The Sounds of Culture

Maltese Radio in Australia

Albert Marshall

November 1995

THE SOUNDS OF CULTURE
Maltese Radio in Australia

submitted by
Albert Marshall Grad Dip (Communication)

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirement for the degree of
Master of Arts in Communication
by coursework

Department of Communication and Language Studies
Faculty of Arts

Victoria University of Technology
November 1995

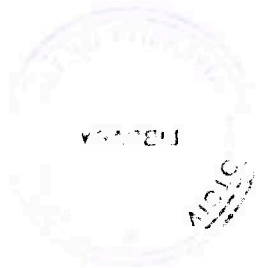

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

Except where reference is made in the text of the thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified or been awarded for any degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgment in the main text of the thesis.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks are due to my supervisor
Dr John Langer.

For their constant assistance, encouragement and support, my particular thanks go to
Dr Helen Borland and Dr Ron Adams.

For their cooperation and patience, thanks also go to
the Maltese radio broadcasters in Australia.

Special thanks to
Rev. Prof. Peter Serracino Inglott
and
Jane Marshall
for showing me the way.

LIST OF TABLES

PAGE

INTRODUCTION

The central concern of this study is how media personnel in one area of community based radio, namely Maltese radio broadcasters operating in Melbourne, come to understand their cultural output and their status as "cultural producers"; what is their perception of the role of "ethnic media" in a multiculturalist context and to what degree does their output in Maltese language based radio programs help to create and sustain cultural identity. What role do they think they are playing in implementing this project? In this context, this study will attempt to uncover some of the underlying cultural assumptions of what they put to air and of what they say about their function as "ethnic broadcasters". A key question then becomes to what extent are these media personnel serving as cultural producers who are governed by a "philosophy" of "assimilationism", "difference" or what Stuart Hall (1992, 1993) calls "hybridity".

Multiculturalism has been "a centrepiece of official government policy" in Australia for more than two decades (O'Reagan, 1994:13). The policy had to be "re-invented" several times during its evolution into the current model which is the product of a series of versions that have been put to the public test since the postwar migration program started in 1947 in an attempt to manage a peaceful coexistence between the "migrant" and the "Anglo-Celtic" of mainstream Australia. This "multiculturalism in process" has had an impact on the way media is organised in this country. In fact, the current organisation of media production in Australia is underpinned by a multiculturalist policy that opens up important spaces for the representation of the cultural diversity of the country's population. Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) is a government financed ethnic public broadcaster whose radio output includes programs in more than 61 languages. Multiculturalism has also impacted on the important sector of community radio broadcasting. Almost all the currently licensed community stations broadcast

ethnic-based programming which provides access and participation to minority ethnic groups that may feel marginalised by the mainstream media.

In recent years, much has been written on multiculturalism, ethnicity and the media (see Jakubowicz, 1994; Bell, 1993; Castles, 1992; White & White, 1983), but almost nothing on those who produce ethnic media. In his discussion on ethnic minority survival, Stephen Riggins (1992:1-20) suggests that the cultural producers of the ethnic media can be considered as the preservationists of their respective community's cultural identity; they are the "public voices" of the various ethnic minority groups of Australia: they are the "bearers" of cultural difference and diversity that multiculturalism is supposed to celebrate and propagate. To conduct research on these cultural producers and their work for the ethnic media is perhaps a way to contribute to a fuller understanding of the multicultural project and the formation of the ethnic media as one of its important institutional manifestations. These mediated voices are essential for the cultivation of a capacity to 'live with difference' which is, in Stuart Hall's view, "the coming question of the twenty-first century" (1993:361).

Research literature becomes rarer still if the focus of study is narrowed down further to the production by ethnic personnel for the radio. In the case of Maltese radio broadcasters, no serious research of any kind has ever been conducted. The power of radio for the Maltese community is perhaps central by virtue of the fact that the only other Maltese media language outlets are two newspapers - one weekly and one monthly. Radio may be serving as one of the main instrumentalities to counter the tendency of Maltese migrants to assimilate into the mainstream, a phenomenon widely recognised both by the Australian government, and specific industrial organisations. (Cauchi, 1990; York, 1986; Frendo, 1986). In this context, it might be argued that Maltese radio may be a central apparatus for the maintenance of a cultural identity under threat. This study is concerned with the way that Maltese radio broadcasters as cultural producers understand their role in constructing and sustaining Maltese cultural identity in the face of what is becoming an increasingly rapid and seemingly irreversible absorption into mainstream culture. Almost 48 per cent of the national population of Maltese migrants live in Victoria

(Census 1991). The rest are spread across the other states of the country. This study focuses on the Maltese broadcasters who are based in Melbourne where there is a potential audience of approximately 63,000 including second generation Maltese.

To what extent are these broadcasters assuming community leadership through their broadcasting and how is their output reflecting this? Do they see it as their role to speak *for* the Maltese community rather than speak *to* and *with* their listeners? How do they construct an imagery of their audience and how do they go about producing radio to meet the cultural needs of this audience? How are they coping with the dichotomy of catering for first generation listeners on one hand, and at the same time trying to attract a second and possibly third generation Maltese listenership to their programs? Or have these broadcasters given up hope of winning over these social groups to their programs, thus reinforcing Pino Bosi's pessimism that "all attempts to reach the new generation (via the ethnic press) have so far failed not only in Australia, but in every other country of immigration" (1980:35)? Is there a difference in orientation that may exist among the Maltese radio producers, given that some of them work for the public broadcaster Radio 3EA, and others for community radio stations. The 3EA broadcasters work close to government policy and, as salaried staff of a public service may have to abide by certain organisational and ideological constraints that do not apply to the broadcasters who work in the community radio sector. Does this institutional location make a difference to the way broadcasters see themselves and their work?

If one pays a random visit to the Maltese Community Centre in Parkville, Melbourne, one is immediately struck by three things: the handsome building, both exterior and interior (many consider this Centre to be one of the best ethnic community centres in Australia in terms of amenities, upkeep and quality of real estate); the total absence of a young second generation of Maltese in activities taking place in this Centre, the average age of the people participating in events, administering and helping out being between 48 to 58 years; and the "traditional", almost folkloric nature of the events that take place there. These markers - an ageing first generation, the absence of young people, and the "traditionality" of the events which occur, are even more pronounced in other

Maltese community meeting places, especially those in Melbourne's Western suburbs particularly Sunshine, St Albans and Altona. Frendo (1988:11) interpreted these outward signs as an indication of a community whose "standards and aspirations...loves and hates were fixed at the moment of impact (when they left Malta) to a very large extent turning into fossilised patriotic nostalgia".

The socio-cultural elements captured by this scenario may be the effects of a relatively long history of the Maltese community in Australia. A brief profile of this community can suggest certain cultural dimensions to help contextualise the scope of this current project. According to Stephen Riggins (1992:4-5), one way of comparing ethnic minority populations is on the basis of their "values" and "geographical origins" - whether their values are traditional or modern and their origins indigenous or foreign. Described according to the criteria of this model, the Maltese community of Melbourne would be a "foreign voluntary minority" (Riggins, 1992:5), immigrants with modern values who chose to move to Australia mainly for economic reasons.

The Maltese migrant community can be considered one of the oldest ethnic communities in Australia, having been involved in the process of settlement in this country for over a century and a half (York, 1986). However, the Maltese community does not feature among the major ethnic groups in Australia. Official documents tend to describe the Maltese as "British", "foreign" or "alien" (York, 1988), depending on the governmental "mood" of the historical moment in relation to migration policy. In recent times, partly because of its size[1] and partly because of the effects of long British colonisation which the Maltese have "imported" with them to Australia, the Maltese community has been markedly invisible to institutional Australia. Frendo (1986:136) argues that since most Maltese emigrated to Australia before Independence - a cultural point in Maltese history that he identifies as the moment when "Malteseness came of age"

[1] From calculations based on the 1991 Census data, in 1991 there were 53, 858 people in Australia who were born in Malta; 25, 375 women and 28, 483 men. In 1991, there were also 76, 618 second-generation (i.e., those born in Australia with at least one parent born in Malta. Recent estimates of the total population of the Maltese community, including those born in Malta and their descendants, place the figure as high as 180, 000. In his article 'Facts, fancies and migration statistics' (*The Sunday Times*, Jan. 15, 1995, Valletta, Malta), Dr Maurice Cauchi takes this figure to task and dismisses it as ridiculously inflated because it "includes also those who have at least one *grandparent* born in Malta. These third generation kids might as well have as many Greek or Italian or dinkum Aussie genes in their blood. It is indeed a stretch of the imagination to claim all these children as Maltese."

- "British Malta was all they themselves knew. In some respects, these people were colonised twice over in the far-flung corners of the British 'Empire'". This double-barrelled colonisation process seems to have led to the atrophy of the notion of a "cultural or ethnic origin" among Maltese immigrants. Assimilation seems to be a characteristic approach to ethnicity among Australia's Maltese, something which the current Labor government has recently acknowledged. Senator Bolkus, Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, described the Maltese as a community "which has quietly and successfully adapted to life here and in many ways, their contribution has been hidden..." (Census, 1991). Since the early eighties, the number of Maltese migrants coming to Australia has been insignificant. According to the 1991 Census, the absolute majority of the Maltese population in Australia (92.7 per cent) arrived prior to 1981; 4.6 per cent arrived during the eighties and 0.3 per cent arrived during 1990-91. This has a bearing on the fact that the proportion of those born in Malta but now residing in Australia, under the age of 25 is one of the lowest of all ethnic groups (Cauchi, 1990:31). The 1991 census data indicates also that the Maltese born community in Australia is ageing faster than the average community: the average age for the Malta born was found to be 46 years, increasing from 42 years in 1986. By comparison, the average age for all Australia born was 28 years. Although what is presented here is a very brief overview, it might be argued that these socio-cultural factors may have a distinct relationship with the sort of media output as generated in the Maltese community - both in terms of who it is that becomes a cultural producer and what it is they produce.

Another socio-cultural feature of the Maltese community is relevant here also, more so perhaps in relation to radio as a cultural form of communication. It has been found that most of the Malta born population in Australia who emigrated in the post-war period and the early 1950s do not have fluent reading skills in any language (Cauchi, 1990). The discrepancy between speaking and reading native languages among the ethnic groups of Australia was investigated by Michael Clyne (1986). In the Maltese situation he found that "the spoken language is used in social domains by 94 per cent of the informants, but only 45 per cent read the language" (Clyne, 1986:68). With this relatively

low standard of Maltese reading skills, it is not surprising, therefore, that Maltese newspaper, magazine and book readership is not high among the Maltese in Australia (Cauchi, 1990). As an alternative to this lack of literacy orientation, the orality of radiophonic sounds could well be the most effective form of media based communication that is currently reaching the Maltese community, which makes the study of Maltese radio, in the context of the current climate of interest in multiculturalism, an important, if not an essential, priority.

The first chapter of this study reviews some of the work which theorises multiculturalism, ethnicity and cultural and national identity. Ethnic broadcasting, it will be argued, is a form of discourse which attempts in part to resolve the cultural tensions which may exist between the mainstream media and the ethnic minority groups that feel marginalised by dominant ideologies carried by such media, and to resolve the cultural problem of identity by articulating a particular stylised "imagined community". This first chapter also reviews some of the work done on media personnel as cultural producers, including issues to do with professionalism, objectivity, gatekeeping, ideology and organisational constraints. These issues are then related to the role of the ethnic broadcaster. Chapter 2 provides a contextualising framework and some methodological considerations for this study. It argues that for a study of ethnic broadcasting to be thorough, it should take account not only of what broadcasters say they do, but to detail what it is they actually produce. The study, therefore, has two substantive components - the first is a content analysis of actual output of Maltese language based radio programming on the government station 3EA and on four community stations, namely 3CR, 3RIM, 3WRB and 3ZZZ. The second substantive component was based on in-depth interviews with the Maltese broadcasters in Melbourne. This will be Chapter 3. Chapter 4 is based on an in-depth analysis of a set of perceptions Maltese broadcasters have about identity, their own community, the role of the ethnic broadcaster, the organisations they work for, their audience and the most suitable compilation of the content and format of their programs to best serve the audience as they image it. The concluding chapter provides a cursory look at the future of Maltese radio production in Australia.

As a systematic study of ethnic media personnel seems to have barely started in Australia, this project has been conceived as a preliminary attempt to map the terrain occupied by a specific group of Maltese radio broadcasters in terms of their desire to preserve their community's cultural identity. It is a broad overview of what these broadcasters currently put to air in Maltese language programming as well as what these same broadcasters say about what they put to air. Both aspects of this study raise questions about what might be designated as assimilationist or pluralist tendencies in the carving out of a specific "ethnic identity". Rather than a definitive study, this is an exploratory excursion around issues of cultural and community identity that attempts to situate and give adequate recognition to a rather neglected, but seemingly critical form of communication in a discussion of the concept of "multiculturalism" in contemporary Australia - the medium of radio.

CHAPTER 1

MULTICULTURALISM, IDENTITY, MEDIA

Since this study intends to focus on a specific segment of ethnic media and how this segment is conceptualised by its "makers", it may be useful to start with a general overview of how issues of multiculturalism, ethnicity, and cultural and national identity are related to questions that have to do with mass media communication. Then, working on the assumption that the ethnic media is an important articulation of a multiculturalist policy and a potential disseminator of a multiplicity of senses of cultural difference and diversity, a discussion of some theory about the role of ethnic broadcasting and the way it is used by cultural producers to create ethnic identity, may help us make sense of how Maltese radio broadcasters perceive their role of preservers, re-presenters or re-inventors of ethnic identity in a socio-political framework of institutionalised multiculturalism.

Multicultural mosaic

The physiognomy of modern Australia is a rich mosaic of cultural diversity. "Multiculturalism", a term which many consider to have lost its meaning because of its constantly shifting connotations and the innumerable rhetorical inflections attributed to it by various governments of different persuasion, is, according to Tom O'Regan (1993:xx), an import from Canada with lexical origins in the United States. In the particular Australian context of cultural and communication policy making, "multiculturalism" was modelled by the policy makers to suit this country's "demographic, ethnic, immigrant and existing national cultural policy configurations". Elsewhere, O'Regan (1994) observes that, unlike in the United States where multiculturalism has been advanced by minority groups "from bottom up", Australian multiculturalism has always been a "top-bottom" inclusionary political process. Castles (1992) and Castles et al.(1986) describe this process in terms of four phases during which the "migrant" has been continuously reified

into a social problematic: the early version of assimilationism (phase one) required the "New Australian" to assimilate completely into the mainstream. By the sixties, the disastrous effect of this policy on community relations gave way to a policy of integration (phase two) that recognised the existence of immigrants' group identities as an essential social reality and sought to integrate this cultural diversity into the social, economic and political life of the nation. During the seventies, it became evident that these objectives were far from the social reality. Between 1972-75, the Witlam government rejected the policy of assimilationism by the proclamation of 'migrant rights' and the recognition of a policy of cultural pluralism which, during the Fraser administration, became the dominant ideology and the exclusive discursive context on matters related to immigration. Integrationism was abandoned in favour of the first model of multiculturalism (phase three) which, "ironically, used the liberal rationale of cultural difference for the conservative task of staying the same" (Castles et al., 1986:2). The fourth phase which occurred during the implementation of a policy of Access and Equity since 1983 was "mainstreaming" - a move by the Hawke government in 1986 which sought to strengthen multiculturalism by homogenising the specific needs of the migrant communities and dragging them from the margins into the "central concems of core social institutions" (Castles et al., 1986:2). The ideology of mainstreaming was looked upon as a "facade for a retreat from the project of securing full social participation for people of non-English speaking background. As such, it [was] a step backward away from what has been positive in multiculturalism" (Castles et al., 1986:2).

Current Australian politicians now seek to extol the virtues of a "new" multiculturalism as an ideal tool with which to manage cultural pluralism with equal emphasis on structural pluralism. One recent rhetorical multiculturalist statement, remembered less for its political insight than for its gloss on 200 years of white occupation in Australia, was Bob Hawke's proclamation of Australian identity on the occasion of the launching of the Bicentennial Australia Day (26 January 1988): "We are, and essentially remain, a nation of immigrants - a nation drawn from 130 nationalities...In Australia there is no hierarchy of descent; there must be no privilege of origin..." (Hawke

1988). In 1989, a "brave new image" of Australia was institutionalised with the launch of the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia which enshrined multiculturalism as the country's official policy. This document understands the preservation of cultural identity as all Australians having the right to express and share their individual cultural heritage, including language and religion; social justice is understood as the right of all Australians to equality of treatment and opportunity, and the removal of barriers of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, gender or place of birth; and economic efficiency requires the need to maintain, develop and utilise effectively the skills and talents of all Australians, regardless of background. This social vision differs from earlier policies in that it emphasises relationships between class, ethnicity and gender.

Multiculturalism has now been in place for over 20 years. It has gradually developed into what is supposed to be a powerful alternative to a unitary sense of "Australians" by articulating the displacement of an ideal of homogeneity by one of diversity. Given the wide spaces opened up by the 1989 National Agenda for the emancipatory voices of cultural difference to participate in the public sphere of Australian society, celebration of ethnicity and cultural identity would have been thought to be a natural progression of the political agenda. Exploring the extent to which these new "cultural spaces" have been allowed to serve as platforms for the articulation of the displacement of an ideal of homogeneity by one of diversity, would be one way of gaining insight into the nature of possibilities available to ethnic cultural producers to preserve cultural identity.

A substantial amount of research does not seem to be overly optimistic about the way multiculturalist rhetoric and political goodwill have succeeded in removing the gap between the ideology of equal rights for all Australians and the reality of exclusion of non-English speaking background Australians from the centres of cultural, economic and political power. Galla (1994:87) suggests that in Australia "we have the idea of a cultural fabric but the frameworks for understanding the different patterns are at an elementary stage...The deconstruction of the dichotomies of us and them or the so-called anglo and

ethnic in Australia are yet to be attempted". Gunew (1990:110) describes Australia's model of multiculturalism as a "series of discursive formations serving a variety of institutional interests" and Pettman (1992:8) argues that the dominant model of Australian society continues to be "an Australia which is white, English-speaking and probably male...(with)...Aborigines, migrants, and women, often seen as alternative categories, each with an ambiguous relationship to being Australian". Petruchenia (1985:37) complains that Australian multiculturalism simply means that there is a multicultural population living in the country but the country's social and cultural structures remain predominantly Anglo-Celtic with equal opportunity and equal access far from being a social reality. These commentaries are corroborated by Foster and Stockley (1989:31) who present a pessimistic view of the progress that is being made in Australia to defuse ethnic conflict by replacing measures ensuring meaningful participation for ethnic minorities in the country's political, social and economic systems with mere symbolic gestures of multiculturalism. This pessimism is also reflected by Smolicz (1983:7) who fears that what he describes as a "multiculturalism of residues" would mean the preservation of British-derived "core values" which would supersede minority core values after the first generation of migrants dies away: the rest satisfied with a "symbolic ethnicity" so that Australia would be restored to the "happy state of affairs existing before the arrival of the first 'Displaced Persons' in 1949...". Smolicz's observations (1983) may be particularly powerful and relevant in the case of some ethnic groups including the Maltese, because of the present virtual halt of new migrants arriving in Australia. Ironically, at the other end of the continuum after almost a decade of multiculturalism, Schiavoni (1992:40) shares the same pessimism expressed by Smolicz (1983): "It is difficult to avoid the pessimistic conclusion that multicultural and multilingual policies are working merely as transitional measures that only serve to delay the process of assimilation that will fatally confront the second and third generations". These commentaries, therefore, problematise the dynamic of the multiculturalist project which, while constructing a facade of a variegated grid of cultural difference and identity, may be incubating a set of "core values" supporting "institutional interests" at the expense of ethnic minority groups - a phenomenon which would have a direct bearing on

the major concerns of this study. To what extent is this problematised multiculturalism expressed in the Australian media? How might the tensions inherent in this problematic multiculturalism be resolved, if at all, by means of an alternative media that might be used to create ethnic identity? These are important issues that will shed light on the work of ethnic broadcasters in their pursuit of cultural identity preservation.

According to some commentators, a powerful discourse in the mainstream media seems to be constructing a totalising social and cultural ethos for Australia, thus distorting the celebration of difference that characterises the spirit of multiculturalism (Goodall et al, 1990; Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission, 1991; Office of Multicultural Affairs, 1991; Coupe et al, 1992; Bell, 1993; Communication Update, 1993; Jupp, 1993; Putnis, 1994; Jakubowicz et al, 1994). In his report to the Office of Multicultural Affairs about policy options for a multicultural Australia, Jupp (1993:46) points out that the electronic media are not responding well to the ethnically diverse nature of Australian society and suggests the incorporation of "multicultural and multilingual dimensions" into the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal's processes of granting and renewing radio and television licences. Jakubowicz et al.(1994) point out that despite the policies concerning access and equity for non-English-speaking background immigrants, some government media organisation have been tardy with implementing visible changes. This organisational resistance to change clearly manifests itself in the absence of ethnic (and women) personnel from the credit lists of those who operate the "creative" side of cultural production (Jakubowicz et al., 1994; Seneviratne, 1992). Other evidence suggests that the mainstream media tend to portray the "real Australia" and Australian culture from an Anglo-centric perspective in which minority groups are constructed as negative entities that dwell "on the margin" and are a source of social problems for society (Bell, 1993, Jakubowicz et al., 1994). Significantly, Special Broadcasting Service's ex-Managing Director, Brian Johns (1992:20), admits that "culturally, we are just not in step with contemporary, pluralist Australia" and laments that when one looks at the arts, the media and our political and educational institutions, "people of non-English-speaking background are brutally under-represented". Johns

(1992) sees it as a "daring innovation" to have the ABC even thinking about the possibility of appointing a board member of a non-English-speaking background.

Ideology and identity

Ostensibly, these commentaries show the Australian mainstream media to be acting as instrumentalities which favour the interests of the "host" culture, which in this context, can be theorised within what has been called the "dominant ideology thesis" and its "grand narrative" - the media are underwriters of the cause of capitalism and, in the context of ethnicity and identity, act as the apparatus of assimilationism. Hall (1977:146) has argued, for example, that the media's power to produce and disseminate meaning for mass consumption, works indirectly to "reproduce the ideological field of a society in such a way as to reproduce also its structure of domination". Yet, we have to be cautious in accepting this view of the media in its entirety, especially in an Australian context where it might be argued that the Australian media sprawl across the logics of commercial networking, public service broadcasting and what some people prefer to call the "alternative". For a country of a relatively small population, Australia has, in fact, one of the most complex broadcasting systems in the world, comprising this three-tiered media structure, not including the recent advent of Pay Television. Historically, within this broadcast structure, has emerged a space where a multiplicity of ethnic voices can be heard. In a symbolic sense, Australia's model of multiculturalism may be seen as helping to prompt the evolvement of this diverse and complex media structure which enables strands of cultural difference and identity to be articulated and find a place in the public sphere (Poole, 1989). The emergence of the current media landscape with the ethnic media as one of its distinguishing features, has developed *pari passu* with the various "inventions" of multicultural Australia. These media spaces have opened up what might be called a "territory of identity" - a place where ethnicity, especially language based, becomes the key moment of media articulation. Yet, as postmodernism teaches us, identity is no longer unified - if it ever was - rather, identity is made from fragments (see Hall, 1992). This observation becomes important for understanding the media work of ethnic cultural producers. If, for example, Maltese broadcasters are engaged in producing

a type of "Maltese identity" in media terms, that identity may not be stable. This study will argue that the "identity" which broadcasters shape and provide for public reception is actually made up of the articulation of a multiplicity of identities which include those "imported" from the homeland culture, those sustained by the migrant's host culture and those that emerge from the continuous contact these ethnic cultural producers have with the organisations they work for and the ethnic community they are part of and re-present in their media output. Theoretically, it may be that we have to set aside the neo-Marxist position embodied in assumptions about the media and domination and, instead, take up what is sometimes referred to as a postmodern position (see Hall, 1992), which, while not denying the place of domination and ideology, it tends also to recognise difference and pluralism in understanding the relationship between identity and cultural determination.

