that our results also partly confirm Kellner’s thesis on the role of the prevailing postmodern media culture for people’s identity construction. In the growing global media output promoting new products and services, the stereotypes provided by the popular culture direct the choices of consumers in different social circumstances, especially regarding people’s consumer behaviour, by providing identification stereotypes related to hedonistic lifestyles and fashion trends. And this kind of identification does not seem to significantly affect the social hierarchy, which, as mentioned, is instead largely correlated with social agents’ attitudes towards the legitimate or “serious” culture.

*Table 1:1. How willingly do you listen to the following music genres?
(structure matrices)*

Teens in Stockholm

Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
.843	-.036	.193	.130	-.050	.012	-.383		Classical music
.837	-.190	.240	.075	-.278	.084	-.241		Opera
.809	-.107	.212	.112	-.351	-.157	-.361		Musicals, operettas
.699	-.129	.249	.088	-.484	.240	-.287		Church music
.622	-.110	.210	.188	-.498	.194	-.294		Swedish folk music
.620	-.159	.172	.280	-.503	-.157	-.297		Songs and ballads
.066	-.851	.318	-.279	-.138	.007	-.021		Hip hop, rap
.065	-.839	.297	-.256	-.173	-.200	.097		R'n'B
.174	-.768	.164	-.091	-.322	-.191	-.267		Soul
.112	-.762	.225	-.005	-.100	.188	-.335		Reggae
.108	-.209	.827	-.021	.076	.002	.177		Techno
.256	-.286	.796	.053	-.301	-.195	-.151		Disco
.183	-.266	.774	-.106	-.280	.018	-.150		House
.484	-.176	.547	.170	-.509	.134	-.333		Spirituals
.097	.217	-.066	.817	.033	.217	.006		Hard rock, metal
.107	.220	-.132	.718	-.001	-.383	-.134		Rock
.125	.128	.049	.709	-.073	.030	-.280		Punk
.290	-.264	.288	-.035	-.807	-.259	-.021		Schlagers
.428	-.338	.378	.124	-.687	.164	-.141		Dance band
.320	-.214	.203	-.082	-.632	-.092	-.568		World music
.360	-.311	.245	.399	-.548	.002	-.415		Country
.220	-.303	.257	-.113	-.341	-.748	-.230		Pop
.447	-.178	.124	.241	-.138	-.058	-.881		Jazz
.408	-.180	.082	.300	-.111	.006	-.858		Blues
.410	-.176	.075	-.123	-.329	.429	-.489		Foreign folk music

(continued)

Teens in St. Petersburg

Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
.823	-.108	.106	-.249	.019	-.106	-.198		Russian folk music
.818	-.071	.088	-.346	.099	-.314	.159		Opera
.776	-.123	.393	-.451	-.028	-.110	-.006		Foreign folk music
.767	-.009	.242	-.418	.050	-.130	-.218		Songs and ballads
.758	.031	.126	-.249	.063	-.154	.055		Church music
.736	.030	.092	-.486	.113	-.423	.087		Musicals, operettas
.729	-.086	.190	-.444	.132	-.331	.061		Classical music
-.049	.861	-.209	-.095	-.250	-.114	-.161		Hip hop, rap
-.136	.809	-.300	.130	-.209	-.355	-.288		R'n'B
.158	-.197	.892	-.227	.044	-.043	.154		Hard rock, metal
.225	-.116	.888	-.221	.066	-.046	-.024		Rock
.134	-.190	.820	-.241	-.005	.138	.192		Punk
.466	-.030	.199	-.888	-.009	-.261	-.036		Jazz
.498	-.001	.239	-.875	.027	-.241	.043		Blues
.288	.104	.250	-.831	-.114	-.217	-.073		Country
.202	.343	.385	-.666	-.310	-.037	.207		Reggae
-.022	.199	.025	-.099	-.875	-.179	-.114		Techno
-.135	.278	-.196	.056	-.812	-.380	-.189		House
.224	.281	-.067	-.175	-.307	-.760	-.220		World music
.186	.188	.152	-.376	-.464	-.665	-.121		Spirituals
.162	.463	.179	-.410	-.278	-.626	-.093		Soul
.486	.104	.090	-.423	-.057	-.565	-.371		Schlagers
.002	.628	-.170	.038	-.049	-.347	-.651		Pop
-.008	.354	-.086	-.231	-.561	-.195	-.649		Disco
-.040	.520	-.325	.008	-.497	-.447	-.550		Dance band

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
 Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization

Table 1:2. How important is it for you personally that the media deal with the following areas? (structure matrices)

