



Ideological Horizons

IN MEDIA AND CITIZEN DISCOURSES

Theoretical and Methodological Approaches

Birgitta Höijer (ed.)

NORDICOM

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Introduction

Birgitta Höijer

This volume is a result of the research programme “Ideological Horizons among Media and Citizens” bringing together senior researchers and doctoral students in Media and Communication Studies with a specific interest in the basic ways in which the media discursively make sense of contemporary society, and the ways in which the public, through the media, deal with and negotiate ongoing changes in society. Transnationalisation and globalisation of economy, technology, politics, and travel and immigration are fundamentally changing social life; processes of deregulation, commercialisation, privatisation and individualisation are pervading society; international terror threats, environmental risks and violent events force people and institutions to judge threats and risks, etc. These ongoing changes are not only structural material processes, but are also deeply ideological, albeit not in any simple uniform way. Inscribed into them are certain repertoires of cognitions and emotions, ways of making sense of reality that play important roles for the manner in which power or dominance is established, legitimised and promoted by institutions and social groups.

Though we are aware that *ideology* is a much-debated and controversial concept with a long history, and is sometimes locked away in some dark closet, we will (anyway) argue for its usefulness in media research. As expressed by Nohrstedt (this volume) we need a theoretical concept for “grasping the development of ideas and discourses beyond individualised and idiographic mapping of the flow of ideas and thoughts over time or between members of society”, and in line with van Dijk (1998) we consider ideologies to be observable in various discursive practices. This is said without advocating one single definition. On the contrary, a certain plurality of meanings has the advantage of opening up spaces for discussion and cross fertilisation. As for many other social concepts we may accept that ideology is a somewhat fuzzy concept including a number of different members of a large and varied family (cf. Wittgenstein’s (1974) concept “family resemblance”). This is also reflected in the contributions to this volume.

By ideological *horizon* we want to emphasize both the breath and the boundaries of the discursive sense-making of the media and of the public. Within hermeneutics, the concept of horizon (or rather “horizon of expectation”) signifies the historically and culturally conditioned assumptions or conventions that are implicit either in the verbal meaning of a text or in the interpretive strategy of a reader (Jauss, 1982).¹ In similar way we may say:

[I] ideological horizons refers to defined ways of making sense of a complex reality; it concerns collective modes of symbolic production and interpretation that are recurrently articulated and practised in order to cognitively and discursively structure the world (Höijer, Nohrstedt & Berglez, 2004).

The breath of ideological horizons thus refers to the manifold of social and cultural phenomena, events, and situations that may be presented and/or interpreted within the same ideological horizon, for example, a nationalistic one. The boundaries refer to the specific limitations inherent in the ideological horizons and how other dimensions are excluded from the perspective. A horizon, according to Gadamer (1977: 99, my translation), is “a field of vision which comprises and encloses all that is visible from a given point”. Unlike a horizon in a landscape, which is easy to detect, and may for the open-minded promise an unknown beyond, something interesting and different to discover, discursive ideological horizons and what lies beyond them must be critically deconstructed in order to be recognized. The volume presents various theoretical perspectives and methodologies for doing so.

The first contribution, “Ideological Horizons. Outline of a Theory on Hegemony in News Discourse” is by *Stig Arne Nohrstedt*. He takes his point of departure in a critical discussion of the ontological and epistemological limitations of traditional Marxist ideology theory and argues for a more dynamic ideology concept – ideological horizon – based on Habermas’s notion of the public sphere and critical discourse analysis (CDA). He reveals the analytical richness of this concept by elaborating it in relation to communication as a multilevel phenomenon including six discursive horizons: the referential, the ontological, the epistemological, the reflexive, the utopian, and the action horizon. The analytical potential is illustrated with examples from mediated discourses on “the global war on terrorism” (GWOT).

Birgitta Höijer argues in “A Socio-Cognitive Perspective on Ideological Horizons in Meaning-Making” for the necessity of including concepts of mind and cognition, and regarding ideological horizons as socio-cognitively embedded in meaning-making processes. She argues that narration, belief, and emotion are building blocks of mind, and that inscribed into them are ideological horizons. Based on these analytical units, a methodology for analysing ideological horizons in media and citizens’ discourses is proposed and exemplified with concrete examples from reception research. She finally emphasizes the need to be open to finding divergent ideological horizons, since neither texts nor people’s cognitions are homogeneous and logically consistent.

In the contribution "The Ideological Horizons of Citizenship: National Media as Discursive Bridge", *Ulrika Olausson* discusses the ideological horizons of citizenship with respect to identity and participation in an increasingly globalised world. From the critical standpoint that there is an apparent lack of empirical evidence related to theories on the processes of globalisation, her argumentation starts from a series of empirical studies of citizens' meaning making about crisis situations extensively covered by the media. One conclusion is that national identity still seems to be a forceful mechanism in the interpretation of media texts about events on various levels of the globalisation scale. Olausson argues for a citizenship in which the national and the global perspectives mutually reconstruct each other and the need for media to function as discursive bridges for dissident voices and communities.

In the next contribution "Border Journalism and the Articulation of National Horizons", *Johan Östman* outlines a theoretical and methodological framework for specifically analysing national horizons in media and citizens discourses, and discusses how such ideological horizons work to establish boundaries beyond which society cannot be imagined. He first presents a conceptual theory of nationality (based on Winther Jørgensen) and discusses its potential for media studies. In so doing he adds an important distinction between the representational and communicative axes of articulation. He then provides some empirical examples by analysing "border journalism", here representations of immigration and drug trafficking in news journalism.

Joel Rasmussen discusses in "Ideological Horizons in the Media: Mental Illness and Violent Crime" how ideological horizons operate in processes of meaning-making around mental illness and violence. Bringing in empirical examples from the media coverage of a number of violent events, among others the murder of Swedish foreign minister Anna Lindh, he shows how an ideological horizon is operating beneath stereotypes and simplified causal explanations. He thoroughly deconstructs the specific discursive mechanisms by which violence and mental illness are causally connected in the media, such as repeating individualized and dispositional causes, referring to a popular culture of stories, and restoring meaning to the "meaning-less" by emphasizing the madness, irrationality, and randomness of acts.

Tanja Kamin analyses the ideological horizons of health and healthism in "Mediatization of Health and 'Citizenship-Consumership' (Con)Fusion". She argues that the mass media, together with public health authorities, hold a central discursive role in constituting the identity of a modern "healthy" citizen, and discusses how the media support and interfere with the political concern that people live long and healthy lives. Her conclusion is that the media spread, as well as exploit, the authoritative and demanding voice of medical discourse, and together with other economic forces they transform collective needs and social obligations into individual interests: the realm of consumer choice and private responsibility. She supports her argumentation with empirical data from Slovenia.

In “The Making of an Employable Individual”, *Marinette Fogde* discusses and analyses ideological horizons in contemporary working life, more specifically, what she labels the discourses of flexibility and employability. She argues that they are global in scope, and related to political changes. She elaborates their ideological meaning and regards an ideological horizon as a horizon of thinkability related to a horizon of “truth”, something that is constructed as normal in terms of what is thinkable and practisable. She also analyses and presents some empirical examples from a web site for students on their way to working life, and homepages and leaflets from a white-collar union giving advice in job seeking. A theoretical point of departure for her discussion is Foucault’s concept governmentality.

In the concluding contribution “For A Transnational Mode of Journalistic Writing”, *Peter Berglez* presents a vision of how ideological horizons of the transnational and the global can be implemented in national journalism. Berglez critically discusses the limitation of present journalistic practices, which tend to construct reality from the ideological horizon of the nation state. He argues that transnational and global journalism may be seen as extensions of local journalism, and that the same basic criteria can be used as a theoretical reference point. He claims, somewhat provocatively, that a relevant mode of global journalism is the kind of journalism that manages to apply the principles of local journalism to the world as a whole.

It is our hope that this volume may stimulate new research on ideological horizons in varied discursive practices of societal relevance, and contribute to a critical discussion of in particular media’s role and potential as a powerful sense-maker in contemporary society.

Everett Thiele has proofread the English in all the contributions to the book, for which we would like to thank him.

Notes

1. In hermeneutics, however, horizons are also reflexive tools for researchers analysing, for example, historical texts, enabling a better understanding of them.

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Ideological Horizons

Outline of a Theory on Hegemony in News Discourse

Stig A. Nohrstedt

Any analysis of ideologies/.../ which fails to include an analysis of the corresponding *institutional mechanisms* is liable to be no more than a contribution to the efficacy of those ideologies. (Bourdieu 1977:188)

"We have to make sure, above all, that our mind is not halved by a horizon"
(Amartya Sen, 2006:186)

Although elusive and, in the traditional interpretations, restricted by a national ontology, the concept of ideology is nevertheless needed in critical social research. The chapter presents an elaboration of the concept of ideology for analysis of dynamic multilevel communication by outlining a theory of ideological horizons. Inspired by Habermas's theory of the public sphere as well as critical discourse analysis, it is suggested that the degree to which ideological horizons – at several levels, such as representation, ontology, epistemology, reflexivity, utopianism, and legitimate actions – reveal systematic coherence can be used as analytical indicator of ideological hegemony applicable in media and communication research.

Introduction

The concept of ideology as used in political and social sciences has a rather well known history from scholars such as Francis Bacon, Antoine Destutt de Tracy, Karl Marx, Antoni Gramsci, Karl Mannheim, and others (see Nohrstedt 1986 for a brief overview in Swedish, see also McLellan 1996, Rose 2006). It has been used for various purposes, but more than anything else it has been an intellectual hammer for smashing, if not heads, at least adverse ideas.

In the history of social science the importance of Marx and Mannheim for the subsequent interpretations of the notion certainly surmounts other scholars' impact. But the fact that Napoleon Bonaparte too found the concept handy

as a defamatory weapon says something about its political usability (Kennedy 1979). Precisely this potential intellectual-political power makes the “ideology-card” a trick that many can play, which for some scholars made it unqualified for scientific use (Ando 2000, McCarney 1980, here from Rose 2006:114-115). It is “difficult to avoid the rueful conclusion that all views about ideology are themselves ideological” (McLellan 1996:2, cf. Bell 1988, Popper 1969:215-216).

But, however complicated and contradictory the concept as such seems to be, and how easily it may slip between one’s fingers when pursuing ideology analysis, it nevertheless has resisted all attempts to erase it, and returns in new disguises and wrappings. The reason for this is the theoretical and political needs of grasping the development of ideas and discourses beyond individualised and idiographic mapping of the flow of ideas and thoughts over time or between members of society. In studies of opinion-building, propaganda warfare, election campaigns, public relations activities, etc., when all is said about how the outcomes of the communication processes shall be explained there is still a residue which has not been fully accounted for. For example questions such as why the target groups, the citizens, etc. in so many instances, as it seems, willingly subordinate themselves to the promoted messages, even at the expense of their own interests?

Some kind of ideological power needs to be invented to fill this “dark hole” in most communication studies that are intended to scrutinise political and societal power.

For example, according to Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in *The German Ideology* 1845-46 (Marx & Engels 1973) the role of the intellectual elite – the “ideologues” – was to reconstruct history in accordance with the power interests of the regime in place, i.e. to create a narrative that legitimised the existing privileges and the inequalities between different citizens.

As a theoretical hypothesis this is really a bold conjecture, and like any of its kind it suffers from a missing link between the general macro-level, where it may make some sense, and the specific and detailed micro-level. That is where the individuals’ interpretations vary widely, and the concrete connections to the regime’s legitimacy interest are difficult to prove or even simply lacking (cf. McLellan 1996:69). Its political usefulness in power struggles is evident, but whether it can be applied in research is a contested issue. Some scholars prefer to avoid it with the argument that it does not stand up to rigorous demands for precision and empirical foundation. Others, like this author, consider it valuable as a theoretical concept and suggest that it should be explored and elaborated further in order to withstand the tests of intellectual and scientific standards. This is the first challenge when approaching ideology for analytical purposes, to define it in such a way as to make it applicable to research.

The second challenge has to do with its historical background in relation to the present stage of social and political development. To be more precise: a major problem with the genealogical meaning of the ideology con-

cept is its limitations to nation-states. To use Ulrich Beck's phrase, it is based on a national ontology a "methodological nationalism" (see interview in Rantanen 2005:255). Globalisation processes and the new world order after the end of the Cold War press for revision of those theories which routinely contextualise their reasoning within the frames of national borders. Developments like these, according to post-modern theories, mark the present political-social-economic-cultural etcetera situation and point out the need to elaborate new theories and notions which may appropriately grasp the realities of the fluid historical situation.

Some have suggested that in the present world a new type of ideology is gaining ground, namely a globalisation ideology which speaks in the interests of and is promoted by the leading multi-national conglomerates and the international agencies with neo-liberalism on their agenda, such as the World Bank and IMF (Mattelart 2002). That is one interesting response to the mentioned challenges. Another would be to consider the relevance of some of the more recent developments within media studies and media theory in connection with socio-cognitive perspectives on agenda-setting, priming and framing effects, and mediatisation theory, as well as critical discourse theory – to mention some of the relatively new approaches that can provide productive input to the theoretical discourse on ideology.

The aim of this article is thus to contribute a theoretical perspective based on the concept of *ideological horizons* (IH), which suggests an integrated and synthesising approach with regard to the above-mentioned achievements of media research in the fields of opinion-building, propaganda analysis, discourse analysis, and reception studies. However, in order to limit the space and scope, I will conduct this exploration focusing only on the IH-concept and its potentials and problems when applied in media research. First, I will discuss the ontological and epistemological aspects of the concept ideology and, second, I will elaborate in what ways the concept of IH can provide a prescription for some shortcomings of the concept of ideology.

The traditional conception of ideology and its problems

If one surveys the genealogy of the ideology concept there are a few common denominators that indicate the basic theoretical ideas. For a start, the concept refers to ideas or beliefs, i.e. to mental entities that in various ways are linked to one or another type of social agents, be it social classes, groups, or professions. Examples are the philosophers about whom Marx and Engels wrote in *The German Ideology*. Finally the notion of ideology by implication questions the truth-value of these beliefs that are categorised as ideological. Hence, the three cornerstones in this analytical framework are mental representations, social agents and (flawed) truth-value. It is not my aim here to systematically recapitulate the history of the concept in regard to these

three components, because that would take too much space and in any event such overviews are available in a number of seminal studies (cf. van Dijk 1998:ix, see also Billig 1982, Eagleton 1991, Larraín 1979).

Ontologically speaking then, an ideology is constituted by cognitive and emotive mental entities, and in its implications it amounts more or less to a worldview, a comprehensive way of looking at things – in particular when it comes to the social and political world. In orthodox Marxism the mind-maps of the dominant class, the bourgeoisie, and the dominated class, the proletariat, respectively are in opposition to each other and by implication instruments for the promotion of each specific class' interests. Where the dominant class or the political elite sees a process of democratisation, the subaltern class only experiences a more sublime form of repression and exploitation.

But in classical Marxist theory the ideologies of different classes do not only differ in terms of material interests, they also represent more or less truthful perceptions of the social world. While the dominant class to some extent fools both itself and the dominated class, according to orthodox Marxism, the working class is – at least potentially – equipped with a more valid comprehension of both the present and the future. In its canonised version Marxism claimed that the accurate – the scientific – knowledge of history and society was manifested in the so-called historical materialism inherited from Marx and Engels and further elaborated by Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin.

In less doctrinal interpretations, such as for example those developed by Georg Lukács and Antonio Gramsci, the pretensions were somewhat more modest and theoretically more sophisticated, but even in their writings one can find the same basic analytical structure – ideas, agents, and degrees of validity. One of the founding fathers of the sociology of knowledge, Karl Mannheim, exchanged the working class as the carrier of a valid worldview with the intellectuals, and thereby in essence turned Marx and Engels upside down, at the same time as he made a distinction between ideology and utopia. Both notions refer, according to Mannheim, to “states of mind” that are “incongruent with reality”. But whereas ideology contributes to the legitimacy of the present social order, utopian ideas tend “to burst the bonds of the existing order” (Mannheim 1972:173). It is precisely the critical and dialectical relation between the concept of utopia and ideology that is at the centre of Jürgen Habermas's interpretation of the marxist tradition (Benhabib 1986:228-229). I will come back to this below.

In many respects later theoretical perceptions of the ideology concept have provided definitions that aim at avoiding some of the serious problems that accompanied the orthodox interpretation. In particular the assumptions, not to say axioms, of the subordinated class being owners of the truth of the societal and historical “laws” have been forsaken for less deterministic claims about the role of different agents and the outcome of the class struggle. The ontological link to the working class as the “historical subject” has been replaced by more relativistic views according to which not only can the workers be wrong in their understanding, i.e. be led astray by “false con-

sciousness", but also that others agents, like the intellectuals that Mannheim wrote about, could have grasped some parts of the truth of society and history.

Instead of concentrating the analysis only to the main actors that were spelled out in the Historical Manifesto, later Marxist analysts integrated all social agents into the idea that the social position frames the beliefs and worldviews of the subject. Teun van Dijk, a rather recent representative of this intellectual descent, for example defines ideologies as: "...the *basis of the social representations shared by members of a group*" (van Dijk 1998:8, italics in original). Thus van Dijk is considerably more open as to the agents that are socially conditioned in their beliefs and mental representations. Another component that he leaves behind is the epistemological assumption about certain truth-values being connected to different social agents. But van Dijk still does not challenge the problem of the contextual association between the nation-state and the ideology.