Ethnic broadcasting - two radio models

i) The "government" model

The images of Australia, were, according to Richard White (1981), invented from time to time to serve the interests of particular groups - images that have grown out of assumptions about nature, race, class, democracy, gender and empire. There was one particular moment in the process of this image making of the nation when social conditions were ripe for the creation of the ethnic media. This moment was not, according to Castles (1987:4), "just a natural evolution out of the failed policy of assimilationism" but the articulation of a set of social phenomena that registered a shift in the reinvention of Australia of the 1970's. During these years, racist outlooks towards migrants seemed to subside and migrant communities started confidently forming a cultural, economic and social identity distinct from the rest of the Australian population. This increased self-confidence gave the ethnic community a newly acquired political clout to demand rights and increased participation. The corridors of power were in a listening mood: the economy was booming and it was generally accepted that the postwar immigration program had contributed substantially to the economic health of the nation (Castles, 1987). When in 1974, Bernard Freedman, Chairman of the Australian Department of

Labour and Immigration Subcommittee on Ethnic Broadcasting announced proposals for his vision of an ethnic broadcasting system for Australia, the foundation stone for the notion of media diversity in this country was laid. Freedman foresaw the role of radio (and later television) as an educational platform for all Australians about the nation's cultural diversity, and as a public means to foster and preserve ethnic diversity. He also foresaw the role of media generally as a discursive process to integrate migrants into the host culture and social structure. Finally, while predicating his argument in favour of immigrant access to the airwaves by a firm belief in a democratising differentiated media structure to serve the particular needs of minority groups, he expressed concern about the potential of these 'different' media to act as divisive and disruptive forces, and hence create electronic ghettos.

This was the birth of Australia's ethnic broadcasting. By 1975, two new radio broadcast outlets were created in Melbourne - 3ZZ and 3EA. Radio 3EA's charter was specifically designed to provide a broadcast service for immigrants who were found to be cut off from important community and government information, to preserve and maintain Australia's ethnic identities, and to assist in the institutionalising process of a multiculturalist policy in its infancy. Radio 3EA and its counterpart in Sydney, Radio 2EA, went to air on a twelve-week trial in June 1975 initially broadcasting in seven languages including Maltese. The station's astounding success led to its trial runs eventually resulting in the establishment of a statutory authority, the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) that was charged to provide multilingual radio and, eventually, television services. Ultimate control on what went to air rested with the government of the day. Whether this controlling feature in the management of SBS and the closure of access radio station 3ZZ which followed immediately after SBS radio went to air, had anything to do with a covert move to preserve government control of ethnic broadcasting, thus reinforcing Riggins' theory (1992:9) that through semblances of benevolence, the state "would be able to monitor minorities more easily and, if necessary, curtail trends towards political independence", remains a moot point (White & White, 1983; Jakubowicz et al., 1994).

Jakubowicz (1987) reminds us that ethnic radio and multicultural television emerged out of struggle: the fact that there was a need for them to emerge at all during the 70s was in itself a telling indictment of the failure of the mainstream Australian electronic media to narrate the nation in an expression inclusive of its very real ethnic experience. SBS - both radio and television - has always been politically controversial, attracting criticism from the left for not being ethnic enough, and from the right for being too ethnic and hence alienating ethnic people from embracing a common Australian identity with the rest of the nation. But it has managed to survive this ubiquitous criticism because government policy has declared SBS a flagship of multiculturalism. SBS and multiculturalism are often described as synergetic forces that form a symbolic framework for a policy of difference and diversity. For instance, Andrew Lloyd-James (1991)[2], the then Head of SBS Television, describes SBS as "one of the big ticket items of multiculturalism". Stuart Cunningham (1993:53) explains the existence of SBS radio as "auditory testimony to the policy of multiculturalism..."). O'Regan (1993:177) traces a symbiotic relationship between SBS and multiculturalism in their management of ethnicity and social marginality "in ways consonant with government policy...". In his reflections on the creative concept of hybridity as a preferred qualifier of Australian national identity, Graeme Turner (1994:125) describes SBS as an eloquent exponent of a cultural hybridity with which it constructs a heterogeneous image of the nation. Turner considers SBS itself as "probably our most radical example of a genuinely heterogeneous public institution" and as a "startlingly original achievement".

On the other hand, while acknowledging SBS as symbolic politics designed to uphold multicultural philosophy, there are observers (Gunew, 1993; Jakubowicz, 1989,1994; Seneviratne, 1992) whose persistent critique of this organisation focuses on what, according to them, are serious deficiencies in the manner it delivers this "cultural hybridity". The main thrust of these criticisms concerns SBS's insistence to "import" a very high amount of its television programming from overseas, thus leaving very limited space for the participation of the "unheard" voices of local ethnic groups (Gunew, 1993),

[2] Andrew Lloyd James interviewed by Lois Randall, 11 Sept. 1991.

and its radio and television stations' staff policies which tend to covertly sustain structural racism and sexism by leaving out non-English speaking persons and women from the production and management processes (Jakubowicz,1994; Seneviratne,1992). Finally, Jakubowicz et al. (1994) find a problem with SBS's very ontology, arguing that, because of SBS's very existence, the mainstream media feel exculpated for remaining largely unmoved in their resolve "to maintain particular cultural hierarchies" resulting in the misrepresentation, non-representation and marginalisation of Australian minority identities.

Much has been written about SBS's strengths and deficiencies as an organisation but very little about the cultural producers who "make" ethnic production on SBS radio and television, how they create or maintain cultural identity or whether they serve as perpetrators of Freedman's doubt about the creation of cultural "electronic ghettoisation". To what extent are organisational constraints and the watchful eyes of the state's agencies over the work of these broadcasters influencing the making of cultural material intended to promote and preserve cultural identity? How well are the ethnic radio broadcasters, particularly, serving their community and re-presenting its ethnicity? This study seeks to address some of these issues and thus make a contribution to a fuller knowledge of how the ethnic public broadcaster is involved in the production and circulation of cultural identity.

ii) The "community" model

The media of community radio offer ethnic broadcasters a relatively less institutionalised space than SBS in which to construct their cultural production. These small media have become important vehicles for electronic communication with the ethnic communities of Melbourne. It is important at this point, therefore, to investigate briefly the development of community radio and its ethnic broadcasting component and then discuss some theory about the structure, functions and obligations of the community model of ethnic broadcasting and the role of the cultural producers who are involved in this important sector of ethnic broadcasting. This will help us better understand the

"roots" of the medium most of the Maltese broadcasters use for their cultural production and the ways in which these community radio broadcasters differ from their colleagues at SBS radio in their "philosophy" of ethnic media and in their production and presentation styles.

Commentators seem to agree about the origins of Australian public radio and its inextricable link with the origins of ethnic radio broadcasting (Bear,1979, 1983; Hill, 1986; Law, 1986; Tebbutt, 1989; Potts, 1992). The community radio sector came into being during the 1970s following the establishment of the FM broadcasting system. In 1974, a grassroots movement was seeking to graft community radio broadcasting as a third tier "alternative" electronic communication medium upon the "rigid and ossified" dual system of Australian broadcasting established more than 40 years before (Bear, 1983:21). They were doing this as a reaction to a scarcity of adequate programs for special interests and to the one-way radio communication monopoly in the hands of a powerful minority - the two traits that typified the radio industry of the time (Law, 1986). Although ethnic broadcasting developed separately from the mainstream of public broadcasting, the ethnic communities in the early 1970s played a vital role in the thrust towards the establishment and development of this form of "alternative" broadcasting. This involvement by the ethnic minority groups secured them access to the development of that segment of public radio known as "special interest" services which was "dedicated to serve a particular field of interest such as education, classical or contemporary music, or the ethnic communities". During the 1980s, ethnic broadcasting flourished still further on community radio when the newly elected Labor government decided in 1983 that the extensions of ethnic broadcasting should not happen through the SBS system but through the public broadcasting sector. Today, a substantial amount of ethnic programming (813 hours per week) is provided by the public radio. Of the 57 stations which together broadcast in 76 languages, four are full-time ethnic stations which operate in the capital cities of Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth (Jackson & Marson, 1992).

The role of public broadcasting has been clearly defined since 1975: "to be alternative to other media and to serve - and be served by - specific communities" (Potts, 1992:23) and "to serve the widest possible range of unmet needs in a geographically-defined community" (Law, 1986:32). The Public Broadcasting Association of Australia codifies the idea that the needs of a public station's audience are not met by mainstream radio. The obligation of public radio is therefore to broadcast alternative programming. This ideological banner of "the alternative" was instituted for the public broadcasting sector by the PBAA and is currently endorsed by the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia's "Codes of Practice [Radio]" with guidelines that stress community service, community involvement, 'access', anti-commercialism, localism and democratisation of the airwaves.

The ideals of public broadcasting are encapsulated in the Brechtian grand vision of a radio that is transformed "from a medium of distribution into one of communication...not only broadcast but receive, not only get its audience to listen, but get it to speak, not isolate its members, but put them into contact with one another" (in Mattelart & Piemme, 1980:325). Community radio, therefore, speaks *with* not to its audience (Hill, 1986); it stands for the people's medium: owned and controlled by the community, programmed by it, not just for it (Law, 1986:33). Significantly, this means that community involvement does not stop with participation in the making of programs but extended to participation in management. This managerial participation in running the station is an important form of empowerment for the cultural producers involved. A few Maltese community radio broadcasters do, in fact, sit on the management committees of their respective radio stations. With this context in mind, it may be useful to explore whether this translates into a sense of empowerment in the case of the Maltese broadcasters and whether this has an impact on the quality of the programs produced and relationships with station management.

Commentators agree that, unfortunately, since the whole public radio sector is endemically poor, these lofty ideals have not been satisfactorily fulfilled (Law, 1986;

Bear, 1983). Tebbutt (1989) and Cunningham and Turner (1993), however, argue that public broadcasting has not developed its full potential as an alternative broadcaster not because of financial difficulties, but mainly because of constant compromising with the forces of state and capitalism which have weakened its distinctive characteristics and its ideals of community accountability, broad media access, participative decision making by both program producers and their listeners, no censorship other than legal requirements, and public proclamation of non-discriminatory station policies.

The role of the ethnic media

One way to identify the unique role of the ethnic media is to investigate Riggins' notion (1992) of the "media imperative" of modern life. Riggins (1992:3) suggests that there would be little justification for the existence of minority media if this media failed to contribute actively to ethnic cohesion and cultural maintenance. In its own language, ethnic media is able to communicate its community's ethnicity and culture, and construct its difference from the mainstream. The cultural producers on this media ensure minority survival by evolving their cultural production "in a manner adaptive to the requirements of modern society" (Riggins, 1992:3). This is what Riggins (1992:3) understands by the media imperative of modern life - "a fact recognised by minorities throughout the world who have lobbied for greater access to the means of media production". The media imperative of the modern life of a particular minority group does, however, create a particular paradox. At the same time as being available for ethnic cohesion and maintenance, the ethnic media may also entail intentional or unintentional assimilationist or integrationist trends that encourage the group to mesh their cultural identity into that of the dominant group. When the Australian Legislative Committee was deliberating about multicultural television's legal *modus operandi* in 1980, it was Barry Jones who identified the contradictory pull of ethnic minority broadcasting. Jones made the very important distinction between the particularist and the integrationist elements in ethnic

media[3]: the particularistic role of these media focuses on the maintenance and development of links between the ethnic group and its country and culture of origin; the integrationist role seeks to facilitate the integration and homogenisation of the ethnic group into the host culture.

Some ethnic media may not assume either of these two seemingly opposing roles. Instead, an ethnic cultural production may collapse assimilationist and pluralist functions into a type of blended content and hence assume what Subervi-Velez (1986) calls the "dual role" of ethnic media. Riggins (1992) suggests that the "dual role" is a more realistic function for the ethnic media rather than operating on either extreme end of the cultural spectrum of assimilationism and pluralism. He stresses the importance of contextualising the dual role of ethnic media within the values and geographical origins of the particular minority group using these media. According to Riggins' model (1992), the Maltese community in Australia, for instance, would be categorised as a voluntary minority with modern values whose main motivation for emigrating was economic. Riggins (1992:5) defines "modern values" as "values consistent with capitalism and industrialism and the bureaucratic structures both require" which are embraced by a non-traditional and therefore non-indigenous, immigrant minority. Riggins (1992) also raises the question whether the balance of assimilationist-pluralist functions varies over time and to what extent this balance is influenced by the particular values, and cultural and geographical origins of a particular ethnic group. For example, given that the Maltese community is one of the oldest ethnic communities in Australia, and that colonialist Anglo-Celtic influences have left their profound mark on Maltese culture since the beginning of the British rule in Malta in 1801, it might be useful to ask how the balance between assimilationist and pluralist positions is "managed" by the Maltese broadcasters in their perception of their work, and in their actual cultural output. Is it possible that

[3] Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates (House of Representatives Legislation Committee), May 1, 1980, p. 13.

these broadcasters "promote assimilation in terms of some core values but in other respects preserve group uniqueness" (Riggins 1992:4)?

The ethnic broadcaster as a cultural "hybrid"

One way to start thinking about these issues is through Hall's discussion (1992) of "diasporic skills". Hall's understanding of diaspora includes those people who have to "internally negotiate...different societies at the same time...(those who have) more than one language speaking in them...more than one grammar...(those) whose cultural identity is already constructed out of...synchronitism of different cultural repertoires...In their key concepts, different accents intersect, so they construct identity by moving between and negotiating the differences..." (Terry, 1994:17,19). Hall (1992) frames this discourse of diasporisation with the concept of hybridity - a type of social and psychological positionality in which the migrant inhabits two cultural identities, speaks two cultural languages and translates and negotiates between them.

Drawing on the theoretical possibilities which emerge from the notion of the dual role model of the ethnic media and Hall's theory of cultural identity positionality (1992, 1993) may be a useful way to analyse how ethnic cultural producers are conceptualising their "radio texts" and presenting them to their audience. While the dual role of ethnic media tends to collapse moments of assimilationism and pluralism into a balancing act between heterogeneous items that make up the cultural product, the project of diasporic hybridity re-invents notions of assimilationism and pluralism and "celebrates...the transformation that comes of new and unexpected combinations of human beings, cultures, ideas, politics...It rejoices in mongrelization and fears the absolutism of the Pure. *Melange*, hotch-potch, a bit of this and that, is how *newness enters the world*" (Rushdie, 1992). The dual role model and Hall's theory (1992, 1993) of cultural identity also open possibilities for examining how ethnic broadcasters conceptualise and explain their own work. Ethnic broadcasters can either think of the dual role of minority media as an articulation of a celebratory hybridity that describes their audience (and themselves) as

having a positionality in two cultural worlds, or of a problematic dual construction that can never crystallise into one identity because it is a negative hybridity - a hybridity that tears the migrant apart between two cultural identities that cannot jell.

Media work: some considerations

i) The issue of professionalism

One way to make some sense of how ethnic broadcasters operate in these terms is to look at some studies done on media producers. Perhaps one place to start is with the notion of "professionalism". The term "professional" has various meanings. In her study of Hollywood TV producers, Cantor (1971:71) describes three aspects of media professionalism: 1) "a specialised technique supported by a body of theory"; 2) "a career supported by an association of colleagues"; 3) "a status supported by community recognition". In his discussion of the BBC, the public and the professional broadcaster nexus, Krishan Kumar (1977) considers the elevation of professionalism to the status of a communicator's prime virtue, as a reflection of "a particular moment in the evolution of the broadcasting organisation" - a moment when the ideology of professionalism constructed the personality of the broadcaster as the "medium" itself. The newsreader becomes "the news"; the on-air presenter becomes "the radio station". Echoing Kumar's emphasis on the broadcasting professional as the *sine qua non* of what is considered to be effective mass mediated communication, McBarnet (1980) argues that "doing a professional job" and being committed to an ideology of professionalism is a profound typification of media organisations of capitalist societies. Yet, other commentators (Schlesinger. 1978; Tuchman, 1972; Lance Bennett, 1988; Davis and Robinson, 1989; Gans, 1980; Schultz, 1994) suggest that those indicators frequently used to define professionalism - objectivity, value neutrality, and organisational constraints including deadlines, formats and content formulas - have been found to contribute a less than effective communication link between broadcaster and audience.

In the case of the Maltese radio broadcasters who are this study's sample population, the notion of professionalism has a special significance because while a

segment of the sample is a group of trained salaried personnel who operate in a professional "public service" work environment at SBS radio 3EA, another segment works on community radio stations as volunteers. But can volunteers afford not to be "professional"? Arguing in favour of professionalisation, Ryan (1989) insists that "whether public broadcasters like it or not, recognition of significance and ascription of legitimacy is accorded only to those who demonstrate a minimum level of professionalism". As a benchmark for the professionalism he intends, Ryan (1989:53) takes the standards "defined by the dominant forms of radio practice...upheld by ABC and commercial broadcasters". On the other hand, Hill (1986) praises the "ordinariness" of the voices of the community broadcasters on the airwaves of public broadcasting. By "ordinary", Hill (1986:7) means "untrained voices confident with the vernacular" which embody a type of broadcasting of a democracy, where members of the community have been let walk into the studio; allowed to sit down and been given the chance to speak". Tebbutt (1989), too, argues that in the public broadcasting sector, these "untrained" or unprofessional voices are an articulation of a living public sphere. They are the voices of volunteers who have brought about a change in the listener-broadcaster relationship as it is constructed by mainstream media. The volunteer cultural producers come across not as voices mediated through privileged elitist professionalism but as recognisable "sounds" that resonate the day-to-day experience of their audience. How then do the Maltese broadcasters describe their production and presentation on radio? Do they perceive their work as "professional"? Are they connecting their senses of professionalism and non-professionalism to the quality of production with which they are seeking to preserve their audience's cultural identity? This study is also concerned with the possible difference in radio styles between the 3EA "professional" broadcasters and the community radio "volunteers" and how this might relate to questions of cultural identity and audience identification.

ii) Organisational imperatives

An essential aspect of "professional activities" seems to be a set of organisational imperatives to which professional broadcasters conform. If broadcasters can be assumed

to occupy the position of "gatekeepers" (White, 1964; Gieber, 1964; Baker, 1980) - regulating the flow of information output - this process of regulation is not entirely subjective and based on personal criteria. For example, as news makers, it has been found that broadcasters forfeit at least some control over their individual impulses because their editorial freedom is constrained by the ideological framework on which their organisational culture hangs. The work of media personnel, according to Tiffen (1989), is governed more by the contradictions than the conspiracies of capitalist society and is not a direct and systematic expression of one person's ideology but the product of institutional demands and processes with which media personnel have to negotiate on a daily basis. Their work needs to be related to the interests and strategies of those seeking to influence their production and particular institutional structures and predispositions. These organisational imperatives are, therefore, added determining forces on the broadcaster's content and style of production which have to carry the imprimatur of the "production house". For the broadcaster, as Gans (1980:101) suggests, "individual autonomy is frequently illusory, especially in a group enterprise". One of the key organisational imperatives of media institutions, especially those producing information based messages is the criterion of "objectivity". Yet, while it is widely acknowledged that media personnel try hard to be objective, it is largely unrecognised that objectivity itself is a subjective, culturally defined concept and therefore, media workers, like all of us, cannot, in the end, proceed without subjective values (Dexter & White, 1964; Gans, 1980; Jakubowicz et al., 1994). In a survey called "Media and Democracy" conducted in 1992 (quoted in Schultz, 1994), most of the broadcasters who participated suggested that objectivity was an impossible ideal. Given the specialised role of ethnic broadcasting, how do these considerations about issues of organisational constraints and objectivity apply to the work being done by the Maltese radio broadcasters? Are they succumbing to organisational constraints to such an extent as to deprive their audience of what it wants or needs to hear? Are they letting their subjectivity mould their content according to their own image? Are organisational imperatives creating the conditions of an assimilationist or pluralist discourse on ethnicity? To what extent are they being restrained in their production impulses by cultural, social or political forces from within their own

community? These are concerns that are bound to lead to images of "audience" which the broadcasters may have in their heads and which may be serving as the ultimate "agenda" for the media work these broadcasters are doing.

Imagined audience

How are the notions of professionalism, gatekeeping, organisational imperatives and objectivity related to the broadcaster's audience? Media personnel can be seen as occupying a space which may exist "betwixt" their audience and the organisation that employs them (Mortensen & Svendsen, 1980). This notion of "betwixt" captures a dilemma between the cultural producer's creative possibilities and the controlling powers of the media institution in which the producer is located. Tensions between the producer's claim for creative autonomy and the media bureaucracy's exertion of economic, ideological or political forms of control may result in the producer ultimately compromising on the delivery of "output" in terms of what the institution sees as audience needs. Another binary context occurs as a result of professional communicators being caught "betwixt" the society as source and the society as audience. Theorising this intermediary role for the communicator, Elliott (1972) argues the "gatekeeper"'s role has to be conceptualised in active, rather than passive terms, where cultural producers engage in "the creation of an image of social reality which includes both cognitive and evaluative elements" (Elliott, 1972:145). In this role, media communicators act cognitively by employing their professional expertise to draw on society for material suitable for their purposes, while they seek to create a social reality by an evaluative process that identifies "particular social groups and their positions on particular social issues" (Elliott, 1972:145), thus facilitating empathy with the society as audience.

Numerous studies have focused on the relations between the cultural producers of media texts and the receivers of these texts (Pool & Shulman, 1964; Cantor, 1971; Schlesinger, 1978; Gans, 1979; Robinson et al., 1982; Baker, 1980; Hartley, 1987; Henningham, 1988; Ang, 1991). These relations have been researched from many different perspectives. In one strand of studies the text producer-text receiver relationship

is conceived as a product of the broadcaster's fantasies, the conception of the audience originating in the personality or temperament of broadcasters and their immediate social environment (Pool & Shulman, 1964). In other studies it comes underpinned by "invisible fictions" of the audience constructed not by the broadcaster alone but by media institutions searching for justifications and legitimation for their discursive and organisational practices (Hartley, 1987). In his analysis of movie making, Gans (1964) argues that "[t]he audience participates in the making of a movie through the audience image held by the individual creator"; that is, the audience acts as a type of internalised institutional constraint which needs to be taken into account when decision-making about the production of cultural output is carried out.

This notion of imagined audience may be an important factor in understanding how ethnic radio broadcasters come to construct their programs and justify their approach.

CHAPTER 2
METHODOLOGY CONSIDERED

Research indicates that the influence ethnic minority media have on society is poorly understood because the topic has been relatively neglected (Jankowski, 1991; Riggins, 1992). Compared to the mainstream areas of broadcasting in Australia, ethnic radio might be considered, to use Jankowski's term (1991:173), "small scale media". Jankowski (1991:173) goes on to suggest that one of the most appropriate methodologies for exploring and understanding such media is "qualitative empirical research". For Jankowski (1991:173), something as important as the process of democracy is at stake and in an increasingly commercial media environment, "qualitative case studies may help in determining under what conditions community media can provide a specific alternative". Jankowski concludes that "qualitative methodologies are the foundation of a better understanding of what community media are - and might be" (1991:173).

The methodological approach of this study is a qualitative analysis of data gathering from two sources: the responses provided by a group of ethnic cultural producers for Melbourne radio during a series of in-depth interviews and the content analysis of a sample of programming "made" by these same producers. Broadly, this methodological "mix" will attempt , on the one hand, to map out what radio broadcasters who produce programs using the Maltese language understand as their function in creating and/or preserving cultural identity and, on the other hand, to use a content analysis in order to reflect on the broadcasters' claims and assertions in terms of their actual programming output.

Referring to journalists responsible for television news, John Henningham (1988) comments that the audience for this genre of cultural production knows next to nothing about the values and characteristics of the people who report and produce the stories on

which they are so ready to rely. This observation may be considered general enough to apply to the majority of media personnel. Henningham's work starts as a corrective to this situation - his research commences as an attempt to "get behind" the readily available output in order to explore the social, cultural and institutional factors which might shape the perceptions, understandings and routines of newsmakers. It is this approach which also informs this current work. The small community of Maltese radio broadcasters operating in Melbourne has been considered to be an ideally sized sample for this level of study. At the time when the study was conducted, 19 broadcasters were involved in Melbourne's Maltese radio, all of whom were included as the study's sample population. The majority of these broadcasters produce community radio: 15 work as volunteers at four different community radio stations, 3ZZZ, 3WRB, 3CR and 3RIM, while the other four are employed by 3EA, the government sponsored ethnic public broadcaster.