Teens in Stockholm

Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
,855	,166	-,024	,380	,155	-,416	-,322		The homeless persons
,831	,063	,019	,446	,179	-,275	-,428		Immigration issues
,825	,055	,029	,444	,308	-,381	-,470		Development assistance
,816	,103	-,020	,373	,268	-,321	-,378		Relations ethnic groups
,806	,224	-,189	,431	,222	-,308	-,459		Gender equality
,795	,316	,091	,383	,151	-,434	-,293		HIV/Aids
,680	,142	-,024	,500	,263	-,378	-,570		Educational issues
,656	,229	,129	,454	,058	-,298	-,578		Alcohol/drug issues
,634	,259	,327	,552	,078	-,232	-,175		Terrorism
,612	,151	,450	,438	,037	-,212	-,292		Defense issues
,165	,844	-,017	,247	,207	-,123	-,074		Fashion
,161	,827	,109	,213	,150	-,106	-,079		Beauty
,360	,679	,164	,197	,188	-,408	-,141		Relations and love
,243	,652	,160	,284	,324	-,122	,071		About celebrities
,281	,593	,089	,296	,235	-,549	-,025		Travels, tourism
,171	,565	,202	,186	,051	-,456	-,335		Interior decoration
-,004	,119	,811	,073	,024	-,166	,050		Cars
,141	-,007	,772	,081	,105	-,238	-,246		Technology, computers
-,116	-,011	,610	-,098	-,035	-,016	-,072		Pornography
,077	,299	,494	,347	,149	,018	-,051		Sports
,451	,083	,014	,917	,267	-,224	-,338		National news
,445	,076	-,059	,890	,319	-,243	-,341		International news
,444	,188	,051	,856	,166	-,290	-,292		Local news
,349	,362	,303	,656	-,176	-,273	-,330		Crime, accidents
,006	,405	,182	,292	,640	-,171	-,145		Entertainment
,252	,447	,262	,196	,633	-,135	-,031		Music
,486	,126	-,072	,373	,627	-,301	-,355		Culture
,385	,000	,108	,282	,169	-,829	-,262		Animals, nature
,267	,448	,225	,241	-,001	-,732	-,159		Food, cooking
,464	-,188	,245	,423	,326	-,624	-,314		History, science
,726	,158	,055	,447	,125	-,354	-,728		Child care and family
,403	,242	,339	,399	,144	-,232	-,711		Economy in general
,691	-,031	-,035	,449	,308	-,253	-,706		Economic divides
,437	-,135	,182	,384	,400	-,221	-,698		Corruption
,634	,085	,091	,444	,213	-,253	-,641		Labour-market issues
,454	,306	,162	,586	-,013	-,465	-,630		Health service
,595	-,066	-,101	,433	,322	-,399	-,603		Environmental issues

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
 Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization

(continued)

Teens in St. Petersburg

Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
,783	,190	,037	,258	-,140	,151	-,296		The homeless persons
,746	,261	,341	,435	-,108	,373	-,160		Terrorism
,736	,287	,175	,252	-,065	,153	-,505		HIV/Aids
,727	,101	,048	,392	-,306	,381	-,228		Relations ethnic groups
,701	,182	,089	,321	-,398	,436	-,190		Immigration issues
,691	-,027	,303	,393	-,214	,353	-,215		Defense issues
,686	,145	,226	,431	-,422	,424	-,193		Development assistance
,625	,193	,163	,204	-,124	,376	-,566		Alcohol/drug issues
,563	,448	,038	,246	-,353	,270	-,447		Gender equality issues
,542	,242	,223	,331	,097	,471	-,366		Crime, accidents
,528	,235	,147	,508	-,475	,233	-,506		Educational issues
,112	,752	-,072	,151	-,200	,146	-,193		Fashion
,074	,738	-,059	,147	-,077	,066	-,467		Beauty
,427	,637	,238	,305	-,198	,133	-,087		About celebrities
,169	,637	,332	,103	-,061	-,220	-,207		Music
,095	,034	,781	,071	-,264	,179	-,127		Cars
,195	,007	,765	,199	-,223	,096	-,066		Technology, computers
,082	,071	,575	-,080	,271	,117	-,273		Pornography
,151	,116	,555	,382	-,003	,132	-,028		Sports
,256	,386	,512	,243	-,023	-,196	-,324		Entertainment
,329	,154	,156	,901	-,191	,292	-,097		International news
,344	,140	,180	,901	-,184	,294	-,127		National news
,313	,143	,097	,837	-,172	,226	-,205		Local news
,217	,189	,065	,600	-,442	,274	-,176		Culture
,389	,212	,312	,390	-,694	,229	-,267		Animals, nature
,357	,473	,143	,238	-,665	,114	-,306		Travels, tourism
,236	,420	,098	,170	-,600	,203	-,511		Food, cooking
,336	-,013	,406	,489	-,594	,340	-,174		History, science
,518	,083	,233	,515	-,547	,455	-,445		Environmental issues
,476	,132	,248	,403	-,118	,813	-,278		Corruption
,486	,103	,275	,391	-,247	,782	-,269		Economic divides
,356	,192	,170	,437	-,273	,755	-,365		Economy in general
,444	,247	,064	,303	-,284	,391	-,749		Child care and family
,175	,282	,229	,094	-,260	,246	-,706		Interior decoration
,396	,371	,120	,439	-,157	,347	-,651		Health service
,516	,143	,253	,405	-,203	,156	-,642		Labour market issues
,478	,454	,252	,172	-,113	-,076	-,571		Relations and love

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization

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