There is hardly any doubt that the nation-state is a central agent in both Marx's as well as Hegel's theory and this has also had effects on how the concept of ideology has been interpreted. Theoreticians like Gramsci and Louis Althusser conceive ideology primarily as a system of perceptions and ideas that endow the nation-state's political policies and activities with legitimacy.

The globalisation processes make this framing of ideology rather problematic. This does not mean that the nation-state has totally lost its importance for the development of society, or as a vital ideological agent, but it does mean however that the ideology theory needs to be complemented and developed with regard to the processes of meaning construction at the global or trans-national level. The ideology-producers to an increasing degree provide legitimating conceptions of how the international development should be understood. In this case it is probably not primarily nation-states that are the central agents of ideology production, but rather international organisations like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the United Nations. The nation-states are still represented and active in these processes, as well as in forums subordinate to the international power structure. But globalisation implies today that ideology is produced and reproduced in new discursive orders, and hence its links to the class structure and national policies have to be reconsidered.

Besides the traditional ideology theory's ontological (the references to the notions of consciousness, class, and state) and epistemological (the axiom about false consciousness and the determined historical development) limitations, there is also another theoretical conundrum in need of re-thinking, namely how ideological struggles and changes should be understood. In previous contributions to the theory of ideology, class-consciousness, in combination with the utopian idea of a historical liberation from repression, comprised the main components of the theory. The working class should be victorious also in the ideological struggle due to its understanding of class repression and own interests. The diffusion and acceptance of certain ideas or perceptions such as

the notions of the class society and its dethroning were the crucial mechanisms for change according to this theory. The domination of the ruling class should be attacked by revealing the falseness of its legitimating ideas, e.g. the claims that its supremacy was based on eternal principles such as justice, freedom, and civil rights. Further, it was to be proved that these ideas were not confirmed by the social reality, since they were blind to the basic social, political, economic, etc., differences between the classes.

In the social democratic version, the ideological struggle became purely an enlightenment project – not only the working class members but also the capitalists should be convinced by rational and relevant arguments. The revolutionary, communist branch of the socialist movement, however, held that enlightening the workers about their class interests was only a first step that should be followed by an armed revolution, because the dominant class could not be expected to give up control over the means of production and the state apparatus voluntarily. But in both cases the ideological struggles were about getting specific ideas concerning the existing societal conditions to be regarded as the truths.

Later contributions such as the theory of the public sphere by Jürgen Habermas (1991) and critical discourse analysis (e.g. Fairclough 1995, van Dijk 1988, Wodak et al. 1999) have provided insights which make it possible to develop a more dynamic theory of ideology that avoids the historical determinism and the crude class-struggle perspective of the traditional Marxist theory. Such a dynamic ideology theory should also, as a point of departure, integrate the criticism of various versions of indoctrination theory of the media that among others James Carey (1992) and Michael Schudson (2003) have elaborated. According to this critique the importance of the media for the development of society and its power relations is primarily to be found in their influence as cultural institutions, and in that capacity by the ways they encourage “a community of sentiments” and “a public conversation” (Schudson 2003:26). The concept of ideological horizons is an attempt to integrate these achievements in a revised theory of ideology which brings to the forefront that ideological power is exercised in close connection with identity politics practices.

A dynamic notion of ideology – contributions to a theory of ideological horizons

What the Frankfurt school or critical theory offered to communication research is in many respects linked to the ideology-critical project which in a similar way as with the work of Marx, Lukács and Gramsci aimed at enlightenment and exposure of the ideological perceptions that block the road to liberation and empowerment. For the leading scholars like Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno and Jürgen Habermas it was/is a theoretical-political project and not

anything like a violent revolution. The limitations, contradictions and delusions of the dominant ideas about the societal conditions upon which the dominant elite based its power should be brought into the daylight and criticised.

The philosophically designed critique among other things involved the analysis of different scientific disciplines, their methods and knowledge interests (Habermas 1987). In the theory of the public sphere that Habermas developed in *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*, originally published in 1962, the ideology-critique transformed more than before into a grand historical and theoretical perspective on public communication in Europe, from the ancient Greek city-states to the modern West European societies after 1945. No doubt the ideology-critique is present in Habermas's analysis of the decline of the bourgeois public sphere and how the historical development, contrary to the dominant ideas, should not simply be conceived as a process of democratic ideals steadily becoming realised.¹ But Habermas's seminal work also comprises an attempt to describe how communication structures and principles of legitimation have changed from ancient to modern times. As such the concept of the public sphere offers a first step towards a dynamic ideology concept which puts the competition between different social groups and classes about position on the agora, an arena where sense-making and opinion-building vis-à-vis the state is taking place, at the forefront of the analysis.

However this spatial metaphor for social communication, which by the way has much in common with the thought that the media is a platform for democratic political communication, is not the only meaning linked to the notion of the public sphere. It also links to the idea of a representation of the public will, i.e. that there is a special institution in society that claims to represent the community or the common interest. Both historically and contemporarily this representation is expressed in the struggle about how public opinion is constructed and interpreted (or vice versa).

Even in this respect the theory of the public sphere casts light upon the competition for power positions at the agora. More specifically, it illuminates how different social institutions through history have expressed a variety of pretensions of representing the people or the public – from the claims by the absolute monarchy to be the father and the guardian of the people to the opinion institutes and media analysts of modern society. It follows more or less automatically from the spatial analogies of the theory of the public sphere – the public sphere as a special space in society, an agora or a “virtual stage” (Habermas 2006:19) – that pertaining to the borders of attendance and expression in the public sphere becomes a strategic mechanism for exercise of power on this platform.

This “border-control” comprises one of the ideological power mechanisms that I will call the *ideological horizon*. Access is not distributed equally among groups and interests in civil society, and for example the state has a continuous, although varying, privilege to attend and make policy declarations. Hence the horizon constitutes a limitation for those experiences and per-

spectives that have the best chances to influence the construction of what appears to be the public opinion.

But the concept of ideological horizon is further inspired also by another theoretical tradition of importance for communication research. Discourse analysis is closely related to language and linguistic disciplines, but its roots are also found in the social sciences. This is particularly evident for the *critical* discourse analysis (CDA), which has been my point of departure here. While the theory of the public sphere focuses on *who* are allowed to cross the borders to the agora, the CDA researcher is primarily interested in *what* is and *how* it is expressed in the public discourse. Consequently the critical discourse analyst studies what themes are appearing, and the semantic expressions and narrative structures that are used.

Within the special CDA-branch of discourse analysis, it is crucial to explore the relations between the discourse and its context, i.e. to analyse in what ways the discourse is connected to political projects and practices (Fairclough 1995, van Dijk 1998: 8-9, Wodak et al. 1999). In the heritage from Michel Foucault this is often aimed at analysis of, for example, how discursive borders are maintained by ex-communication of certain themes, linguistic forms, and rhetorical means. But, as in Foucault's study of "the archaeology of sexuality", ideological dominance – for example in the form of taboos – can be exercised not mainly by censorship and silencing of "the forbidden" but rather through a frantic and continued exposition of "It".

In relation to the concept of ideological horizon this implies attention, not only to manifest discursive themes and forms, but also to the latent meanings addressed as well as to the themes and meanings in the societal context that are systematically not mentioned at all. In addition to Foucault's analysis of the bourgeois class during the Victorian period and its obsession with defending sexual morality, it is worth noticing that this was driven as much by curiosity and fascination as by the intention to establish control over the masses' lechery (Foucault 1990, cf. Frykman & Löfgren 1979).

In other words, a CDA-project worth its name is not limited to analysis of the articulated meanings and how they are constructed, but also includes the contextual needs and interests that are represented by the actual discourse. This contextual dimension of CDA Fairclough has tried to handle with the notion of "discursive order". By this concept he refers to "all the discursive types" used by or in a "social institution or social domain" (Fairclough 1995:55). Analysis of orders of discourse should look for the internal and external relations of such orders (ibid:63). For example, the order of discourse of the media is marked by its tensions between public and private orders of discourse (ibid). According to Fairclough this analytical concept is useful in studies of "cultural power and hegemony". However, this is not within an approach that he calls "the code model", but rather in a Gramscian approach that does integrate a plurality of discursive practices (ibid:67).

Hopefully the above is sufficient to indicate in what ways CDA, through its focus on discursive meanings in relation to the societal conditions, adds

a special dimension to the concept of ideological horizon that could be called the horizon of the contextually related meanings, or in other words, the borders for what the public discourse may address and what opinions and views are permitted as well as the types of discourses used. The theory of ideological horizons accordingly describes as central ideological mechanisms the processes of border-control through which, firstly, access, voice, and authority in the public discourse are attached to social agents, and, secondly, the various discursive forms by which legitimacy is assigned or withdrawn from a certain dominance- or power-relation.

The advantage of the concept of horizon in this context is its connotations both to inclusive and exclusive processes – a horizon divides what we can from what we cannot see, matters that occupy our consciousness from those that we are not aware of. Ideological struggle is thus perceived as a tug-of-war between opposing social and political forces about what truths or taken-for-granted assumptions about society etc. that are the central sense-making and opinion-building issues in public discourse.

Thus far I have been following the “classical” traditions in communications studies in my attempt to develop a dynamic ideology-theory approach for the field. The epistemic dimension – to use Habermas’s phrase – is very much at the heart of this endeavour. But even if this complement to the theory of ideology is not without importance, it is not as such a sufficient reason for introducing the new concept “ideological horizon”. Its analytical richness is more obvious when applied to and elaborated in relation to communication as a multi-level phenomenon.

Ideological horizons and the analysis of multi-level communication

At least when the purpose is to analyse political discourses in general, including debates, speeches, and staged media events in connection to political institutions, but also news reporting and other mediated forms of communication of general relevance, the following discursive levels seem relevant to consider:

- 1) *Referential* horizon: the borders of representations.
- 2) *Ontological* horizon: the inner nature of reality and its external borders.
- 3) *Epistemological* horizon: the borders of the potential knowledge.
- 4) *Reflexivity* horizon: the transcendental borders of own perceptions.
- 5) *Utopian* horizon: the borders of the wanted and possible situation.
- 6) *Action* horizon: the borders of legitimate actions.

The struggle about ideological hegemony is acted out at all these levels, and only when the different discursive levels are coherent, i.e. mutually confirming, can we say that an ideology is established and that it has the possibility to become hegemonic. Below I will explore the potentials of the suggested theory with examples from the mediated discourses on “the global war on terrorism” (GWOT).

Armed conflicts are not only fought by military means on land, sea, and in the air. Media have increasingly become a battlefield on which journalists are both targets and weapons in the propaganda war. Propaganda is a conscious, strategic form of communication aiming at strengthening the forces and war opinion on one’s own side and disarming the enemy side by symbolic means (Jowett & O’Donell 1992:4, van Dijk 1998:87, 99, 184). But the propaganda concept should not be mixed up with the concept of ideology. It is true that propaganda strategists strive towards getting a particular view or perspective on the conflict generally accepted. But in contradistinction to an ideology, especially a hegemonic one, the “propaganda image” is temporary, fluent, and concrete in a sense that clearly makes it differ from the more permanent, general, and abstract character of the ideology.

However, propaganda discourses interact with ideologies, for example by taking some general assumptions from the ideology as granted or by attacking some other such assumptions in order to prepare the ground for promotion of one’s own view. In connection with the GWOT, the propaganda war is conducted within a discursive order that in principle stakes out two types of borders: on the one hand, borders for what factual news and interpretations that on a daily basis may be relayed to the general public, and, on the other hand, borders that delineate the ideological horizons which surround the more comprehensive sensemaking with respect to the conflict.

The ideological horizons consequently in- and ex-clude discourses about the international global situation, and have a noticeable inertia in relation to the mediated news discourses on daily politics and other current events. It can tentatively be stated that the ideological discourse in relation to the GWOT establishes the fundamental interpretative paradigm that outlines what forces and historical processes that mark the global development and, further, how these forces and processes should be assessed and where the development is heading. Examples of decisive ideological divides are the perceptions about the power-structure of the present world, what the USA as the only remaining super-power represents – anything from its narrow national interests to the hope of global democratisation – or what importance should be assigned to ethnic-cultural-confessional distinctions between different “civilisations” (Huntington 1993) when it comes to present and future conflicts. With these points of departure one could for example talk about globalisation as an ideology or even a “totalizing ideology” (Mattelart 2002:591, cf. Rantanen 2005).

War on terrorism as a struggle about ideological horizons

In terms of a discursive order GWOT can be described as a contested meaning-field where propaganda images and ideological horizons are attacked and defended by symbolic means. In order to illustrate the analytical possibilities of the proposed approach I will now exemplify this struggle with reference to the different discursive levels mentioned above.

1) The level of the *referential* horizons: A propaganda war may simply be described as the belligerent parties' operations which by symbolic means aim at depicting their own side as good and the enemy side as evil. Propaganda research has in detail described the concrete forms of these operations, for example how casualties on one's own side are discursively constructed in terms of what have been called "worthy victims" whereas casualties on the opposite side are "unworthy" (Herman & Chomsky 1988). Another example is how the hostilities are depicted in opposite terms – violence from the own side with reference to the good *intentions*, while the opposite side's actions are framed with reference to their negative *consequences* (Luostarinen 2002).

Through these discursive operations civilian casualties may be described with completely different measuring sticks: civilians suffering from the enemy's attacks are victims of consciously inflicted destruction. They bear evidence that he does not hesitate to commit the most evil acts and that he totally ignores the laws of war when they are in the way of his goals. This shall be compared with the diametrically opposed view that civilian casualties caused by one's own military forces are not by any means intentional, but on the contrary tragic collateral damage that "We" try to avoid at all costs out of respect for international law and human rights.

This pattern, which seems to mark the propaganda war in all modern international conflicts, contributes on a more fundamental level to supporting a referential horizon that makes the discursive order favour the hegemonic parties' perspective over any other possible perspectives on the conflict. As an ideological horizon this discursive operation departs from an identification with / inclusion of one party (our side) which at the same time is a demarcation against / exclusion of the opposite party. In the GWOT this is apparent for example in the Swedish media's preoccupation with the intentions of the White House, Washington D.C., and the internal US controversies and other preconditions for the superpower's foreign policy.

That this is not just a question of the media devoting great attention to the superpower as such, but also an ideological identification and inclusion was, if not earlier, evident after the 9/11-terrorist attacks. Several European newspapers, including the editorial in *Dagens Nyheter*, carried headlines such as: "Today we are all Americans". But usually these types of horizons at the referential level are not manifest in media discourses, but rather come up in

the fault-lines of the ideological discourse. There it may be detected by terminological sensitivity and assimilation of the rhetoric of the superpower, as when European politicians and media adopted the language of the Bush administration and labelled the 9/11-attacks the starting point and the provocation that initiated the GWOT. Instead of calling them – although horrendous and massive – crimes (Mral 2004:17, cf. Rosenberg, 2002). Or, when in a radio interview the Swedish foreign minister in connection with the invasion of Iraq in 2003 agreed that the resistance against the occupation could be labelled a liberation struggle – a statement that quickly disappeared from the newscasts and made few headlines in the newspapers the next day.

In order to avoid misunderstandings, I would like to underline that these comments on the media focus on the US as agent in international politics are not meant to be a critique of the amount of attention that is devoted to the superpower's political actions. Instead this critique implies that the problematic side of the matter is that this excessive attention is seldom matched by comparative interest to other parties' actions and views. Therefore the critique aims at the lack of pluralism and comprehensiveness in the news discourses. But more than anything else the analysis aims at illuminating the more or less conscious ideological consequences of these routinised, daily priorities and journalistic modes of writing.

2) The level of the *ontological* horizon. Even at the ontological level the discursive order is upheld by borders that are established in the identification process through which distinctions and hierarchies between *We* and *Them* are constructed. Otherisation on the ontological level is connected to an ideological horizon that makes it possible to perceive and describe *Them* as in their essential nature deviating from and less valuable than *Us* and the community *We* belong to.

In the GWOT this means that ontologically speaking the ideological struggle is about whether essentialist perceptions depicting the opponent as being evil in a biblical sense, i.e. demonic and connected to eschatological ideas about a mankind divided into those people who worship God and the impenitent others lost to the devil, as expressed in the rhetoric of President George W. Bush after 9/11 2001 (see Mral 2004:20-22). For example when he declared that: "Today, our nation saw evil, the worst of human nature" (ibid:21). Other similar expressions used by President Bush are: "crusades", "axis of evil", and on 16 September 2001 when he assured that "The governors and mayors are alert that evil folks still lurk out there" (ibid:22).

But this essentialism does not necessarily take its symbolic and rhetorical images from a fundamentalist religious culture in order to ontologically function as an ideological horizon. The same US president has also exploited more secularised variants. For example when he declared that the terrorists' hate is targeting the USA as the stronghold of democracy and the free world. The important thing is the way in which this kind of essentialism provides

conditions for the meaning-creating processes with regard to the conflict with the implication that the meaning of concrete actions is not emerging out of their consequences but from who is behind them. The acts performed by *Them* can therefore by definition be characterised as evil even when their consequences – except for the essentialist interpretation – are good.