A two-tiered approach

The methodological approach adopted in this study entailed the collection of two sets of data: the off-air recording of 28 hours of program airtime which captured a contribution by each of the 19 broadcasters involved in Maltese language radio in Melbourne, and the audio taping of extended interviews with 15 of these broadcasters, which were later transcribed. Four broadcasters did not wish to participate in the in-depth interviewing exercise. The separate empirical analysis of each set of data provided a multifaceted perspective in addressing the study's concerns; the analysis proceeded from what was discovered to be the nature of the content of Maltese language broadcasters and from what the producers of that content had to say about themselves, their work, the organisations they worked for, their community and their audience.

Table 2.1 shows the complete spread of Maltese language radio output as it occurs in Melbourne for a typical week in 1995. At the time when this research was conducted, the Maltese broadcasters were producing a total of 19 hours per week. The off-air

recording of 28 hours of program airtime represented proportionally the output by the 19 broadcasters over a period of two consecutive weeks.

Table 2.1: Profile of Maltese language radio in Melbourne for one week by station.

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	
3EA	12 - 1pm 7 - 8pm	12 - 1pm	12 - 1pm 7- 8pm	12 - 1pm	7 - 8pm	12 - 1pm	7 - 8am	*9 Hours*
3WRB	7 - 9pm	9am - 12pm						*5 Hours*
3ZZZ	5 - 6pm				5 - 6pm	10 - 11am		*3 Hours*
3CR		7.30-8.30pm						*1 Hour*
3RIM			1 - 2pm					*1 Hour*
	5 Hours	*5 Hours*	*3 Hours*	*1Hour*	*2 Hours*	*2 Hours*	*1 Hour*	
								Total 19 HOURS

Log sheets for the content of each program were created. A very brief description of each separate item that featured in the programs was recorded together with its duration. Each item was "coded" according to its relevance to the research questions. A content analysis was then conducted to categorise items according to their "cultural" meaning. This analysis provided a map of the different emphases broadcasters were giving the various segments and other cultural inputs in their programs. By mapping these patterns of emphases and noting systematically the type of material included or excluded in the sample broadcasts, a tentative profile of the programs devoted to the Maltese language could be constructed. Since one of the concerns of this study was to investigate possible different approaches to program production and conception at 3EA, the ethnic public station, and at the community radio stations, comparative tables of content breakdown between 3EA and the community stations were produced. In order to provide a thorough picture of how each Maltese program sounded - its "tone", "style", "audio feel" - representative examples from shows were included as illustrative material.

The second set of data for this study is from a series of face-to-face in-depth interviews with 15 of the Maltese broadcasters using a relatively structured, but open ended questionnaire. Each broadcaster was interviewed separately at a location of his or

her own choice. Written permission was asked and obtained from each of the respondents to have the entire interview audio recorded. The 15 interviews were transcribed in their entirety. The average duration of the interviews was 3 hours and 20 minutes. The interview schedule allowed for a break and refreshments after the first two hours of interviewing. Since all the respondents were bilingual, they were offered the option of responding either in English or in Maltese. They were encouraged to make use of their bilingual skills and not to hesitate switching from one language to the other at any time during the interview. Interestingly, all respondents chose to answer in English.

The questionnaire

The questionnaire that was prepared for these interviews was structured according to "themes" related to relevant research questions: primary and probe questions were set around carefully chosen topics. Before the study proceeded to address questions to do with ethnicity, identity and the mass media, it was important to establish some socio-cultural information about the sample of broadcasters - the faces behind the radio voices, as it were. Hence, the interview's first group of questions was designed to tease out a profile of the respondents' sociocultural context. After a series of background questions about the "personal histories" and biographies of the respondents and their families, the questionnaire focused on some cultural aspects of the subjects' lives. The data gathered from this segment of the interview provided the base for the construction of a socio-economic and cultural profile of the broadcasters. Respondents were then asked about their "Maltese-ness" in the context of their Australian experience. This segment of questioning was aligned with a fundamental concern to find out about how notions of ethnicity and national and cultural identity are projected into broadcasters' radio and whether these notions are actively shaped in order to preserve an identity on behalf of their community. The next category of questions investigated respondents' perceptions of the Maltese community of Melbourne and the Maltese media that are serving it. This part of the questionnaire informs a set of concerns about how the Maltese radio broadcasters

may be assuming positions of leadership to promote a collective will to preserve a cultural identity that may be threatened by integrational trends. The questions are also designed to explore how the broadcasters come to understand their cultural output and what is their perception of the role of ethnic media in a multiculturalist context. The next set of questions focused on the actual nature of the work they did for the radio and probed about issues of objectivity, professionalism, power, ethnicity and ideology as related to ethnic minority radio production. This segment of the questionnaire supplies data related to the nature of the role the broadcasters perceive they are playing in the implementation of the project of cultural identity maintenance.

Another category of questions was designed to elicit information about the content of the broadcasters' own programs: respondents were shown the content analyses of their recorded programs and asked to comment on the results. Importantly, this is the point where the two methodological approaches of this study meet: as part of the interviewing process, the "makers" of radio are "confronted" with their own "product" and asked about it. At this point, a series of questions was asked in order to explore perceptions these broadcasters may have of "making" radio for the preservation of their community's ethnic and cultural identity. Interest here was on the extent to which broadcasters might serve as agents for the assimilation of their audience, for a pluralist preservation of the minority culture they represent or for the possibility of engaging in recreating their community's cultural identity through a hybridised form, celebrating Maltese-ness and Australian-ness. Following this, the questionnaire addressed the issue of "audience": respondents were asked to discuss their understanding and perceptions of their audience and provide reasons for this. This part of the interview provided data related to concerns about how Maltese broadcasters construct an imagery of their audience and how the radio they produce may be influenced by this imagery. Near the end of the interview questions were designed to explore how the respondents were coping with the dichotomy of catering for first generation listeners on the one hand, and at the same time trying to attract a second and possibly third generation Maltese listenership to

their programs. Finally, a group of questions probed about the future of Maltese radio broadcasting in Australia.

The approach used to assist shaping the questions for the interview was modelled according to Foddy's symbolic interactionist framework (1993). The methodology embodied in the formulation of the questions assumed that respondents were active agents "engaged in the task of trying to make sense of the questions that are put to them...constantly trying to exercise some control over the situations in which they find themselves" (Foddy, 1993:189). Integrated within this assumption were three insights which underpin Foddy's methodological approach (1993:192): first, that the entire population targeted for data generation had the same idea of what a question was about; second, that the question was relevant to the respondents - that the respondents were likely to actually have the required information; third, that before offering an answer, respondents were provided with a specified perspective within which they needed to frame their answer. The resulting questionnaire was securely grounded within the framework of these basic assumptions and was pretested on two broadcasters before being taken out into the field. The cultural "bond" that existed between researcher and respondents in this study - all Maltese - was particularly helpful in working with this methodology: shared knowledges of the community and the language facilitated the rapport between respondents and researcher, and created the right 'ambience' for in-depth interviewing.

Although the question wording, order and use of probes were uniform across the whole series of interviews in order to maximise the reliability and credibility of the findings and the ability to generalise to a population, the questionnaire was strictly based on the technique of open ended questions. Thus, the methodological approach to the interview as applied in this study, departs from the standard view of the activity of interviewing as a behavioural event. Instead, after Elliot Mishler (1991), the interview was viewed as a form of discourse: a "speech situation" (or "event") in which interviewer

and interviewee as speakers of a shared language, together contribute creatively towards contextualised meanings that both can understand. Engaged primarily in a discursive process, the interviewer seeks to facilitate respondents' efforts to construct meaning from their own experiences. Mishler (1991) argues that the traditional approach to interviewing, characterised by an elaborate technology of coding and statistical analysis based on quantifiable readings of questions and answers as stimuli and responses, thrives on a striking asymmetry of power in the interviewee-interviewer relationship. This study chose to adopt Mishler's alternative approach (1991) which allows respondents the space to "tell their stories", thus empowering the interviewees to articulate their narratives without being constantly called to order and to observe a regimented alignment to the "point" of the question asked. However, the interviewer at times also tended to move the discussion in a desired direction by asking the questions, and by inserting queries which were considered important, thus impelling and punctuating the narratives produced by the participants.

Limitations

There is a methodological limitation in the way this study's audio sample for content analysis has been selected. Although this limitation is somewhat remedied by the data generated during the face-to-face interviews with the broadcasters, the sample radio airtime for content analysis does not succeed in capturing an universal impression of what is going to air. This is particularly true in the case of 3EA and 3ZZZ. The 3EA schedule is constructed in such a way that some special segments of programming feature once a month and therefore fall outside the two consecutive weeks catchment of this study. On 3ZZZ, at least one broadcaster is constantly changing the make-up of his program each week. In this case, the two week program sample is not entirely faithful to the content that is being produced.

Further, this research is, in a strict sense, not a participant observational study where time is spent with respondents in their work environment to gain ethnographic knowledge - what Runciman (1982) describes as "tertiary understanding" which may be needed for a total study of cultural producers and their output. Instead, as an exploratory case study, this research relies on extended interviews and on an overview of cultural "product" as an initial step to sensitising media scholarship to ethnic radio in Australia.

Also, the study does not seek a solution for universal categories of meaning and, therefore, it does not purport to present an accurate impression of the entire ethnic radio broadcast personnel of Australia. The focus of this study is the Maltese radio broadcasters in one major capital city who still occupy the radiophonic spaces of 3EA and community radio stations to "make" their cultural production. This type of research, focused as it is on one social group's relatively limited media use to construct, maintain and propagate ethnicity and cultural identity does not lend itself to adventurous generalisation and wide applications of knowledge. The broadcasting span of Maltese programs in Melbourne, as illustrated in Table 2.1, is merely 19 hours per week. Schedules are staggered and a sense of continuity is missing. This output cannot be compared, for example, to the 24-hour service provided by some new Greek and Italian narrowcasting radio stations in Melbourne. Although these cultural producers are "ethnic" like their Maltese colleagues, professional sophistication, market driven ideology and generous budgets which allow the packaging of their products as consumable cultural goods, tend to facilitate an ethnicity fundamentally different to that of the Maltese broadcasters, including those who work at 3EA. Therefore, just how relevant the findings of this study will be to the commercialised ethnic broadcast groups who have ventured into a more mainstream kind of radio, remains an issue still to be explored.

But while it is not strictly possible to generalise from the population studied in this research to all ethnic cultural producers, it may be that its findings will have relevance to other Maltese media workers based in other parts of Australia, and perhaps

to non-Maltese ethnic personnel who produce for the "small scale media" in Australia. The mapping of the Maltese radio broadcasters' terrain of cultural production and its perceived significance in processes of ethnic cultural identity preservation may be a useful model for studies of other minority ethnic media workers.

CHAPTER 3

PROFILING MALTESE RADIO

Very little public acknowledgment is given by the Maltese community to its radio broadcasters. In some sense, therefore, despite their status as community based broadcasters, they are relatively anonymous in the public domain and in terms of public profile. This chapter begins by attempting to sketch a "face" to these broadcasters - the people behind the voices. What is their socio-economic background, how old are they, what is their level of education and what are their main cultural activities? This short biographical sketch will be based on the broadcasters' own responses to a detailed questionnaire that underpinned a lengthy interview with each of them separately. This background will be useful in locating how this particular group of ethnic broadcasters see their role as cultural producers and to what extent does the conceptualisation of their work on the radio relate to their self identity as they themselves describe it.

A PERSONAL PROFILE

i) Emigration patterns

All the broadcasters were born in Malta except one who was born in Britain but was taken to Malta when very young and lived there until he emigrated to Australia.. Like the majority of the Maltese (93 per cent, according to the 1991 Census), most of the broadcasters (87 per cent) arrived in Australia prior to 1981. Most arrived when they were still in their teens (40 per cent); 27 per cent were in their twenties; 13 per cent in their thirties and another 13 per cent in their forties. Only one broadcaster arrived in Australia aged over 50. Most (67 per cent) were single on arrival. All spoke fluent English and encountered no serious problems getting accustomed to the Australian way of life. The only exception was the broadcaster who came to Australia when he was over 50: within a

year he went back to Malta because "I decided that Australia wasn't for me". He left his family behind. Eventually, his wife persuaded him to give it another try and he came back to stay. Table 3.1 shows that almost half the number of the Maltese broadcasters have been residing in Australia for almost the last four decades.

Table 3.1: Length of time residing in Australia

Number of years	Number of broadcasters
1 - 9	*1*
10 - 19	*2*
20 - 29	*3*
30 - 39	*7*
40 - 49	*2*

ii) Gender

Similar to the mainstream media, the majority of Maltese broadcasters are men (Table 3.2). Radios 3CR and 3ZZZ are all-male while female broadcasters exceed males only on WRB. The majority of women broadcasters have a role as "contributors", coming in to do special "spots". There is a significant imbalance the number of male and female broadcasters on the public service station 3EA, made more so by the fact that the only female there has duties as an occasional "contributor".

Table 3.2: Gender break-down

	Males	*Females*
ALL STATIONS	9	6
3EA	*3*	*1*
3CR	*1*	-
3RIM	-	*1*
3WRB	*1*	*4*
3ZZZ	*4*	-

iii) Age

Table 3.3 shows that the highest percentage of broadcasters are 60 years or over; the lowest percentage belong to the youngest age group. The average age of the broadcasters is 54 years: 11 out of the 15 broadcasters who made up the sample

population are in their fifties. This means that most broadcasters arrived in Australia during the late 1940s and early 1950s: they would therefore fall within the category Cauchi (1990) described as part of the post-war exodus from war ravaged Malta. The standard of living and education of this group of emigrants was, according to Cauchi (1990), generally very low. Generally, the 'old' age factor characterises both the government and the community broadcasters. A comparison between the two radio sectors shows that while the average age of the groups is the same, 50 per cent of the 3EA broadcasters belong to the youngest age group (40-49 years) while only 27 per cent of the community radio broadcasters are aged between 40 and 49. The youngest broadcaster (40) works full-time with 3EA, while the eldest (68) is with 3ZZZ.

Table 3.3: Age of broadcasters

Age Grouping	*Number of broadcasters*
40 - 49	4
50 - 59	5
60 +	6

iv) Socio-economic background

The majority of the Maltese broadcasters seem to come from what might be called a working-class background, having large families and parents who are not conventionally literate. Only one described his social background as a "middle class type of upbringing". Most talked about hard times when they were young, although they generally described their childhood as a happy one. Ten out of the 15 broadcasters live in the western suburbs of Melbourne. All are married, four to non-Maltese partners. All have children, except one. They agree unanimously about the paramount importance of providing their children with the best education "money can buy". Seven are in the workforce: three males work at 3EA as professional broadcasters; one female is a marketing manager, also employed at 3EA; another female works as a customer service assistant; one male is a professional accountant and another male is employed with a finance company. Four out of the six female broadcasters said they performed "home

duties". Out of the remaining four broadcasters, two are retired - one does part time labour work after having accepted voluntary redundancy from a government business enterprise and one is self-employed as a manufacturer. Annual incomes range from $35,000 to the highest figure of $50,000 per annum. The 3EA broadcasters earn between $39,000 to $46,000 per annum. These salaries are far above the annual gross income earned by the highest percentage of Maltese-Australians ($16,001 and $25,000) (Census, 1991).

More than 50 per cent of the broadcasters said they traditionally voted Labor; 20 per cent said they voted Liberal, while 27 per cent described themselves as "swinging voters". Most admitted that their family background in Malta could have something to do with their political preferences in Australia. One broadcaster who has been living in Australia for the last 39 years said he brought his political allegiance with him from Malta to Australia: "I was a member of the Malta Labour Party then - I'm a member of the Australian Labor Party now. I'm not active in Maltese politics at all but I'd feel happier if I see a Labour government in Malta rather than a Nationalist (Liberal) government". On the other hand, another broadcaster who described himself as having always been "an apolitical animal" talked about how he had managed to extricate himself from a "heavy Labour following" by his family back home and in Australia cultivated a broader political perspective. Another broadcaster explained that the reason for his allegiance to the Australian Labor Party was not just his pro-Labour family background but mainly the fact that "there are important Labor members of Parliament who happen to be Maltese. This influences my political preferences tremendously". Most female broadcasters were not interested in politics and indicated that they left it up to their husbands to explain to them what was going on and how to vote. One female broadcaster, however, spoke about occupying a political position grounded in what could be described as a socialist perspective.

As Table 3.4 indicates, the overall level of formal education attained by the Maltese broadcasters is not high. Many commented about their education being

interrupted either by the war, or by poverty in the family, or by emigration. A few managed to continue their education some time after they arrived in Australia; others found it too hard to study and earn a living in a new country at the same time. Through the interview, respondents seemed to indicate a low level of commitment to further education. Formal broadcasting training among the broadcasters was the exception, not the rule.

Table 3.4: Highest education levels of broadcasters

Education Level	*Number of broadcasters*
Primary	3
Secondary	4
Secondary technical	1
Tertiary - Diploma	4
Tertiary - Part Degree	3
Tertiary - Degree	-
Post-Graduate Degree	-
Formal Training as Broadcaster	2

(v) Patterns of culture

Religion

Many considered Catholicism as a major cultural factor in Maltese identity. When asked to describe their religious preference, all the respondents said they were Catholics, but only six said they were practising Catholics. Most non-practitioners said the rest of their families including their children were non-practitioners like them. Only one respondent described his involvement in the practising of his faith as "more involved than other people's" because on his day off he took time out to teach religion to two primary school classes.

Languages

The majority described their oral Maltese skills as excellent. More than half of the broadcasters, however, admitted that their Maltese writing skills were only fair. Some

broadcasters commented that their Maltese had improved while living in Australia. One broadcaster said the feedback he received from Maltese broadcasters in Malta who read or listened to his work was always very positive: "They admire the way I ensure that no anglicism intrudes in my way of expression". All respondents described their English writing and oral skills as excellent or above average. Those who still had their children living with them at home said English was the language that was predominantly spoken at home. Talking about his dilemma in trying to speak Maltese at home while his son was around, one broadcaster remembered how his son always resented the Maltese accent of his parents' English and his own: "He used to pray before going to bed - I used to hear him - 'Jesus, please take away this Maltese accent from me...'". Almost half the broadcasters also described their oral and writing skills in Italian as excellent.

Social Contact

When asked to think about their socialising patterns, most broadcasters discovered they socialised mostly within the Maltese community. Many were surprised at this realisation. Some pointed out that they considered their attendance at Maltese social functions as part of their job and they took little pleasure out of these events. This comment tended to come from the 3EA broadcasters. The respondents were also asked about their affiliation with or membership in Maltese organisations. Ten responded that they belonged to at least one organisation - many, to more than one. The most popular organisations among the broadcasters were the Maltese Community Council, the Maltese Literature Group, the Maltese Historical Society and Harmonic 65 Culture Club which promoted local Maltese artistic talent. Many said they held office within the organisation or organisations they belonged to. The 3EA broadcasters pointed out that it was part of their work conditions not to hold office in any of the community organisations of which they were allowed to be regular members.

Table 3.5: Broadcasters' cultural activities

Cultural activity	*%*
Reading in English	**87**
- books	*- 40*
- newspaper	*- 73*
- magazines	*- 53*
Reading in Maltese	**100**
- books	*- 60*
- newspapers	*- 80*
- magazine	*- 40*
Watching movies	**60**
Watching videos	**47**
- English	*- 7*
- Maltese	*- 40*
Watching television	**100**
- SBS	*- 60*
- ABC	*- 40*
- Commercial	*- 73*
Listening to the radio	**100**
- ABC	*- 20*
- Commercial	*- 87*
- Maltese programs on SBS Radio	*- 73*
- Maltese programs on community stations	*- 80*
- Other ethnic language programs (inc. narrowcast)	*- 33*
Going to the theatre	**27**
- Australian shows	*- 27*
- Maltese shows	*- 13*
Listening to music	**100**
- Contemporary	*- 93*
- Classical	*- 67*
- All Maltese	*- 13*
- Maltese folklore (sung)	*- 20*
- Maltese folklore (instrumental)	*- 100*
Travelling	**73**
- Domestic	*- 60*
- International	*- 60*
- Holidays in Malta	*- 40*

Reading and Writing

The figures in Table 3.5 indicate that broadcasters do a substantial amount of reading. Because of their work in radio, this group tends to read more than the general trend uncovered by Cauchi (1990) would suggest. However, the reading is squarely in the range of the "popular" and the accessible: it does not generally include a taste for the "heavier" genres especially in the English reading category; book reading preferences in

English include "short stories" and "novels or romances". Many mentioned popular history and poetry as their book reading preferences in Maltese. Most female respondents said they did not read books in any language. Female broadcasters who did read books said they mainly read Maltese books to "prepare segments for the program". Most broadcasters read newspapers - Maltese and English. All respondents from 3EA said they read locally published Maltese newspapers as well as all the Maltese papers published in Malta which they received at their radio station. Neither the 3EA nor the community broadcasters were avid readers of the Australian press: for most, the Australian newspapers staple diet was the *Herald Sun*, Melbourne's "popular" newspaper, with The *Age*, the quality broadsheet, a close second. Most female broadcasters when asked said they tended to "skim through" Australian newspapers rather than read them. Magazines, both in Maltese and English, are the least popular form of reading. Interestingly, while some broadcasters who said they read Maltese magazines found no problem mentioning a good number of these magazines by their title, others said they did not even know magazine publication in the Maltese language existed at all. Although most respondents said they did some Maltese writing "for the program", only three considered themselves as "writers": two were published authors of Maltese poetry and short stories, and one was the editor of the Melbourne-based Maltese newspaper.

Viewing and Listening

Going to the theatre was the least popular "viewing" activity among the Maltese broadcasters. When asked to express their preference for either mainstream or Maltese theatre, only two respondents expressed a preference for Maltese shows. Watching videos was the second least popular "viewing" activity. Only one respondent said he watched videos in English; many, however, seemed to enjoy watching videos in Maltese. Video recordings of shows transmitted on Maltese television, as well as home videos about Maltese major cultural events like village feasts and carnival, were sent to them regularly by relatives who lived in Malta. All the broadcasters said they watched television, listened to the radio and listened to music at some time during the day. From the average

viewing and listening durations described by the broadcasters, radio emerged as the most popular medium. Some described the radio in terms of companionship: it woke them up; it helped them go to sleep. Others described it as their main source for cultural and informative "necessities". Most listened to one or more commercial stations mainly for musical and talk-back content. Half of the female broadcasters admitted that their commercial radio listening patterns were dominated by their partners. After the commercial radio stations, community radio is listened to most, registering a slightly higher percentage than 3EA. The main reason for this is the large number of broadcasters in the sample who work for the community radio stations and who tend to listen to each other's programs as a matter of course. While the 3EA broadcasters kept a "professional distance" from the product on their own station, community broadcasters expressed a strong sense of "camaraderie" with the station they worked for. This was especially true of the ZZZ broadcasters who listened to each others' programs not for the intrinsic value of their colleagues' product but out of a sense of "loyalty" to them. Some of the main reasons given for listening to "other" Maltese programs included the pleasure taken in listening to the Maltese language, the desire to "know about and keep up-to-date with what's happening in the Maltese community", and to "know what other Maltese broadcasters are doing". A small percentage mentioned that they listened to other ethnic language programs because they said they learnt "tremendously" about how "other ethnic broadcasters from other language groups organised their formats" and about "different styles of presentation". The ethnic language programs mentioned were Italian, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese and German.

Most broadcasters watched the commercial television channels mainly for entertainment rather than information. However, a high percentage of male broadcasters said they regularly "used" television for news and current affairs consumption. Most male broadcasters said they watched SBS Television mainly for international news and sport, especially soccer, while the majority of female broadcasters said the only time they watched SBS was when programs that were directly or remotely related to the Maltese community were shown. Only two broadcasters identified SBS as their favourite

television channel. ABC television was the least popular, and was mostly watched for news and current affairs.

