

ETHNIC MEDIA: BREAKING THE GHETTO POLITICS

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“Dear Father,

All social bonds between us are broken; only those of nature remain”

-*Stendhal*

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article examine la notion de *lebenswelt* (lifeworld) et la lie au multiculturalisme. Il considère le multiculturalisme, une condition post-coloniale renforcée par un capitalisme corporatif, la politique du biculturalisme, ainsi que différents événements exotiques (ethniques) qui conduisent à l'acculturation et à l'apolitisme. Avec cette logique post-coloniale, les media ethniques opèrent comme un totem qui transcrit le discours dominant (du centre et de la périphérie). Tenant compte du cas greco-canadien, cet article montre le processus et la pratique par lesquels les media ethniques transmettent une conscience qui affirme les paradigmes culturels dominants. Enfin, l'article propose une sortie de la politique ghettoisante du multiculturalisme par une synthèse de courants anti-hégémoniques et au niveau canadien par la création d'une fédération transculturelle.

ABSTRACT

The paper examines the notion of life world and correlates it to the politics of multiculturalism. It further considers multiculturalism to be a postcolonial condition reinforced by corporate capitalism, the politics of biculturalism and various exotic (ethnic) events that lead to acculturation and apolitization. Within this postcolonial logic, the ethnic media operate as a totem that inscribes the dominant discourse (metropolitan and peripheral). Taking into account the Greek-Canadian case, the paper demonstrates the process as well as the practices by which the ethnic media transmit a consciousness that affirms dominant cultural paradigms. Finally, the paper provides an exit from the ghetto politics of multiculturalism by proposing a synthesis of counter-hegemonic politics and creation of a transcultural federation.

From Public Sphere to Lifeworld

Ever since the dawn of immigration, people have been trying to gather information, primarily that of their homeland. Technology has helped them reach this quest by finding new ways to move, store and process information.

However, in view of immigration, minority policies and practices are being designed by power elites and politicians in such a way that information is intensified by techniques of distortion, suppression and fragmentation.

T. Todorov¹ traced the idea of America as a territory of exchange. An

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exchange that resulted in the interiorization of the *other* (aboriginal people) within the colonial project of the West. This argument tends to raise the complexities of the postindustrial society. Furthermore the question of interiorization of the *other* has been extended to ethnoracial or aboriginal minorities. Clearly, this extension corresponds to the impulses of fragmenting practices associated and reinforced by the politics of Canadian multiculturalism. In this sense the multicultural arena requires a substantive political diagnosis. In any case, by fragmenting communities, the dominant system cuts out the ground for the possibility of communicatarian emancipatory politics.

When seeking to argue ethnic/racial issues it is necessary to conceptualize the communicative practice within which these issues have taken place.

In this view, if I consider multiculturalism as an institutionalized system of fragmented ethnoracial species then I must clarify the notion of *communicative practice* in which multiculturalism is exercised. Within this context I would consider the communicative practice as an “organized superfluity” that contains activities or information routines which are designed to instigate phantasmagoric representations; in other words commodified information and activities based on sentimentalism, beautification, militant nationalism and customary aesthetics with romantic pictorial stereotypes. Since the dominant system is constantly promoting categories of impression management then the mass media are the territorial army that mediates the practices of mystification (phantasmagoria).

According to Habermas² the mass media — among other institutions - were transmitting information regarding the considered common interest of bourgeois society versus the mechanisms of the State. The result of this practice, which took place in early modern Europe, was the emergence of *public sphere*; a rational discursive interaction of public thematology, that worked as a counterweight to the absolutist State.

As Nancy Fraser³ pointed out “the public sphere, in short, is not the State; it is rather the informally mobilized body of nongovernmental discursive opinion that can serve as a counterweight to the State. Indeed, in the bourgeois conception, it is precisely this extragovernmental character of the public sphere that confers an aura of independence, autonomy and legitimacy on the “public opinion” generated in it.” After all, “public sphere” became a constant reference to political participation. However it must be noted that women were excluded from this process as well as plebeian men. Indeed, the issue of marginalization is the conjunctual outcome of existing practices of hegemonic power that defend the interests of technocratic capitalist restructuring. I would argue that the more extreme the imperatives of a capitalist restructuring, the less they

allow the marginals to advance or enter directly into the political arena. This escalation can also be seen on the basis of *lifeworld*; as a correlated practice of modern public sphere institutions such as multiculturalism.