Discursive expressions of this ideological horizon would for example be the clamorous appeals in the media – also Swedish – directly after 9/11 2001 not to pay too much attention to the reasons why the terrorist attacks were aimed at the USA in particular. As Peter Berglez has noted, in the media discourse terrorism is explained tautologically by making it its own cause when framed within an ontology based on the distinction between good and evil – irrespective of a religious or a secular superstructure (Berglez 2006).

It should be added that the GWOT among other things is also marked by the fact that different and opposite essentialistic points of departure are competing about where and how the ideological horizon should be drawn in the discursive terrain. Muslim fundamentalists, with or without links to al-Qaeda, preaching war against the Occident take position at the opposite side and in that way mirror the Christian Right of the US political spectrum. However besides the two polarised blocks the GWOT is also politically marked by other competing ontological views, whereof a real-political one, which emphasises power and material interests, probably is the most important alternative. All in all there is every reason to count on a number of ontological perceptions competing in the meaning-creation struggle within the discursive order related to the GWOT.

3) The level of the *epistemological* horizon. Perceived as an ideological horizon this discursive level is also not innocent from the point of view of the war of minds. Epistemology is not separated from social and political interests, and partial interests are often lurking behind scientific controversies about truth criteria, theory testing, methodology, etc. According to Bourdieu it may for example have to do with competition about material, social or cultural capital (Bourdieu 2005, cf. Garnham & Williams 1986:117). Or, to use the vocabulary of Habermas, it may be a question of different knowledge interests, which in their turn are conditioned by different societal and institutional values (Habermas 1987).

In connection to GWOT, but also generally when it comes to ideological struggle for public opinion, what I will call the *epistemology of the transparent reality* is at the centre of my analysis. Mediated discourses, and in particular news reporting, start from an understanding of knowledge as based upon facts about concrete events, actors' statements, motivations and actions and – in some cases – the consequences of these actions (cf. Schudson 2003:48 ff.). The sequence of events can be understood by relatively simple observations and does not demand deeper analysis or theoretical reflections. Or, to put it in other words: the massive transmission of facts under "the tyranny

of details” in the last instance produces oblivion and meaninglessness (Berggren 2006, quote from Horkheimer & Adorno 2002). The ideological importance of the epistemology of the transparent reality is due to its power-relatedness – it provides a substantive discursive superiority for those actors that possess enough material, political, and military power to influence the development of events and to produce authoritative policy declarations. With this epistemological backdrop it also becomes important ideologically and politically in what ways the concrete events are constructed discursively.

In the GWOT the antagonists are making huge efforts to, first, perform spectacular events with a strong symbolic appeal, and, second, control the meanings that are assigned to the crucial actions and events. The terror-attacks against the US economic, military, and political centres on 9/11 2001 aimed, from what can be deduced from the available information, to position al-Qaeda on the international political scene and, in particular, to promote its agenda amongst the Muslim populations and other peoples in the Third World. The symbolic value of the targeted buildings and the shock-effects of the horrible consequences, with thousands of innocent civilians’ deaths cannot be mistaken.

While the terrorist network managed to get the media attention in this unbelievable way, the superpower USA could use its longstanding position as the most central actor on the scene of world politics for agenda-setting responses to the attacks in speeches, declarations, and political decisions, which immediately got undivided media attention. The epistemology of the transparent reality opened the agora wide open for the White House to influence the interpretations of the events, as well as how to perceive the actions taken by the superpower and its allies when challenging the terrorist threat. But the enormous power on the side of the superpower also implies that the White House and the Pentagon can exercise ideological influence over the international opinion by a variety of actions – both military and civilian. This becomes most evident when the USA mobilises its military superiority for the purpose of demonstrating preparedness to defend its interests of security and dominance. The symbolic importance of such actions, for example the invasions of Afghanistan 2001 and Iraq 2003, can hardly be overestimated, and the messages about the US global interests and operational capability cannot be misunderstood either – even without explicit political motivations or declarations.

But whatever dependence on the power structures that the epistemology of the transparent reality imposes upon the media, even for the most powerful actors it creates some open flanks in the ideological warfare. The public exposures of the torture in the Abu Graib prison or the war crimes against the population of Fallujah made major headlines globally and compelled even the superpower to conduct extensive political and PR-efforts to reduce the public opinion damage. Not to mention the problems for the White House to handle the strength of the resistance against the occupation of Iraq, which unavoidably make the initial promises to liberate the Iraqi people from tyr-

anny and to establish democracy and human rights seem doubtful or perhaps even mendacious (Wijk 2006).

In other words, although the epistemological horizon of the news media discourse leaves the superpower USA with a substantial ideological superiority, its dominance is not absolute. First, concrete events occur continuously that are beneficial to other competing ideological positions and which force the USA to invest a great deal in the ideological struggle. Second, the dominant epistemological horizon is further challenged by a philosophy that explores and reveals what Slavoj Žižek – with an elegant travesty and elaboration of Donald Rumsfeld's famous triad about "known knowns", "known unknowns" and "unknown unknowns" – has called the "unknown knowns" (Žižek 2006). Serious investigative journalism aims at expanding the professional epistemological horizon into areas where it may uncover how the very language and terms used in political discourses mystify rational communication.

4) The level of *the reflexive* horizon. Media reflexivity is closely related to the epistemology of news journalism, which I have named the epistemology of transparent reality. By and large the media discourse lacks the capacity to manage the more fundamental knowledge problems and this also narrows the ambitions when it comes to self-critical reflections about the quality of the relayed information. In addition the ideological horizon of media reflexivity is conditioned by institutional interests, like the media's dependency on access to information sources at various power centres and its credibility in the eyes of the audience. All this implies that the media discourse stakes out narrow borders for self-critical reflections and comments in the media. It is especially difficult to admit any systemic flaws or tendencies in the knowledge that the media offers for sale – not to mention the reluctance to do anything about these deficits.

Nevertheless the media can be relatively open about individual pieces of information or source problems in the daily production. The typical pattern is to correct an invalid but previously published news report while giving the impression that this was an isolated mistake, which may occur now and then, but has no general significance as a problem for the profession as such.

Therefore, the instances when about a year after the "battle of Iraq" was over both the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* committed self-criticism are typical, but also unique as examples of media reflexivity (*New York Times* 2004-05-26, *Washington Post* 2004-08-12). In itself it is then not unique that media admits mistakes in public, but the self-criticism that NYT and WP presented was nevertheless extra-ordinary because of the magnitude of the issue, i.e. misleading the public in a matter of literally life and death. It certainly is remarkable that both the most prestigious newspapers confess that they have failed in critically investigating the arguments presented by the administration for the military intervention, and that they, as explained by Bob Woodward, had become part of "groupthink" with respect to the WMD

issue (*Washington Post* 2004-08-12). However, as the press ombudsman at the NYT stated, these *mea culpas* could only be taken seriously provided that they are followed by a comprehensive analysis of the variety of ways by which this group-thinking had caused flaws and pitfalls in the coverage of the conflict (*New York Times* 2004-05-30). To my knowledge, no such thorough self-critique has yet appeared.

Besides the lack of reflexivity in regard to systematic dependencies which follow from the epistemology of the news media discourse, that is transparent reality, another limitation is the lack of capacity or interest in elaborating a self-critique when it comes to the visual reporting. When any self-reflective comments appear at all it is usually the content of the written or vocal texts that is considered. Photos and other sorts of visual material seem to have an unclear status with respect to media ethics and in relation to the professional claims raised by journalism as an institution.

In a previous study of three Swedish dailies' coverage of the Iraq war 2003 it was intriguing how contradictory the texts and visual images – in particular the graphic illustrations and the popular press's headlines – were when it came to reporting the Bush-Blair allegations against Iraq about possession of weapons of mass destruction. While the texts strongly questioned the accuracy of the allegations, the graphics were not seldom based on the premise that the allegations were valid, for example by showing maps with Iraqi midrange missiles equipped with chemical or biological weapons, or with headlines according to which Swedes visiting neighbouring countries feared Iraqi attacks with weapons of mass destruction (Nohrstedt 2005).

Contrary to the self-critique by NYT and WP for their misleading information – in the texts – the Swedish press have hardly used their agora for revision of flaws in the visual reporting (cf. Andén-Papadopoulos 2005:142, 144). With respect to the visual images it seems that media reflexivity is lagging behind the commercial and technological development, because obviously the visual representations are increasingly important for the news narratives both in terms of content and when it comes to attracting audience attention.

5) The level of *the utopian horizon*. When the media discourse is exposed to ideological influence it also means that borders are put in place limiting what idealised and desired situations that are drawn into the meaning-making processes. This is even more important at the ontological level and for how the conflicting parties are discursively related to possible outcomes, as when the ideological horizon at the ontological level is based on eschatological beliefs.

In the GWOT one can recognise this both in the discursive constructions by which the leading Western powers are related to utopian and the fundamentalist Islamist movements to dystopian outcomes of the conflict. The US/UK side is assumed to promote democracy, freedom, human rights, and liberalisation of the markets and oil resources, simply because that is what this

side has declared as its objectives. Rarely does the media question these declared intentions unless in the form of some doubts concerning the actual capacity to realise them. This goes for the news discourse. For the meaning creation this implies that all related positive expectations about the outcomes are related to this very side in the conflict, whereas the other side is discursively constructed as a threat to this utopian end.

But in other mediated discourses – foremost the editorials and the commentaries – this horizon may be visible through the attention that is directed towards different interests and hidden agendas. But what possible alternative situations that could be beyond this horizon are not up for discussion. The discursive order permits debates about what are the central objectives – whether installing democracy is the primary aim together with the dethroning of Saddam Hussein or access to oil wells – but the possibility that the opposite side in the conflict – whether the Saddam Hussein dictatorship or the paramilitary groups that are resisting the occupation – should represent anything but dystopian outcomes of the conflict is never mentioned.

In this respect the horizon at the utopian level coincides intimately with the ethnocentric identification with the parties representing the Western, i.e. media's own, culture. In relation to this utopian horizon it is hence typical that there is never space for any real negotiation of the Western lifestyle in the media discourse (cf. Lynch & McGoldrick 2005:276).

6) The level of *the legitimate actions'* horizon. The borders of legitimate actions are of fundamental discursive importance in connection with international and intra-national conflicts. International laws, including the Geneva Convention and the UN Declaration of the Human Rights together with the Security Council's resolutions are constitutive for conflict reconciliation and thereby for the meaning-construction that takes place in conjunction with armed conflicts. The International Court in the Hague and other special international courts for the handling of war crimes interpret this system of rules, including common law, and decide on sentences for violation of international laws and the human rights.

The USA has so far refused to sign the convention on the International Court of War Crimes and also, in the so-called New World Order and the GWOT, opted for its self-declared right to defend its national interests as defined by Washington, including the right to "pre-emptive strikes" against perceived threats (cf. Agrell 2003). Since 1989 the USA has both under the Clinton presidency (the Kosovo conflict) and under G.W. Bush (the Iraq war) attacked sovereign states with military force without the backing of the UN Security Council. Due to this a continued controversy concerning the horizon for legitimate conflict resolution emerged.

Discursively the conflict has resulted in border adjustments or in any case in a heated discussion about where the boundaries should be drawn for legitimate actions to stop or avoid potential or factual genocide and crimes

against humanity. The US/UK alliance has challenged the previous international hegemonic order and pushed through – if not accreditation – at least acceptance of its standpoint. This has been seen in the case of the Swedish prime minister Göran Persson's vague comments with respect to the NATO intervention in former Yugoslavia 1999, when he said that the operation was not legal, but was understandable, and the International Kosovo Commission's similar conclusion that it was illegal but legitimate (*Kosovo Report* 2000).

This, together with the fact that the false accusations that allegedly were the reasons for the Iraq war 2003 also were publically criticised for being unconfirmed or even fabricated (Nohrstedt 2005), vindicates something about the discourse that the Nobel prize winner in literature, Harold Pinter, pointed out in his speech in connection (actually online from his home) with the award ceremony. Namely that the USA had showed all its cards in the open and not even tried to pretend that it had any intention to yield to the international laws and the UN. The declared policy of the USA is to gain "full-spectrum dominance", i.e. total control on land, at sea, in the air and space as well as with respect to all therewith related natural resources (Pinter 2005).

To the extent that the discourse at the level of legitimate actions has tight limits for the representation of the superpower's operations it is not primarily the result of disinformation and cover-ups on the part of the USA, but rather the consequence of conscious self-censorship on the part of the media. Probably the two most crucial forms of self-censorship are firstly, the dependence on the US/UK leaders' own motivations and declarations when covering the war alliance's actions rather than their consequences, and secondly, the tendency to look in other directions when obvious violations of international laws are committed by the US/UK.

However, the explanation of this bias in the reporting is hardly a pro-US/UK attitude among journalists and editors – at least not when it comes to, for example, Swedish media – but has to be deduced from the previous level, the utopian level, and from the condition that it, within its horizon, does not seem to host any alternative to the dominance by the American superpower. From this follows that it becomes discursively compulsory to accommodate and to maintain friendly relations with the American power-holders, politicians as well as business leaders and colleagues within the large international media conglomerates based in the US. To borrow an expression from Bob Woodward, the main explanatory factor behind the horizontal borders at this level seems to be "groupthink" at a trans-national level (*Washington Post* 2004-08-12).

Advantages of the suggested approach

The theory of ideological horizons has some advantages over the usual approaches within ideology analysis. It provides an elaboration of the concept of hegemony and offers more precision to empirical analysis because

of its multi-level perspective which emphasises the criteria of coherence as decisive for whether an ideology should be regarded hegemonic or not. Further it illuminates phenomena which otherwise are difficult to explain, like for example that a journalism, which at one level is open for critique against the actions taken by the superpower USA, because of the impact of the combined horizons at the end of the day may come out with a discourse which ideologically supports the interests and position of the superpower.

Furthermore, I contend that the proposed approach, in combination with its realism, reasonably well acknowledges the relative importance of the international and national power relations for the discursive order, at the same time as it avoids the deterministic mistake of excluding any opposition and challenges to the ideological domination. On the contrary the suggested approach invites reflection about discord and conflicts between different discursive levels, which under certain circumstances may widen the ideological horizons and lead to new dominance relations.

Although it certainly is true that the journalistic epistemology is an obstacle to deeper narratives about hidden agendas and to a more holistic perspective on the wars in the New World Order, the very same epistemology at the same time directs the focus towards concrete events and facts that in specific situations might end up in flagrant contradictions to the announced and promoted intentions and motivations, which otherwise occupy the horizons at the representational level. In particular reports about civilian casualties for the US/UK warfare could be elements of a news discourse that are more than difficult to assimilate within the horizons at the ontological and utopian levels.

The ideological hegemony is opposed – at least temporarily – when the contrasts between the various levels become too obvious. Depending on how the struggle about the extensions of the horizons ends, there is a theoretical possibility that a new ideology takes the hegemonic position because of a dislocation of the joint configuration of horizons, for example in such a way that the superpower cannot retain its advantageous position with respect to the combined discursive levels after 1989. Other interpretative paradigms may break through.

But even if that is not going to be the outcome of the event-oriented reporting in the media, nevertheless frictions and resistance will occur within the hegemonic ideological discourse. When “the good side’s” illegitimate and illegal actions are noticed, and in particular when they are represented visually, that will erupt above the surface and cracks will rock the discursive order and perhaps eventually tear it apart.

Note

1. The continuity of Habermas’s ideology-critical perspective is apparent and evident in his later works by his argument that the deliberative theory of democracy is a valuable point of departure for analysis and interpretations of empirical findings considering the “contingent constraints” of the public sphere in the media society (Habermas 2006:22).

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A Socio-Cognitive Perspective on Ideological Horizons in Meaning-Making

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This chapter focuses the socio-cognitive processes of interpretation and representation involved in ideological meaning-making and identity formation. Ideology, then, is about certain basic ways of conceiving and representing the social world, which may be related to specific groups or social categories, but which also may be of a more general nature, such as the ideas of the Enlightenment. Identity has to do with feelings and conceptualizations of oneself and one's belonging to certain groups or social categories, even abstract categories, such as mankind.

Ideological horizons are not present or represented as clear-cut propositions, but are socio-cognitively embedded in meaning-making processes. It will be argued that narration, belief and emotion are building blocks of media-related meaning-making, and accordingly inscribed into them are also ideological horizons. Based on these analytical units a methodology for analysing ideological horizons in media and citizens' discourses is proposed and exemplified with concrete examples from reception research.

Introduction

There has been a tendency to exclude concepts of mind and cognition from theories and research on processes of meaning-making and the mass media. I will not deny that such observable outward processes, such as the practices and routines of everyday life, play important roles in meaning-making. I will however argue that they are not as important as our life-long collected socio-cultural experiences that we carry within ourselves in the form of mental frames of reference or cognitive-emotional structures. It is necessary to include perspectives of mind and cognition – human social thinking – in theorizing and studying meaning-making. It is true that some cognitive theories are too individualistic in the sense of being ahistorical and non-cultural, for example, theories within the field labelled cognitive science, in which one

tries to simulate human thinking with computer models. But, at the same time these theories are strongly collectivist, claiming that there are universally shared patterns of cognitive processes. It is also true that social and cultural dimensions are often absent in the widespread “information processing paradigm”. There are, however, theories on cognition that acknowledge the collective social character and cultural embeddings of meaning-making. Such theories will be brought up in this chapter.