Most respondents said they liked most types of music except for opera and "heavy classical". Only one broadcaster said she loved opera. Most said they liked pop music particularly the "golden oldies". While very few said they liked "all" Maltese music, the broadcasters expressed an unanimous liking for Maltese instrumental folk music. However, "sung" folk music which happens to be a strong "marker" of Maltese tradition and community in Melbourne, was much less popular than the instrumental folk music.

A PROGRAMMING PROFILE

When discussing radio formatting and appropriate radio material for ethnic broadcasters, the Public Broadcasting Authority of Australia in a training manual suggested the following:

* Entertainment - music, contemporary and traditional; comedy
* News - homeland, international and Australian
* Settlement information - covering such areas as education, social and medical benefits, transport and employment
* Community announcements - events and activities from the ethnic and wider community
* Current and ethnic affairs - including major community issues, comment and opinion
* Cultural material - history, arts, language, literary
* Australian lifestyle - history, geography, customs, legal rights, citizenship
* Promotion of local talent
* Special needs of children, the household and the aged

(Source: PBAA: Ethnic Public Radio - A Training Program, 1984:7)

Since this list of contents is prescribed in an official training publication by PBAA, it might be useful to assume its features as a "sanctioned" benchmark for the formulation of a variety of ethnic programming. To what extent are the Maltese broadcasters conforming to this "official" prescription of cultural production? What are they doing differently? Taking a closer look at the content which is going to air will generate a tentative mapping of the terrain covered by the Maltese broadcasters with their radio production. After analysing this content, one would be able to compare the work of these broadcasters against the PBAA benchmark and may be able to understand how the Maltese broadcasters conceptualise their programs' content according to their "private" perceptions of how best to preserve their community's (and their own) cultural identity.

Table 3.6: Percentage of total sample airtime (28.7 hours) by content segments

Contents n = 1722 minutes	% *of total sample airtime*
Opening/Closing Signature Tunes	5
Radio Talk	12
News (inc. weather reports)	7.5
Commentary on the News (Australian)	1.5
Commentary on Community Affairs	0.4
Community Announcements	7
Sports	2
Music	33
Maltese Literature	7
Maltese History	6
Religion	2
Talkback	3
Studio Interviews	5
Education	0.4
Profiles	0.3
Sponsors' Messages	4
Station Promos	1
Folk Features	0.5
Information for the Aged	0.4
Hello's from Listeners	1
Cooking, Health & Household Hints	2

Perhaps, before examining a detailed content analysis for each station, it would be appropriate to map out the various broad "dimensions" of content contained in the sample

broadcasts in order to derive the overall shape of Maltese broadcasting. Table 3.6 provides an overview. As most broadcasting time is spent on music (33 per cent), readings from Maltese literature and history (13 per cent), "radio talk" (12 per cent), and news (7.5 per cent), it might be argued that these features are important for carrying the "message" of the programs.

The broadcasting of specific types of recorded music may be a prime indicator of how identity is established and reproduced in these programs and, therefore, it is important to distinguish several varieties. One strand consists of the folkloric traditional "marches" - Maltese brass bands, folk singing or guitar playing. A blend of folkloric and pop sounds makes up a style of song that narrates themes of migration including the pains of separation and the rejoicing of homecoming. For the purpose of content analysis, this category will be called "Migrant Specific". A category of "pop" music was also created and included four types of music: the standard Maltese pop song which is firmly grounded in contemporary European styles; the "nostalgic pop song" with lyrical content that celebrates patriotic sentiments like the homeland's natural beauty, traditions and customs; the pop song with a religious or semi-religious theme; and the song which is sung in English by established "Australian" singers of Maltese origin. In the music content tables, these four subcategories are respectively called: a) "Modern Themes - pop with no nostalgic connotation", b) "Nostalgia - celebrating homeland beauty, traditions and customs", c) "Religious Themes" and d) "Maltese Singers - English Numbers". Other categories included humorous songs and musical numbers extracted from comic and dramatic works for the local Maltese theatre. Throughout, music content is also broken down in terms of its community base or "imported" nature: if the music has originated in Australia and is composed or interpreted by a Maltese-Australian, it is classified as "Local (Maltese-Australian) talent"; if it is imported music from Malta it is classified as "Imported talent from Malta"; if it is neither of the two, it is classified as "International". This classification includes opera, and classical music.

Broadcasters' "radio talk" - the "patter" and introductions before a program's segments, for example - will be analysed for its stylistic qualities as "carrier" of cultural "messages". News will also be categorised in order to find out how broadcasters are oriented in relation to the provision of information about the "host" country, the world and the Maltese community, locally and internationally. Four categories of news were created: news from Malta, international news, Australian news and Maltese-Australian community news.

Finally, because a significant proportion of talk time included reading to air of a variety of Maltese literary texts (poetry, popular prose and romance fiction) as well as historical works (heroic feats of some national significance), a separate category of content related to these items was noted.

i) The Public Broadcaster - 3EA

Radio 3EA's weekly program schedule consists of nine one-hour programs. The regular slot of 12.00 pm to 1.00 pm runs through Monday to Saturday. On Sunday, the Maltese show goes to air at 7.00 in the morning. Two programs are broadcast every Tuesday and Wednesday - one between 12.00 pm and 1.00 pm and the second at 7.00 pm until 8.00 pm. The sample broadcasts collected from 3EA amounted to five hours airtime. Two broadcasters are in charge of the shows and one full time journalist/broadcaster supplies news bulletins and current affairs commentary. One female contributor features on the program from time to time.

To start, three general observations might be submitted with regard to 3EA programming. Firstly, 3EA program format seems to be very tightly structured, which has a tendency to close off the "personal voice" of the broadcaster. As George Zangalis (1994) has argued, SBS radio's "program relevance in time and content for the listeners comes second to the packaging requirement". In their official mission statement, 3EA declares itself to be a radio station that provides homeland, world and local news, community information, cultural features and entertainment for 61 language groups.

Under this ambitious obligation, 3EA may, as implied by Zangalis, be adopting a functionalist and bureaucratic approach to program content and scheduling which may be seen by some as insensitive to the needs of particular ethnic communities. What the Maltese broadcasters, like all other language groups, may be working from, are format models that are products of constraints resulting from a heavy reliance on packaging and networking requirements.

The second finding concerns what might be called the performance of the professional radio voice. The performative patterns of the 3EA "voice" tends to have an elaborated formality in its presentation style. When "radio talk" occurs, it is characterised by the smooth delivery and the modulated tones of the "trained" voice, with a careful construction of the Maltese language, precise in its semantic and syntactic correctness which is a marked departure from spoken "migrant Maltese".

Thirdly, given that SBS radio is totally supported by an annual government grant of over $18 million, there would be the expectation that its product be of a superior quality to the production by the endemically poor community radio stations. The programs are indeed wide ranging in the way resources are used for their production. For example, the "imported" music components of the programs include very recent releases of songs and music from Malta; telephone link-ups with the homeland for commentaries about the latest Maltese news including sports and cultural events are lengthy and frequent; and "professional experts" are regularly invited in the studios to provide listeners with information about legal, medical and financial matters. All these elements, together with the overall technical performance of the station, tend to put 3EA at par with the mainstream radio broadcasters. But despite the wide range of available resources, the conceptual breadth of the programs seems narrow and constrained. For example, all the material captured by the sample is studio-centred. This generates a strong sense of the studio being the oracular chamber where the voice of authority dwells. There seems to be little attempt to work outside the studio perimeters: money is being spent relatively

generously to "go back home" and very little to go where the community in Melbourne congregates to work, play and pray. This observation is reminiscent of the critique which from time to time is launched at SBS television accusing it of indulging in "importing" multilingual material from the "homelands" and of "breaking its neck...to secure agreements with overseas companies to directly telecast their programs to Australia at the commercial PAID TELEVISION FEE" (Zangalis, 1994:2), rather than producing Australian made multicultural and multilingual programs.

Table 3.7: Overview of 3EA program segments n = 16877 sec. or 281min.

Content	*Duration (in minutes)*	%
Opening/Closing Signature Tunes	7	3
Radio Talk (presentation/chat/humour/anchoring/time checks)	33.3	12
News (inc. weather reports)	66.2	24
Commentary on the News (Australian)	12.2	4
Commentary on Community Affairs	-	-
Community Announcements	17.3	6
Sports	18.7	7
Music	56.5	20
Maltese Literature	42.7	15
Maltese History	-	-
Religion	11.8	4
Talkback	8.7	3
Studio Interviews	-	-
Education	6.6	2
Profiles	-	-
Sponsors' Messages	-	-
Station Promos	-	-
Folk Features	-	-
Information for the Aged	-	-
Hello's from Listeners	-	-
Cooking, Health & Household Hints	-	-

A closer examination of some of the more important content categories on 3EA gives further indication of these general findings. When 20 per cent of the total broadcast time in the sample is music (Table 3.7), one could argue that music is, as in the case of some mainstream radio, the mainstay of Maltese radio production on 3EA. Table 3.8a breaks down 3EA's musical segment into a set of general types of music.

Table 3.8a: 3EA musical segment by type of music n = 3390 seconds (of musical content)

General types of music	*Talent from Malta*	*Local Maltese Talent*	*Total %*
Brass Bands (traditional Maltese 'marches')	11%	-	**11**
Folk music and song	-	-	-
'Modern' themes ('pop' with NO nostalgic connotation)	53%	17%	**70**
Nostalgia (celebrating homeland beauty, traditions and customs)	6%	7%	**13**
Migrant specific (themes of migration: separation, homecoming etc)	6%	-	**6**
Humorous	-	-	-
Musical theatre	-	-	-
- comedy			
- drama			
Religious themes	-	-	-
Maltese singers (English numbers)	-	-	-
International (light)	-	-	-

As Table 3.8a indicates, folk music does not seem to be popular on 3EA. The "Ghana", as the Maltese call their folk singing, has always carried a class connotation and has polarised Maltese cultural "tastes" both in Malta and in Australia. While in Malta this folkloric expression is rapidly dying out, in Australia it retains substantial popularity among first generation migrants whose social background prior to emigration was predominantly working class. Unlike folk singing, folk music, generally played on acoustic guitars, has been universally accepted as a "showcase" of Maltese folk culture. On 3EA, folk music is mainly used iconically as signing-off themes and as background music. The only "stand alone" sound of a folkloric nature on 3EA is the small percentage of airtime dedicated to the "march". The "march" is a popular genre among the Maltese migrant community. The Maltese brass band "marches" are intimately associated with one of the most popular icons of Maltese culture - the village feast and its exuberant celebrations both in a religious and in a social sense.

Despite what one might think of as the need to address community interests in music and as an obligation to promote local talent to foster cultural identity, Table 3.8b gives a clear indication that 3EA broadcasters' musical preferences lie with "imported" Maltese music. Local Maltese talent is not prominently featured: only 24 per cent of the musical content features numbers by local artistes.

Table 3.8b: 3EA music content: community based/imported

Source	*%*
'Imported' talent from Malta:	76
Local (Maltese-Australian) talent:	24
International	-

The overall picture indicates that the 3EA broadcasters seem to organise their musical material in such a way that, rather than serving as a medium that proliferates sentimental nostalgia and homesickness, they conceive of "their" music as a means to celebrate Malta's "new" and progressive musical expression that puts the homeland firmly on the musical map of Europe.

Overall, the largest percentage of airtime on 3EA is dedicated to news (see Table 3.7). A typical news bulletin on 3EA is approximately 12 minutes long and the commentary on current affairs approximately six minutes. The bulletin features an average of between 10 to 15 stories. The average duration per story is 1 minute 5 seconds. Table 3.9 shows how the sample bulletins can be divided between news from Malta, Australia, the rest of the world and Maltese-Australian oriented items.

Table 3.9: 3EA news segments by content focus **(n = 16877 or 281 min.)**

Content focus	*%*
Australian News:	39
News from Malta:	34
World News:	23
Maltese-Australian News:	4

Most news on 3EA is dedicated to news from Australia. Next comes news items from Malta, followed by items from the rest of the world. News from Australia is twice the duration of the news from Malta. This could be the outcome of news values such as proximity and impact which are best served by the reportage of Australian events, assumed to be more newsworthy than news from Malta: listeners now live in an Australian social context and hence the Australian "event" stands a better chance of being relevant than news from geographically remote Malta. "Maltese-Australian news" is the least important segment in terms of airtime duration.

Table 3:10: 3EA news content breakdown and durations (n = 2507 sec. or 41 min.)

NEWS ITEMS	*Malta News*	*Maltese-Australian News*	*Australian News*	*World News*	*TOTAL %*
Politics	13%	-	26%	18%	57
Crime/police	3%	-	1%	1%	5
Industry/agriculture/economy	5%	-	2%	-	7
Employment	-	-	1%	-	1
Environment	1%	-	2%	-	3
Education	2%	-	-	-	2
Industrial disputes/strikes/demonstrations	2%	-	-	-	2
Culture	8%	4%	2%	-	14
Science/medicine/health	-	-	4%	1%	5
Sport	-	-	1%	1%	2
Religion	-	-	-	2%	2
	34%	**4%**	**39%**	**23%**	***100%***

Politics dominate the news bulletins (Table 3.10). Most of the political stories originate from Australia. The majority of items in the category of political news from Australia is a rerun of the day's stories which are re-produced in the Maltese language. Re-production does not necessarily mean the mere translation of news text into Maltese, but the news items are re-arranged and re-modelled to fit into the program's format both in terms of duration as well as of relevant emphasis and angling. This is also true about news from Malta and the rest of the world. Stories are current and recent. "Sound bites" from reliable spokespersons feature quite regularly throughout the bulletins. Twice within the sample news bulletins, there was a "contribution" by a correspondent from the Department of Information in Malta who was recorded off the phone, giving listeners in Australia what was considered to be the most important news from the homeland.

The news commentaries, prepared by the same broadcaster in charge of the news bulletins, are critiques of power sites in Australian society that, according to this broadcaster, are responsible for the marginalisation of a disempowered citizenry, especially the ethnic minority groups of Australia. For example, the sample included what could be called outspoken comments on what should be the true significance of the National Australia Day and on alleged discrimination in the workforce on grounds of ethnicity. People including Labor and Liberal state and federal politicians are mentioned

by name and accused of draconian acts of arbitrary decision making that insult democratic values. There is no attempt to relate the issues that are discussed to the Maltese community in a parochial sense. It is assumed that the issues are important enough to interest all Australian listeners. Article 2.4 of the 3EA Guidelines states that, "the SBS acts as a forum for views to be communicated to the audience. SBS does not have an editorial position, therefore SBS Group Journalists and Broadcasters should not express their personal views on any controversial matter or be seen as taking a definite editorial position" (1995). While these commentaries on current affairs on the Maltese 3EA programs clearly venture out of the spirit of this guideline, this segment is one of the few places in Maltese broadcasting that raise some serious political issues which are not ethnically specific to the Maltese community but have broad appeal in relation to ethnicity in general.

It might be also worth mentioning the talkback segments, because this seems to be the opportunity for "direct" contact with the community addressed in the programs. The sample indicates that only one of the 3EA broadcasters conducts the talkback segments. As it features in this sample, this broadcaster's "performative voice" bears some characteristic elements which may not be conducive to effective two-way communication during the talkback segments. For example, during this segment, this broadcaster tended to an expansive retelling of his life experiences in Malta, particularly experiences related to his career as a professional broadcaster with the Maltese electronic media. His discursive style tends to dominate any external contribution. In the sample were two "talkback" segments: the first about the role of the father in the family, and the second about a set of social and political issues of particular relevance to the Maltese community. In both cases, what should have been a space for genuine interactivity between broadcaster and caller, was turned into a quasi individualised and overbearing monologue.

In the Community Announcements segments, details are broadcast about forthcoming events organised by the various Maltese social, religious and cultural

organisations in Melbourne. These announcements are supposed to bring the community together by providing a bulletin of shared information about a network of activities that are happening at a point in time. The radio medium may serve to promote for the listener a strong sense of identity by the mere fact that community organisations are publicised as busily promoting Maltese culture and creating the opportunities for communal gatherings to celebrate cultural identity. The sample indicates, however, that, in terms of duration, this seemingly important segment ranks sixth in the overall contents table (Table 3.7). More time is allotted to categories such as Maltese literature and sport. Presentation style here is what could be described as "bland": announcements are read one after the other in a monotone voice with no musical breaks, background or any other embellishment which might generate interest.

Traditionally, the Maltese have shown a great passion for the radio narrative. Since the early days of radio broadcasting in Malta by the Rediffusion Group of Companies, serialised novel reading on radio was among the most popular programs. This type of programming still operates on 3EA and a solid amount of time is devoted to it (Table 3.7). The popular fiction genre presented to a Maltese audience in its own language and in the form of serialised readings as it used to be "in the past", may be reminiscent of "the old days" and hence an attempt to affect cultural identity preservation. The readings that featured in the sample broadcasts were from a historical novel by a classic Maltese author. Thematically, the novel celebrates heroic acts by Maltese patriots who plotted to overthrow the French rule over Malta during the late 18th century.

Surprisingly, only four per cent of the sample's total airtime was dedicated to religion (Table 3.8). According to the report, "Community Profile 1991 Census - Malta Born" (1994), 92.8 per cent of the Maltese who were interviewed said they were Roman Catholic while 95.1 per cent identified themselves as Christians. There seems to be a high degree of interest in the practice of the faith especially among the big number of "old" first generation Maltese. From the segment, it seems that 3EA shows little commitment to religious content given the high percentage of Census figures, the apparent "practice" of

the faith by a substantial portion of the community and the strong opinion many people have that Catholicism and Catholic values are central to the Maltese community's cultural identity.

The cultural production by 3EA's Maltese broadcasters seems to be structured around an institutional framework which might be constraining the conceptual breadth of the programs they produce. Despite the resources available at 3EA, on the basis of this content analysis, it may be argued that the commitment of ethnic radio to communicate the genuine voice of the strength in Australia's cultural diversity by creative means that meet community needs and aspirations with a strong sense of vitality, seems, in the case of Maltese programming, to be subsumed by a stronger sense of institutional values and exigencies.

ii) The community stations

3CR

Table 3.11: Overview of 3CR program segment n = 7200 seconds

Content	*Duration (in minutes)*	*%*
Opening/Closing Signature Tunes	7	6
Radio Talk (presentation/chat/humour/anchoring/time checks)	4	3.5
News (inc. weather reports)	8	7
Commentary on the News (Australian)	-	-
Commentary on Community Affairs	-	-
Community Announcements	3	2.5
Sports	-	-
Music	64	53
Maltese Literature	-	-
Maltese History	34	28
Religion	-	-
Talkback	-	-
Studio Interviews	-	-
Education	-	-
Profiles	-	-
Sponsors' Messages	-	-
Station Promos	-	-
Folk Features	-	-
Information for the Aged	-	-
Hello's from Listeners	-	-
Cooking, Health & Household Hints	-	-

The Maltese program on CR goes to air once weekly on Tuesdays between 7.30 pm and 8.30 pm. The show is presented by a single veteran broadcaster in charge of the entire program. Most "talk" gravitates towards what might be described as a type of public relations exercise for the Maltese labour movement and the Malta Labour Party, currently the party in opposition. For example, in the two hour sample, the Labour's position on Malta's full membership in the European Community and the "imposition" of Value Added Tax on the Maltese people by the present government were the subject of extensive monologue. The CR broadcaster's style of presentation is stern and intense and his Maltese language is basic and direct. In Malta, his "accent" would be perceived as "rural" rather than "urban". There is no mention in the sample broadcasts of sports activities or appraisals or announcements of any cultural events.

Table 3.12a: 3CR musical content n = 3864 seconds

General types of music	*Talent from Malta*	*Local Maltese Talent*	*Total %*
Brass Bands (traditional Maltese 'marches')	24%	7%	31
Folk music and song	17%	3%	20
'Modern' themes ('pop' with NO nostalgic connotation)	2%	1%	3
Nostalgia (celebrating homeland beauty, traditions and customs)	23%	2%	25
Migrant specific (themes of migration: separation, homecoming etc)	20%	1%	21
Humorous	-	-	-
Musical theatre	-	-	-
: comedy	-	-	-
: drama	-	-	-
Religious themes	-	-	-
Maltese singers (English numbers)	-	-	-
International (light)	-	-	-

Table 3.12b: 3CR music content: community based/imported

Source	%
'Imported' talent from Malta:	86
Local (Maltese-Australian) talent:	14
International	-

As can be seen from Table 3.12a, only three per cent of the musical content is dedicated to a modern musical idiom. Brass band playing features regularly and

profusely, with one particular segment taking up to 20 per cent of one of the programs. The CR broadcaster explained that this "march" was played annually as part of the celebrations of the titular feast in his native village. In one program, he talked about his own "march" compositions and played excerpts of his own work. Almost all the songs on the sample programs were composed or sung by Maltese talent residing in Malta (Table 3.12b). Most songs were hits from the 1960s, 1970s and the 1980s. The lyrics of the majority of these songs were nostalgic celebrations of Maltese folklore, and the homeland's "post-card" natural beauty, customs and traditions. Other numbers were sentimental expressions of love and yearnings by migrants for their place of origin.

All the news in the sample programs was based on reports about Malta. Like his "talk" component, the news seemed to be selectively presented according to a type of "political" motivation. For example, as part of the presentation of each news item, the broadcaster acknowledged his source and for every item, the source quoted was a newspaper that represented the interests of the Maltese Labour party. These news stories were presented as *the* news from Malta, giving the impression that the bulletins were an encompassing news narrative of the main events from Malta for the week. In his construction of the news, the CR broadcaster literally assumed the role of a spokesperson "in Australia" for the Maltese Labour party.

Readings of an historical nature also featured prominently. In one of the sample broadcasts, a particularly long reading dealt with the history of the broadcaster's native village and its feast of Our Lady - the Maria Bambina, a paramount icon of Maltese cultural identity. The piece had numerous religious overtones. At the end, the broadcaster appealed to his listeners to pray to Our Lady and to "teach our children about the miracles performed by Maria Bambina to save us and our country during those ugly times [of war]". The other readings were historical excerpts about the Maltese Labour party, the Maltese working class and the coming of the Knights of St John to Malta.

3RIM

RIM is an outer suburb based community radio station. The Maltese program on RIM goes to air once weekly on Wednesdays between 1.00 and 2.00 pm. The content analysis of the RIM material is based on two hours of airtime. Two broadcasters, a male and a female, are involved in the production of the program, although during one program slot, the female broadcaster said she had been "abandoned" by her partner and was trying to do the show on her own. The sample programs were selected from the time when the partnership seemed to be working well. The female presenter does most of the programs' anchoring. From what is heard, it might be assumed that she has the responsibility of planning and putting the program to air. She regularly compliments her partner for the pieces he presents as if he is a contributor rather than a co-host. Her "radio talk" includes giving recipes of Maltese and continental dishes, reading the community announcements and introducing songs. The male broadcaster reads the news bulletin and excerpts from Maltese history and classical literature. From time to time he plays requested songs and talks about receiving CDs and audio cassettes from his relatives in Malta, which he plays on the show.

"Talk" has constant references to Malta - its customs, traditions and natural beauty. References to the homeland, especially by the female host, are generally of a sentimental and nostalgic nature. When, at one point, she introduced a "classic" Maltese song that celebrates the many picturesque aspects of Malta, she categorically stated that "the soul of Malta is the sun and the sea and the scenic beauty God has endowed her with". These idyllic visions of the homeland seem to characterise the 3RIM program.