Habermas⁴ borrowed the notion of *Lebenswelt* (lifeworld) from Husserl and connected it to a concept of communicative action in order to provide a critical account on the implications of the Weberian theory of rationalization.

However with the transition from the state-organized societies to modern forms of socio-cultural organization, *lifeworld* is directly linked to the informational mode of development. Contrary to Habermas, I believe that this linkage constitutes, not just a symbolic space within which cultural tradition and social integration are sustained and reproduced but a strategic pattern of state intervention in which the emphasis shifted from political legitimation to cultural fragmentation. Therefore, the emerging needs of multiculturalism are not to be determined by autochthonous requirements of a given society, but by the restructuring patterns of the capitalist system. And when the capitalist system produces a scale of crises, it is compelled either to change its goals or to change its modes, in order to overcome the crisis. In this context, multiculturalism is the institutionalized system of the restructuring process not only of capitalism—which includes historically specific species of contradictions — but also of the restructuring of the dominant racial/ethnic elites in a given society. This sequence definitely contributes to the development of the “inner colonization of the lifeworld” as Habermas contends.

Ethnic Media and Multiculturalism: co-producers of affirmative culture

The so called “colonization of the lifeworld” incorporates the imperatives of national identity and racial harmony as basic ideological discourse to exercise the engineering of hegemony and source the broader strategy of the post-industrial or corporate capitalism.

The mercantilization of multiculturalism was acknowledged a few years ago (1986) in a conference “Multiculturalism means business” by the former Prime Minister of Canada Brian Mulroney and since then has become the ultimate objective of the public agenda. One clear implication of the above is the establishment of the Laurier Institute: an organization based in Vancouver whose mission is to “promote cultural harmony in Canada and encourage understanding among and between people of various cultures”⁵. Members-supporters of the Laurier Institute are corporations such as banks (Royal Bank of Canada, Bank of Nova Scotia or Hong Kong Bank of Canada), chrematistic institutions (The Canadian Maple Leaf Fund, Pacific Canadian Investment) and real estate or development units.

In this context, multiculturalism can be understood as an ideological panoply to distribute the dominant or elite discourse. Indeed, it is an apparatus in which political, economic, social and cultural tensions are controlled through fragmentation, contradictions and bureaucracies. Furthermore, the virtual hegemony of multicultural ideologies, emphasized by the increasing size of fragmentation and discrimination, contributes to the growth of dominated ethno/racial elites. However these elites cannot directly supervise or rule on their own the multicultural apparatus. Therefore, in order to achieve or maintain dominance, they must establish an alliance with various subaltern cultures or cultural factions. This alliance is the systematic engineering of *mass consent* by which socio-cultural conditions must be represented in neutral terms on neutral communicative territories. It is part of the condition of successful *hegemony* to produce a cohesive ideology, a set of commonsensical values and norms through various institutions especially mass media. Consequently it is achieved not by direct coercion but, routinely by "manufacturing consent".

Further, I would argue that the colonial "Founding Nations" heritage is reproduced in the settling of a minority faith in an egalitarian new world of opportunity. In this context, "Founding Nations" land is a territory of potential, promise and opportunity. It is a benefactor land⁶. Thus, an ideology of spectacular illusion transmitted by minority media secures the consent, even the support of the oppressed minority groups.