Remarkably, a methodological consequence of mainly regarding meaning-making as a set of situation-bound practices is particularism or situationism, that is, that we can only study specific situation-bound moments of meaning-making. According to Ang (1996:70-71) research should even emphasize “particularization over explanatory generalization, historical and local concreteness rather than formal abstraction, ‘thick’ description of details rather than extensive but ‘thin’ survey”. There obviously is a kind of situated individualism hidden here.

We may maintain that neither cognitive individualism nor situated particularism are good foundations for theorizing collectively shared, socially embedded and culturally somewhat stable, yet dynamic processes of meaning-making. I would like to emphasize “somewhat stable”, because neither people, nor institutions or texts are like chameleons continuously changing colour. The post-modern construction of a reflexive individual constantly changing identity is simply too exaggerated.¹ A basic assumption in this chapter is that both ideological meaning-making as well as identity formation do change over time within the bosom of culture, but that such transformation processes often are quite drawn-out. There are basic characteristics of established practices, discourses and interpretations that are strong and relatively durable, not least those stamped by ideology and identity. Institutions and people may however use varied aspects of a complex whole of ideological and identity horizons in different contexts. The complex whole of horizons may be theorized as *socio-cognitive structures of representations*. In order for a specific horizon to appear in human practices, discourses and interpretations there must be some related socio-cognitive representations in people’s minds that are triggered by the text or the situation, or both in combination.

This means that there is a now and a past, and that they are interconnected with thousands of threads. From the perspective of human social cognition and interpretation, at every moment in everyday life we are bearers of our cultural, social and collective past, or more precisely, bearers of our earlier experiences and interpretations, which are cultural, social and collective in nature and origin. The now is always understood through the lens of this past concealed in our bodies and minds, or in the words of Wagner and Hayes (2005:5) “[T]he voices of the past exist in the guise of our common sense”.

Outer and inner – the two faces of social experience

All human experience has two sides: an outer, facing social and cultural life and practices, and an inner, facing toward mental and psychic life. The outer and the inner are closely related, but they cannot be reduced to one and the same thing. Cognitive activity not only reflects social reality, it also interprets and reconstructs it. Socio-cognitive theory enables us to grasp these interpretive and reconstructive processes and to understand how external experiences are converted into internal images and ideas, which in turn form frames of reference for future interpretations and so on, in an infinite process. This also opens a space for change and development. If man was no more than a mirror of his or her external circumstances, then what we would have are closed, constant systems, which can only reproduce themselves, and in which humans lack all manner of intentionality and creativity. Who will there be to think new thoughts, to come up with new ideas?

Social cognition may thus be placed between structural determinism and personal voluntarism.

Ideology in a socio-cognitive perspective

Ideology is one of the most debated concepts within social science, with definitions ranging from marxism imbued accounts to general political accounts and accounts of common sense thinking in everyday life, such as by Billig et.al. (1988). The point here will not be to take a stand in this jungle of definitions. It is instead to bring into focus a socio-cognitive perspective in which ideology will be part of human social thinking.² Stuart Hall (1986:29) has come up with a definition of ideology that implies this:

By ideology I mean the mental frameworks – the languages, the concepts, categories, imagery of thought, and the systems of representation – which different classes and social groups deploy in order to make sense of, define, figure out and render intelligible the way society works.

This perspective has been further developed by van Dijk (1998) in his theoretical efforts to combine cognition, society and discourse into an overall outline for the concept of ideology. He maintains that:

Ideologies ... are not metaphysical or otherwise vaguely localized systems 'of' or 'in' society or groups or classes, but a specific type of (basic) mental representations shared by the members of groups, and hence firmly located in the minds of people. Thus, ideologies are not 'above' or 'between' people, groups or society, but part of the minds of its members.

Ideologies are, in his view, the foundation of the social cognitions shared by people, and he wants to “get down to the mundane job of describing what they actually look like” (ibid:6). Ideologies organize clusters of social beliefs and are manifested in discourses and in everyday social practices, and it is at these concrete levels, he states, that they can be empirically studied. This does not mean that van Dijk limits ideologies to mental constructions. On the contrary he emphasizes the importance of relating ideologies to social groups, group relations, institutions and social practices. “They typically [...] apply to fundamental dimensions of the group and its relations to other groups” (ibid:49). One example could be general socio-cognitive representations of us-and-them in terms of inclusion and exclusion, which legitimize common standpoints and actions.

A conclusion for media and communication research is that in order to study ideology one should analyse clusters of social beliefs that are openly or more implicitly manifested in media and citizens’ discourses. Racism, for example, may, as proposed by van Dijk (1998:291), be manifested in social beliefs around three core concepts: *difference*, *deviation* and *threat*, and be more concretely formulated in a number of specific social beliefs, such as “they are violent and criminal”; “they do not want to work”; “they use obscene language”; “they have bad customs”, and so on.³

The advantage of van Dijk’s account of ideology is that he demystifies the concept and makes it researchable. He does, however sometimes seem to construct descriptive taxonomies of ideologies as sets of coherent social beliefs, rather than a theory explaining how ideology works in society. The question of power is therefore somewhat underdeveloped. He states that it is the

... discursive and ideological control that will be taken as the main example of power and dominance, one that seems prevalent in contemporary ‘information and communication’ societies, in which knowledge and the access to the media and public discourse are the crucial resources to control the minds, and hence indirectly the actions, of others. It is here that consent and consensus play a fundamental role in the exercise of power and the reproduction of ideologies that support such power (van Dijk 1998:163-164).

However, the degree to which one should make power or dominance relations central to one’s ideological analysis may be a matter of personal research interests. For some, common sense notions as discussed by Billig et al. (1988) or Moscovici (2000) will be relevant. Power relations will be more of an explanatory level than an empirical level. Studying the spread of psychoanalytical thinking in French society, Moscovici (2000:67) concludes that it is established as common sense within various layers of society and is “elevated to the rank of a major ideology”. His key concept is “social representations” which is a broader, yet more vague, concept than the concept of social belief used by van Dijk (1998). Moscovici (2000:30-31) states that it is

related to Durkheim's concept of collective representations, but has to be considered as a phenomenon with structure and dynamics. They are socially, psychologically and culturally developing phenomena. In his work Moscovici has given social representations different definitions (see Augoustinos and Walker 1995) but he places social representations between concepts and perceptions: "they occupy in effect a curious position, somewhere between concepts, which have as their goal abstracting meaning from the world and introducing order into it, and percepts, which reproduce the world in a meaningful way" (Moscovici 2000:31). For Moscovici (2000:67) with his historically developing perspective on social representations they can enter into an ideological phase when they are "appropriated by a party, a school of thought or an organ of state". Others have also pointed out the close link between ideology and social representation. As Wagner and Hayes (2005:53) put it: "one can subsume the essential features and functions of ideologies for social-psychological purposes under the concept of 'social representation'". Moscovici (2000:67) also regards social representations as "independent variables, explanatory stimuli". They can, thus, explain interpretations, reactions and textual practices, though this does not mean that it is the only explanatory level.

Power would then be a question of the power of some social – or socio-cognitive as will be preferred by the author of this text – representations to spread, develop, survive and become long-lived, while others die out. Moscovici (2000) himself emphasizes the important role played by the mass media in modern society. Augoustinos and Walker (1995) point out interesting parallels between Gramsci's notion of hegemony and Moscovici's theory. People do freely consent to dominant ideas in society, take them for granted and accept them as common sense. Sperber (1996) offers an "epidemiological model" for how ideas can invade whole populations.⁴ For others analysing feminism, racism, inequality and so on, more explicit power relations may be more central.

Ideological horizons could, as defined by Höijer, Nohrstedt and Berglez (2004:3), be "ways of making sense of a complex reality; they concern collective modes of symbolic production and interpretation that are recurrently articulated and practised in order to cognitively and discursively structure the world". Three things can be noted here:

- (1) Ideological horizons are holistic frames, which may be somewhat vague and fuzzy compared to coherent and well-elaborated sets of social beliefs. The advantage of a degree of fuzziness is that it can capture both the gist of the ideological thinking and its variability (sometimes contradictions) in relation to the many specific time-bound manifestations. The fuzziness makes possible multiple and flexible uses.⁵
- (2) In specific discourses or social practices a mixture of different ideological horizons may be used and manifested, some more pronounced, others more in the background. Recognizing that we here are discuss-

ing socio-cognitive structures of representations we may, in accordance with Bartlett (1932/1995) argue that they operate as an active dynamic totality.

- (3) Ideological horizons are repeatedly used to make sense of a variety of social phenomena and are thus manifested over and over again. Repetition and recurrence are vital for the spread, survival and cementation of ideological horizons among citizens, in discourses and in society. The impact should not, however, be regarded as a question of frequency, but in qualitative, institutional, social and cultural terms.

Identity in a socio-cognitive perspective

Identity is basic to our ideological horizons. Van Dijk (1998) brings up the interconnectedness between processes of identity and ideology, and according to MacAdams (1993:81) ideological thinking serves as frames of reference for identity: "It locates the personal myth within a particular ethical, religious, and epistemological 'time and place'. It provides a context for the [life] story".

The concept of identity is discussed almost as much as the concept of ideology. It has, as pointed out by Kivikuru (2004:20) "roots in a wide range of disciplines – religion, political science, sociology, anthropology, linguistics and psychology (not to mention history)". Obviously there are many different perspectives on this popular concept, which nowadays often is discussed in relation to theories of late modernity. This will, however, not be in the focus here. Instead a socio-cognitive perspective on identity will be brought up claiming that social psychology can give important theoretical contributions to the study of identity positions in citizens' and media discourses.

A theoretical distinction is often made between two modes or types of identity, self-identity and collective identity (Thompson 1995), or between individual/personal identity and social identity (Augoustinos & Walker 1995). The former stands for the personal experience of being an individual with certain characteristics and a specific life story. The latter stands for the experience of belonging to certain social groups or collectives, constituted for example by age, profession, gender, ethnicity, or nationality. There are no clear-cut demarcation lines between these identities, and they are both intrinsically social (Augoustinos & Walker 1995, Jenkins 1996), or cultural (Camauër 2000). Some emphasize the collectivity of all identities, for others, such as Jenkins (1996) social identity is both individual and collective. Concerning processes of individualization in contemporary society (Bauman 2001, Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002), we may even argue that the experience of individual identities is increasing at the expenses of collective identities. According to Bauman (2001), the individualization of society and its

influence on everyday life is something that social research must recognize and take into consideration.

This process means that we to an increasing degree are set free from traditions and firm social structures such as class, nuclear family, and gender roles, and that we are "free", or rather, forced to select our own lives and manage problems by ourselves. We are even fated to make individual choices. In the words of Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002:4):

One of the decisive features of individualization processes, then, is that they not only permit but they also demand an active contribution by individuals. [...] Opportunities, dangers, biographical uncertainties that were earlier predefined within the family association, the village community, or by recourse to the rules of social estates or classes, must now be perceived, interpreted, decided and processed by individuals themselves.

They speak about a "precarious freedom" centred on imperatives such as think, calculate, plan, adjust, negotiate, define and revoke. "The choosing, deciding, shaping human being who aspires to be the author of his or her own life, the creator of an individual identity, is the central character of our time" (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002:23).

It is important to note, however, that both Beck and Bauman regard individualization as collectively forced upon us by neo-liberalism, the new global economy, commercialism, and so on. Individualization is a condition which is "not arrived at by a free decision of individuals [...] people are condemned to individualization" (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002:4). In other words we may talk about processes of individualization as ideological processes as well as identity processes.

However interesting it might be to take this discussion further, I shall instead bring up another basic aspect of identity, namely that of differences and similarities. These cognitive categories are often considered constituents of identity (Jenkins 1996). It is, of course, important to recognize that it is not differences and similarities as such that constitute identity but rather social cognitions of differences and similarities, whether they are realized/ materialized or not. They may be pure fantasies, and often are. Basically we are dealing with socio-cognitive constructions of us and them, inclusion and exclusion, in the minds and thinking of people manifested in social interaction and in different types of discourses. There are socio-cognitive theories that are of relevance here. *Schema theory*, which deals with how experiences and knowledge are organized in the mind and used in the interpretation and production of meaning, *attribution theory*, which deals with how people attribute causes, that is, explain their own and others' behaviour, and *stereotyping* all serve identity functions (for an introduction see Augoustinos & Walker 1995), as do *social representations* (Moscovici, 2000). Olausson (2005) has, for example, used social representations and attribution theory in combination with globalization theory when analysing identity positions

of nationalism in the meaning-making of citizens. Rasmussen (in this volume) applied attribution theory in a study of media representations of mental disorders and violence and concluded that the media creates violence-imbued group identities of people suffering from mental illness, which risks excluding them from “us” and stigmatizing them.⁶

It is further important to recognize mixed forms of identity. Both people and discourses are complex phenomena with the ability to manifest a manifold of identity positions, some of which are more pronounced in specific situations, while others remain more in the background. We may distinguish between identity positions at different levels of social reality: universal identity relating to human rights and democratic ideals, European identity, national identity, socio-cultural identity (different ethnic identities), local identity, social or socio-economic identity (gender, age, profession, class), sub-cultural identity related to common lifestyles, views and interests, and personal identities relating to more specific characteristics. From a socio-cognitive perspective, identity positions or mixed identities are constructed in specific everyday life situations as more than just a result of the circumstances. There must also be some related earlier experiences in the form of socio-cognitive memories and structures of representations, which are activated by situations, but in the mind of the interpreter. Different persons may, as a matter of fact, construct different identity positions in relation to the same situation.

In some post-modern versions of identity, changeableness is strongly underlined, giving the impression that people are constantly shifting identities. It is important not to get stuck in essentialism, but at the same time we should not go too far in proclaiming extreme vacillation of identity positions or external situation-bound determination. As argued by Kivikuru (2004:26):

Today, identities are not viewed as stiff and resistant to change, but they are assumed to adapt to the times, to the community and to the individuals belonging to the community. They are not very flexible and apt to change, but they do have that ability. Most identities are like bouquets, including both more and less easily changing components. An identity may be viewed as a mangrove tree, slowly and not so elegantly moving, but mobile in principle.

The narrative and the paradigmatic modes of thinking

At a very basic abstract level of social cognition Bruner (1986) distinguishes between two basic modes of cultural thinking, the argumentative or paradigmatic mode and the narrative mode. In the former, which is close to beliefs discussed earlier, concept-formation, reasoning and arguing play important roles, while the latter thinks by means of stories. Stories deal with sequences of events, characters and actors, and so forth – all the classic elements of narratives. They have dramatic qualities and some moral point. According

to Bruner (1986, 1990) we learn the narrative mode early in childhood, and use it in most of our everyday interaction with the world. It is concrete, and we mostly experience our lives – people, events, social settings, places – narratively. Our identities may also be formed in that mode. According to Giddens (1991:54) identity “is not to be found in behaviour, nor – important though this is – in the reactions of others, but in the capacity *to keep a particular narrative going*”. Identity is a life story, says McAdams (1993), often with a narrative tone of optimism or pessimism, or some narrative mixture of comedy, romance, tragedy and irony. We may carry within us many stories about ourselves. McAdams emphasizes concrete and lived experiences, but we may also include parts of public discourses in our life stories (Höijer 2000). For example when the media exposes crime and violence and negative trends in society, individual worries and pessimism may become a part of personal identities.

How separated or interconnected these modes of cultural thinking are, may, of course, be discussed. Are they just different levels of abstraction; are they manifested in different discourses, and so on. To some extent they certainly are manifested in different discourses or genres. For example, if we compare scientific discourses and everyday talk, we will certainly find that the former is more based on the argumentative mode and the latter more on the narrative mode. At other times they will be more mixed, as in news discourse. Ideological horizons and identity positions will be produced as well as interpreted in both forms of thinking. Stories may be powerful as instruments of ideology. When the media, for example, tells stories in words and pictures about the lives, cruelty and madness of political leaders, they may serve as effective propaganda for one party in a conflict. Enemy images of Milosevic and Saddam Hussein are two examples. And we may use abstract categories and arguments to confirm our identities and separate us from others: women are more caring than men; in our profession we need a good measure of intuition; I am an honest and moral person.

Emotions

For many the term “cognitive” signals intellectual, analytical and informative dimensions of human thinking excluding emotional aspects. This is, however, an out-of-date view in much contemporary social-cognitive theory. It is instead more and more being realized that emotions and cognitions are intrinsically interlinked, and that emotions are of critical importance for all aspects of social cognition (Bless, Fiedler & Strack 2004, Smith & Kirby 2001). Ortony et al. (1988:1) even maintain that emotions arise as result of certain kinds of cognitions, more precisely “as a result of the way in which the situations that initiate them are constructed by the experiencer”. Ross (1975) argues that psychoanalysis from the very beginning regarded affects as inte-

grally bound to cognitive processes in the form of unacceptable ideas, and Brewin (1988:10) points out how "experiencing emotions such as anxiety or depression may bring back memories of previous times when these emotions were felt". Emotions are thus natural and necessary parts in all meaning-making, at conscious as well as unconscious levels, and accordingly also important for ideologically coloured interpretations and identity positions. Although cognition and emotion constitute a functional unit, analytically, we may make a theoretical distinction between them.