As can be seen from Table 3.13, the musical component in the RIM programs receives the biggest slice of airtime. The music played is mainly "pop", but, as in the case of 3CR, a distinctive feature of this music is its datedness: most numbers are old Maltese memories from the 1960s and the 1970s. Maltese listeners from the local community give

the broadcaster old records to play on the program. There was an instance in one of the sample programs when the broadcaster thanked these listeners and stated that she did not mind the records they gave her being old because "these are the ones that we remember and that we mostly enjoy hearing"

Table 3.13: Overview of 3RIM program segment n = 7200 seconds

Content	Duration (in minutes)	%
Opening/Closing Signature Tunes	9.6	8
Radio Talk (presentation/chat/humour/anchoring/time checks)	2.4	2
News (inc. weather reports)	14.4	12
Commentary on the News (Australian)	-	-
Commentary on Community Affairs	-	-
Community Announcements	10.8	9
Sports	-	-
Music	46.9	39
Maltese Literature	2.2	2
Maltese History	13.7	11
Religion	-	-
Talkback	-	-
Studio Interviews	11	9
Education	-	-
Profiles	-	-
Sponsors' Messages	2	2
Station Promos	-	-
Folk Features	-	-
Information for the Aged	-	-
Hello's from Listeners	-	-
Cooking, Health & Household Hints	7	6

Unlike some of the other Maltese programs, there is a total absence of folkloric bands and folk music and singing from the sample (Table 3.14a) while nostalgic material makes up a significant portion of the total musical airtime. It is important to note that the musical selection of this sample features no compositions by local Maltese-Australian talent. All songs and instrumentals are "imported" from Malta (Table 3.14b). This may be indicative of the marginalised position of the outer suburb based broadcasters from the "centre" of Melbourne where all the Maltese-Australian musical action takes place. But it may also be the articulation of a particular cultural perception. The music used in the

program seems to be shaped by a vision of "bringing back" to their migrant listeners a Malta "as we know it" and the "voices that we remember so dearly". Locally produced musical material may not be perceived as a comfortable "fit" in this particular vision.

Table 3.14a: 3RIM musical content n = 2873 seconds

General types of music	*Talent from Malta*	*Local Maltese Talent*	*Total %*
Brass Bands (traditional Maltese 'marches')	-	-	-
Folk music and song	-	-	-
'Modern' themes ('pop' with NO nostalgic connotation)	69%	-	69
Nostalgia (celebrating homeland beauty, traditions and customs)	31%	-	31
Migrant specific (themes of migration: separation, homecoming etc)	-	-	-
Humorous	-	-	-
Musical theatre	-	-	-
: comedy	-	-	-
: drama	-	-	-
Religious themes	-	-	-
Maltese singers (English numbers)	-	-	-
International (light)	-	-	-

Table 3.14b: 3RIM music content: community based/imported

Source	*%*
'Imported' talent from Malta:	100
Local (Maltese-Australian) talent:	-
International	-

News occupies the second highest percentage of 3RIM's program content. The news bulletin is approximately six minutes and features an average of between four to six stories. The average duration per story is 1 minute 40 seconds. Like CR, this station only broadcasts news from Malta. However, there is no evidence of a direct ideological slant in the way the news bulletins are assembled. In the sample broadcasts, political stories occupy almost half the news duration, followed by news about the Maltese economy. The rest of the news consists of stories about cultural events and loss of (Maltese) life mainly owing to traffic accidents. The news reader, the male host of the program, seems to finds it difficult to deal with the language in which the news items are reported. Mistakes and long, unnecessary pauses around syntactic and semantic elements of the language indicate

that he is not the "author" of the text which is likely borrowed directly from "outside" sources, with little attempt to "personalise" the items for reading and performative comfort.

Fortuitously, the sample included a 20 minute studio interview with a teacher who was trying to found a "family movement" for the first time in Australia on the model of a well-known Maltese organisation. This interview and the sorts of discussion evoked by it, are revealing in terms of locating some of the programs' assumptions about identity and social change. The objective of the "family movement" will be to foster the Catholic values of the traditional family and help prevent the young generation from straying away from these values. The interviewee and both broadcasters express highly conservative views about this matter and show that they have serious concerns about the erosion of the traditional Catholic values of the Maltese family in Australia. Both broadcasters argue that, after a number of years, the migrant family which arrives as a strong nucleus modelled on traditional Catholic beliefs and are an essential part of Malta's heritage, gets "infected" by the Australian way of life and sadly disintegrates.

3WRB

Maltese programming from the community radio station 3WRB was taped off air for 10 hours. One immediately noticeable characteristic of the Maltese programs on this station is their extensive duration: one program is two hours long; the second is three hours. The two hour program goes to air on Mondays between 7.00 pm and 9.00 pm. The first hour seems to be dedicated to information based segments but with no strict format and the second hour is dedicated exclusively to listeners' requests for music and songs. The first "information" hour is presented by a married couple. However, the "stronger", more directive voice in this part of the program is the male's. The "request" hour is produced by the female broadcaster assisted by a regular contributor who is a well known musical personality among the older first generation Maltese migrants. The clear boundary line between the show's two parts seems to indicate a balanced and pre-planned programming structure of one hour of education and information, followed by an hour of

non-stop musical and verbal entertainment. Reflecting the demarcation line drawn between the "informative/instructive" and the "entertainment" segments, a dramatic shift in the discursive qualities of "talk" takes place half way through the program. The radio talk in part one is characterised by a quasi-solemn style of presentation that "talks to" rather than "talks with" the audience to ensure that the information presented is taken seriously. This is in stark contrast to the more casual approach adopted in the second part of the program. The male co-presenter who assists the female broadcaster exploits his popularity with the community and organises a friendly discourse with his audience, most of the time "bouncing" his chatting off his female partner. This "talk" however, tends to "use" the female broadcaster as a butt for jokey sexist remarks to which the she does not retaliate.

The three-hour program, hosted by two presenters, a male and a female, and assisted by one female contributor and another female whose role is to talk to callers and take their "requests", is a mixture of information and entertainment segments interspersed with a substantial amount of what might be called unstructured radio talk. Generally, this takes the form of "idle chat" between the presenters in the studio, and prolonged musical bridges between segments. On any given day, for example, this unstructured talk might include exchanges about what the women members of the team had been cooking lately, about places of interests visited over the weekend or about a religious function which was about to take place. The two broadcasters who host this program are both senior citizens and they both perform social work in one of the major areas of Maltese settlement in Melbourne. The male host seems to assume control of the program's co-ordination and, with what sounds like substantial improvisation, orchestrates the various contributions into a somewhat haphazard sequence of items. The women broadcasters, however, sound fully prepared with their segments: the material seems well researched, written and presented. The women deal primarily with kitchen, health and household advice and they are also responsible for reading community announcements, interpreting excerpts of Maltese literature and presenting religious segments. The male broadcaster who at one time described himself as "the cock with his three chooks sitting close by", conducts

studio interviews, reads fragments of Maltese history, presents information for the aged and narrates risque jokes - rather surprisingly, given the general tenor of this program.

Table 3:15: 3WRB overview of program segments n = 36000 sec. or 600 min.

Content	Duration (in minutes)	%
Opening/Closing Signature Tunes	27.4	5
Radio Talk (presentation/chat/humour/anchoring/time checks)	96.4	16
News (inc. weather reports)	25	4
Commentary on the News (Australian)	-	-
Commentary on Community Affairs	-	-
Community Announcements	51.8	9
Sports	-	-
Music	175.4	29
Maltese Literature	53.4	9
Maltese History	26.5	4
Religion	17.4	3
Talkback	-	-
Studio Interviews	25.5	3
Education	-	-
Profiles	-	-
Sponsors' Messages	44.7	8
Station Promos	7.2	1
Folk Features	-	-
Information for the Aged	6.5	1
Hello's from Listeners	21.1	4
Cooking, Health & Household Hints	21.6	4

Table 3.15 shows that music and chatting occupy more than half the broadcast time (55 per cent) and this emphasis is consistent in both Maltese programs on WRB. Maltese history and popular literature readings feature on both these shows. Readings range from popular romantic novels and profiles of Maltese localities to patriotic poetry and religious anecdotes about saints' lives and their miraculous intervention in times of need throughout the history of Malta.

As in the case of 3CR and 3RIM, the majority of musical numbers played on the two WRB shows is older material which would be familiar with people who emigrated to Australia in the 1950s and 1960s. The very low percentage of contemporary numbers are from recently produced CDs by Maltese talent in Malta. Similar to other Maltese programming, except 3ZZZ, the sources of 3WRB's musical material seem to be

"imported" music from Malta rather than Maltese material produced in Australia (see Table 3.16b).

Table 3.16a: 3WRB musical content n = 10524 seconds (of musical content)

General types of music	*Talent from Malta*	*Local Maltese Talent*	*Total %*
Brass Bands (traditional Maltese 'marches')	3%	4%	7
Folk music and song	5%	6%	11
'Modern' themes ('pop' with NO nostalgic connotation)	28%	10%	38
Nostalgia (celebrating homeland beauty, traditions and customs)	17%	2%	19
Migrant specific (themes of migration: separation, homecoming etc)	4%	10%	14
Humorous	-	-	-
Musical theatre	-	-	-
: comedy	-	-	-
: drama	-	-	-
Religious themes	9%	2%	11
Maltese singers (English numbers)	-	-	-
International (light)	-	-	-

Table 3.16b: 3WRB music content: community based/imported

Source	*%*
'Imported' talent from Malta:	69
Local (Maltese-Australian) talent:	31
International	-

News is only included in the two-hour show format. Bulletins are signature tuned by the theme from the film "2001 Space Odyssey" - evidence, perhaps, of the "urgent", "dramatic" and "apocalyptic" nature of "news" as perceived by the broadcasters who compile it. News makes up only four per cent of sampled airtime. Table 3.15 also shows that the time allotted to news is less than that given to items like sponsors' messages and community announcements: news time is equivalent to the time given to "Cooking, health and household hints" and "Hello's from listeners"; it is even less than the time taken up by opening and closing music. However, in spite of this minimisation, closer scrutiny indicates that there is a conscious attempt to "globalise" the news bulletin by bringing in what are perceived as important stories from around the world. These "important" stories seem to be based entirely on reportage of "official" news which the broadcasters would have gathered from the week's Australian mainstream media.

The news bulletin is approximately eight minutes and features an average of between six to eight stories. The average duration per story is 1 minute 10 seconds. The reading of the news is shared alternately between the male and the female broadcasters. Delivery is slow paced and the language is enunciated to ensure easier understanding. Each story begins with a headline - perhaps a direct influence on the broadcasters by the conventions of print-based news packaging. Language is not always simple and there is no attempt to reconstruct complex ideas and scientific jargon when they occur. The use of Maltese in reading the news is punctuated with the use of English words and phraseology. The reading style, especially that of the female presenter, is substantially removed from the stereotyped "performance" of newscasting - indeed, at times it becomes so "dramatic" that it sounds as if it is being read like a piece of popular literature, blurring the lines between what we understand as the performance of telling about factual and fictional material. A distinctive feature in the compilation of this station's news bulletins is the complete elimination of news from Australia. With 41 per cent of political stories, this sample strongly confirms the emerging pattern of political stories constantly topping the list of news categories in all the broadcasts analysed in this study.

In the three-hour show, radio talk occupies 11 per cent of sample airtime. Generally, discourse is constructed in such a way that the audience is given the role of eavesdropping to private chatting between the broadcasters in the studio. The audience is very rarely "talked with" directly. With this "talk", the broadcasters are "going public" about their lifestyles and their moral and social values inspired by what might seem to be strong Catholic sentiments. Detailed descriptions are given about going to Sunday mass, having the whole family assembled for the traditional Sunday lunch, participating in the parish activities and visiting the sick: perhaps, as public figures - voices on the radio - they may be, intentionally or unintentionally, constructing role models for their listeners.

Of particular note were several interviews which gave a good sense of the assumptions behind these programs. Particularly interesting was the interview about

social service entitlements with two Australian officials from the Footscray Social Security branch interviewed in the studio. The interview was conducted in English. Only two very brief synopses in Maltese of the discussion in English were given during the whole segment. The interview covered important topics like job search, dole payments, new sickness benefits and partner allowance. The Maltese synopses ignored many important points made by the Australian "experts". There was a clear indication during this interview segment that these types of issues were a regular feature on the program. This was the only instance in the whole sample where contributors were put to air talking to listeners in English. The broadcasters promoting this type of programming might be assuming that the English skills of their audience were "good enough" to cope with the "Australian" content. This may be their way of promoting an assimilationist approach in their style of programming.

3ZZZ

Maltese programs on 3ZZZ go to air three times a week: programs are broadcast on Mondays and Fridays between 5.00 pm and 6.00 pm and on Saturdays between 10.00 am and 11.00 am. Five male broadcasters are responsible for all this output. Only one of these broadcasters goes to air regularly once a week; the other four broadcast alternately so that each of them has one show per fortnight. Each of the five ZZZ broadcasters seems to bring a distinctive quality and style to their respective programs. There is the "comic" broadcaster who claims that his is the only program dedicated to humour in the entire repertoire of Maltese broadcasting in Australia. This show is essentially made up of requests for popular songs interspersed with lighthearted chat between the broadcaster and a regular "helper" who takes requests, "works the panel" and provides his own dose of humour. Another broadcaster focuses on folk music and the promotion of local singing talent especially young, budding, Maltese talent. A third broadcaster produces a program "with a bit of everything" - music, trivia, community announcements and literature. The "literary corner" is a relatively lengthy slot compiled by a university lecturer who co-presents with an established Maltese actor. This segment seems to be designed to entertain as well as instruct the audience in the appreciation of serious prose and poetry.

A fourth broadcaster produces a more conventional sounding radio show which works to a strict format. Interestingly, this broadcaster spent many years working at 3EA in the past, and may have imported this station's "culture" to community radio. His program is the only Maltese show on 3ZZZ that features a news bulletin. Another distinguishing feature of this program is the serialised reading of Maltese popular literature. The readings in the sample were from a social history of Malta that narrated nostalgic moments when the homeland had to shed old traditions in its quest to become a modern nation. The fifth 3ZZZ broadcaster seems to be the most adventurous among all the broadcasters whose work was included in the entire sample. The main feature in one of the sample broadcasts was a studio discussion with a Maltese homosexual who talked about the Tasmanian position about homosexuality from a legal perspective. This was followed by a talkback session. The other sample broadcast's main feature was an interview with the writer and artistic director of an original Maltese musical theatre piece followed by a generous selection of songs from the musical. The presentation and the ideas that characterise this show's broadcaster can be considered as unique in the context of the overall sample broadcasts of this study.

Table 3:17: 3ZZZ overview of program segments **n = 36000 sec. or 600 min.**

Content	*Duration (in minutes)*	%
Opening/Closing Signature Tunes	36	6
Radio Talk (presentation/chat/humour/anchoring/time checks)	96	16
News (inc. weather reports)	15	2.5
Commentary on the News (Australian)	-	-
Commentary on Community Affairs	6	1
Community Announcements	39	6.5
Sports	10	2
Music	218	36
Maltese Literature	26	4
Maltese History	23	4
Religion	5	1
Talkback	34	6
Studio Interviews	53	9
Education	-	-
Profiles	5	0.5
Sponsors' Messages	15	2.5
Station Promos	11	2
Folk Features	8	1
Information for the Aged	-	-
Hello's from Listeners	-	-
Cooking, Health & Household Hints	-	-

With 36 per cent of the total 3ZZZ sample airtime (Table 3.17), the music repertoire on this station's Maltese programs is by far the most varied. This can be clearly seen from a comparison of the figures in Table 3:18a with similar tables representing the other stations. Table 3:18a is a breakdown into the most important types of music played on 3ZZZ. This musical variety may be the result of the taste each of the five 3ZZZ broadcasters exercises in the construction of their respective programs. However, while this variety of musical cultures may be broadening listenership because of the appeal to a diversity of tastes, it may also, in some instances, be the cause of a "narrowcasting" effect. For example, one fortnightly program specialises in folk but this narrowed focus may lock out those who are not fond of this particular musical genre. However, those who follow folk music - and this is a small strong audience in the Maltese community - will be thoroughly catered for. It could be argued that this 3ZZZ folk show celebrates a cultural heritage which is rapidly dying out both in Australia and in Malta. Another category that does not feature in the musical content breakdown of the other stations is the small but interesting "humorous" category. The music in this category can best be described as vaudevillian, its popularity derived from the much loved Maltese version of slap-stick comedy. A further distinguishing feature of ZZZ's musical breadth of approach is the playing of musical theatre. For example, a substantial segment on one of the shows featured excerpts from Maltese musical melodrama - "high culture" pieces with limited appeal to general listenership. This sort of approach is a gamble in that it can lose audience, but it also suggests an approach which addresses the use of Maltese music from an artistic rather than strictly a "popular" or "nostalgic" perspective. Also worth noting (see Table 3.18a), is the category of "international (light)" music: this is the only instance in the entire sample where chamber music by an American orchestra was used as an interlude on a Maltese program. Although of minimal duration, this occurrence may be seen as a mild attempt to open up the parameters of ethnic broadcasting and free the broadcaster and the audience from some of the more typical ingredients that tend to characterise much of Maltese broadcasting.

Table 3.18a: 3ZZZ musical content n = 12960 seconds (of musical content)

General types of music	*Talent from Malta*	*Local Maltese Talent*	*Total %*
Brass Bands (traditional Maltese 'marches')	12%	-	**12**
Folk music and song	11%	7%	**18**
'Modern' themes ('pop' with NO nostalgic connotation)	15%	19%	**34**
Nostalgia (celebrating homeland beauty, traditions and customs)	2%	3%	**5**
Migrant specific (themes of migration: separation, homecoming etc)	-	2%	**2**
Humorous	2%	2%	**4**
Musical theatre	-	15%	**15**
: comedy	-	*:3%*	
: drama	-	*:12%*	
Religious themes	2%	-	**2**
Maltese singers (English numbers)	-	7%	**7**
International (light)	-	-	**1**

Another interesting difference between 3ZZZ and the other stations is the higher percentage of recorded local talent used on the shows compared to "imported" talent from Malta, as shown in Table 3.18b. In all musical categories, the Maltese-Australian representation is equal to or greater than the amount of imported material. This difference is particularly significant in the pop music category. As in all other programs in the sample, pop music tops the list of the type of music most played. What is unique in this case is the amount of local pop music played: compared to 3ZZZ's 55 per cent of community based musical content, 3EA has 24 per cent, 3WRB 31 per cent, 3CR 14 per cent and no local talent featured in the 3RIM programs. It is interesting to note, however, that two of these three broadcasters are themselves singers - one is an "auteur" creator of songs, the other, besides being a singer, is the secretary of a Maltese culture club renowned for its prolific production of Maltese-Australian original musical numbers. It is also important to mention that on two of the shows there is a substantial exposure given to professional singers of Maltese origin like Joe Camilleri (*The Black Sorrows*) and Max Vella (*Relax with Max*) who are featured singing in English. Perhaps, it might be suggested that breaking the language exclusivity rule opens up the space for the program to provide its audience with the "sounds" of role models who could be seen by the Maltese community as something to aspire to - Maltese who have "made it" in the host country.

Table 3.18b: 3ZZZ music content: community based/imported

Source	%
'Imported' talent from Malta:	**44**
Local (Maltese-Australian) talent:	**55**
International	**1**

Occupying only 2.5 per cent of broadcasting time in the sample (Table 3:17), news on the Maltese 3ZZZ programs seems to be relegated to the margin. Only one 3ZZZ broadcaster includes news in his program. The fortnightly news bulletin averages a duration of under eight minutes and consists of approximately seven to eight stories. Story duration is an average of 45 seconds. The 3ZZZ news sample features stories from Malta exclusively. Although the majority of stories are about politics, industry and the economy, the general criteria for story selection seems to favour less sensational material and an emphasis on "soft" news that includes stories like changes in Maltese social policy and Malta's anti-abortion declaration in a United Nations conference. There is also a relatively generous inclusion of cultural news that may be nudging out more important stories. For example, the sample includes stories about the architectural restoration of Malta's prehistoric temples and the restoration of medieval manuscripts at Malta's National Library. It is important to remember that this broadcaster is presenting a fortnightly news bulletin so that soft news that has longer "shelf life" may be preferable to the ephemeral quality of "hard news".

Apart from the quasi-formal tone of presentation adopted by the ex-3EA broadcaster, radio talk on this station is relaxed, direct and constructed in a language that is, generally, the "mongrelised" type of Maltese spoken outside the studio.

iii) In summary

From this analysis of Maltese programming on community radio, it could be argued that, despite the relative freedom from "official" organisational constraints that

community broadcasters enjoy, there is generally no major departure from the type of programming that is being produced on 3EA, the government sponsored station. While community radio offers the space for the projection of its broadcasters' ethnic and social identities to translate into the creative making of their cultural production, the "nostalgia" mode seems to be the predominant paradigm that is textually operating in their radio work. Paradoxically, the leaders of the ethnic community broadcasting movement constantly insist that, while the movement has always valued and fought "to obtain (and maintain) living contacts with the countries of origin...it is not in the best interest of the ethnic communities, of multiculturalism and of Australia, if the main sources of media entertainment, information and opinion making are derived from overseas" (Zangalis, 1994:2-3). Content analysis of the current Maltese language output on community radio indicates that this advice has not been heeded as yet.

This breakdown of the sample broadcast material separated into specific segments has given an indication of what and how much material the Maltese broadcasters are producing on their respective radio stations. The evidence presented here through content analysis seems to suggest certain recurring themes, features and tendencies. Generally, in their programs, the broadcasters seem to be consciously trying to strike a balance between entertaining and informational content. It may be that with the government station 3EA, this balance may be tilted more towards an informational than an entertainment style of programming, whereas on most of the community stations, a combination of information and entertainment appears as a formatting solution. The entertainment component across the five stations mainly consists of music playing. Table 3.19b shows how most music is "imported" from Malta with very few broadcasters dedicating space within their programs for the promotion of local talent. Failing to promote Maltese-Australian talent, especially the young generation who perform in the Maltese language, may have a negative effect on the preservation of cultural identity. Most music is Maltese "pop

songs" from the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Most contemporary "pop" which stylistically is firmly embedded in the modern genre of the European "pop song", is played on 3EA.

Table 3.19a: Overall music content

n = 5[illegible]

MUSIC CATEGORY	% CR	% EA	% RIM	% WRB	% ZZZ	% Total
Brass Bands (traditional Maltese 'marches')	*4*	*1*	-	*2*	*5*	**12**
Folk music and song	*2*	-	-	*3*	*7*	**12**
'Modern' themes ('pop') (with no nostalgic connotation)	*0.5*	*7*	*5.5*	*12*	*13*	**38**
Nostalgia (celebrating homeland beauty, traditions and customs)	*3*	*1*	*3*	*6*	*2*	**15**
Migrant specific (themes of migration: separation, homecoming)	*2.5*	*0.5*	-	*5*	*1*	**9**
Humorous	-	-	-	-	*2*	**2**
Musical theatre	-	-	-	-	*5*	**5**
:comedy	-	-	-	-	*:1*	-
:drama	-	-	-	-	*:4*	-
Religious themes	-	-	-	*3*	*1*	**4**
Maltese singers - English numbers	-	-	-	-	*2.5*	**2.5**
International (light)	-	-	-	-	*0.5*	**0.5**

In one sense, the "golden oldies", although thematically not directly "celebrating homeland beauty, traditions and customs" (see tables related to music content breakdown), may have intrinsic nostalgic qualities which, from the analysis of their radio talk, the broadcasters generally seem to consider particularly appealing to their audience. A high proportion of "pop" of a specific nostalgic "timbre" is played on all the radio stations. Apart from the "serenading" about the natural beauty of Malta, its great history and its heroic people, this music tends to contain themes to do with the migrant's uprooting from the native culture and the opportunities for a better life Australia has provided. However, when the programs use what is very traditional homeland music - like folk instrumentals - this is only used as incidental music.

Table 3.19b: Overall music content: community based/imported

Source	*%*
'Imported' talent from Malta:	**65**
Local (Maltese-Australian) talent:	**35**
International	-

Serialised reading of popular literature seems to be considered as an important element of the entertainment component as well. However, as with music, most of this literature is "imported" from Malta and very little air time is dedicated to promote Maltese-Australian literature. Generally, narrative could be classified as belonging to the "soapie" genre or to the melodramatic celebration of heroic episodes from the history of Malta.

Table 3.20: Overall news segments n = 130 minutes

NEWS DESCRIPTION	CR %	EA %	RIM %	WRB %	ZZZ %	TOTAL %
Malta News	*8*	*16*	*10*	*8.5*	*11.5*	**54**
Australia News	-	*20*	*1*	*2*	-	**23**
World News	-	*12*	-	*9*	-	**21**
Maltese Australian News	-	*2*	-	-	-	**2**

Generally, the informational component consists of news broadcasts, current affairs and community announcements. News is given substantial prominence on 3EA while most broadcasters on the community stations do not include news bulletins on their shows. As can be seen from Table 3.20, only 3EA features news in each of the four categories. Across the 5 stations, most airtime is dedicated to news from the homeland. Particularly significant is the exclusion of Maltese Australian news by all the community stations, with EA carrying only two per cent of news in this category. From these figures it seems that the Maltese community is not being perceived as a site for the generation of newsworthy stories. As is the case of mainstream news, Maltese news content features a universal preference for the political story. However, as can be seen from Table 3.20, no consistent pattern emerges that indicates the existence of "shared meaning" among the Maltese broadcasters for what stories should be included in the news. This ambivalence in the construction of news bulletins and the fluctuating patterns of news formatting across the 5 stations may indicate inconsistent perceptions of news relevance among the broadcasters.

Generally, comment and opinion about major social issues, both in the Maltese and the broader community, seems to be the domain of 3EA. However, less than two per cent of the sample broadcasts' airtime (see Table 3.7) is dedicated to what some might consider an important category of programming which could also be useful in the project of cultural identity maintenance. Another important "carrier" of cultural identity is the "community announcements" segment. None of the broadcasters seem to be giving much thought to "producing" this segment in an interesting way. Although dutifully featured on most programs, this segment is presented as a cluster of "bland" information seemingly read straight from the notices that organisations send to the broadcasters. A potential avenue to propagate a sense of "community identity" and "cultural cohesion" is perhaps not being adequately exploited by the Maltese broadcasters.

Finally, the information component also includes some talkback and studio or telephone interviews segments. Relatively little time is dedicated to these segments and the manner in which talkback, especially on 3EA, is tackled by the broadcasters, does not seem to utilise the medium for its potential interpersonal communicative richness. Generally, studio and telephone interviews are with "prominent" members of the community and most broadcasters do not seem to favour the idea of "grassroots" community participation unless it is in the form of "talkback".

It is significant that the sample broadcasts of Maltese radio do not include some important categories that feature in the "guide" for ethnic broadcasting as suggested by the Public Broadcasting Association (see page 46). These omissions may have a bearing on the assumptions Maltese broadcasters use in reference to the preservation of ethnic and cultural identity by means of their radio work. Topics such as settlement information, education information, social and medical benefits, transport and employment opportunities might not be directly pertinent to the needs of an established ethnic group like the Maltese community. However, given the paucity of Maltese language-based media and the tendency of Australian government agencies and other organisations to omit translating their official "messages" into the Maltese language, this type of

information broadcast in Maltese may still be significant in serving the community and for the survival of its social identity. Current and ethnic affairs, including major community issues, comment and opinion rarely feature in Maltese programming. It may be argued that the ahnost total absence of material related to Australian history, geography, customs, legal rights and citizenship, and information that addresses special needs of children, the household and the aged, reflects a "narrowcast" perception by the Maltese broadcasters of what interests their audience: it is clear from this content analysis that, overall, there is little attempt by the broadcasters to integrate a sense of "Australian-ness" in the fabric of their cultural production; similarly, almost no effort is made to feature serious debate and incisive commentary on current and ethnic affairs including important issues related to the Maltese community specifically, and to the broader Australian community more generally. Overall, proportion and priority on current Maltese radio programming seem to favour the construction of cultural identity from what might be called narratives of the homeland - texts of nostalgia mainly in the form of music, radio talk, readings from popular literature and news. The next chapter explores some of the reasons for this, as provided by the broadcasters themselves.

CHAPTER 4

COGNITION AND CULTURAL PRACTICE

Having done a preliminary content analysis of the material broadcast on Maltese radio, the next stage of the research was to map out how this content related to broadcasters' perceptions and understandings of their place as cultural producers in a particular cultural and ethnic context. Methodologically, this was important: studying the broadcasters' output in relation to issues of cultural and ethnic identity is useful, but exploring the broadcasters' perceptions in reference to their own radio "texts" expands our understanding of the role of a group of cultural producers whose crucial function as "ethnic broadcasters" in the 1990s may be to negotiate the earlier multiculturalist discourses of assimilationism and pluralism in a way which produces a workable contemporary "hybridity".

The data discussed in this chapter emerged from the in-depth interviews with the 15 broadcasters who formed the sample population of this study. After an analysis of the broadcasters' perceptions of national and cultural identities, the discussion leads on to record some insights the broadcasters have of their own community - its subgroups, its leaders, its ethnicity and its cultural idioscyracies. Having mapped the junctures of these sites of identities, the discussion focuses on the respondents' perceptions of the role of the ethnic broadcaster and how they think radio should be "made" to create, maintain, enhance or diffuse the cultural identity of their community. This is followed by a brief analysis of how the broadcasters relate to what is currently being produced for the Maltese radio and how they understand their approaches to radio work with particular reference to the station they work for. At this point, a line is drawn to differentiate the radio culture of public broadcaster 3EA from that of the community stations. The chapter ends with a brief commentary about the broadcasters' image of their audiences.

Throughout the discussion, the broadcasters' opinions, insights, arguments, frustrations and aspirations are represented with the use of "first person" quotes.

Identity ambivalence

It was felt that, in order to locate Maltese broadcasters and what they do, certain issues to do with cultural identity in a broad sense were important to explore. When asked about cultural belonging-ness most respondents were ambivalent in their descriptions of senses of nationality and cultural "belonging". While many instinctively recognised their country of origin as "home", upon reflection they retreated from this position and opted for Australia as their "real home". Only one respondent expressed a desire to go back to Malta for good. While admitting to a strong sense of belonging to Australia, the majority qualified this admission immediately by adding that they felt the same for their homeland. Many said they found it difficult to identify themselves with either the Maltese or the Australian nation and culture alone; however, only one broadcaster felt comfortable with the title "Maltese-Australian".

Although respondents were well aware of living in Australia and that they "were Australians", they were also very aware that they still carried in their heads the cultural baggage of tradition, religion, and social and moral values which were instilled in them in Malta by institutions like family, state, school and church. For example, they all said they still cherished their "past" in spite of their adopted Australian cultural identity; they accepted that this past - these traditions, customs, and values - constructed a difference between themselves and who they defined as "Australians". Some admitted this was a contradiction; others said they never found their "Maltese-ness" to interfere with their Australian cultural identity, while a few confessed that they were eternally caught in a web of "identity crisis". "I'm an ethnic," one respondent said, "and like most ethnics, I feel I have two identities: I'm neither one hundred per cent Australian nor one hundred per cent Maltese. I am always caught in between - forever, perhaps." One female broadcaster talked about her "identity crisis" from a different perspective: "I took out

Australian citizenship...but the strange thing about it is I feel Maltese and nothing will change that - no matter what the documents say. However, when I'm travelling overseas, I feel Australian and I'm the first to identify with other Australians whom I happen to come across - I just want to be with them. But, when I'm in Malta I feel Maltese and nothing else!" In comparison to what might be called Maltese oriented cultural identity, was a response which emphasised primary attachments to the host country: "Australian first and Maltese close second," one female broadcaster explained. "This country has given me all that I have and therefore I feel a strong sense of belonging to it. I still have family and friends living in Malta but this is where I belong, although this is not to say I've forgotten my roots." One other broadcaster who said he considered himself Australian, said: "Identity is what I feel: I feel a strong sense of belonging to Australia - I wake up in Australia; I smell Australia." This rhetoric of quasi-patriotic fervour, however, was atypical of the responses given by people who said they "felt" Australian.

Two other general responses to identity issues emerged. Some respondents chose to call themselves Maltese first and foremost: "If I were to analyse my feelings, I'd find that I'm more Maltese than Australian. However, I'm not one who goes about waving the flag and telling the world that I'm Maltese". In contrast to this relatively muted description of Maltese identity was another version of this response: "To me Malta still means the place which gave me my status, my profession, my career...I always feel an urge to promote my country everywhere because I'm nationalistic: I'm Maltese from my roots. My mother always taught me to love my country and its people, to show I'm Maltese and to show that I'm a Roman Catholic Maltese, and to show that I'm traditional. I show this in all cultural aspects of Maltese-ness including food."

This discourse which speaks about splintered cultural identities can be seen as a type of oscillation, moving between tradition and transition. The majority of the Maltese broadcasters strongly identify either with traditionalist constructions of a homeland identity or with a Maltese cultural identity embedded in a continuous transitionary process across an essential Australian existence. Only one broadcaster talked about a

hybridised form of cultural identity - a creative effort to extricate oneself from the magnetic forces of cultural "purities" of the past and, instead, organise a dialectic between the traditional and the transitional cultures, thus articulating a discourse in two cultural languages. This broadcaster talks about having "married" his Maltese identity to his Australian identity and by so doing has recreated himself into what he saw as an enriched cultural hybrid: "My identity is firstly Maltese, but then it developed into something else also, and here I am - a full person with this sense of identity which I owe to my country of birth and its development to my country of adoption - an identity in a process of continuity which started very nobly for me in Malta and is still developing here."

One interesting point which emerged from the discussion of identity was the complicating factor of a "British" influence which was a product of the colonial history of Malta. Part of the Maltese broadcasters' national and cultural identity ambivalence may be explained, in fact, in terms of a massive British presence in Malta over a long period of time, including the time when most of these broadcasters grew up. It might be argued that this "history" could have provided the Maltese migrant with a cultural cushion to soften the blow of culture shock. Not having "to learn" assimilationism, the Maltese migrants would have found Australia's anglo culture a relatively comfortable fit to the extent that in some important socio-cultural senses a blurring might have occurred already in Malta, which problematises the notion of a distinct "original" cultural belonging. Articulating a rationale for his sense of Australian-ness, one respondent felt it was important to draw upon experiences of his colonised "self": "I was brought under British rules (in Malta) and the British system, slightly the Australian system...I mean the thinking, the talking...So, when I came here, I didn't find it that hard because I was in it already. I could talk, I could mix up...Today, my kids are born here and their children too. Australia today means all this to me." An interesting case is that of a female respondent who provides an extreme example of the power of colonial ideology on its colonised subject's cultural identity: "We came to Australia carrying a certificate of identity - no passport - because we were travelling on an assisted passage. Eventually, when I decided

to apply for a passport, I asked the Australian official whether I could apply for a British passport instead. I was terrified of losing my British citizenship to an Australian." For this broadcaster, the dilemma was choosing between Australian and British citizenship: she did not even think about her Maltese nationality.

Perceptions of community

The broadcasters' ambivalence about their cultural identity seems to be complemented by their descriptions of the Maltese community in Melbourne. Consistently, albeit in different ways and with fluctuating emphases, all the broadcasters described this community in terms of a collage of splintered identities - a multiplicity of subcultures that co-exist not without tensions in their social and cultural interactions. They held that although there were leaders within the community, not one of these leaders could claim the leadership of the entire community; likewise, not one single official or unofficial body could be perceived as representative of the whole community. Several "models" of community organisation circulated in discussion. For example, one model frequently used delineated cultural boundaries between three subgroups: those who came to Australia with the express intention of not letting their ethnicity stand in the way of their total integration with mainstream Australia - this category "doesn't mix, does not belong"; the second subgroup made up of those people who, as one respondent put it, behaved in Australia "as if they had never left their homeland"; and a third category consisting of those who are "capable of looking at the world around them without any blinkers on, and without shedding their Maltese cultural identity, they have also embraced the culture of the host country wholeheartedly".

People belonging to the first category were described as generally "professional" - people who pursued a career as doctors, solicitors, bankers and other such occupations. For reasons of social status and career development these people severed ties from the "old" culture and refused to participate in celebrations and manifestations of their ethnicity. This distanciation from "the native culture" by the "professionals of the

community" meant, according to all respondents who talked about this issue, that this category of people did not have a need or cultural aptitude to use the Maltese media and, therefore, they did not listen to Maltese programs on the radio. The majority of broadcasters imagined these professionals as residents in the eastern and south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne. It was suggested, however, that some of these professionals infiltrated into positions of "leadership" within the community on the strength of their status and higher education, and formed an elite who have tried to homogenise the various "differences" within the community; they assumed the role of spokespeople for the whole community working from a central base that they described to the Australian authorities as the "centre" of the Maltese community of Melbourne. The second category was described as having chosen to "put blinkers on" and to emulate a Maltese "homeland" existence even in the context of their host country. This group was perceived as the "working class Maltese" whose social and cultural status made them feel "displaced" from the "official" centre. Broadcasters who talked about this group described them as "avid listeners of all Maltese radio programs", "the majority of our listeners", "those people who find solace and companionship in Maltese radio". The third subgroup of people who were perceived to have cultivated their Maltese-ness while coming to terms with the Australian-ness of their new existence were imagined as the culturally enriched. Interestingly, the broadcasters who referred to this group agreed that these people were their "critics": "They are not regular listeners and when they listen they tend to compare us with mainstream media." All the broadcasters said they fitted into this category but they did not recognise this cultural enrichment as a claim of some form of community leadership.

There were some broadcasters, however, who did not imagine the community in terms of this triadic arrangement and preferred to explain "difference" within the community as the result of personality clashes in the pursuit for positions of power: "There are some people who pose as community leaders and whose ambition is to be recognised as such by local and state politicians, hoping to attract government funding for projects that may not be in the general interest of the community. These people are

accused by the "centre" as dangerous and divisive. But they do have a following by members of the community "especially in the western suburbs". Broadcasters who identified this specific group of people described them as "regular listeners of the radio, always trying to "hijack" some airtime to promote their ideas and the activities of the organisations they represent". There were other broadcasters who described the community's subgroups as manifestations of generational differences. As one respondent put it: "...the 'old migrants' did not consider education as an important and essential value in life. These people have survived not thanks to their education but to their characteristic resilience". While many broadcasters described the early migrants as socially and culturally distinct from the "new arrivals", this broadcaster said that the overarching distinguishing feature between these two groups was their different levels of education. The generational aspect of community divisions was graphically expressed by one "early" migrating broadcaster this way: "Our ethnicity was a weight around our necks at that time," he said. "We hid behind our baggage of a British colonial past where we came from and, because we craved for acceptance, we were made to betray our cultural identity. Mind you, we were brainwashed even before we left Malta to come here: the stern advice they used to give us before we left was, 'forget your native country - go to your new country and start afresh. That's your country now'. The recent arrivals who found multiculturalism in place as a national policy are a subgroup within the community whose cultural identity has to be of a different ilk to ours". According to the broadcasters who made this generational distinction within the community, it was the "early arrivals" who made up the majority of their shows' audiences: "They are the old people whose English is not that good and who want to hear from and about their homeland in their own language on the Maltese radio".

If the broadcasters were to design their radio production according to the perceived tastes and needs of this multiplicity of community groupings, their effort would be a considerable feat of cultural heterogeneity. The perceived fragmentation of their community identity compounded with ambivalence about cultural identity, it might be argued, renders their role as broadcasters particularly problematic because, according to

their own admissions, they not only need to cope with making sense of their Maltese-ness and Australian-ness, but also with a wide range of subgroup cultural identities which makes up their potential audience. Given this problematic terrain of self, community and national cultural identities which needs to be negotiated, how do the broadcasters perceive their role and their cultural "output" which is currently being produced for the Maltese radio?

The role of the Maltese broadcaster

Most broadcasters agreed that mainstream radio "was there for the entire Australian population" and did not have the finance, the expertise or "the political will" to cater for ethnospecific cultural needs of minority groups. Ethnic broadcasting was acknowledged as "an indispensable altemative to mainstream media" and as a specialised form of communication - a *sine qua non* in a country like Australia that championed an exemplary model of multicultural policy. A 3EA broadcaster emphasised the specialised nature of ethnic broadcasting by stating that "if SBS had to close down tomorrow, its broadcasters will virtually be unemployable in the other media". To point out the fundamental difference between mainstream and ethnic broadcasting, another 3EA respondent who considered himself a professional broadcaster, said that "ethnic broadcasting is so unique that no matter how professional you are, you definitely have to start from scratch here. You cannot emulate mainstream formats, especially those on commercial radio stations. You are speaking to a particular ethnic audience and so you have to be culture specific using the language spoken by your community".

The broadcasters described different perceptions of the role of ethnic broadcasting. The data that was gathered from the discussions about these roles indicate that each of these is perceived as controversial. Four major roles - endorsed by some but contested by others - emerged from the interviews.

i) The "linking" role

One 3EA broadcaster said that "doing ethnic broadcasting means that you constantly have to think 'community'". Respondents commonly used the "family" metaphor to describe this "community": ethnic broadcasting is language based and as such is essentially a "narrowcast" communication reaching out to audiences that "belong" to a specific ethnic "family". This type of focused communication creates a special rapport between broadcaster and audience: "As an ethnic broadcaster you become an indispensable part of a family - of your community. I tell (station) management to its face that I feel more responsible to my community than to its rules and regulations." Unlike the mainstream media, ethnic broadcasting provides a special human link between cultural producer and listener based on shared meanings which are framed by a common language and culture. The role of ethnic broadcaster, according to most respondents, was to cultivate this special "human link": "we should pose ourselves as a medium of communication: our listeners communicate in their 'different' world through us - we are the connection between friends and relatives, husband and wife, homeland and host country, old and new".

Some respondents, however, contested this approach to ethnic broadcasting on the grounds that it was too inward-looking, too ethnocentric. One broadcaster who believed it was a "sacrosanct" task of ethnic broadcasters to encourage outward-looking vistas of cultural identity rather than seek to insulate homeland culture purities from mainstream contamination, expressed concern about the situation of Maltese broadcasting in general, but had special criticism for 3EA in relation to this issue: "I feel that some ethnic broadcasting encourages inward looking cultural tendencies in listeners. We have a lot of this happening in Maltese radio broadcasting, including 3EA. I feel that 3EA as a government agency has a hidden agenda to keep communities like the Maltese happy by letting the Maltese broadcasters fulfil stereotyped wants like news from Malta, and information about this and that, rather than creating challenging ways - outward looking

ways - to empower the community to become more meaningfully participatory in mainstream Australian society".

ii) The role of the "symbolic realm"

Part of the "linking" function relates to what can be called the "symbolic realm". This role focuses on cultural recognition and the affirmation of ethnicity and identity through "symbolic goods". Ritual rather than information is the substantive communication thrust of this approach. Maltese broadcasters, according to one respondent, fulfil their duties "if they provide their listeners with what they love listening to most: segments about Malta - news, current affairs, history, music - in their own language". As one other respondent who concurred with the view that ethnic media should serve as a free symbolic channel for "bringing the homeland back to the host country" stated that: "Ethnic broadcasters should constantly ask themselves, 'what do our special breed of listeners want to hear?' and your knowledge of the community, your feedback from community leaders and the people who listen to the Maltese radio programs, are constantly telling you that what they want to hear most is material from Malta because that is the material which they can't get from anywhere else".

However, this approach to ethnic broadcasting was considered by some as an attempt - conscious or unconscious - to freeze cultural identity, reduce cultural customs and tradition to folk museum pieces and defeat the purpose of winning access to minority language based broadcasting to ensure the evolvement of cultural identity in a manner adaptive to the requirements of a modern multiculturalist society. "One major failure in the responsibilities we Maltese broadcasters have towards our community," argued one respondent, "is that we have kept our community wrapped up in a cocoon so that while the Maltese in Malta have broadened their minds and have broken out and jumped barriers, we keep the Maltese community here wrapped up in cotton wool, hence disabling it, disempowering it...We are doing exactly the opposite of what we are supposed to be doing."

iii) The "inclusionary" role

The symbolic realm can be extended to embrace a symbolism of inclusion - of an ethnic minority who, on the strength of its language-based radio, has a place in the multicultural mosiac of Australia but, more importantly, "feels part" of the spectrum of current media output. Riggins' point (1992) about the media imperative seems relevant here - is intricately connected with the capacity for media representation in the public realm, and this, according to Riggins, includes ethnic minority cultures. The deep penetration of the ethnic broadcaster's voice into the private sphere of the listeners through the power of a common language and their culture's "re-presentation" among the other ethnic languages on the radio was considered by all respondents as one of the major strategies to create and maintain cultural identity: "Ethnic broadcasting gives the community a special impetus," argues one respondent. "Maltese listeners, for example, open the radio and they don't hear English, Greek or Arabic - they hear Maltese spoken on the media by one of 'them'; immediately they feel that the Maltese language, their entire cultural heritage, is not being left out, ignored, forgotten..."

Although none of the broadcasters opposed this function, some expressed the view that this notion of "inclusion" could lead to the exclusion of their cultural production from the broader Australian community. Others argued that the exclusive use of Maltese on the programs may not be the most effective strategy to preserve ethnic and cultural identity. The language "liberalists" thought that the use of English on their programs was, in a sense, as inclusionary as the use of Maltese: "We have Australian guests who come in for interviews about social security changes and other topics. In fact, our listeners like this, because it gives them a sense of belonging to the wider community. We had our Australian guest on the program for eight consecutive weeks and there wasn't one phone call complaining about it". One 3EA broadcaster argued that if ethnic broadcasters adhered rigidly to the ethnic language imperative, they would be sanctioning for themselves and their audience a self-imposed isolation from mainstream Australian authorities "because of the minority language we use for our broadcasts".

iv) The "integrational role"

All the respondents agreed the promotion of cultural maintenance was fundamental to the role of the ethnic broadcaster; yet most mentioned that another paramount responsibility was "to make sure that the ethnic community integrates well into the overall community". In quite practical terms, some broadcasters explained that a straightforward use of the Maltese language would help in this task: "the great majority of the people who are listening to us do not have a high level of education and, therefore, we have to make sure that the Maltese language we use on our programs is in its most rudimentary form. How do you expect these people to understand...or follow complex issues?" More broadly, respondents fully recognised the importance of constructing their program content in such a way that a significant portion of the message is dedicated to "blending" images of the homeland and the present Australian social and cultural reality of their audience. "The Maltese broadcasters are dealing with a large sector of their audience whose perception of cultural identity has not changed for many, many years and this perception is based essentially on their visions of their town or village of origin," argued one respondent. "It is the role of the ethnic broadcaster, I think, to slowly and sensitively introduce a different and wider perception of life, and while encouraging these people to retain their cultural identity, present them with information and explanations about what's happening today in the Australian social context in which they have chosen to live - their social reality - and make them understand that making the transition or making these two perceptions come together is not such a difficult thing. I hope this is what I'm trying to achieve".

Despite these claims, content analysis of Maltese programs reveals that this philosophy of integration is less than complete, with much broadcast material dedicated not to a "different and wider perception of life" but to a framework of cultural references strongly reverberating with a backward looking nostalgia for the homeland, its rituals and way of life. So, while there seems to be the sense that the Maltese broadcasters have a broad vision of their status as cultural producers and their function as ethnic broadcasters

carving out a specific "ethnic identity" in Australia, their actual cultural output on the radio, according to the data that emerged from content analysis, does not mirror this vision but generally restricts itself to sounds from the "symbolic realm" and a nostalgia paradigm.

Conditions of radio work

Having established an overview of the respondents' perceptions of the role of the ethnic broadcaster, we now focus on their perceptions of current Maltese production for radio: how do respondents think their colleagues and they themselves are delivering the cultural goods to their listeners according to their professed vision of the role of the ethnic broadcaster; to what extent are they perceiving others as a success or failure in their work. These insights will provide further understanding of the processes the broadcasters are implementing through their media output to create, sustain or dilute Maltese cultural identity. Responses dealing with the conditions of work seem to be divided in terms of where the broadcasters were located organisationally. Whether broadcasters belonged to the government station, 3EA, or were part of the community radio sector seemed to have a determining influence on the perceptions and understanding of broadcast practice and it was around this division that much disagreement over the shape of cultural identity and how it ought to be implemented occurred.

i) 3EA broadcasters about themselves

Broadcasters from 3EA indicated that, since they received salaries from the "public purse" to do a full time job, they considered themselves more responsible than community radio broadcasters for delivering to the community "the best Maltese radio in Melbourne and the content that the community wants to listen to most". They saw themselves as the "official voice" of Maltese media and since it was taxpayers' money that was keeping them on air, "every member of the community shares a sense of ownership in this station as much as we do". They agreed that the station management

was conscious of its broadcasters' obligation to their community and provided them with regular training programs to ensure they maintained and enhanced their skills and expertise to be able to fulfil these obligations. However, one respondent disagreed with the way management was going about the organisation of this training: "Not only are we currently being inundated by senior management personnel from ABC who are being given permanent positions with us, they even call in ABC trainers to conduct our training. The nature of our broadcasting is different to the way ABC do their broadcasting. This is first and foremost an ethnic station and we specialise in that type of broadcasting". The 3EA respondents agreed their programming and their content and presentation styles could be classified as highly conservative but the organisation's guidelines prohibited them from broadcasting editorial opinion. One respondent mentioned how he was reprimanded for trying to be controversial by discussing on air important issues of a political nature: "I was accused by my superiors that I was giving my opinion and at 3EA we do not have editorial authority".