If the mainstream media maintain the faith in the logic of amelioration (socio-cultural or economic) the minority media transform this logic into ideals. In other words, they trivialize the unequal distribution of power, privilege and wealth by turning this uneven environment into glorification of homeland or idealization of Canada. They proceed to establish a consent and to spell out only organizational or administrative accounts without transforming them into political discourse (political consciousness, counter-hegemonic process, gender/class/race/ethnic stratification etc). Beyond this relatively narrow range of representation that contributes to partial or temporary ethnic scope the media promote the models or patterns of dominant cultural compositions. This central tendency towards formative typology of reference maintains the politics of structural assimilation. Therefore the emergence of an assimilationist environment should not be seen as meaning of social harmony; it simply indicates conformity patterns that can't energize, politicize and radicalize the segmented racial groups in a given society. As a result of this continuous pattern the ethnic media spend considerable time and space dealing with society as a Nation-State instead of society as a Political State. Ethnic media's consensualism is the microcosmic version of the dominant mass media representations. Certainly, they function as an apparatus in a larger depoliticization process of the public sphere by representing or negotiating positions defined overwhelmingly in par-

liamentary context and content. Nonetheless, their representation separates elements of political, social, economic and institutional matters and opens the road towards militant nationalism with populist sensibilities or overtones. In this sense news-stories, for example, about Québec or Ontario elections cannot be discussed in the light of the logic of neo-colonial politics or capitalist Anglo-Franco elites restructuring activity; on the contrary, news-stories see this topic as an overwhelming presence of parties internal conflicts, voters frustrations, public relations or public opinion ranks. Such discourse reinforces the irrational bureaucracy of the capitalist Nation-State and not the need for a direct formation of a Political-State.

Ghetto Media spaces: The Greek-Canadian Symptom

We have already seen that the ethnic media, as a communicative territory, contribute to an assimilationist environment. By employing populist exaltations as a form of public communication, the ethnic media transmit a kind of national consciousness that affirms dominant cultural accounts.

The ethnic media, as a kind of consensual and depoliticized vehicles, speak for the interest of pseudomoral utilitarianism whose features are based on individual effort and achievement or the possessive “credentials” of the homeland.

The emergence of these features have reduced the political discourse into normative condition of a postulated preservation of various antagonistic and persuasive representations. But this preservation lies along the line of the construction of *privatized individuals*⁷ (not radicalized forms of life) as correspondence to the capitalist economic ethic; an ethic whose structural properties refer to the mode of exploitation or subordination under the “principle” of plurality. Indeed, the relative success of the dominant ethnic elites in stamping the national political culture depends in part on how ethnic media raise political and class consciousness of their own communities; how they critically engage citizens in a dialogue and action in order to facilitate social responsible change. I assume that neither the mainstream nor the ethnic media provide such competence for critical discourse or radicalized forms of life. Particularly, the ethnic media, because of their strong ties or association with “designated” community leaders, are not unified and will not be until they are able to reject the boundaries that constitute the experience of *ghetto*. Furthermore, the ethnic audience is frequently exposed to features and cases that apply to its own community without being connected to other communities’ similar standpoints. The result is that the ghettoized ethnic media become a weak communicative territory — a space that under constant pressure and influence from forces generated through dominant ethnic elites, contributes to the lack of self-determination.

I would argue that ethnic media are rapidly moving to a condition where the

logic of fantasmagoria perpetuates passive participatory pursuits so as to distract ethnic groups from the formal political and economic conditions of ethnic class subordination. Even so, political action, such as counter-colonialization, is transformed into linear routinization of electoral imagery (impression management).

In this context the ethnic media is a web that enmeshes its own community to exemplify the requirements or hallmarks of a disciplinary system. At the core of this web is the practice that the individual community will participate in the regulation and control of “national harmony” by voluntary actions such as festivals or recreational assignments.

If power means the capacity to communicate, package and diffuse information⁸ then we must associate this power with the process reduction⁹ in which everything that is experienced or observed as dynamic process later is transformed and represented in a static, minimalist or sterilized media form. Thus, ethnic media appear to be assigned as the ideological compensatory in a given post-industrial society. Nevertheless, the practices of these media are not synonymous with pluralism or diversity. On the contrary, they obey or mimetically correspond to mainstream media practices. This formation of cultural association has created an institutional space of the ghetto that is impotent/incapable to provide a counterpublic sphere free from both dominant ethnic elites and the politics of neocolonialism. Nor it is likely to offer connections with any extended marginal group or social change movement. Unfortunately such practices work with, rather than against the classical bourgeois public sphere. The issue then comes to be defined as one of forging new institutional mediations through which ethnic media’s function might be commodified instead of developing an alternative transcultural network. The concept that ethnic media should be an emancipatory vehicle that will command the active participation in a transcultural society is still vital to the formation of a political state.