Here it may be especially interesting to note the discussion on rationality and emotions within psychology and philosophy. If emotions were previously regarded as something negative hindering people from thinking and acting rationally, the positive role of emotions is today recognized theoretically, and demonstrated in empirical studies (see Ojala 2004). Emotions help people interpret and judge social situations and act suitably. Marcus (2002) claims that because people are emotional they are also able to be rational. Good citizenship and democratic engagement is based on the capacity to feel.

Philosophers have also recently criticized the long-lived traditional emphasis on rationalism as abstract reasoning in ethical theory. Instead they argue for the necessity of taking emotions seriously and integrating them in theories of moral thinking. Antonaccio (2001:129), for example, argues that "emotions are significant for ethics because they display the value-laden character of human consciousness". This is also mainly the view of Nussbaum (2001) in her elaborated work on the basic role of emotions in ethical thinking and in narration and social and political life in general.

Compassion is one of the emotions that Nussbaum discusses. It is "a painful emotion occasioned by the awareness of another person's undeserved misfortune" (Nussbaum 2001:301). We see the importance of socio-cognitive representations of social reality and the intrinsic relationship between emotion and cognition. Compassion is based on such cognitive beliefs as that the suffering of the other is serious, and that the suffering person does not deserve the pain. We may extend this to ideological horizons of global compassion related to victims of conflicts, wars and catastrophes in the world, as reported in the media. According to Sznajder (1998) public compassion originates in an abstract, theoretical and rational idea of humanity, not in religious charity. It is closely connected with the ideas of the Enlightenment and the humanitarian movements that arose in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, such as movements to abolish slavery, child labour, and so on. Today a public, and global, compassion can be related to the ideology of human rights.

The media display pictures of distant victims of civil wars, genocide, massacres and other violence against civil populations, and the audience may respond with different types of compassion (Höijer 2004). The suffering persons must, however, be considered to be innocent victims of some gruesome acts or circumstances. In international politics as well as in the media many victims never qualify as worthy victims (Herman & Chomsky 1988).

At a more general socio-cultural level, as common sense ideology, media and citizens discriminate between more and less ideal victims. Children, women and the elderly are often seen as helpless in a violent situation, and therefore they are more suitable as ideal victims than males in their prime (Christie 1996, Höijer 2004).

Identity positions also play a role in ideological horizons of global compassion. At best the “we” may be widened to include humankind through public discourses about distant suffering and violations of the ideology of human rights. Or we may be touched by some particular victims, such as pictures of children wounded in wars and conflicts. When a child shows its feelings by crying or looking sad, compassionate sentiments may be evoked both in relation to identities based on memories of being a child vulnerable to the treachery of adults, and in terms of our adult identity – our desire to protect the child.

At other times the identity position may mark distances and differences. Distance may, for example, be formed when the audience applies an us-and-them perspective in which the culture, mentality and way of life and behaviour of the others, that is, the suffering people, are dehumanized. With stereotyped thought patterns empathy can be warded off and one’s lack of involvement rationalized and legitimized. Why bother about people who are primitive and uncivilized and not like us: civilized citizens in democracies? Examples of different forms of compassion as well as distanced identity positions are given in Höijer (2004) and Olausson (2005).

Exemplification

From a socio-cognitive perspective, or from the point of view of meaning-making, in analysing media and citizens’ horizons of ideology and identity positions “belief”, “narration” and “emotion” are analytical categories to be highlighted. Each of them can be concretized, specified and broken down into subcategories in relation to some overall discourse, for example, racism, nationalism, or individualism. They may then also be brought together in a holistic perspective forming a synthesis with firm roots not only in theory but also in empirical data.

In a study of citizens’ reactions to and understanding of the murder of the Swedish foreign minister Anna Lindh in September 2003, heavily covered by the media, a mixture of ideological horizons could be traced in beliefs, narrations and emotions expressed in focus group interviews (Höijer & Rasmussen 2005). As an example I will here bring up an interview with immigrants with Syrian background.

Narration deals with concrete space- and time-bound situations, places, events and courses of events or storylines. There are people or characters involved, main characters and minor characters, there may be heroes, vic-

tims, perpetrators, and so on. Some narrations in the interview, which were coloured by ideological horizons, were more fragmented, others more coherent and elaborated. The first example below is a brief story demonstrating collective identity and mourning among immigrants with Syrian background. The identity position is that of a mixed ethnic and national (Swedish) identity. Anna Lindh was a very special politician for the immigrant groups interviewed, a politician with whom they felt a psychological nearness and familiarity. As two informants expressed: *"We have lost a very competent politician"*; *"In the political arena she was on the same side as all immigrants, the Middle East, the Balkan, and at the same time she was open, personal, reflective, critical."* She was perceived as a good person working for peace, as an ideal to look up to. As a public person portrayed in the media Anna Lindh may even have been better known than other native Swedes. For the immigrants their new national Swedish identity was brought forth in relation to Anna Lindh at the same time as their ethnic and collective family identities also were positioned. In the experience of grief, a unification process between national and ethnic identities may in fact have taken place.

The second example must be understood in relation to the strong critique of expanding violence and harm, individualization and lack of institutional trust and responsibility that the Syrian immigrants said characterized Sweden. The view that there is *"too much freedom"*, meaning that you also are free to commit crime and be rude and violent towards other people, was also expressed. In this second narrative, a critical view of the current situation in Sweden was an ideological horizon for interpretation connected to the identity position of being a hard-working immigrant. The story mainly seems to be based on personal experiences. Stories saying that there is no point in reporting crimes because the police cannot investigate and solve them are, however, recurrent in media reporting, and statistics presented in the media show extremely low levels of success. So the personal story told is also a more public story about the police, and in the interview the story is brought up to underline this. It can however be noted that the informants said that the police are not to be blamed, but the politicians who give them limited resources and have the legislative power: *"With no resources and wrong authorities the police will be powerless"*.

A service was held in her memory at our church. Children, women and men all stood up and prayed for her. It was a very special service. We uphold peace, and the entire congregation said the Lord's Prayer just for her.

In the morning when I arrived and saw that there had been a break-in in my shop I called the police: there's been a break-in. Okay, call the insurance company, we can't come. The insurance company says: Write a note, send in a claim. Three years in a row, racists came and wrote "Sweden for the Swedes", (Bevara Sverige Svenskt, BSS) on my sign. The third time, I was both disappointed and upset, and called the police: An officer came. Do you have any enemies?

No, I don't. These three letters, BSS, aren't about enemies. All he said to me was: listen, there are two powerless groups in this country, the police and the immigrants. We can't do anything, you can't do anything. We'll file a complaint and move on.

Beliefs may be explicitly expressed in clear propositions and arguments, but they may also be more implicit and hidden in what is said. It is also important to note that beliefs may express uncertainty and ambiguity. They only occasionally have the status of knowledge in the sense of being something factual and verifiable. In the interview treated here, beliefs mirroring a nation-critical ideological horizon were expressed in many propositions and arguments.

To give a few examples. The informants wondered why nobody intervened when the foreign minister was attacked in a public place full of people, and found ideological explanations in the form of a lack of responsibility on the part of citizens and institutions. A lack of exercise of power and control in contemporary Sweden was emphasized. A trans-national comparison made one informant conclude: *"I think if this event would have happened outside the Swedish borders, say in the Middle East, he would have been caught immediately."* The beliefs were formulated in words such as:

It's a question of civic responsibility, how people should protect each other. Sweden has lost this.

There's a law in Sweden: you're not allowed to catch a thief. You mustn't get involved in a conflict. It's none of your business.

Parents have no power over their kids. The police have no power over the citizens. Who is supposed to protect whom? If someone come up and hits me, I'm not allowed to hit him back.

The system doesn't work so well. Neither the security service (SÄPO) nor the police are especially strong.

The civic responsibility of citizens is perceived as being hindered by legislative power demanding passivity from individuals in threatening collective situations. Implicitly, the identity position of being a good, responsible citizen, who takes action in critical situations, cognitively frames the thinking. A lack of effective action and competence is further seen as undermining institutional, socially responsible practice. As one informant said: *"If the police don't have the resources to put in, and not are given the right orders they will be powerless. It (good practice) must be built into the system."* A moral and normative ideological horizon is apparently framing the socio-cognitive attribution of responsibility in relation to the violent acts. Discussing other recent violent events in public places in Sweden, the informants further expressed

a pessimistic view of society, in which growing violence threatens the basis of societal and private security:

There are no boundaries to the violence in society. There's foreign influence as well.

In Iraq many children die every day in the war, but in Sweden children die because of mental illness and violence in society. That means that we are in a war every day, but we don't see that war. The violence creates worse wars but people forget about it. Children who are the victims of violence have their whole lives destroyed.

The ideological horizons of identity positions can further be expressed in the form of beliefs. For example among the immigrant informants a strong collective family identity was expressed in combination with social cognitions of being responsible. A personal identity highlighting one's social responsibility, and a subnational immigrant identity emphasizing human and social concern were also articulated:

First and foremost you have to see to the family situation, then you can solve the violence. [...] You have to start with the family, through the family you can come to terms with the violence.

As the father of a family I have a duty to keep the family together.

I would intervene. I would not just watch passively but think about what to do.

We do not just listen to or read about these [violent] events. We live in this country and we have to care for and help each other.

In analysing *emotions* as part of ideological horizons we may look at explicit verbalizations – “I felt upset” – as well as tone of voice, style, gestures, and pictures. Documentary films/photos may have a strong emotional impact, as seen in the above discussion of compassion.

In the interview with the immigrants from Syria, strong feelings, such as chock, sadness, and consternation followed on the murder of Anna Lindh and other violent events, for example the killing of a little girl outside a day nursery. Collective mourning in the families – “*we share the sorrow and talk to each other*” – or in the church, as shown in the narrative above, are examples of the close connection between identity, ideology and emotions. The emotionally laden identity position could also be more individualized: “*Sometimes you need to think. Not saying so much but praying and thinking and being in mourning.*”

Indignation was another emotion entwined with the ideological horizon of criticism of Swedish society, its institutions and the morality of ordinary

people. It was expressed with emphasis and wordings, such as: *“Who is going to pay for this?”*; *“How can a public person be killed in the middle of the day, at NK [a well-known department store] without any security guards?”*; *“My God as after the murder of Olof Palme I hoped that the same thing would not happen again!”*; *“How could they set free a person like that [a person with a mental disorder who committed a murder] without any control? There must be something wrong with the system!”*

Conclusion

This chapter has argued for the importance of paying attention to social thinking and meaning-making processes in the formation and maintenance of ideology and identity. Socio-cognitive perspectives have been discussed, and a methodology for analysing ideological horizons in media and citizens' discourses has been suggested based on the theoretical categories narration, belief and emotion. The examples provided have, however, more been an illustration of the method's practicability at a concrete level rather than a coherent and full analysis. This would require putting together analyses of larger bodies of material, scrutinizing recurrent or qualitatively outstanding themes, and synthesizing narrations, beliefs and emotions into holistic and theory-based units, such as nationalism, individualism, racism, human rights, and so on. It is, of course, the ideologically coloured thematic content of narrations and beliefs and related emotions that we must grasp, not some content-free structures. But it is precisely at the concrete level of the material at hand, whether media material or transcribed interviews, where we need to find methods for analysing ideological horizons. They are materialized somehow, and we must show this and explain how. The claim here is that ideological horizons are socio-cognitively embedded in narration, beliefs and emotions. They are not present or presented as clear-cut propositions in themselves. These categorical units also help us to do the analysis in a systematic way. Otherwise we risk only imputing our predetermined ideas onto the material, without being sensitive to new dimensions in the social reality we want to study.

Narration, beliefs and emotions are simultaneously communicative categories fundamental to the production of texts, for example broadcast or print news or documentaries, and interpretative categories used in our everyday understanding of the world. Although this chapter has only brought up concrete examples of the latter, more precisely reception research, the methodology is also applicable to textual analysis. We should thoroughly analyse ideological horizons in narrative units of the texts, and in the beliefs presented in the texts and further the emotional dimensions involved.

One of the many possible exciting projects may, for example, be to study the tensions between different ideological horizons trying to find the crea-

tive space in which new ideas and positions are developed both in the media and among citizens. Ideologies are, further, as noted by Billig et al. (1988) rarely coherent, but instead contain partly contradictory standpoints and ideas. Neither are texts and people's common sense homogeneous and logically consistent. Therefore we must be open to finding divergent ideological horizons in media and citizens' discourses.

Notes

1. According to Sperber (1996:57-58) "Widely distributed, long-lasting representations are what we are primarily referring to when we talk of culture. [...] Representations are more or less widely and lastingly distributed, and hence more and less cultural. So to explain culture is to answer the following question: why are some representations more successful in a human population, more 'catching' than others?"
2. Billig et. al. (1988:2) note that theories of ideology "often ignore the thinking of individuals, for individuals are often seen as the blinded bearers of a received ideological tradition. All the individual can do is to act according to these received constraints and to pass them on to the next generation. In this respect, ideology is seen as something which closes the mind and switches off thought". Instead they stress "the thoughtful nature of ideology".
3. Sometimes beliefs are distinguished from knowledge, which has connotations of being true statements of some reality. The distinction between subjective and objective is, however, not relevant here.
4. According to Sperber (1996:50) "An epidemiology of representations will attempt to explain cultural macro-phenomena as the cumulative effect of two types of micro-mechanism: individual mechanisms that bring about the formation and transformation of mental representations, and inter-individual mechanisms that, through alterations of the environment, bring about the transmission of representations".
5. Compare with Wittgensteins (1953/1974) "fuzzy concepts".
6. The study is reported in Rasmussen and Höijer (2005).

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The Ideological Horizons of Citizenship

National Media as Discursive Bridge

Ulrika Olausson

Theories on the process of globalisation and its social, cultural, and political consequences in late modernity are largely abstract. There is an apparent lack of empirical evidence and also a tendency to view the public media audience in terms of the injection-needle model (cf. Morley 2000). This chapter should be seen as an effort to contribute to the debate on globalisation and citizenship with an argumentation based on a series of empirical studies of citizens' meaning making about critical situations extensively covered by the media.¹

Introduction

The role of the nation-state as the centre of politics, economics, and culture is a topical issue in late modern theory. Most theorists agree that the world in several respects has become more integrated, and that interdependency has increased with new forms of inequalities as a consequence. Still, the current and future role of the nation-state as the horizon of cultural identification and foundation of citizenship is a topic of intense discussion. In light of the intensified physical and symbolic mobility, characterising the process of globalisation, claims have been made that the principle that each person belongs, politically and culturally, exclusively to one nation-state is becoming obsolete (Castles 2000, Davidson 2000). Citizenship has ceased to reflect the geo-politics and geo-culture of the nation-state: the *rights* have been incorporated into discourses far beyond the jurisdiction of the nation-state; the *duties* are no longer solely associated with the individual or the state but encompass a more general meaning – universal obligations towards the environment and future generations (Delanty 2000).

In addition, it has been argued that the hybridity and fragmentation that characterise the landscape of late modernity call for multidimensional and differentiated definitions of citizenship, which also take into consideration

social and cultural practices (Biltereyst 2001, Dahlgren 1995, Habermas 2001, Linklater 1999, Mosco 1999, Trend 1995). *Identification with* and *participation in* various kinds of communities are components that, in the definition of a complex citizenship, have been added to the formal ones of rights and duties (Isin and Wood 1999, Mosco 1999). *Participation* is less concentrated to the national community than to other spaces, created as a result of, for instance, subnational mobilisation (e.g. immigration), and *identity*, which is the prime focus of this chapter, has become a question of pluralism; national identity cannot be regarded as given. As a consequence of the fragmentation of citizenship, caused by the process of globalisation, it must be located on various levels of the scale of globalisation (Delanty 2000).

This chapter discusses the horizons of citizenship with respect to identity and participation. It shows how the “banal nationalism” (Billig 1995), sustaining the imagined national community (Anderson 1983) and permeating national media content, functions in an excluding and marginalising manner towards various groups. The central argument is that national media in the pluralistic landscape of late modernity need to function as *discursive bridges for dissident voices and communities* and should cease to, on a routine basis, gaze at the world through the lens of the nation-state. This means for national media to abandon the role of “bard” (Fiske & Hartley 2003), speaking on behalf of the needs of some imagined homogeneous culture, and instead become integrated into the globalised society.

The chapter prepares for this argument by, firstly, analysing “nationalising” processes in citizens’ meaning making, that is, when the national identity position functions inclusively and as the foundation of the construction of “We” (by means of the concurrent construction of “Them”). Secondly, by describing how the same mechanism, that is, the national identity position that enables these processes of inclusion for some citizens at the same time excludes others: more precisely, various minority groups within the nation-state. As a consequence these minority groups engage in “subnationalising” processes. These experiences of discrimination are closely related to experiences of exclusion from the symbolic national community – national media. The chapter therefore, thirdly, emphasises the need to make room for the dissident minority communities in national media, not least due to the fact that these groups contribute to active citizenship by questioning public structures of power.

Three focus groups studies

The empirical material was collected by means of focus group interviews with a total of 133 Swedish respondents in relation to three critical situations, each of which attracted much media attention. Both the selection of respondents and cases aimed at operationalising the perspective of globalisation. The selected cases therefore include some kind of transnational processes: firstly, the case of the Gothenburg fire in 1998, when 63 young

people – a majority with ethnic minority backgrounds – died; secondly, the case of the Kosovo Conflict in 1999, when NATO-led military forces intervened in the conflict between Serbia and Kosovo; and thirdly, the case of the Gothenburg riots – confrontations between activists and the police – which took place during the EU summit meeting in June 2001. The respondents in the two latter cases were selected using the criteria of variation regarding age, gender, occupation, and ethnicity, whereas the respondents in the case of the Gothenburg fire were young people in Gothenburg, ethnicity and gender being the two variables.²

Identity and Ideology

When analysing the horizons of citizenship in late modernity, the concept of *identity* carries considerable weight. The concept is multi-faceted, and a number of meanings have been attached to it (see Höijer in this volume). The specific identity of the subject in a given situation is here viewed as a matter of contingent constructions of *identifications* – which presuppose the fixing of a boundary towards “Them” – with one or several communities (cf. Aronowitz 1995, Barker 1999, Grossberg 1996, Hall 1996, Isin & Wood 1999, Mouffe 1995a). At a general level, identity is regarded as a centreless web of beliefs, values and attitudes (Barker 1999), cognitive components that, and I want to emphasise this, are characterised by relative *stability*. The notion of the contingent nature of identity refers to the miscellaneous *combinations* of these components – identifications activated in relation to concrete events – leading to the provisional stabilisation of identity position. This implies that a respondent who in one study identifies with an imagined immigrant community is likely to take on another identity position, the national as a case in point, in a different context. Identity positions are thus, as Winther Jørgensen & Phillips (2000) claim, more or less stable *in specific situations*. These “nodal points” (Laclau & Mouffe 1985:112) are heavily influenced by the structure of the situation – a potential identity position is made topical in relation to the specific situation, but without making any claims of constituting the “inner self” of the individual: “It is not forever /.../ every full stop is provisional /.../ not underpinned by any infinite guarantees, but just now, this is what I mean; *this* is who I am” (Hall quoted in Morley 2000:253, italics in original). The respondents’ constructions of “we”, “them”, “here”, “there”, “home”, etc. become, in the analysis, vital indications of the identifications being activated in the various situations (cf. Billig 1995).

Unfortunately, the concept of identity has, as Jameson (1995) points out, become something of a buzz-word within Cultural Studies, which more or less has developed an “identity-paradigm” in celebrating pluralism and transgression. Essential questions related to structures of power are easily obscured by such a point of view (Corner 1991). The analysis of citizenship would,

however, be more or less redundant, should the analytical connection to the structural context be lacking. Therefore, the concept of *ideology*, which also carries several meanings, is of the utmost significance. In traditional Marxism, ideology was regarded an abstract value system, linking people to a certain order. Today, the concept of ideology is frequently used to describe all naturalised, socially shared “clusters of beliefs in our minds”, in the words of van Dijk (1998:26). In order to directly relate the analysis to structures of power, ideology will here only be used to describe “*meaning in the service of power*” (Fairclough 1995:14). “*Ideology*” will be reserved for collective meaning making that spontaneously legitimises and reproduces current structures of power. The focus of the analysis is placed on culturally constructed codes that function ideologically, that is, as if they were the creations of nature (e.g. Hall 1995). The relationship between identity and ideology becomes an empirical question in the analysis: With what communities do citizens identify in a particular situation and do these identifications trigger processes of cognitive reproduction of various power structures?

Nationalising processes

Results from the studies give little evidence in support of the idea of the development of a global community and transnational identities. The construction of “We” refers to the Swedish community, and the collective meaning making appears to be the result of the shared cultural, historical, and political experience of being a “Swede”. The national identity position is nourished by the notion of what Wodak et al. (1999:11) label “sameness”, that is, the experience of being similar to others in the community and different from those outside. The salience of the national identity position should not, however, be taken as evidence of non-globalisation. Globalisation might result in different forms of hybrid identities, but just as well in reinforced traditional forms of local or national ones. Globalisation and re-nationalisation are in fact two sides of the same coin (Delanty 2000, Giddens 2000, Hannerz 1996, Naficy 1999, Robertson 1992). There is also reason to suggest that the process of globalisation is not developing at the same pace everywhere, affecting every social group to the same extent, but is progressing in an uneven and irregular fashion. At any rate, the studies indicate that the making of meaning encompasses a kind of “ideological nationalism”, in which national identity is taken for granted. Billig (1995) describes this phenomenon in terms of “banal nationalism” (in order to separate it from its “hot” counterpart, associated with right-wing extremist groups). Banal nationalism exists, according to Billig, in an invisible manner in the context of everyday life, not least by means of the domesticating (Clausen 2004, Gurevitch et al. 1991, Riegert 1998) tendencies of media reporting. The nationalised community constructs meaning, in all essentials, along the horizon of the national “We”.

The case of the Gothenburg riots makes evident that collective meaning making is closely related to defending and protecting the reputation of the community with which one identifies. The national identity position, “We” in the quotation below, is activated by the media’s initial focus on violent actions performed by activists (Granström 2002), and the defence of this national “We” guides the way meaning is to be made. Respondents with Swedish backgrounds seem to fear that the nation-state “lost face” before the rest of the world:

– Well, about these reporters from other countries, they think that *we* were weak in Sweden because *we* weren’t able to handle this. And, I mean Sweden used to be a country of high standing both concerning the police /.../ and then, something like this happens that you cannot really say they handled well. Then there has to be a negative reaction in foreign countries.

/.../

– Perhaps it has something to do with *our* softness.

– Yes, it’s probably because *we’ve* had it so peaceful.

The tendency to immediately and spontaneously identify with the national community and its symbols results in intense emotions of indignation, directed towards the activists. The antagonistic emotions find their discursive form in expressions like “I almost became hateful”:

You’ve seen /.../ in this damned park where they had this disco-thing. They provoked the cops and acted like clowns. As soon as the police do something then it becomes their fault and I got damned furious about that.

Thus, the antagonism among the respondents with Swedish backgrounds probably not only concerned the violence and the material destruction, but also – and maybe this is the key explanation – *the experience of the nation-state losing its reputation*.

This conclusion is strengthened by the study of the Gothenburg fire. In this case as well, the activated meaning making among respondents with Swedish backgrounds is founded on the experienced national community. Many rumours circulated at the time, claiming that the fire was the work of an arsonist with racist motives, but the respondents with Swedish backgrounds show great reluctance to express this point of view. A central explanation for this could very well be that their identity as Swedes appeared to be under attack. This is exactly what the young woman is indicating in the quotation below:

I’m scared... if they discover that the fire was arson, and that racists did it. I feel as if they’ve ruined a great deal for me as a Swede. I’m not a racist, and I don’t want somebody else to ruin everything for the entire Swedish people. Because that’s what they’re doing.

The importance of the national identity position in the construction of meaning can also be traced in the case of the Kosovo Conflict. Respondents with Swedish backgrounds are in this case united in an interpretative community based on emotions of pity (Höijer 2004, Olausson 2003). These emotions, combined with the national identity position, enable the respondents to empathetically understand what it must be like to live as a refugee, to be forced out of one's "home", the nation-state:

- But they [the kosovo-albanians] want to go *home* anyway.
- Yes, but so do most people.
- It's probably the same with *us*. If they'd force us to leave /.../
- You wouldn't want to live *in some other country* as a refugee.
- No.
- You'd just have to get back *home*. So if you get help, like they do, then you would just pack up and go *home*, that makes sense.

Processes of inclusion are, however, always relational, and require processes of exclusion; the construction of the national "We" presupposes the simultaneous construction of "Them". In the case of the riots, a great reluctance to ascribe violence and hooliganism to the Swedish community seems to be present. Instead, those phenomena are associated with the transnational element of the riots and the EU summit. Had the foreign demonstrators, "They" in the quotation below, not been allowed to cross the Swedish borders, the "attack" on the nation-state would have been notably reduced or possibly entirely avoided:

They [the demonstrators] have embarrassed Sweden as a whole. And some of *them* weren't even Swedes. *They* came from Germany /.../ But nevertheless it is Sweden that has to take the blame.

Results from the Kosovo case indicate that possibilities of broadening identification *across* national horizons are dependent on recognised *similarities* with the national community's way of life; the more similar to "Us", the more likely the transnational identification. However, the victims of the conflict are not, similarities in appearance and culture notwithstanding, included in the construction of "We". Thus, despite a certain degree of identification, the construction of "Them" in the making of meaning is evident:

- It's also something about the way *they* look. *They* aren't so different from *us*.
- I think it has to do with culture as well. *Their* culture is still more like *ours* in many ways. *They* are like *us* in many respects. That's the way it is, I think. If something happens close to you, near yourself, then it's easier to put yourself in that situation.

Noteworthy in this context is the tendency among the respondents to depart from the national identity position if they had contacts with people directly affected by the event, or if they had visited the location themselves. For these respondents, the horizon of meaning making and identification could extend far beyond the borders of the nation:

I've worked with a guy from there [Somalia], and met people from there. So, of course, then you can get involved. So it's not only about the nearness but whether I know someone or if I've been there. /.../

Geo-cognitive proximity in the form of personal experiences and contacts seems thus to be essential for transnational identifications and participation, something which indicates the importance of global mobility as well as domestic policies that facilitate contacts between the individuals of the pluralistic society. These results notwithstanding, the overall tendency in the studies is still that the national identity position is accessible and deployed by respondents with Swedish backgrounds, and normative of the way meaning is to be made.

Subnationalising processes

The national level of the globalisation scale is not the only one activated in the identification processes among the respondents. On the contrary, it seems as if the national identity position functions to discriminate against various minorities within the national borders. These minority groups find it both threatening and hostile towards their own identifications in the situations at hand. By minorities, I not only refer to ethnic minorities in Swedish society, but to every social group that experiences some kind of threat and exclusion from the national environment, and as a result has engaged in processes of *subnational compression*.

In the case of the Gothenburg fire, the respondents with immigrant backgrounds explain the fire with structures of racism in a hostile national environment, and so they join together into a subnationalised community, the common denominator being their identity positions as *immigrants*. In their interpretations of the event, the fire is explained as the work of a (Swedish) arsonist with racist motives, a rationalisation that nourishes the categorisation into "Us and Them" – "Immigrants and Swedes". This attribution, alongside an evident distrust of the official investigation of the fire, implies the "gap" between the subnationalised community and the national environment:

It seems as if the police are still hiding a lot. Perhaps they don't want to admit that it was arson because that would cause real war between the young people. It would cause chaos if it was revealed. So, my guess is that if the fire is

arson, then the police would conceal it because they're afraid that it would cause war between *Swedes* and *immigrants*.

The national identity position is rejected by several groups in the case of the Kosovo Conflict as well. Primarily, it is the interviewed Serbs who feel unfairly treated by the rest of the world, including the Swedish people, "You" and "They" in the quotation below:

/.../ People here in Sweden are ignorant of the war. *You* have no understanding of the war. *You* weren't in the Second World War either. That's why *you* have so much Nazism here, since *they* don't know what it's like to be afraid.

As a result of the experienced exclusion of their ethnic group, they gather in a homogeneous subnational community based on *ethnicity*. Nor does the African group, interviewed in the Kosovo case, identify with the Swedish community in this situation. In the quotation below, this non-identification with the national (Swedish) community becomes evident in the construction of "the Swedes" in the third person mode:

The Swedes' way of reporting on the Third World – I don't want to say just Africa. /.../ It [the Third World] is almost something that you can keep at a distance but enjoy, love, keep at a distance. You like them, feel sorry for them, they're barefoot, they don't have enough to eat – but at the same time we have to keep them at a distance, so that they're happy and content with this.

Regarding the Gothenburg riots, the minority to which the national context seems to constitute a threat is not constructed on the basis of origin. Instead it is the *activists* of the political movements, who experience themselves as excluded from and unfairly treated by the national community:

/.../ Almost everyone I've spoken to, especially directly after the summit, had opinions that completely differed from mine. I've heard all sorts of things, from "The police should've used more force. They could just as well have shot a few more, that would've taken care of the problem." They don't understand why they fight and they haven't bothered to learn the facts either. /.../ They're so influenced by this media picture and this entire structure /.../.

The activists do not side with the defence of the national community, around which other respondents with Swedish backgrounds construct their meaning making. It is the activists they identify with, and their perspective is employed in the construction of identity; in the quotation below the 19-year-old who was wounded by a gunshot from the police:

And that particular night, we all knew /the 19-year-old/. Everyone could've been /the 19-year-old/ regardless of whether or not you had thrown any stones.

Everyone could've been that guy who got shot in the leg. Everyone could've been running in that crowd that the police fired at. It was civilians and ordinary Gothenburg people. It was photographers. It was anyone running in that crowd. It could've been anyone in Sweden visiting Gothenburg. There was no aim, no objective. Anyone.

Nor does the group with Somalian background, interviewed in the case of the riots, make meaning about the riots and the EU summit from the national (Swedish) perspective. Since they do not find their identifications nationally, with the Swedish community, they do not feel the urge to defend the nation-state against the activists' "attack" on it. Instead they find their identifications with the demonstrators, whom they feel represent the "dominated" in the structures of power:

They spoke on the radio with the demonstrators and they were Africa-friendly, and friendly towards every poor country. When you listen to them on the radio, you get affected and feel sympathy with the demonstrators.

/.../ I sometimes felt as if these young people, they were demonstrating for *us*, the immigrant minority /.../.

Thus, far from every social group within the borders of the nation-state is actually involved in the national – by banal nationalism permeated – construction of meaning. On the contrary, the national identity position functions excludingly and discriminatingly for some groups, and triggers subnationalising processes.

National media and subnational compression

The conflictual relationship with the national environment among subnationalised communities seems to be closely connected to experiences of *exclusion from national media*. When the experiences and beliefs of citizens collide head-on with media representations, the latter are rejected and discarded. The Serbs, interviewed in the Kosovo case, experience their own ethnic group, with which identification is strong in this case, as misrepresented and misunderstood by the "entire world". They "do not want to watch Swedish media" since they experience that it depicts the Serbian group in hostile terms:

- They [the media] set up a picture of Serbs. As if Serbs are people who eat small children.
- You can't admit that you're a Serb.

- That's the problem. They always take up the the worst things. Of course, there are idiots. But there are Swedish, American idiots as well. You take them and draw general conclusions about an entire population.

In a similar fashion, the group with African background rejects the Swedish media content. Experiences of exclusion and misrepresentation of the community with which they identify lead to their rejecting the national media content in general:

- I've watched Swedish media. And then I relate this to my own homeland, Africa, the continent I come from. I think the Swedish media is poor.
I: How come?
– Let's take AIDS as an example. They say that within three years 75% of the entire African population will get this disease. /.../
(everyone laughs)
– What kind of circus is that? It's not true that 75% of the African population have this disease. And then the Swedes come with news about Yugoslavia. I think it's equally false.

In the case of the Gothenburg riots, the subnationally compressed community – the activists – experiences exclusion and misrepresentation in national media. As a result of the negative media reporting, the activists feel that the group with which they identify in the situation at hand, has been misunderstood and excluded from the national community:

- Did you trust the media reporting?
– No. (laughter)
– /.../
– No, you couldn't trust a word of it. You swore when you switched on the TV, when you got home at night to go to bed.
– The frustration was enormous.
– You were so angry: "Is mom watching this on TV?"
– Exactly. You were so worried about what other people, who weren't there, would think about what they saw on TV. We phoned home and said: "Now you're going to watch this and that on TV, but this isn't the whole picture. It's selected pieces in order to support the police in their actions."
– I've tried /.../ to actually raise the level of awareness of what actually happened. Since the media didn't, I feel as if this is a personal mission. /.../ You've met a lot of people so closed off, only wanting to accuse you, and the media has helped them and provided arguments to attack you, poor thing.

The respondents with Somalian backgrounds, interviewed in the case of the riots, identify with the "dominated" in global as well as national structures of power. Through these identifications, the activists are regarded as representatives of the experienced community and the respondents talk about them

in terms of “our friends”, due to their commitment to global justice. The media are criticised for what the respondents interpret as biased reporting, misrepresenting the activists:

The worst thing is the media, which are awful, I think. It was the police that should be scrutinised, but I think they side with the police. It was not an independent scrutiny, they just gave the picture that would satisfy the police. And all the time it was about the violence caused by these young people. The media have to use some other method, they shouldn't just defend the police, they should bring up facts and try to report everything that happened, but they don't. I think Swedish media need to evolve. They're almost dead.

It thus seems as if the construction of a national identity position in national media, which includes some meaning makers and make them feel at home and addressed, at the same time excludes others. Banal nationalism is guiding certain meaning makers' interpretations in specific directions – there is no dissonance between media representations and the collective interpretative frames, and the urge to defend the national community is unmistakable. But to other groups within the national borders, the very same identity position – offered by the media – is both threatening to and discriminates against their own identity position. Hence, the experience of being “oppressed” or “dominated” in various situations within the national context, leads to the compression of subnational minority communities. *These dissident communities should*, and I wish to emphasise this, *not be regarded as problems, but as resources in the democratic system*, given that one considers this system to be dependent on active, questioning, and committed citizens. This argument is supported by the following two sections, which show that identification with the hegemonic community, the national, in all essentials results in the unreflected reproduction of national structures of power, whereas subnational identification leads to a meaning making that is oppositional in relation to those structures.

Reproduction of national structures of power

As a more or less automatic consequence of the inclination to identify with and defend the national community and its symbols, *national public structures of power obtain spontaneous legitimacy*. The study of the Kosovo Conflict, as a case in point, shows that the instant identification with the Swedish community *prevents* the citizens taking part in the study from questioning the *political elite* of the Swedish nation-state. Traditional Swedish “pacifist” foreign policy, with its emphasis on human aid, is to a great extent regarded and legitimised as part of the natural order of things, as “our” way of dealing with foreign conflicts: “Didn't *we* help? Didn't *we* help in *our* own

way? Yes, *we* received people.” Human aid in the aftermath of a conflict should by no means be criticised. However, it must be recognised that this taken-for-granted notion of Swedish political action not only reproduces traditional Swedish foreign policy but also runs the risk of obscuring other forms of political action, for instance, diplomatic efforts to prevent or bring an end to a conflict.

The political elite is left unquestioned in the case of the Gothenburg riots as well since the meaning making triggered by the media’s initial reporting focused on the violence. The expressive antagonism directed towards the activists sent the political happenings off to a remote corner. Very few of the respondents with Swedish backgrounds can, when interviewed, even recall the political events (this is not to say that they would have, if the riots had not achieved media attention):

- I guess they demonstrated against, what the hell it was, the establishment.
/.../
- I don’t have a clue really about what... I don’t really know what was going on.
- No, neither do I.
- The only thing I’ve grasped is that it was about EU, some summit, and then that there were a lot of demonstrators and then that everything became chaos and that they destroyed. Yes, everything that you could watch on TV. I don’t know why, no I don’t think I know that.

In any case, one might argue that the focus on the riots, and the subsequent antagonism directed towards the activists found in the meaning making of the respondents, gave rise to a *meta-conflict* between the media audience and the activists. In a sense, this meta-conflict *obscured* the political processes, thus protecting them from civic critique, which in turn implies that the structures of political power remained unchallenged.

Not only does the national identity position more or less automatically reproduce the power of the political elite of the nation-state, the same tendency exists in relation to Swedish *authorities*. The case study on the Gothenburg riots shows that the activists are solely blamed for the violence that occurred. The police, as a symbol of the Swedish community, are viewed as a “good” and “just” societal power. Interpretative frames in which the police force is given spontaneous legitimacy are activated, and media discourse that eventually indicated otherwise dismissed. Nor is this interpretative framework modified by news of demonstrators injured by gunfire or of mass arrests. Instead, police actions are legitimised through various explanatory strategies in which the provocative context of aggressive activists is given great significance:

- I know that some guy got himself shot, but...
- He was standing there, throwing paving-stones at the police. He doesn’t constitute any real threat, they say, when the policeman shoots because then

he's turned around. But he did throw two big stones at the police just before that /.../. Yes, I think it was only right [that the police shot].

Similar to the case of the riots, the case of the Gothenburg fire shows that national authorities – the fire department and police force – receive more or less automatic legitimacy in the meaning making of the nationalised collective. In their role as representatives of this community, the police are regarded a “just” societal force, working for the common good, and their information is also accepted without questioning. Discourses that criticised the performance of the police at the scene of the fire are immediately rejected. The overall opinion maintains that “it was wrong to accuse them, they only did their job”.

Furthermore, the three studies indicate that national *media* and their relation to political elites, global as well as national, to a large extent obtain spontaneous legitimacy within the nationalised community. Criticism of national media does not concern their general logic and structure, and the evaluation of news – that sensational and violent events are given priority in media discourse – is taken for granted: “People want to see action”.

A plausible conclusion would be that identification with and the sense of belonging to the hegemonic community, the national, leads to the spontaneous legitimisation of public structures of power. As Billig (1995:6) points out, “banal” nationalism should not be confused with “benign” nationalism, just because it lacks the violent ingredients of its “hot” counterpart. Banal nationalism must instead always be analysed in the context of power relations: “National identities are rooted within a powerful social structure, which reproduces hegemonic relations of inequity.” (Billig 1995:175).

Opposition to national structures of power

A quite different type of meaning making about the three cases can be found within the subnationalised communities, the ethnic minority groups, and the activist groups, withdrawn from the national context due to the experience of being in some way excluded from and oppressed by it. In relation to all three events *the subnationalised communities create meaning in an oppositional manner*, compared to the nationalised community *and* in relation to public structures of power. In the Kosovo Conflict, the interviewed Serbs, Kosovo-Albanians and Africans, none of whom identified with the Swedish community in this case, express criticism towards the political actions of the nation-state of Sweden concerning the Balkan crisis. Whereas the Swedish national ideology encompassed a sort of naturalness of human aid in the aftermath of a conflict as political action, these subnationalised communities would have liked to see action *before* the conflict actually started and, in addition, an active political effort to *bring an end* to the conflict: “A

country that's got everything should be able to exert some influence one way or another. But this shows Sweden's position."

The relationship between oppositional interpretations and subnational compression is also confirmed by the case of the Gothenburg fire, in which the subnationalised community, collectivised around the experience of belonging to an immigrant community and being the victims of racism, does not express any sense of belonging related to the nation-state of Sweden. This group does not, as a consequence, give spontaneous legitimacy to the Swedish authorities, as did the nationalised collective. Both the police and the fire department are strongly criticised for their actions at the scene of the fire, as well as the information they provided afterwards:

What they said when they were here, no one, exactly no one, believed. The information they gave us was intended to somehow make everything appear so sacred and calm, because everyone was really mad and it was as if they were here to calm us down and believe in what they're doing. There were so many questions they didn't even answer. /.../ They just wanted to make it clear that the fire didn't have any connection to racism or anything of the kind – they wanted to put an end to that, it was out of the question. But why is it? If you live in Gothenburg, you've seen plenty of racist stuff.

The same opposition against national structures of power could be localised within the subnationalised group in the case of the Gothenburg riots. This community is based on the identification with the activists who considered themselves abused by both the national police and national media, and also misunderstood by the Swedes. The interpretations of the activist community do not at all lend spontaneous legitimacy to the national police force. On the contrary, this group regards the behaviour of the police as the cause of the escalating violence and damage. In sum, to the subnationalised communities, there is nothing "natural" about the Swedish authorities working only for the common good.

Not only do the subnationalised communities oppose the political elite and the authorities of the nation-state. They also question and challenge the function and role of national media, which are held responsible for the average citizen's "misinterpretations" of the events that took place, reinforcing some kind of unquestioned notion of the "benevolent" Swedish police, and which are accused of being uncritical of the European political elite:

- When it's not about the violence, then the [the media] are glorifying the EU summit, telling about the democratic success of the EU summit, allowing Göran Persson [then Prime Minister of Sweden] to defend the democratic EU summit.
- Yes.
- The exact opposite of what twenty thousand other people right there in Gothenburg think.

– Undemocratic.

/.../

– Yes, it's simply one-sided reporting, and at the same time a pat on the back for Persson and the rest of all those EU top-politicians sitting there discussing, and the actions of the police.

The subnationalised communities' shared experience of being maltreated or misrepresented by the Swedish media seems to have resulted in an "internalised" media criticism, which guides the interpretations of media discourse in general. It is also among the subnationalised communities that opposition and criticism of the relationship between national media and the political elites can be found. Below is a quotation from the, in the Kosovo case interviewed, group with African background, none of whose members adopt a national (Swedish) identity position in this situation:

The Swedes [the Swedish media] have no originality. If we talk about the war in Kosovo, for instance, the bombing of China's embassy. They have said only the things that the U.S. wants them to say.

In sum, vital mechanisms behind the hegemonic position of the nation-state are made visible through the analysis. The sense of belonging to the hegemonic community relates intimately to the ideological reproduction of structures of power, whereas opposition can be found within the communities on the subnational level of the globalisation scale.

National identity and the interpretation of media texts

One possible explanation for the dissimilarities in meaning making between the nationalised and subnationalised communities could be the respondents' different knowledge and experiences of the events. In the case of the Gothenburg riots, for instance, the respondents who engaged in nationalising processes had access to the events through the media only, whereas the subnationalised community, the activists, actually were present at the scene of the action. The nationalised ideological meaning making, in which public structures of power attained spontaneous legitimacy, might be explained as a direct effect of the media reporting. It is pertinent, though, not to reduce the explanation of the interpretations of the citizens as media audience to mere media effects. My claim is that *the national identity position, activated in relation to media discourse, is a powerful explanatory mechanism behind ideological meaning making*. This becomes evident if one compares the meaning making of the citizens-audience with Swedish backgrounds with that of the citizens-audience with Somalian backgrounds. The latter respondents do not, in the case of the riots, identify at all with

the Swedish community, and they consequently do not feel the urge to defend the symbols of it. Their experience of living under non-democratic conditions and being “dominated” within the structures of world power, triggers quite different types of identifications and meaning making. Instead of encompassing a national (Swedish) identity position they identify with the “weaker” party in this situation and adopt the activists’ counter-ideological horizon. Thus, even though the respondents with Somalian backgrounds only accessed the riots through the media, their interpretations differ from other citizens-audience groups.

It is also quite clear that the national identity position not only triggers dominant readings – the acceptance of media texts – but also has the ability to cause the opposite, namely oppositional readings and the rejection of media texts (cf. Morley 1980). In the case of the Gothenburg riots, media reports that eventually questioned the role of the police in the riots are harshly rejected by respondents with Swedish backgrounds, and comments like “the journalists are only trying to make the police look bad” are recurrent in the interviews. There is a notable reluctance to modify the established interpretative frames, and frequently, the initial interpretation, in which indignation towards activists guided the meaning making, becomes even more established and elaborated on:

I: /.../ Your opinions, have they changed over time?

– No, I don’t think so. They’ve probably become harsher if they’ve changed somehow. I’ve become more hateful, when I’ve roughly understood what they [the Gothenburg riots] meant for Sweden, I think.

This indicates that oppositional readings of media texts are likely to occur if the latter in some respect, in the situation at hand, question the imagined community, its representatives, and symbols. The Kosovo case, on the other hand, does not seem to have triggered the same forceful urge to defend the national community. In a sense it has become “just another foreign conflict” in the eyes of the citizens. This “unthreatening” character of the situation may very well explain the nationalised community’s willingness to accept changes in media discourse; the interpretative frames seem to be less rigid. The shift from one media perspective, where the Serbs played the part of the antagonist, to another, where the consequences of the NATO-led military intervention in Yugoslavia were exposed, trigger *ambivalence* instead of opposition in the interpretations. What are you supposed to believe when everyone in the end turns out to be “a bad guy”? This open character of the collective interpretative frames, in contrast to the rigid frames evoked by the Gothenburg riots, could at least partially be explained by the non-threatening nature of the conflict. It did not take place within the national borders, and did not constitute any explicit assault on symbols of the imagined community; the reputation of the nation-state was not at stake. Hence, the national identity position constitutes a fundamental mechanism in the interpre-

tation of media texts, whether or not the making of meaning will be of the ideological/counter-ideological, dominant/oppositional kind.

Democratic implications of ideological horizons

In the debate on globalisation and citizenship, we have gradually come to witness the “cosmopolitan turn” of normative character among the *globalists*, as labelled by Held and McGrew (2000) in their simple but enlightening dichotomisation of the “global babble”. Cosmopolitanism signifies a commitment to cosmopolis – to world society – and a celebration of a global citizenship, where identifications and political engagement transgress national borders (e.g. Hannerz 1999, Held 1995, Linklater 1999). The *sceptics* (Held & McGrew 2000) on the other hand, maintain that a global citizenship is neither desirable nor possible (e.g. Brown 2000, Mann 2000). Smith (1991), as one example of the “sceptical” outlook, describes national identity from an essentialist point of view:

[national identity] provides the sole vision and rationale of political solidarity today, one that commands popular assent and elicits popular enthusiasm. All other visions, all other rationales, appear wan and shadowy by comparison. They offer no sense of election, no unique history, no special destiny. (Smith 1991:176)

Miller (1999) goes even further when he claims that citizenship in fact *requires* the boundaries of the national political community. In order for a community to develop in the first place, there have to exist a number of common interests and a sense of common identity.

To some extent I am inclined to agree with the sceptics. National identity still seems to be a forceful mechanism in the making of meaning about events on various levels of the globalisation scale, and, as Billig (1995) argues, in relation to its ideological consequences, national identity carries greater weight than do other identity positions. However, what seems to be almost self-evident to the sceptics (and to a certain degree also to some globalists) is that *citizenship requires identification*. Thus, they are arguing from a communitarian point of view. The above presented results from the three case studies indicate, however, that *identification with the hegemonic community – the nation-state – implies that public structures of power remain unchallenged and protected from civic critique by means of ideology*, since identification includes the urge to defend and protect the reputation of this community and its symbols.

This is not to say, though, that national horizons should be less preferable than other forms of identifications, global or regional. The same ideo-

logical mechanisms would occur within any hegemonic horizon, since hegemony itself is unattainable without them. The Kosovo case, for instance, shows a similar pattern of legitimising meaning making within an imagined *European* community. None of the groups, all of which to some extent identify with Europe, reflect on the European performance in the conflict. The one interviewed group that criticises Europe for political passivity – for not taking care of its members – is also the only one that does *not* identify in any sense with a European community: “We in Africa, *we* don’t have any military power. /.../. In Europe *you’ve* got more money, *you’ve* got everything, but *you* do nothing.”

Thus, it is not national identity in itself that I am critical of. My point here is simply that democracy – if we think of democracy as dependent on active, questioning and reflecting citizens – is not best served by a sense of belonging, which fosters consensual meaning making within the community. The full potential of democracy, where structures of national power are raised to a conscious level, challenged and criticised, lies within the subnationalised communities. It is when the hegemonic community is studied from an outside position, and from an antagonistic perspective, that its potential flaws and inequalities are revealed. *Democracy*, from the perspective of active citizenship, *is thus best located in conflict, among groups that experience exclusion and oppression in different situations*, because they are the ones in opposition to structures of power. Mouffe (1995b) claims that conflicts and antagonisms are in fact constitutive of the well-functioning democratic system, and that the principle element of politics should be *struggle* against various subject positions. No struggle is possible, however, without the construction of some kind of boundary towards the hegemony, the dominating group (in the nation, the world etc.). The total absence of conflicts and antagonisms in a society does not, according to Mouffe, mean that it has reached the ultimate stage of democracy. The specific situations and the dissident groups will vary, but the mechanisms creating conflict remain. The contingent character of political identity and struggle must, as Laclau and Mouffe (1985) argue, be recognised, and political identities are never given in advance, but are defined contextually by various elements. The individual encompasses several identifications of which some become politically important *for a period and in certain contexts* (Scott 1995).

Although I am advocating pluralism and conflict as the main components of active citizenship, I do not want to be confused with extreme postmodernists, who in a sense “universalise” heterogeneity (Morley 2000:251). To deny all forms of unity, consensus, and community is to deny all forms of identification necessary for political commitment. This type of argumentation does not succeed in grasping relationships of power and antagonisms constitutive of politics. Recognising pluralism as a key component of democracy is vital, but it should not be understood as entirely dissolving every sense of unity (Mouffe 1995a). We have to expect some sense of belonging within various political communities, yet this experience of “togetherness” should

not constitute a goal for the democratic polity itself, wherever it may be localised on the globalisation scale (Dahlgren 1995).

To continue and to conclude this chain of thought, I wish to stress, with Delanty (2000), the existence of some kind of *identification with the normative principles of the democratic polity*, that is, to give emphasis to a *constitutional patriotism* (Habermas 2001). This loose construction of “We” should be built on various groups’ acceptance of the need for the maintenance of democracy and the protection of its rules. Citizenship then becomes, according to Mouffe (1995a), a form of identification with the principles of a pluralistic democracy. If these identifications do not exist, there is an obvious risk that political action takes the shape of what Scott (1985) labels “weapons of the weak” since subnational compression, where opposition and political identities are to be found, is based on experiences of being one way or another oppressed by the hegemonic community. This kind of action could be identified, at least in its discursive form, both in the case of the Gothenburg fire, where respondents talk about planned actions of revenge against the “Swedes” and in the case of the Gothenburg riots. These actions surpass the framework of the democratic order, and should, of course, neither be romanticised nor encouraged, but simply taken for what they, at least partially, are expressions of: a strong sense of powerlessness and a total lack of communicative spaces, which could serve as a forum for the negotiation of conflicts and antagonisms.

Discursive bridges for the postnational citizen

If the argumentation above is correct, the focus of the discussion on globalisation and citizenship ought to shift from *consensus* to *communication*, and the need to *build discursive bridges between the hegemonic community and dissident voices* should be acknowledged. The hegemonic discourse needs to be confronted with alternative ones – national ideological horizons need to be confronted with discourses beyond – in order for democracy to thrive. The challenge at hand is to create opportunities for antagonists to communicate *in spite of their differences and lack of identification*; an arena for transgressing communication – “a dialogue across difference” (Aronowitz 1995:124) – should be available. As Dahlgren (1995) points out, discussion is the most fundamental form of civic action and a key concept in most formulations of democracy, not least the deliberative one. The task of the polity should therefore not be to incorporate the dissident political communities into a more or less artificial unit, but to generate as much communication as possible between them.