These broadcasters see themselves very much as "professionals". "Professionalism" was understood as a deep knowledge of broadcasting through training and experience, the ability to share information effectively on the radio with the widest possible range of audience, and the provision of media service to the best of one's ability. One respondent described his professionalism in terms of sitting in a "middle" position: "I am middle of the road. Like all professionals, I don't act on the spur of the moment: I sit in the middle and look at things and issues from a distance. This can only come to you after long years of experience in the work". To the 3EA respondents, being professional also meant "being objective". Being objective was considered important and tended to mean being straightforward, reasonable and fair, and giving the opportunity to others to express different opinions and ideas to oneself's. "Our conditions of employment demand this. It is not our role to tell listeners what to believe: we present them with two sides to a story; our job is to report the story the way it is without providing the slightest inkling of a personal position". Another respondent talked about objectivity from a different perspective: the point was made that patronising one's listeners is a form of subjectivity.

"My views are my views and I am not to impose them on anybody and I will never patronise like some broadcasters do - they not only patronise, they lecture! I mean, why take a high moral stand just because it's your belief and make it out to be that 'this is it'? When I'm broadcasting I sometimes say things which are not necessarily my opinion: I am there to present an unbiased, impartial opinion. When people ring in on talkback, most times I disagree with what they're saying but you empathise, you accept their values, their opinions, their contribution". Perceptions of professionalism and objectivity also included the role of gatekeeper (White, 1964; Gieber, 1964; Baker, 1980) which was seen to function in relation to both the interests of the organisation and of the community. This gatekeeping role was particularly evident in the way broadcasters spoke about producing their news segments. For example, one major news source for the 3EA broadcasters for Maltese news items is the Maltese Department of Information which was described as the "mouthpiece for the current Maltese government". According to one respondent, his job "is to edit the source copy so that we clean it from all propagandistic elements before we include in our news bulletins." The gatekeeping function also applied to Australian and world news, where items are selected according to criteria of perceived relevance to the Maltese community. Respondents explained that most of the time, the bias was in favour of stories about ethnic affairs, migration stories and the "big national and international stories of the day that make it to the front pages of the mainstream newspapers". All respondents agreed that this gatekeeping function was an important aspect of ethnic broadcasting because, blunting the edge of news items from Malta that may be interpreted by some as a mouthpiece for the Maltese government currently in power and fmetuning the repertoire of Australian and international news for relevance to a specific ethnic community, is protecting the station's credibility and respecting the Maltese community's right for balanced news reportage from the homeland.

There was considerable disagreement about issues related to program content among the 3EA broadcasters. One respondent, for example, described the current program format as "exemplary" - so successful that the station management has taken it as a model for other languages. This "model" format, according to this respondent catered

for "entertainment, culture, tradition and language". It addressed the need of those "who are shy to go to the local doctor; it provides legal and financial information; it caters for Maltese traditions and encourages listeners to pass on these traditions to their children. Our format, in fact, includes a program for children in which we use English as well as Maltese with the intention of ensuring that Maltese children understand what we're talking about in their parents' language. The format has a youth program, too." This format was described as the framework on which all 3EA Maltese programming hangs. Some of the other 3EA broadcasters, however, expressed discomfort working within the rigidity of this framework: the formal structures were believed to be stifling initiatives to be creative and original: "They do not leave much room for innovation". Some said that because of the straightjacket of the format, 3EA output is "not original, not proactive enough - it allows little interaction with the audience". It was also mentioned that there was some tension between the station's format exigencies and the interest of the audience: "I have found out that what the community wants and needs is not the same as what management asks us to do in our programs. Format is not negotiable: it guarantees management a sense of uniformity across all language groups. It is their way to exert discipline, at least in a structural sense, on the station's output. So you have to find a compromise where you're doing what the management is saying but, at the same time, the community is getting what it wants". This respondent mentioned how he tried to cut down on what he considered unnecessary "talk" including detailed translations of government agencies' brochures and substitute with lighter material like music.

ii) Community broadcasters about 3EA

Because 3EA Maltese programming is the most widely broadcast and well funded, all broadcasters tend to listen to it and evaluate its performance. It has a special status in the community and hence it evokes responses. These responses are revealing of certain values connected to work and, by implication, identity. The community radio broadcasters consistently expressed mixed feelings about their colleagues' work on 3EA and the station itself. They expressed consensus about the superior technical quality of the

3EA product compared to that of the community stations. Most agreed that program content too was of a superior quality "as to be expected, because 3EA broadcasters are salaried full timers". Some respondents described 3EA as the "oldest" station that had been sending coordinated Maltese programs to air for the longest time and had therefore attracted a "traditional listenership". "It started broadcasting in Maltese when people were starving for Maltese language programs". 3EA was also described as the mainstream of Maltese radio broadcasting: it had a well coordinated daily program schedule including weekends; it had the financial support and it had experienced broadcasters producing the programs. One respondent mentioned that the 3EA programs coordinator was a "popular radio voice from the past": old time and relatively recent migrants remembered his voice on Maltese cable radio and it elicited nostalgic memories from their pre-emigration days in Malta. Despite this praise, community radio broadcasters also provided a scathing critique of 3EA. They thought that both 3EA as an organisation and the Maltese programs were "sickeningly" conservative. News was seen as biased in favour of the current Maltese government; 3EA broadcasters were perceived as "playing it safe because they have their bread and butter to protect, not wanting to take risks and therefore the content gets stale"; "tell[ing]...listeners rather than talk[ing] with them"; lacking enthusiasm; and overtly posing as "guardians of the status quo". Other criticisms voiced included a lack of response to what the community really wants; not inviting enough contributors to participate on programs; and not attempting discussion and debate about "important issues that concern every modern ethnic group living in Australia today" - issues like drugs, child abuse, domestic violence, language retention strategies, and cultural identity inheritance by second and third generations. And finally, the 3EA program content was found to be "highly formulated: little room is left for experiment; "too much nostalgia, too much sports from Malta, too much news from everywhere; it features too little information and commentary about what's happening in our community here". "People want less talk and more music. The technology at 3EA is not being exploited: why don't we get live shows in the studios featuring established and young Maltese Australian singers and musicians?"

Why is this critique so strong, and so firmly articulated? The community broadcasters said they perceived the 3EA broadcasters as the doyens of Maltese language broadcasting: they were "senior" in terms of status, broadcasting expertise and available resources. The community broadcasters also perceive their 3EA colleagues as their peers, and their work as a radio production benchmark especially in terms of equipment and resources - the relative "wealth" of infrastructure at the government sponsored station as opposed to the chronic "poverty" of the community based stations. However, when community broadcasters compared their ideals, aspirations and values in terms of what might be done with the radio medium, with the actual output on 3EA, they perceived a reprehensible gap: 3EA is, according to community broadcasters, too much overwhelmed by government edict and whim, bureaucratic conservatism and lack of creativity, deficiencies which should not feature in the work of real radio "professionals". And, in the end, the community broadcasters feel that they could be doing a better job themselves.

iii) Community broadcasters about themselves

In talking about their own cultural production and how they perceived and related to the organisations they worked for, the community radio broadcasters felt it important to emphasise the "financial poverty" of the community stations. This axiom contexualised all their production for radio: they were volunteer part timers and the stations they worked for did not provide them with financial backup to enhance the quality of their programs. With minimum training, they were expected to present their programs while, at the same time, "work the panel and handle the rest of the studio's broadcasting equipment". All respondents agreed there should be more training programs initiated by the station management. Most admitted that there was a need of a general overhaul in the area of presentation techniques. In spite of the lack of resources, the community broadcasters generally agreed they were not "copying 3EA"; however, there were some respondents who criticised the community radio broadcasters' collective effort as being "too constrained by rigid formatting similar to that on 3EA". Being community based, it was suggested, they should be exploiting their operational freedom "much more

adventurously and creatively and not get entrapped into rigid formats that prohibit spontaneity and lock out initiatives to experiment and share the airtime generously with the community out there - which, after all, is a basic characteristic of community radio". The relative freedom from organisational constraints referred to by these respondents was reflected by the very small amount of meetings with and memos from management, and the "aloofness" of management from "the production site of the Maltese programs", possibly because of the trust it had in the Maltese broadcasters: "Management leaves us Maltese broadcasters alone because they know we don't create divisions among the community".

The notion of "professionalism" was framed very differently than with the 3EA broadcasters. Most "community" broadcasters defined their contribution as "professional" in the sense that it was founded on good ideas, sensitivity to the needs of their community, and commitment to present the best radio programs possible given the lack of resources, preparation time and vocational training: "To be professional does not just mean getting paid for the job you're trained to do," said one respondent. "It also meant a standard - presenting something with the ultimate level of efficiency, skill and ease. I consider myself to be chasing these goals and I believe that I'm part of the way there. I'm pretty hard on myself..." Another respondent defined a "professional" as "a person who has been fully trained and was academically qualified to perform the job. "I am, therefore, not a professional but I try to do my best." One broadcaster rationalised his non-professional status as justification for placing his obligation to listeners as his first priority: "Professional means getting paid for what you're doing, thus you have to put more effort into the work for what you are being rewarded. Your duties still remain the same, however, whether you're amateur or professional - to inform, to communicate, to involve people. These principles still have to be maintained but the amount of time and the quality of treatment like research and other pre-production work have to be of a higher standard if you're a professional. Given these criteria, I don't consider myself a professional but I still feel a professional commitment to my audience - a stronger

commitment, in fact, because since the organisation I work for is not paying me, my first duty is to the listeners."

While none of the respondents associated objectivity with professionalism like the 3EA broadcasters did, all except one agreed that the relative freedom that came with broadcasting on community radio was not to be abused by pushing subjective views on air: "Probably the only subjectivity that seeps out in my programs is the type of music I play. My personal beliefs in matters such as politics and religion are not reflected in the way I do my program. But although I believe that the program is a natural extension of the personality of the broadcaster, we have a responsibility for the feelings of our community. You try to be objective. To me being objective means that you try not to take sides: not pushing one's personal beliefs is in itself being objective. However, I must say that if I enjoy the material of my program, I tend to think that most of my listeners are going to enjoy it, too. But, as a matter of principle, when I state facts I refrain from disclosing what's my position in relation to those facts. I'm a typical conservative and I'm therefore objective."

When discussing the nature of their broadcast organisation and how this might affect their personal choice and style on radio, community broadcasters feel that they have more space for "creative dimensions" on their programs than their colleagues at 3EA. Most broadcasters agreed that, to an extent, their programs are a extension of their cultural and social personality: their choice of material, their emphases both in the presentation style as well in terms of airtime duration, "show up" their personal preferences. As one respondent put it, "I don't think it's possible to do a radio program without having a part of you showing up in your work". In one case, the personal is connected to quite specific political ends. This broadcaster describes the objective of his program as "deliver[ing] the message of the Maltese labour movement to the Maltese people of Melbourne because no other station is fairly representing this political position". He asserts that his program is "a platform for counterbalancing 3EA's bias in favour of Malta's governing Nationalist party". From these responses by community

station broadcasters, choice of material and format style seem to be linked with individual predispositions and attitudes, and not as an organisational dictum "from above" as may be the case at 3EA. This space to project the "personal" on community radio may be serving as an outlet for the articulation of a more individuated and idiosyncratic type of ethnic identity where the strictures of an organisational culture and official policy have less hold on the shape of the radio discourse. As all the community respondents suggested, there was only a basic Code of Practice to observe - the rest was "up to you".

There emerged, however, areas of contention between some community broadcasters and the stations they worked for. It was revealed that two of the major stations were threatening to cut back the number of Maltese programs if sponsorship was not forthcoming. At one station, management was asking broadcasters to pay a fee from their own pocket every time they turned up to do their broadcasts. This was having a debilitating effect on the broadcasters' morale: "I don't think our efforts are being appreciated by the station management. If they were, they wouldn't ask us to pay a fee of $2 per program we broadcast. We've got heaps of sponsors and still they're insisting that we pay the fee. We have been threatened that unless we pay regularly, we were risking losing our programs." Although the amount seems trivial, these broadcasters seem to consider this "charge" as a personal insult since they feel that they are "making huge sacrifices" to produce their programs "for the community" and their effort is not being appreciated enough. No community organisation including the Maltese Community Council of Victoria, the official "centre" of the community, has come forward to support these broadcasters financially or otherwise. In fact, the apathy from the community in general to give support in times of need was an issue mentioned by many community radio respondents. One particular comment summed up how these broadcasters felt about this lack of support from their own community aggravated by their station management's fimctionalist demands: "I don't think management would have the slightest idea of the good or bad job we're doing. Our worth is being measured according to the number of paying members we manage to accrue. This to me is not a sign of loyalty to the principles of ethnic broadcasting especially if a language is threatened, as we have been, with

program losses unless it secures a stipulated amount of membership. The station policy stipulates that unless you have at least 40 financial members for each hour of broadcasting, you could at any time lose program air time. We are continuously appealing to our audiences to take $10 or $15 out of their pocket, which is a year's worth of membership, but response is very poor. I can't understand this, especially in the case of Associations who are asking for our help all the time to promote their functions and activities, and they are making money out of the free advertising we given them on the radio."

One central theme seems to emerge from perceptions of community broadcasters - a consistent comparison between themselves and what they do, and "what is done" at 3EA. An "us-them" opposition takes shape, from which the community broadcasters define their identity as cultural producers. They come to see what they are and where they are in terms of the significance and status of 3EA. This construction of a broadcast identity through an "us-them" binary seems to put the self-concept of the community radio broadcasters in a kind of negative relief with respect to the "official" broadcasters whom they perceive as "significant" figures in the production of their community's cultural and ethnic identity but who are not "getting it right" as they should, given the enormous resources and financial help at hand.

iv) 3EA broadcasters about "community"

Despite their central place in the community as broadcasters, personnel at 3EA did feel it important to make some comments on their counterparts on the community stations. These comments included concerns about the "uneven spread" of Maltese programs on most community stations; the "shoddy" manner in which broadcasters are selected to work on these stations; their failure "to provide Maltese audiences with an alternative style of programming to that which is being presented on 3EA"; the lack of preparation that results in "on air glitches" that mar the flow and pace of the programs; and the deology behind the organisation of content which seems to favour entertainment

rather than informational and educational values, and on one particular station, the interests of one particular Maltese political party. These comments by the 3EA broadcasters about their counterparts on community radio seem to be based on assumptions that echo their views about "professionalism", organisational culture, and how ethnic broadcasting can best preserve cultural and ethnic identity. This critique seems to be based primarily on a set of broadcasting values which assume that ethnic language community broadcasting must sound like professional broadcasting to be "culturally effective" (which may not be the case).

v) In summary

Finally, several general themes emerged out of the overall discussion. Most broadcasters said that sufficient Maltese radio programs was being produced and the focus now should be on quality not quantity. One respondent said, however, that 3EA should dedicate more hours to Maltese programming on the basis of the size of the Maltese population in Australia including second generation Maltese Australians. All respondents agreed that the Maltese radio output in general was too tame, too conservative in representing the needs of the Maltese community. One respondent made the point that most broadcasters lacked the professional skills to use the medium "aggressively enough to make effective representation". Some would like to "create some ripples but they don't know how to do it, or, in the case of 3EA who could perform this task better than anybody else because of their supposedly superior broadcasting skills and status, cannot do it due to their organisation's constraints". Broadcasters want radio to make more community intervention, become a more vital resource for community involvement and identity formation. Despite this, respondents seemed to agree that programming had a community building function through language. All respondents agreed that in spite of the differences between 3EA and the community radio output, and the content variety across all the Maltese radio programs currently being produced, "people generally don't distinguish between one program or station and another: what's important for them is listening to their native language on the radio; having their sets

open at all times they know a Maltese program is on to have the companionship in their home of somebody 'talking' to them in Maltese". One respondent said people told them they had a radio set in every room at home, each set tuned in on a particular station: "They have gone through the operation of tuning in by trial and error because they didn't know how to use the frequency codes. So, they have lined up a radio set for each Maltese broadcast and they don't touch the setting on that particular set any more." Despite the general belief in Maltese radio as a medium for community building, there are still questions about how best it ought to be "performed". Some claimed that the style of the Maltese language on 3EA was too "standardised", the delivery "a bit too stiff, too pure for people to fully understand". Others said that broadcasters on the community radio stations were "butchering the language and feeding it to the dogs!" This may be a clear indication of "institutional" versus "community" opinion, struggling to give shape to what is an essential part of Maltese identity. Most respondents, however, suggested a compromise: "...a relaxed linguistic style with some Australianised elements aptly worked into the natural structure of our language but with a bit of 'broken grammar' to draw closer to the general listener's style of 'talk'".

The "ideal formula" most frequently discussed for Maltese radio programs pivoted around the concept of what one broadcaster perceptively called "infotainment": "you have to entertain your audience before you can start providing instructive information". The "ideal formula" included news from Malta - good and bad, Maltese reading "preferably of popular romance set in Malta, or a patriotic story set in one of the better known epochs of Maltese history, popular music including "a small dose of folk singing but a generous dose of folk instrumental music", a lot of talkback with more time put at the disposal of callers to express themselves without interruptions from the studio, select interviews about important social and cultural events in the Maltese community calendar, in-depth discussions about important social, political and cultural issues the community needs to know about, and "very brief community announcements that are dressed up a bit and not presented blandly and boringly as everybody is currently doing". However, some respondents acknowledged the fact that the "info" component had to be

tailored according to serious research about what the Maltese audience needed to know and not on "our perceptions of what they want to know". According to broadcasters, to a certain extent this notion should also apply to the "tainment" component. "Collectively, we need to act more like the gatekeepers for our audience and stop providing them mainly with the radio they want to hear and start providing them with what we believe is important to broadcast to maintain and enhance our cultural identity in this country". This idea of getting the "mix" right is currently being worked out around what was seen as an "overdose of nostalgia". Some declared that "nostalgia for the homeland" had to be the flagship of every Maltese program. Others said that the emphasis had to be on "strategies of integration" with material that reflected the current reality of the Maltese migrant and on "open minded broadcasting styles that appealed and made sense to second generation Maltese listeners - if any". Most respondents agreed that neither the 3EA nor the "community" broadcasters had been able to find the "right balance" yet.

"Who do we think we are speaking to/for?"

Throughout this discussion a number of assertions were made by the respondents about who they thought their audience was and what type of content this audience liked or disliked. When confronted by probing questions asking for a clearer profile of the audience they were talking about, at first most broadcasters started talking confidently about what one broadcaster called the "personality" of their audience. However, if questioned further, they tended to become increasingly uncertain about who their audience was and how they were to be addressed in programming terms. Broadcasters whose programs used a "magazine" format - "a bit of everything" as one respondent described his program - tended to have the vaguest notions of who their audience were, while those who produced a "focused" program with a few regular segments, one of which was a major portion of the program, had a clearer idea. The sources of information about the constitution of their audience profile most respondents mentioned were the people who they met face to face and said they listened to their programs, the callers who participated in talkback segments, those who rang the switchboard "just for a chat or to

dedicate a request for friends or relatives", and the people who wrote them letters. The perceived audience profile which emerged from these encounters was surprisingly consistent with all broadcasters. The typical listenership was "an ageing audience" - 50 plus, gender balanced, low on the social ladder, low educational standard and most of them living in the Western suburbs. However, some respondents mentioned that they felt the range of their listeners' age group included "a lot of middle aged males and females and a small number of young listeners - not the youths but the 11 to 14 year olds". Some also mentioned that there was a substantial number of listeners who did not live in the western suburbs: one respondent who worked for 3WRB which is a western suburbs local community radio station, said that she got several protest calls when she used to 'ident' her program by announcing that, "This is the Maltese program for the West". Most broadcasters said they mingled with the community enough to be in a position to know who their audience was and what they liked or disliked on Maltese radio. However, when reminded of their own identification of a number of subgroups within the Maltese community and the possible multiplicity of audience profiles within the community, they admitted to the possibility that they were reading too much into the relatively small sample of the "tangible audience" they had described as their source of information, using this small section of the community and projecting it onto the entire community in order to justify their own approach to their program choices and format.

This impulse to rationalise according to the projected image of the audience tended to have a direct impact on what broadcasters felt they could put to air. The sense was that they always had to offer what "best suited" their particular audience - the imagined listener in a sense setting up the boundaries for what could be done. In Gans' terms (1980), the perceptions of audience become part of the decision making context determining content and style. A 3EA broadcaster described the "boundaries" drawn by her perception of the audience in this way: "We are trying to reach a very traditional community - a community that has stopped growing. They didn't grow one way or the other, so they're still of the mentality of Malta as it was 30 or 40 years ago, which makes it very difficult when it comes to tackle religious issues or social issues that impact on

traditional religious beliefs - anything that's new and controversial to them". All the respondents tended to give the impression that they considered their audience could only "tolerate" a certain type of broadcasting format and content, both of which could only be encoded in terms which evoked a narrative of the homeland. So, although content analysis confirms a homeland approach in the form of the "nostalgia model", and although broadcasters are aware of this approach, they use it not because they want to, but reluctantly because this is what they perceive the audience as capable of relating to.

The few broadcasters who actually wanted to "reform" this approach to cultural identity retention did not reject the importance of the nostalgia syndrome: "I think that while I don't dwell on it, the past has a role to play," commented one respondent, "but an overdose of nostalgia is an invitation for broadcaster and audience to freeze in time". However, these broadcasters are increasingly imagining another audience that has to be catered for, and insisting that there was a very urgent need to "make our production relevant to the young generations of Maltese Australians. If we want to contribute meaningfully to the preservation of our cultural identity in this country, we need to start a radical revision of the structures of our programs - not by tokenistic and feeble attempts to introduce programs for youths but also, without forgetting our obligations to the mass of our audience - the elderly, the uneducated, the working class of the western suburbs - we ensure that the culture of our programs appeals to the culture of our youngsters". The problem and dilemma of these broadcasters seems to be that this youthful audience is elusive: they do not really know it is there, hence their dilemma: recognising the need for change but also being locked into the surities of an already constituted audience, even if it is one that is "imagined". At least this imagined audience has a history and some connection to the broadcasters' own biography.

The terrain of what Maltese broadcasters produce for radio and how and why they produce what they do, has been mapped out. Intersections between findings from content analysis and some of the data that emerged from what broadcasters had to say about their cultural production suggest certain tensions between what the Maltese

community hears on air and what the Maltese broadcasters say should be going to air. Broadcasters' perceptions of how best to re-present, preserve and maintain their community's ethnic and cultural identity in terms of cultural production on ethnic radio are not generally reflected in program output. Interestingly, these broadcasters seem to be at least partially aware of these tensions. Proposed resolutions are tentatively explored in the final chapter where broadcasters discuss the future of Maltese radio.

Chapter 5

WHAT FUTURE

Uniformly, the 15 broadcasters interviewed for the study expressed a substantial degree of anxiety about the future of Maltese language radio. With this perceived decline, was the sense that a distinctly Maltese cultural identity would simply atrophy. One of the main concerns discussed was the sense that Maltese radio production as it currently exists failed to capture the listenership of the younger generation. As one broadcaster commented, "there is a frightening apathy from...the young generation to participate actively in keeping the culture and identity alive: it's always the same old set of people. When these people move on, I'm afraid it will be close to the end of an organised effort to preserve our culture and identity in this country." A crucial factor being hinted at here, of course, is the importance of language for cultural maintenance. From their radio work, broadcasters seem to know what Census figures confirm: there is, in fact, a processual language shift constantly going on among second and third generation migrants away from the "native language" to English. Focusing on the Maltese-Australian experience, Cauchi (1990:68-72) explains that "[loss of original language]...seems to have occurred faster among the Maltese than among most other ethnic groups" and that "the prospect of an early demise of Maltese language within the next generation is very real". According to Cauchi (1990), language is "one of the most important props of culture", so, with the devolution of the Maltese language, the Maltese community will rapidly lose their cultural identity. Maltese broadcasters seem to be acutely aware of this situation and see it in crisis terms. Their thinking on this matter is two pronged: on the one hand, the loss of Maltese as a language has direct impact on the communicative effectiveness and cultural significance of community language based radio; on the other, it may be radio which is precisely the cultural tool which could help to keep the language, hence the culture, alive.

In this context, there have been some attempts to initiate radio programs for young people. A fortnightly experimental one hour program produced by a group of Maltese youths has started going to air on 3ZZZ. The young broadcasters were permitted to use the airtime as they wished within the station's Code of Practice. On 3EA there was a proposal for a five hours per week series called "Common Language Programs" to be produced by young people of ethnic background who will be asked to present in English. But the sense from respondents was that these approaches were superficial and not really addressing the problem. "The youth experiment on 3ZZZ is not working" said a 3ZZZ broadcaster. "They take the job too lightly. They have no vision of what they're doing. They try to say things in Maltese but you can't understand what they're talking about. Besides, if these young people want to attract other young Maltese to listen to them on the radio, they need to make the program appealing to that particular generation. I don't think they know how to do that...and the station cannot help them."

Another problem in addressing this issue head on arises from certain perceived institutional imperatives and predispositions. For example, the 3EA Common Language Programs were not wholly embraced as a correct way to proceed. The "institutional solution" proposed by 3EA to solve the alienation of ethnic youth from their parents' "old language and culture" resulted in a set of strategies which developed into areas of contestation and struggle between the 3EA ethnic broadcasters and their station management. One 3EA broadcaster explained that broadcasters from many language groups including Maltese protested against the idea because "we think that we know our youth much better than the SBS Australian managers and, therefore, we can produce more relevant radio for them ourselves; people think this is nothing but an undercover strategy to cut down on our broadcasting hours..."

Reaching out to the second and third generations assumes great significance for these broadcasters because of three factors they perceive as critical in the erosion of Maltese cultural identity: the virtual freeze in new migrants from Malta, the rapid ageing of the community and the "natural tendency" the Maltese migrant has to integrate into

mainstream culture. Most importantly for them is the possible loss of their ethnic language. One respondent summarised all these ideas in his refection on the future of Maltese radio broadcasting: "The only way to preserve the Maltese culture is to keep the language alive and the only way one can do this is to speak it and to make it interesting for the younger generation to listen to. This won't be the case with communities like the Italian and the Greek, even though, like the Maltese, these languages are experiencing a halt to their emigration to this country. In our case, we've always been proud of the excellent manner we succeeded to integrate; so much so, that we're now tending to forget our own language and identity. What's aggravating the situation is the fact of life that the Maltese community is an ageing community and sooner or later, with the erosion of language retention by the second generation, the broadcaster will finish imagining their audience exclusively in terms of old people. This, in my opinion, will be the beginning of the end...the broadcaster will die a natural death with his old audience..." A respondent from 3EA suggested that Australia's economic policies which explain the country's integral part in the Asian Pacific region will have important formative implications on radio broadcasting: "I foresee only a few languages surviving the test of time and those will be the languages of the new arrivals, mainly the Asian languages because that's the future of Australia - that's the political direction we've taken. I can see ethnic broadcasting changing its image altogether: they will get rid of all the established community groups - the languages will disappear because the new blood within these groups would have become pretty much assimilated into the mainstream and therefore there wouldn't be a need for the respective languages on the radio". These concerns were also reflected in the response by one of the community radio broadcasters: "There are some languages that are waiting to get a program on the station and this may be taken as a sign of interest in ethnic broadcasting. However, if these languages gain a niche within the new grid of the station, it will be to the detriment of the weaker language programs that are currently on air. Maltese is one of these languages. The probability is that the new Asian languages will soon succeed to nudge the old established languages out of the way and they'll inherit the airtime". Here, the Maltese broadcasters might be articulating some of the typical perceptions that "old" ethnic communities tend to have of "newer" ones. In

the context of small scale multicultural media as proposed by government policy, broadcasting is supposed to be based on principles of access and equity - all cultural groups in principle should have equality of access to the air waves. Yet, according to these broadcasters, these groups are actually hierarchically ordered, some given more favorable treatment than others, depending on the political and economic climate of the day.

In spite of the bleakness of these scenarios, Maltese radio production continues. This case study has sought to map out a particular cultural terrain. At its most "panoramic", this was a project that attempted to make a connection between media communication and social identity, its central premise being that in a media saturated world, media forms of communication become central to the formation of subjectivity and community. Its specific focus covered the contribution of the Maltese radio broadcasters to preserve their community's cultural identity. It sketched out a socio-economic profile of these broadcasters in an attempt to animate the faces behind the radio voices. It then analysed the cultural output of which these voices were a part and constructed an audio profile of each of the radio programs currently presented in Maltese. Finally, basing its findings on responses provided by the broadcasters themselves during a series of extended interviews, this study attempted to map out how these producers made sense of the self-national-cultural identity nexus and how their understanding of their own community, the role of the ethnic broadcaster, their obligations as "public voices", their relations with the stations they work for, and the images they carry in their heads of their audience, forms and informs their conceptualisation of "the best content" for their respective programs.

Since the completion of data collection for this study there have been some changes in the broadcasting personnel of Melbourne's Maltese language program production. The changes took place very suddenly and in quick succession. The 3EA Maltese broadcasting group lost their coordinator who, at 65, had to retire against his wish because the public service does not allow its employees to keep on working beyond

that age. The journalist producer whose main responsibility used to be the compilation and presentation of news and sports reports and current affairs commentaries is now Head of Group at 3EA. Almost a year later, 3EA has still not filled the vacancy created by the resignation of the previous Head of Group. In fact, there are two positions within the Maltese broadcasting team to be filled. It is widely thought that 3EA are being bogged down in bureaucratic red tape and procrastinating in the employment of the two new broadcasters. Among the applicants for these positions were five broadcasters from community radio: three males from 3ZZZ and two females from 3WRB - a fact on the basis of which one can argue that there is a keen interest and aspiration among the community broadcasters to "move on" in their role as cultural producers. If 3EA decided to appoint two of these applicants, their appointments would have immediate repercussions on the production of Maltese programs on one or both of the community stations where the successful applicants originate from. This is because there is nobody willing to take over from whoever leaves the community stations. Recently, 3ZZZ has lost the broadcaster responsible for what the community used to know as the "folk program" which was satisfying the cultural need of an important segment of the community. Two other broadcasters from ZZZ have volunteered to take up the time slot but their approach and cultural knowledge are very different from their predecessor's. The last change took place at 3CR where the veteran broadcaster who was known as "the mouthpiece of the Malta Labour Party in Australia" retired due to old age. This broadcaster spent some months training two newcomers before he left. The ideology of the CR program has not changed but is now delivered in a less declamatory style. Both newcomers on CR are male and over 50 years old.

These changes do not augur well for the future of Maltese language programs on the radio and tend to entrench the current broadcasters' concerns as they expressed them during interviews. The call for applications by 3EA which was for salaried jobs and all the entitlements which go with a public service position only attracted one "new face" who applied together with the community radio broadcasters. This applicant failed the initial language tests and has since dropped from the scene. Nobody has yet come

forward to take over from the community radio broadcasters who have clearly shown their intention to move on to greener pastures. There has been no initiative taken to arouse interest among members of the community by the Maltese newspapers or by the Maltese Community Council or any other community Association. Whether this is a case of cultural apathy or simply lack of talent, or both, it seems to be symptomatic of an ageing ethnic community whose able members, as surmised by the Maltese broadcasters themselves during their interviews for this study, have distanced themselves from their ethnicity and have no desire to come forward and assume leadership roles in the project of preserving their culture of origin by actively and creatively participating in the Maltese media. As Riggins (1992) suggests, in spite of it being a significant ingredient towards cultural preservation, ethnic minority media on their own are certainly not a miraculous remedy: the ethnic group requires a cultural and political will to survive; it needs to establish its significant cultural difference in a multiculturalist context like the one in Australia. The media can then interact with this cultural difference and celebrate it, manifest it and perpetuate it. If, as seems to be the case in the Maltese community, the group's will for cultural survival does not sustain and inspire its re-presentation in the form of its language based cultural output on the radio, the mediating cultural producers may be engaging not in a project of preserving their community's cultural identity, but in a time-bound and ultimately, from their point of view, a frustrating exercise in cultural nostalgia.

Bibliography

Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs, 1988, Towards a National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia, A Discussion Paper, AGPS, Canberra.

Anderson, B., 1983, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism. Verso, London.

Anderson, J., 1987, Communication Research - Issues and Methods. McGraw-Hill Inc., New York.

Ang, I., 1990, Desperately Seeking the Audience. Routledge, London.

Anwar, M., 1978, Who Tunes in to What? A Report on Ethnic Minority Broadcasting. Commission for Racial Equality, London.

Baker, I, 1980, "The Gatekeeper Chain: A Two-Step Analysis of How Journalists Acquire and Apply Organizational News Priorities", in P. Edgar, (ed), The News in Focus - The Journalism of Expectation. Macmillan, Melbourne.

Baker, I., 1980, "Looking inside the media as an institution: studies in the news-gathering process", in P. Edgar, (ed), The News in Focus - The Journalism of Expectation. Macmillan, Melbourne.

Bear, A., 1983, "The Emergence of Public Broadcasting in Australia". *Australian Journal of Communication*, No. 4, July-December, pp 21-28.

Bosi, P., 1980, "Ethnic Press - A question of survival", *Media Information Australia*, No. 15, pp 34-36.

Browne, D. R., 1994. Book review of Husband, C. (ed), A Richer Vision: the Development of Ethnic Minority Media in Western Democracies. Communication and Development Series, John Libby & Co., 1994. in *Intermedia*, October/November, 1994, Vol. 22, No. 5, pp 46-47.

Bureau of Immigration and Population Research: Community profiles - 1991 Census - Malta-born, September 1994, AGPS, Canberra.

Cantor, M. G., 1971, The Hollywood TV Producer - His Work and His Audience. Basic Books Inc., New York.

Castles, S, 1992, "Australian Multiculturalism - Social Policy and Identity in a Changing Society". Chapter 11 in Freeman, G. P. and Jupp, J. (eds), Nations of Immigrants - Australia, the United States, and International Migration. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 184-201.

-1987, "A New Agenda in Multiculturalism?". An occasional paper written for the conference Whither Multiculturalism. Institute for Immigration and Ethnic Studies, La Trobe University, Bundoora.

Castles, S, M., Kalantzis, M. and Cope B., 1986, "The End of Multiculturalism?" Monograph 24. Full version of the article 'W(h)ither Multiculturalism?' (1987), Australian Society, common ground, Annandale, NSW.

Castles, S. et al., 1988, Mistaken Identity - Multiculturalism and the Demise of Nationalism in Australia, Pluto Press, Sydney.

Cauchi, M., 1990, Maltese Migrants in Australia. Gozo Press, Gozo, Malta.

Chomsky, N., 1985, "The Bounds of Thinkable Thought", *The Progressive*, October, pp 28-31.

Clyne, M. G., 1986, 'Multilingual Australia: Implications for Libraries" in Whitehead, D. and Holmes, A. (eds), Directions for Diversity: Proceedings of the Second National Conference on Multiculturalism and Libraries. Melbourne.

Community Broadcasting Association of Australia, Codes of Practice [Radio], Alexandria, NSW, ACN 003 108 030.

Cunningham, S., 1992, Framing Culture: Criticism and Policy in Australia. Allen and Unwin, Sydney.

Cunningham, S., and Turner, G. (eds), 1993, The Media in Australia, Industries, Texts, Audiences. Allen & Unwin, Sydney, NSW.

Curthoys, A., 1993, "Feminism, Citizenship and National Identity", *Feminist Review*, No 44, Summer 1993: 19-25.

Doueihi, J., 1980, "Ethnic Press - Its Role and Influence". *Media Information Australia* No 15: 38-40.

Elliott, P., 1972, The Making of a Television Series - A Case Study in the Sociology of Culture. Constable, London.

Fiske, J., 1989, Reading the Popular. Unwin Hyman, Boston.

- 1987, Television Culture. Methuen, London.

Foddy, William, 1993, Constructing Questions for Interviews and Questionnaires - Theory and Practice in Social Research. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Foster, L, and Stockley, D, 1989, "The politics of ethnicity: Multicultural policy in Australia" in *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, Vol 10 No 2:16-33.

Freedman, B., 1974, "A Proposal for Ethnic Broadcasting in Australia". Paper delivered at the Conference on Public Radio Broadcasting, Australian Government Centre, 3-4 July 1974, in *Conference*, mimeo, 1974.

Freeman, G. P, and Jupp, J, (eds), 1992, Nations of Immigrants - Australia, the United States, and International Migration. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Frendo, H., 1988, "Maltese Settlement in the English-Speaking Countries: The Australian Case", Maltese Community Council (Victoria) Library, Paper No 139.

-1986, "The Maltese: Who Are They?", *The Democrat*, Valletta, Malta, 13 December 1986.

Galla, A., 1994, "The Rhetoric and Reality of Cross Cultural Heritage" in CIRCUIT Conference, Melbourne 1993, *Enhancing Cultural Value: Narrowcasting, Community Media and Cultural Development*, 85-89.

Gans, H. J., 1980, Deciding What's News - A Study of *CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek*, and *Time*. Vintage Books, New York.

-1964, "The Creator-Audience Relationship in the Mass Media: An Analysis of Movie Making" in B. Rosenburg and D. M. White, Mass Culture: The Popular Arts in America. Free Press, New York.

Gieber, W., 1964, "News is what Newspapermen Make it" in Dexter, L. A. and White, D. M. (eds), People, Society and Mass Communications, Free Press, New York.

Gouldner, A., 1976, The Dialectics of Ideology and Technology. Macmillan, London.

Gunew, S., 1990, "Denaturalizing cultural nationalisms: multicultural readings of 'Australia'" in H. Bhabha (ed.), Nation and Narration, Routledge, London.

Gunew, S. (and G. C. Spivak), 1993, "Questions of multiculturalism". Chapter 14 in During, S. (ed), The Cultural Studies Reader, Routledge, London.

Hall, S., 1993, 'Culture, Community, Nation', in *Cultural Studies*, Vol 7, No 3, pp 349-363.

- 1992, 'The Question of Cultural Identity' in S. Hall, D. Held and T. McGrew (eds), Modernity and its Futures, Cambridge, Polity, 273-316.

- 1977, "Culture, the Media and the 'Ideological Effect'" in Curran, J. et al., Mass Communication and Society, Edward Arnold, London.

- 1973, 'Encoding, decoding in Television Discourse', Occasional Paper No. 7, Birmingham:CCCS. Reproduced in During, S. (ed), 1993, The Cultural Studies Reader, Routledge, London, pp 90-103.

Hall, S., Held, D., McGrew, T., (eds), 1992, Modernity and its Futures, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Hartley, J., 1987, "Invisible Fictions: Television Audiences. Paedocracy, Pleasure", *Textual Practice* 1, 2:121-138.

Henningham, J., 1988, Looking at Television News, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne.

Hill, B., 1986, "Oz Radio Now", *Media Information Australia*, Number 41, August, pp. 6-10.

Jackson, T. & L. Marson, 1992, Ethnic Radio Broadcasting Training Needs Analysis. Prepared for the Dept of Transport & Communications, Arts Training Australia, May. Quoted in Patterson, R., 1993, "Two Nations, Many Cultures: The Development of Multicultural Broadcasting in Australia and Canada". *Australian-Canadian Studies*, Vol 11, Nos 1& 2 (Special Double Issue, pp 17-41).

Jakubowicz, A. et al. (eds), 1994, Racism, Ethnicity and the Media, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

Jakubowicz, A., 1994, "Australian dis(contents): film, mass media and multiculturalism" in Gunew, S. & F. Rizvi (eds), Culture, Difference and the Arts, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, NSW.

-1989, "Speaking in Tongues: Multicultural Media and the Constitution of the Socially Homogeneous Australian" in Wilson, H. (ed), Australian Communications and the Public Sphere. Macmillan, Sydney, NSW. pp 105-127.

-1987, "Days of our lives: Multiculturalism, Mainstreaming and 'Special' Broadcasting". *Media Information Australia*, 45, August 1987:18-32

-1984, "Ethnicity, multiculturalism and neo-conservatism" in Bottomley, G and de Lepervanche, M. (eds), Ethnicity, Class and Gender in Australia. Allen and Unwin, Sydney.

Jankowski, N. W., 1991, "Media contexts - Qualitative research and community media". Chapter 9 in Jensen, K. B. and Jankowski, N. W. (eds), A Handbook of Qualitative Methodologies for Mass Communication Research. Routledge, London.

Jankowski, N. W. and Wester, F., 1991, "The qualitative tradition in social science inquiry: contribution to mass communication research". Chapter 2 in Jensen, K. B. and Jankowski, N. W. (eds), A Handbook of Qualitative Methodologies for Mass Communication Research, Routledge, London, pp 44-74.

Johns, B., 1992, "SBS: Coping with a Strange Idea", in Goodman, D. et al (Eds), Multicultural Australia, the challenges of change, University of Melbourne.

Jupp, J., (ed), 1993, "The Challenges of Diversity - Policy Options for a Multicultural Australia", AGPS, Canberra.

King, N. and Rowse, T., 1990, "'Typical Aussies': Television and Populism in Australia". In Alvarado, M. and Thompson, J. O. (eds), The Media Reader. BFI Publishing, London: pp 36-49.

Kukathas, C., 1993, "Multiculturalism and the Idea of an Australian Identity" in Kukathas, C, Multicultural Citizens - the Philosophy and Politics of Identity. CIS Readings 9, Multiculturalism Research Program, The Centre for Independent Studies Ltd.

Kumar, K., 1977, "Holding the Middle Ground: The BBC, the public and the professional broadcaster", Chapter 9 in Curran, J. et al. (eds), Mass Communication and Society, Edward Arnold, London, pp 231-248.

Law, M., 1986, Public Radio: where is it headed and will it get there? *Media Information Australia*, Number 41, August, pp 31-35.

Lindlof, T. R., 1995, Qualitative Communication Research Methods. Sage, California.

McBarnet, A., 1980, "The Professionals", *Media Culture & Society*, Vol. 2 No. 2, April, pp 101-102.

Mattelart A. and Piemme J., 1980, "New means of communication: new questions for the Left", *Media, Culture and Society*, Vol. 2, No. 4, October, pp. 321-338.

McCoy, T. S., 1990, Voices of Difference: Studies in Critical Philosophy and Mass Communication, Hampton Press Inc., New Jersey.

Meadows, M., 1994, "The Way People Talk. Indigenous Media Production in Australia & Canada", *Media Information Australia*, No 73, August, pp 64-73.

Mishler, E. G., 1986, Research Interviewing - Context and Narrative, Harvard University Press, Mass.

Mortensen, F. and Svendsen, E. N., 1980, "Creativity and control: the journalist betwixt his readers and editors", *Media, Culture and Society*, 2, 169-177.

O'Regan, T., 1994, "Introducing Critical Multiculturalism", in O'Regan, T. (ed.), Critical Multiculturalism, *Continuum, The Australian Journal of Media & Culture*, Vol 8, No 2, pp 7-19.

O'Regan, T., (ed), 1993, Australian Television Culture, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, NSW.

Petruchenia, J., 1985, "Multiculturalism in Australia: a new direction or consensus ideology?" in Thorpe, R. and Petruchenia, J. (eds) (with assistance from Lesley Hughes), Community Work or Social Change? An Australian Perspective, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.

Pettman, J, 1992, Living in the Margins - Racism, Sexism and Feminism in Australia, Allen and Unwin, Sydney.

Pool, I., D., S. and Shulman, I., 1964, "Newsmen's Fantasies, Audieces, and Newswriting" in Dexter, L. A. and White, D. M., (eds), People, Society and Mass Communications, Free Press, New York, pp 141-159.

Poole, R., 1989, "Public Spheres". Chapter 1 in Wilson, H., (ed), Australian Communications and the Public Sphere, Macmillan, Sydney, NSW.

Potts, J., 1992, "Music on Public Radio", *Media Information Australia*, No. 64, May, pp. 17-23.

Riggins, S. H., 1992, Ethnic Minority Media - An International Perspective, Sage, London.

Robinson, J. et al., 1982, "Television journalists and their audiences" in Ettema, J. S. and Whitney, D. C. (eds), Individuals in Mass Media Organizations: Creativity and Constraint, Sage, Beverly Hills.

Runciman, W., 1982, A Treatise on Social Theory: Volume One. The Methodology of Social Theory. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Ryan, B., 1989, "Wither Public Radio?" *Media Information Australia*, No 53, August, pp 49-56.

Schiavoni, F., 1992, "The Case for Linguistic Pluralism" in Goodman, D., O'Hearn, D. J. and Wallace-Crabbe, C, (eds), Multicultural Australia - the challenges of change. Scribe, Newham, Vic. pp 38-43.

Schlesinger, P., 1978, Putting 'Reality' Together - BBC News. Constable, London.

Schultz, J. (ed), 1994, Not just another business: Journalists, Citizens, and the Media. Pluto Press, Monash University, Melbourne.

Seneviratne, K., 'Multicultural Television: Going beyond the rhetoric". *Media Information Australia*, No 66, November 1992, pp. 53- 57.

Sinclair, J., 1994, "Communication Media and Cultural Development" in M. Breen (ed), Enhancing Cultural Value: Narrowcasting, Community Media and Cultural Development. Proceedings of a CIRCUIT Conference held at CIRCUIT, Melbourne 4 December, 1993.

Sklovsky, G. A., 1980, "Special Broadcasting Service and Ethnic Radio Broadcasting in Australia". *Media Information Australia* No 15: 15-29.

Smolicz, J. J, 1983, "The Rhetoric of Multiculturalism". An Occasional Paper presented at the 3rd Ethnic Politics conference, Australian National University, Canberra, pp 1-10.

Subervi-Velez, F. A., 1986, "The Mass media and ethnic assimilation and pluralism: A review and research proposal with special focus on Hispanics". *Communication Research*, 13(1), 71-96.

Tebbutt, J., 1989, "Constructing Broadcasting for the Public" in H. Wilson (ed), Australian Communications and the Public Sphere. Macmillan, Melbourne, pp 128-146.

Terry, Les, 1994, *Not a Post-modern Nomad: A Conversation with Stuart Hall on Race, Ethnicity and Identity*. Unpublished paper. Victoria University of Technology, Melbourne.

Tiffen, R., 1989, News and Power. Allen & Unwin, Sydney, NSW.

Tuchman, G., 1978, Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality. The Free Press, New York

Turner, G., 1994, Making it National - Nationalism and Australian Popular Culture. Allen & Unwin, Sydney, NSW.

Walters M., Introduction to ANZJS's symposium "Globalisation, Multiculturalism and Rethinking the Social", *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 30, No. 3, November 1994, pp 229-234.

White, D. M., 1964, "'The Gatekeeper': A Case Study in the Selection of News", in Dexter, L. A. and White, D. M. (eds), People, Society and Mass Communication. Free Press, New York.

White, N. R. and White P. B., 1983, Immigrants and the Media - Case Studies in Newspaper Reporting. Longman Cheshire, Melbourne.

White, R., 1981, Inventing Australia. Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

Yeatman, A., 1994, "Multiculturalism, Globalisation and Rethinking the Social". *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 30, No. 3, November 1994, pp 229-234.

York, B., 1986, The Maltese in Australia. Australasian Educa Press, Melbourne.

-1988, 'Maltese male immigrants in Australia in the 1920's', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, Vol 9 No 2, p.17.

Zangalis, G., 1994, "Ethnic Community Broadcasting: Meeting the Challenge in the Media Revolution". Paper presented at the 14th National Community Ethnic Broadcasting Conference, Perth, Sept. 9-11, 1994.