Viewed in this perspective, emancipatory politics are to be posed on lifeworld. This in turn, leads to the formation of ethnic media political *technology* in the light of modern communication practices. In the existing environment the ethnic media, to a great extent, operate as communicative territories for the transmission and elaboration of hegemonic canon. This operation perpetuates passive pursuits so as to distract community members by incorporating them into incredible pervasive and resilient systems of domination.

Let us explore the hegemonic canon by examining the Greek-Canadian media in some detail. In that context, I would like to consider some of the conceptualizations that I have already discussed in order to open up a theoretical space and argue the construction of ghetto.

Greek-Canadian media are themselves information or cultural species that

must necessarily be consumed by members of the Greek diaspora in Canada. Their cultural and, particularly, economic viability relies on three categories — the sale of space or time to advertisers, the sale of information to a specific audience and the “courteous non-profit oriented” service to members of diaspora (community media). From the mid-'50s two print media appeared in Canada, *The Acropolis*, in Vancouver (1956) the *Hellenic Postman* in Montréal (1958). Since then print and electronic media appeared to have been on a continuously upward spiral (see chart below).

Print Media City	Frequency	Province
Athenian Toronto	Monthly	Ontario
Community News Montréal	Monthly	Québec
Echo Toronto	Quarterly	Ontario
Edmonton's Hellenic Can. Line Edmonton	Monthly	Alberta
Free Speech Toronto	Weekly	Ontario
Greek Can. Action Laval	Bi-monthly	Québec
Greek Can. Press Hamilton	Monthly	Ontario
Greek Can. Reportage Montréal	Weekly	Québec
Greek Can. Tribune Montréal	Weekly	Québec
Greek Can. Voice Vancouver	Monthly	British Columbia
Greek Can. Weekly Toronto	Weekly	Ontario
Hellenic Can. Chronicles Toronto	Weekly	Ontario
Hellenic Hamilton News Hamilton	Monthly	Ontario

Hellenic Postman Montréal	Weekly	Québec
Hellenic Times Toronto	Monthly	Ontario
Macedonian Echo Toronto	Bi-monthly	Ontario
Opinion Burnaby	Bi-monthly	British Columbia
Orthodox Way Toronto	Monthly	Ontario
Patrides Toronto	Monthly	Ontario
Relay Toronto	Monthly	Ontario
The Acropolis Vancouver	Monthly	British Columbia
The Greek Journal Toronto	Monthly	Ontario
The Greek Press Toronto	Monthly	Ontario
The Hellenic News London	Monthly	Ontario
Greek Macedonia & Thrace Don Mills	Monthly	Ontario
Electronic Media City	Type	Province
CHCR-Greek Radio Program Montréal	Radio	Québec
CFMB-Greek Radio Program Montréal	Radio	Québec
La Voix Hellenique Montréal	TV	Québec
Hellenic Pulse Montréal	TV	Québec

Emission Hellenique de Radio Montréal	Radio	Québec
Centre-Ville Montréal	Radio	Québec
Hellenic Melodies St.Laurent	Radio	Québec
Hellenic Voice of Halifax Halifax	Radio	Nova Scotia
Channel 47-Greek Program Toronto	TV	Ontario
Ontario Voice of Greece Toronto	Radio	Ontario
Ch10-Avramis Greek Show Toronto	TV	Ontario
CIRV-Greek Radio Program Toronto	Radio	Ontario
CHRW-Greek Radio Program London	Radio	Ontario
Greek-Can. Melodies Markham	Radio	Ontario
Echoes from the Valley Belleville	Radio	Ontario
The Mountain Hellenic Radio and TV Media Vancouver	Radio-TV	British Columbia
Greek Can. Memories Vancouver	Radio	British Columbia
Greek Can. Program Edmonton	Radio	Alberta
The Greek Radio Show Edmonton	Radio	Alberta
Greek Radio Program Calgary	Radio	Alberta
Hellenic kaleidoscope Ottawa	TV	Ontario

Source: Greek Press & Information Office, Ottawa, Canada

I would argue that the above media are reporting news, events and entertainment that reiterate the dominant political or cultural industries discourse of the homeland (Greece) as well as that of Canada. Furthermore, militant nationalism — within the context and content of news or entertainment — allows us to understand the current media formation as a mechanism of fictionality. Specifically, the mediation of the homeland dominant political or cultural industries discourse diffuses its own fictionality but in conditions that indicate an affective fictionality appeal; in other words as a natural, normal and therefore pleasurable and meaningful organ to community. An organ that manufactures nostalgia and works to position unfulfilled desires or emotions in the name of freedom of expression. Such formation leads to the proclivity of a *privilege account* for those who own or operate the media¹⁰. In other words, this proclivity by incorporating the gradual organization of dominant discourses (homeland and Canadian) becomes *fait accompli* to which community members and mainly Canadian levels of government accept as legitimate territory for public communication. In this account the dimension of representation regarding political culture is obliterated and reduced to scopophilic representations of : I) fetishized nostalgia II) militant nationalism III) auratic pop culture and IV) assimilated practices or ideologies.

It seems that the material existence of the above representations (electronic, print or visual) leads to engineer a compromise between the discourse of “real” and the language of “sensuous”. In turn, the textual or visual compromise corresponds to the recollection of nostalgia (being part of the past) which is controlled by the responsiveness to the exploitable means or interests of the present. Eventually this mediated arrangement produces the condition of *mere illusion* which, nevertheless, attains high status in a given multicultural society. In this respect, the suppression or exclusion of every other refracted or counter-hegemonic discourse plus the illusory satisfaction of scopophilic practices, compose the notion of *Mémoire volontaire* as it was developed by Benjamin¹¹; a practice that looks upon the present as a repetition of the past that attempts to defuse the crisis of the present. Despite defusive or illusory props, the use-value of media, as specifically employed for large scale ethnic valorization, feeds back on the idea of pluralism—the arsenal of liberal philosophy. In a space where culture is dominated by mass media, the ideals of liberal philosophies promote the argument that society contains different existences that harmoniously co-exist. However, in practice such a philosophy doesn’t take into consideration class conflict, gender politics, ethnic discrimination, counter-hegemonic cultural or political groups, etc. Thus, the enunciation of “Founding Nations” and “ethnic minorities”, within the filtration of the media representational system, remains problematic. Apparently, the media dominate the public sphere where either stereotypes or ghettoized practices play a role in negatively affecting conscious-

ness and behavior. Inherent in all this lies a remarkable fragmentation of the ethnic groups.

The practices, for example, of various Greek-Canadian print media forcefully affirm the fact that the politics of fragmentation are also politics of power. These media neglect to convey, and of course aid the foundation of an ethnic interactive paradigm. Therefore, their representations, assumptions or propositions deploy a functionalist type of determination. A closer examination reveals a strong synthesis of passivity based on representational practices that separate transcultural action and neo-colonial culture from the political process. For instance, an investigation of various print Greek-Canadian media leads to the assertion that the ideals of commodified politics (acts of celebration or national exaltation) segregate the community from the material apparatuses of daily struggles against fixation: ghetto management and colonialization. Commenting upon the fixation I would remark that none of these media contain policies or establish interactive communication with other ethnic communities. It is apparent that the fixation is also keen to turn our attention to the system of concealed despotism that constitutes the symptom of the affirmative *character of culture*¹². By extension, the ethnic media, operating as community despots, keep the practice of phantasmagoria alive and, at the same time, by promoting phantasmagoria as an exchange relation they pacify emancipatory practices; they confirm the social order of the dominant discourse by rejecting any critical role within a corporate society; they fail to broach the question of neo-colonial politics when it comes to federal or provincial elections; they never question the concentration of ownership and therefore power; or the unequal distribution of power. The important point, however, in such formulations is to seek clarification on those exclusionary politics that conceal the interests of dominant discourses. I would argue that exclusionary politics is not a desultory, but a strategic form of narration constructed on social practices that eliminate the degree of autonomy of a given ghetto mediaspace complex.