An important space for transgressive communication is, of course, the media, pertinent as it is to the democratic system. However, the studies presented in this chapter indicate that *the media must deal with some problems*

before they are ready to serve as discursive bridges. One obstacle is that news reporting tends to trigger spectators' *emotional reactions* only, on the topic at hand, guiding the way meaning is to be made. Firstly, in the case of the Gothenburg fire, the media focused on the grief following the tragic event, activating a homogenising emotional reaction (Olausson 2000); secondly, in the case of the Kosovo Conflict, the media's focus on human suffering gave rise to reactions of pity (Höijer 2004, Olausson 2003); and thirdly, in the case of the Gothenburg riots, the violence, which was the main object of media attention, triggered emotions of indignation (Olausson 2002). Even though these media efforts of creating engagement succeeded in certain respects (the importance of emotions in the construction of political identities cannot be overstated (e.g. Marcus 2002, Mouffe 2003, Ojala 2004)), one can hardly claim that this kind of reporting fulfils the requirements of the discursive bridge. Instead, it takes the shape of what Berglez (2006) labels *semiotic compression*, communication subordinate to a form of direct and mute *experience* of grief, suffering and violence. Media discourse thus obscures the antagonisms and conflicts that need to find their communicative forum. Instead of offering the discursive bridge, the media suggests an emotional, mute and temporary reaction.

Another problem is the tendency of national media to *exclude* certain groups, either by means of misrepresentation or invisibility. The groups that, in the interviews, expressed these experiences of exclusion – the “dominated” or “oppressed” in the structures of power, national as well as global – often rejected Swedish media discourse entirely. These communities felt neither addressed nor represented by the reporting. Among them, the “crisis of confidence” (Boltanski 1999:177) related to national media could be almost complete. Morley (2000) suggests that people and events that somehow are excluded from national media are also excluded from the national community:

The imagined community is, in fact, usually constructed in the language of some particular ethnos, membership of which then effectively becomes a prerequisite for the enjoyment of a political citizenship within the nation-state. (Morley 2000:18)

Since the dominating ethnic group is allowed to monopolise national media, not least by means of banal nationalism, far from every citizen of the nation-state feels at home and welcome in this arena. Accordingly, there exist – alongside the ethnic majority community – a number of minorities, frequently excluded from the symbolic community of the nation-state. These mechanisms of exclusion in the media are general in character and do not exclusively affect citizens belonging to ethnic minorities. Situations characterised by an antagonistic relationship to the national context, including national media, might also result in other forms of subnationalised communities; the “activist community” in the case of the Gothenburg riots is one example. It seems reasonable to suggest, though, that the identity positions of ethnic

minorities are more exposed and vulnerable to these mechanisms of exclusion.

To bring this chapter to a close by returning to the horizons of citizenship in late modernity, I am inclined to agree with Delanty (2000) in his detachment from ordinary cosmopolitan discourse, that is, to argue either in favour of the globalists or the sceptics. Delanty prefers to discuss *a citizenship in which the national and the global perspectives mutually reconstruct each other*. This means to retain the best innovations from the liberal system with its focus on the nation-state, and simultaneously open up for new possibilities both on the subnational and transnational level. Instead of discussing either a global or a national citizenship one could thus, with Habermas (2001), reflect on a *postnational citizenship* relating to the reflexive transformation of national civic sovereignty into subnational and transnational citizenship.

Notes

1. The chapter is based on Olausson (2005), see also Olausson (2006).
2. Quotations from the empirical material function illustratively only. For a more detailed and comprehensive empirical substantiation, see Olausson (2005).

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Border Journalism and the Articulation of National Horizons

Johan Östman

This chapter takes up the position that ideological horizons work to establish boundaries beyond which society cannot be imagined. One set of ideological horizons seems to be as persistent as it is nebulous and elusive: nationality.

The aim of the chapter is to outline a theoretical and methodological framework for analysing the role of mediated communication in the constitution of national communities. In the first part a formal theory of nationality proposed by sociologist Marianne Winther Jørgensen (1994) will be discussed. The second and third parts of the chapter explore the implications of the theory for the specific field of mediated communication. Finally the framework is applied to brief analyses of representations of immigration and drug trafficking in news journalism. In a broader sense, then, the chapter suggests an approach in which analyses of ideological horizons conducted within media and communication studies may contribute to general social theory.

Introduction

An interest in nationality may seem anachronistic to some. According to a number of theorists of globalization and the media (Appadurai 1996, Morley 2000, Morley and Robins 1995, Tomlinson 1999) both the processes of migration and mediation in contemporary society make received notions of nationality seem obsolete. The composition of the social structure transforms with migration. Transnational electronic and digital media accompany this process by opening up new possibilities for representation and interaction, as well as the constitution of communities that resist being contained by the geographical territory of the state. Some claim that the arising of postmodernity produces instable, fragmented and multiple forms of identity that are not tied to given entities, such as the nation (Hall 1992, Jameson 1991). Moreover, the international flow of capital and labour, and the changing political struc-

tures, reduce the sovereignty of the nation-state. Politics cannot take the nation state for granted any more. Neither can contemporary social science.

Yet, as Michael Billig (1995) polemically reminds us, some theories of globalization and postmodernity contain a great deal of “as-if” arguments regarding the categories of nation, nationalism and the nation-state. “It is”, in his words, “as if the nation state had already withered away” (ibid 139). Confronting the arguments of globalization theory with the concept of “banal nationalism” he convincingly demonstrates how the national dialectic of remembering and forgetting pieces of the past within collective memory just as much concerns the present. For nations do still exist, in spite of (or perhaps due to) their routinely forgotten presence. The nation-state still is the dominant form for political imagination, as well as the very basis of citizenship as we know it. And the identification with the nation as an imagined community “cannot be exchanged as last year’s clothes” (ibid 139).

What seems to be needed, then, is an approach to nationality devoid of any unwarranted assumptions – neither about the nation as a taken-for-granted dominant social form, nor about its expected demise in a context of globalization.

The concepts and ontology of national horizons

In a recent article, Crofts Wiley (2004) proposes an analytical framework for the study of nationality, supposedly well suited for the contemporary context of globalization. Nationality, he argues, should be viewed as “one particular logic among others that organize economic, political, technological, and cultural territories and flows” (ibid 78). Thus the focus is shifted towards concrete analyses of a wide variety of social spaces and contexts that may or may not be contingent upon the nation as an organizational principle. He argues for a project of mapping out, rather than presupposing, the relevance and implications of the national rationale, “in such a way as to reveal and open up new articulations not apparent on the surface of an event or site” (ibid 89).

This means that nationality deserves to be studied and explained rather than taken for granted as the “container” of society. There would be a rich analytical potential in such an innocent approach to the study of nationality. Nationality is an elusive phenomenon and the proposed methodological recognition of this is welcome, as are its implications for empirical research.

Some additional theoretical work remains, however, before we can join Crofts Wiley. Although I am sympathetic to the general inclination of his arguments, there is a need to know more exactly what a “mapping approach” to media and nationality would entail. For instance, Crofts Wiley’s conflation of state and nation into the nation-state concept needs to be dealt with. The same goes for the institutional-structural bias in the examples used to

illustrate the perspective. Which additional conceptual distinctions have to be made if the “space” to be charted consists of the audience reception of mass-mediated discourse on a specific topic – and not the topography of cinema systems (see Crofts Wiley 2004:89)? Clearly, these are ontologically different “spaces”. Even if one cannot beforehand delineate the very nationality whose terrain is to be charted, as an object and an objective of research, it would nevertheless be plausible to stipulate some basic conceptual distinctions from previous research and theorizing.

The perspective on nationality offered by sociologist Marianne Winther Jørgensen (1994) is helpful in this respect. Largely developing the theory out of a critique of some of the established theorists of nationalism (Anderson 1991, Gellner 1983, Hobsbawm 1990, Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983, Smith 1991), Jørgensen retains their insights, while at the same time seeking to transcend some of their anachronistic and essentialist qualities. Instead of placing both the creation and reproduction of nations some two hundred years or so back in time (the advent of the national daily press, the consolidation of state apparatuses, the crisis of communities based on religion etc.) she prefers to view nationality as a project never finished. Thus, the processes of both change and reproduction have to be studied within the same synchronic framework, since “the history of the origins of nationality is not the whole story of nationality. There is a place for a perspective on nationality in already established nations” (Jørgensen 1994:5).¹ This is a point of view similar both to Billig’s (1995) and Croft Wiley’s (2004). In brief, Jørgensen defines nationality as the relationship between social reality (*nationscape*), cultural conceptions of reality (*nation*) and practices that aim at establishing a correspondence between social reality and conceptions of reality (*nationalism*).² Figure 1 illustrates the interrelatedness of these concepts.

Figure 1. The concepts of nationality. Adapted from Jørgensen (1994)

Nationscape	Social structure, institutions (i.e. the level of social reality)
Nation	Culture (i.e. the level of experienced reality)
Nationalism	Action, articulation (i.e. the level of practices generating correspondence between <i>nation</i> and <i>nationscape</i>)

The concept of *nationscape* covers those “at face value” existing, historically established institutions, laws, practices, knowledges and traditions in social and material reality that are tied to – but *not identifiable with* – the established nation. The first and most obvious example is the institutional complex of the state. Others are the educational system, whose requirements of knowledge, order and discipline *largely* rely on nationally defined standards, the national media landscape, and the geographical territory of the state. Less apparent examples are the railroad system and the national mail (though surely not commonly thought of as “national”) whose range and scope co-

incide with that of the state territory (which is itself a crucial part of nationscape).

Jørgensen's nationscape would also include institutions in the wider, sociological meaning of the term, such as sedimented practices, official language, institutionalized historical memory, explicit popular knowledge, and commonalities of interest, that, *by and large*, are common denominators for members of a certain nation at a given moment in time. This is not controversial. The point is, however, that any attempt at objectively defining the essence of a nation will fail, in the sense that some people or characteristics will be illegitimately excluded from the community under any description.³ Thus, it is the italicized expressions above that should be emphasized here. Or to be precise – it is the “largely”, “by and large” and “not identifiable with” properties of nationscape that provide nationality with its dynamic qualities (Jørgensen 1994:62).

The *nation*, in Jørgensen's view, is nothing more nor less than the implicit cultural meanings ascribed to nationscape. That is, the institutions, practices, and commonalities in nationscape mean nothing in themselves, but become intelligible as the nation only through a sedimented “cultural grammar” conditioning the way social and material reality is experienced among people. To some extent, the specific contents and qualities of this grammar are questions for empirical research, but Jørgensen (1994:96–98) singles out some basic traits that would apply to most nations. The nation is by necessity experienced as a community that transcends difference among its members. As such it is commonly regarded as natural and involuntary, as well as universal, since everybody must “have” a nationality. Moreover, this community may often be imagined as based upon some essential qualities (culture, ethnicity, language, “national character” etc.) supporting the logic of naturalness. Politically, the nation is closely tied to the idea of a sovereign state that governs itself through the will of the people. Finally, the nation is imagined as both limited and distinct from other nations. This is not merely a question of borders and geography, but also implies perceived qualitative *differences* – be they cultural, political, historical or otherwise – between nations.

The role of the media in reproducing the cultural grammar of nation would be substantial. Mass mediated communication can be said to provide members of a nation with common symbolic points of reference of various kinds: a domestic celebrity/star system, including gossip and scandal; symbols of the sovereign state such as images of the parliament, familiar politicians, and the largely uncritical celebration of monarchy, common at least in the Nordic countries (Phillips 1999); images of territory such as televised weather reports (Löfgren 1990); the division of news into foreign and domestic, and so forth. The audience is inscribed as always-already members of this national community.

The conception of the nation as a “cultural grammar” echoes, when applied to mass mediated communication, common themes in previous research

into the history of public service institutions and/or “national media culture” (Scannell & Cardiff 1991, Van den Bulck 2001, Löfgren 1990). These histories tend to view the “national media culture” or “national public sphere” as something quite inclusively shared by all the members of the nation (see Morley 2000:113–127). Jørgensen’s framework, however, makes national culture contingent upon articulatory practices.

Nationalism. If *nationscape* refers to the “dirty reality” dimension of nationality and *nation* to an idealistic cultural grammar of “imagined community” the question arises: What is the nature of the relation between the level of institutions/social structure and that of cultural meaning? The answer is that it is contingent rather than necessary. Furthermore it is a highly political relation, since establishing a cultural grammar by which social reality is interpreted, experienced, and lived involves power struggles (Jørgensen 1994:109–110). Jørgensen brings this political dynamic to the very heart of the nationality problematic.

Theoretically then, the “national communities are constituted in a process, whereby other possible communities criss-crossing the nation are suppressed or ignored” (ibid 110). This constitution is never to be seen as fully established but ongoing and temporary, since there is always the possibility of other commonalities and other cultural grammars of community (for example based on region, class, gender or race/ethnicity) being articulated in practice.⁴ Drawing on Ernesto Laclau’s (1990, 1996) terminology, Jørgensen describes the process of implying a community through action as a *hegemonic intervention*. Hegemonic interventions, whether they involve linguistic or non-linguistic practices, establish more or less provisional horizons beyond which one cannot imagine society. The dynamic process of hegemonizing the nation through interventionist action is, finally, what Jørgensen terms *nationalism*. Following Laclau, Jørgensen argues that social reality does not determine what kind of articulations of community become established (remember the “by and large”-character of *nationscape*). However, in *nationscape* she finds a concept that can account for those “real” historically established institutions, commonalities and practices that may make the closure of nation more possible and probable than others (Jørgensen 1994:63).

It is through nationalism that various phenomena in social reality present themselves as national. Nationalism thus includes all the practices and actions that imply the Nation as if it were a perfectly transparent mirror-image of social reality. The very existence, even of so-called established nations, is contingent upon the reiteration of such practices and actions. Our main task will thus be to conceptualize a framework for studying nationalism in mediated communication.

To summarize, there are many advantages to the perspective offered by Jørgensen. First, not only is the concept of nation dissociated from that of the state, but also from other “objective” criteria such as race, ethnicity, culture and territory. Yet, it does not discard these conditions altogether, but makes them part of a dynamic framework, capable of accounting for the

paradoxes, inconsistencies, and instabilities that have always been inherent in the nation as an imagined political community. Thus, the theory makes no implicit or explicit assumptions as to the future of the nation form. Finally, it hones the concepts used and, I suggest, specifies the conditions under which research adhering to the “mapping approach” of Crofts Wiley (2004) must take place.

The concept of nationalism, however, in lay language as well as in some versions of the sociology of late modernity and political science, often spells right-wing ideology, the wish for ethnic purity or other tribalistic phenomena. I suggest that the concept should be replaced with the phrase “articulation of national horizons” to avoid confusions such as these.

We may guess that in discourse theory Jørgensen finds the key to making the notion of nation as “cultural grammar” contingent upon articulatory practices, rather than viewing it as a stable, all-inclusive entity. Conversely, the introduction of the category of “cultural grammar” may provide the nation with an ontological stability that seems to evaporate into pure “play of meaning” in the sole grip of discourse theory. However, since the poststructuralist discourse theory of Ernesto Laclau (1990, 1996, see also Laclau and Mouffe 1985) – if his conception of hegemony is considered – can account for both the processes of change and non-change, the question is, in short, whether the “articulation of national horizons” makes the category of “nation” superfluous. The redundancy of the nation concept appears even more plainly when one considers the importance of nationscape (i.e. the practices, institutions, and social structures by which we may roughly demarcate nations) in setting a “scene of possibility” as to which horizons are likely to provide closure, and which are not.

This is not the place to fully explore and resolve the theoretical tensions between “culture” and “discourse”. Methodologically speaking, my position in all this will be of the agnostic kind – in the fashion suggested by Crofts Wiley. Rather than assuming that there already exists a cultural grammar of the nation, its character, on-going creation and, restructuring – if there is one in the first place, that is to say – will automatically be included when the category of “articulation of national horizons” is methodologically operationalized. Now it is time to suggest such an operationalization in the area of mediated communication.

Mass media and nationality: nationscape

In relation to the categories introduced by Jørgensen, the media is a double-edged sword. Mass mediated communication is not only *a part of* nationscape (i.e. as institutional settings organizing the social practices of mediated communication in society); mediated discourses *represent* this very nationscape as well. As a methodological imperative the proposed theory will suggest

that the study of *media institutions as parts of nationscape* be analytically separated from studies of *articulations of national horizons in media discourse*. This is because it would be highly problematic to expect any necessary correspondence between these levels.

Figure 2. The concepts of nationality and mediated communication.
Adapted from Jørgensen (1994)

Nationscape	The economic and political structure of media production and ownership, audience composition, patterns of audience consumption.
Articulation of National Horizons	Practices providing closures of social reality within national horizons through the dynamic relationship between “encoding”, genre conventions, systems of representation, audience address, and audience reception.

As figure 2 suggests, the media aspects of nationscape would include those structural, institutional and technological settings of media production and consumption whose range, by and large, at face value, coincide with that of the existing nation. “The national media landscape” may once have been a warranted term, but these days the role of the media in nationscape is highly ambiguous. (Morley & Robins 1995, McChesney 1999, Herman & McChesney 1997, