

The Scramble and Partition for Content: The Place of Africa in a Globalised Programmes Market

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Introduction

Like in the pre-colonial days, there is a new struggle and partition for Africa. This time the struggle is not limited to physical territories or the natural resources, it is in fact, the struggle for the heart and soul of the African through its mediated content.

Every year, around the world, programme makers and producers converge for the business of selling content. The global programmes market run into billions of dollars. Well established programmes markets have emerged after the patterns of the globalization of the world market space. With media content highly monetized and commoditized. Outcomes are regional marketing hubs for programme content market and distribution. In America, there is **NAAB**, in Holland there is **IBC** Amsterdam, in Singapore is **BROADCAST ASIA**, **MIPTV CANNES** for France, **SITHENGI** in South Africa and perhaps **AFRICAST** in Nigeria. These are globally recognized content markets whose monetary value is too large to appropriate.

Content, according to Esiri (2002) is the soul of the broadcast industry. Content is so crucial because it fuses the multi-dimensionality of entertainment culture and politics and of course profit. The television and video format or medium especially presents itself as a good vehicle for the portrayal of programme content. Thus programme content is a big income earner. Because the broadcast industry, is content driven. The American film and TV Industry according to Milano (2010) is comprised of 3.5 million professionals including advertisers, lawyers, actors, directors, make-up artistes and the rest. **Comcast**, for instance is the US's largest cable company with revenues of 36 billion dollars in 2009. It runs 10 specialty channels. NBC is the general electric owned entertainment group that includes universal studios, It's revenues are grossed at about 15.4 billion dollars. The group includes TV network and TV studio, eight specially run channels.

Aside its potential of money making, the television, has emerged as a crucial area of study in popular culture. It is indeed the subject of intellectual and academic discourse. This is so because of the level of impact that it can bring to bear on the behavioral patterns of people and societies. Television, Video and film have become over the years not only veritable tools for entertainment, information, and education; they have more essentially become a tool of nationalism. All over the world the modern communicator is in the forefront of cultural promotion or preservation. That is why the programmes market, is not just a market of products, it is market place of ideology . philosophy ,politics and diplomacy.