Out of this mediaspace complex certain information practices are exercised and categorized in six interdependent spheres:

I. Externalization: emphasis on patrimonial or phantasmagoric activities

(e.g. *Opinion* 15.7.94 or *Greek Canadian Tribune* 28 July '94).

II. Abrogation: the media dictate a particular pattern of socio-political pattern that reproduces or mediates issues within parliamentary terms. In this context, they abrogate voices coming from counter-hegemonic environments (e.g. the issue of peacekeeping as a legitimate property of the minister of Defense of Canada. *Patrides*, July 1994).

III. Obscuration: denying the correlation between racism and capitalist interests or the association between ethnic division and racist ideas or class location (None of the media presented in chart 1 offers such an analysis).

IV. Enchantment: a state in which the community is exposed to ethnocentric accounts (e.g. *Hellenic Hamilton News*, July 1994)

V. Annihilation: the roots of urban/city planning can't be seen as a result of economic discrimination or ethno/class location (e.g. *Greek Canadian Tribune*, 4 Aug. '94)

VI. Gentrification: triumphant texts or visual material of community "pioneers" are seeking for community support.

Such media interdependent spheres repeatedly emphasize the consensual, calculable interrogation of lifeworld. In this sense, they become a vital power instrument for maintaining the "Founding Nations" dominance. Their politics would be absorbed into a simulacrum that denies autonomy and emancipation. On this basis, we should open up a new field for historical delving.

Breaking the Ghetto Reticence

There are grounds for considerable optimism since a lot of minority ethnic groups have started to take a more critical work and action within Canadian society. Indeed, "in the 1980, and 1990s, foreign domestic workers from the Philippines and the Caribbean have been militant in contesting coercive Canadian immigration policies and substandard provincial employment standards"¹³. Lately a group of communities in Ottawa organized a conference on "Ethnic Communities and the Media"¹⁴. The speakers rejected - quite emphatically - the existing patterns of bicultural power and privilege of "Founding Nations". They challenged the practices of multiculturalism because these practices fail to acknowledge the unequal allocations of resources or detection of injustices. Multiculturalism and its ideological arsenal (pluralism), perpetuate bicultural accommodation practices and therefore ensure the power elites equilibrium. Such practices secure the concentration of power in a very chauvinistic, paternalistic way by treating ethnicity as a sensory or folklore index. In Canadian politics, ethnicity has often lurked behind forms like "food", "folklore" or "tradition". In this conference and particular in our task, we proposed¹⁵ the composition of a *transcultural federation*. This concept doesn't refer to the existing "symbolic interaction" among various ethnic communities; such an interaction promotes silent debates held within the parameters of rhetoric pluralism and therefore multiculturalism. Our concept of transcultural federation betrays a multiplicity of meanings, politics and emancipatory practices.

To begin with, we propose a constitutional appearance of a "transcultural federation" with emphasis on the aspect of ethnic equal *openness* — open public sphere, path, trail — as distinguished from the existing system of "legal" or

“institutional” ethnic hierarchization.

A second meaning can be found in practices that inquire and reject the power structure of corporate capitalism and its consciousness industry¹⁶ as an ideological and educational machine.

The corporate parameter and its systematic techniques of persuasion for hegemony lead to the third imperative practice: decentralization of the dominant ethnic elites. In order to achieve this objective the ethnic communities must be adequately organized. In this view, a fourth way of constructing transcultural federation must be in the light of ethnic community activism. Such activism will address the issue of politicization of the ethnic movement within the particular bodies of direct, and not representational democracy.

Practicing such politics entails the claim that the communities can be associated with other social justice organizations, unions, counter-hegemonic movements and indigenous minorities that give a broader perspective of a long-term social change. Of course, this practice needs to be supplemented by a political forum or social network that would effectively confront the existing hegemonic policies and relations. Confronted with hegemonic operations, the meaning and practices of transcultural federation must be based on the principle of *transparent politics*. Indeed, the secrecy of parliamentary centralism and its repressive, closed and centripetal structure could be the target of a united ethnic political forum or social network. If the State speaks in the name of dominant history or culture then the ethnic movement must fight for the determination of such hegemonic contracts.

At present, however, the prospect of ethnicity is more transcendental as a sociological discussion than a political or social action phenomenon. Thus conceived, Charles Taylor's¹⁷ account of “deed diversity” doesn't relate the power structure of corporate capitalism to the fact that ethnic communities were the systemic invention for maximum profit. He takes the conventional view that “deep diversity is the only formula on which a united federal Canada can be rebuilt”. Such apparently artificial diagnosis contributes to political neutralization which is the groundwork for what appeared to be a corporatist strategy for managing immigration along Canadian State lines. The main factor is that today there is an antifederal development that has to be seen in terms of “Founding Nations” nostalgia associated with the neo-colonial practices of protestant reformation and catholic sovereignty.

The ambiguities of “Founding Nations” nostalgia do not provide ethical contribution to history (extermination of native people and land), nor do their politically disastrous tendency to escape from the history through phantasmagoric celebrations. In this context the Canadian state is unauthentic; it is not only untrue to itself, but also fuses history with an absurd united federalism.

What is the responsibility of subaltern ethnic communities in such an environment?

Obviously, it is their responsibility to transform social consciousness into political praxis. They should not be a static and therefore dead category of public sphere but a living predicament—a unifying synthesis that must overcome the deprivation of emancipation. Here is where the issue of counter-hegemonic ethnic class media arises—to avoid or prevent capitulated representations. Without this perspective, ethnicity remains an abstract and marginalized attribute rewriting the “master narrative” and therefore working for the relegitimation of an atavist liberal state. In the light of this I would like to extend the “study” questions conducted by I. Wallerstein¹⁸ and add the *question of immigration*.

Indeed, the last two decades the gradual, deepening intrusion of immigrant crossovers-geographically, culturally and politically—provided to a modern society an ever abundant supply for reconsideration and thus repositioning of power. Yet, the new set of different localities invents new spheres that can posit communicative territories against the manufactured or false history of the atavist state. It is this, that allows the question of immigration to be regarded as vital to the modern politics of nation, class and ethnicity and to the formation of a counter-public sphere that doesn't contribute to the practices of populist or militant nationalism and chauvinism reinforced by the “Founding Nations” ideological management.

It is not surprising that the “Founding Nations” image (biculturalism) appears to be “natural” — as an internally credible source or point of reference. This “naturalness” is itself an outcome of the nationalisation of history and space according to neo-colonial needs strengthened by immigration policies; policies that exclude, for example, Anglo-Saxon or Franco ethnic media from federal organized ethnic media conferences or studies. If it is accepted that Canadian society is a multi-ethnic society and thus be considered as having consequences in the constitution of immigration policy, then it becomes possible to argue that all ethnic groups — including the “Founding Nations” — belong to the same socio-political structuration without ethnic hierarchisation. This ethnic relocation obliterates the materiality of *otherness* by eroding the hierarchy or dichotomy between “ethnic groups” and “Founding Nations” species. However, the relocation of ethnicity can't be a temporal patterning but a socioethnic struggle against the politics of a corporatist capitalism and its State. The aim of those engaged in the relocation of ethnicity must be, after all, to fight the sources of destabilisation and ghetto management. Thus, the relocation process becomes a strategic power site for various subaltern communities. Hence at all levels, power ultimately cannot be separated from the realm of “lifeworld” — a dialectic that involves the interaction between long-term commitment and socially

responsible practices.

It is clear that this dialectic requires a communicative territory that can construct interactive relations. Therefore, ethnic media can be understood as a counter-cultural interactive territory — a concept that breaks the narratives of despotism and, equally important, the *irrational rationality*¹⁹ of control imposed by neo-colonial capitalist systems. Such a concept must be transformed into collective action for the relocation of ethnicity and thus an awakening political consciousness of “nations without nationalism”²⁰ must be exercised for the establishment of a new paradigm of social existence. In this sense the relocation of ethnicity also enlivens the argument that the political consciousness must contain the rationalization of sociocultural conditions that (re)produce phenomena of suppressive or destructive human sociality.

FOOTNOTES

1. TODOROV, TZVETAN, **The conquest of America—the question of the other**. Harper Colophon Books, New York, 1985.
2. HABERMAS, JURGEN, **The structural transformation of the public sphere—an inquiry into a category of bourgeois society**. The M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, M.A., 1989.
3. FRASER, NANCY, “Rethinking the public sphere—a contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy”. **Social Text**. 25/26, 1990 (pp.56-80).
4. HABERMAS, JURGEN, **The theory of Communicative Action**, vol. II, Beacon, Boston, 1987.
5. MITCHELL, KATHARYNE, “Multiculturalism, or the United Colors of Capitalism?” **Antipode** 25:4, 1993, pp.263-294.
6. Speaking to a liberal fundraising dinner, prime minister of Canada Jean Chrétien said that “...Canada is the best country in the world. This is the land of generosity, this is the land of sharing, this is the land that permits all of us to enjoy a very good life...millions and millions of people around the world would give their shirt and their last penny to come...” See **THE OTTAWA CITIZEN**, 30-11-1994, p.A3.
7. HABERMAS examines the concept of privatized individuals regarding the capitalist economic ethic. See J. HABERMAS, **The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalization of Society**, Vol. I, Beacon Press, Boston, 1984.
8. BABE, Robert, **Information and Communication in Economics**. Kluwer Academic Publishers. Boston/Dordrecht/London, 1994.
9. ELIAS, N., **What is Sociology**. London: Hutchinson, 1978. Elias uses the

term (zustandsreduction-process reduction)

10. For detail accounts see W. ANSELM- K. GOULIAMOS, **Mediating Culture: the politics of representation**. Guernica. Toronto/Montréal/New York, 1994.

11. BENJAMIN, W., **Illumination**, Fontana Press, London, 1992.

12. I use the notion of affirmative culture as H. MARCUSE stated in his book **Negations**. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972.

13. See STASIULIS DAIVA, "Deep Diversity: Race and Ethnicity in Canadian Politics" in M. WHITTINGTON and G. WILLIAMS, **Canadian Politics in the 1990s**, Nelson Canada, 4th edition, 1994.

14. The conference sponsored by CKCU-FM 93.1, took place at the Regional Municipality of Ottawa- Carleton on September 24, 1994.

15. K. GOULIAMOS-W. ANSELM, "Redefining Ethnicity"—paper presented at the CKCU-FM 93.1 conference.

16. The notion of consciousness industry as it was identified by H.M. ENZENSBERGER in his book **The Consciousness Industry**. Seabury Press, New York, 1974 and D. SMYTHE in **Dependency Road: communications, capitalism, consciousness and Canada**. ABLEX, N. Jersey, 1982.

17. TAYLOR, CHARLES: "Shared and Divergent Values" in R.L. WATTS and D.M. BROWN, **Option for a New Canada**. University of Toronto Press. Toronto, 1991.

18. WALLERSTEIN takes into account just three questions: the "national" of left movements as it came within the Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires, the "peasant" as a result of the Chinese Revolution and, finally, the decolonization of "Third Worldsim". see E. BALIBAR and I. WALLERSTEIN, **Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities**, VERSO. London, 1993.

19. CASTORIADIS, breaking with Marxian and Weberian accounts, focused his analysis on despotism and anarchy of capitalism not only in the workplace but also in the market — a phenomenon that is characterised by a constant application of the irrational rationality of control. See CASTORIADIS, C., **Political and Social Writings**, vol. 2. The University of Minnesota Press. Minneapolis, 1988.

20. I borrow the phrase "nations without nationalism" from J. KRISTEVA'S book **Nations Without Nationalism**. Columbia University Press, New York 1993.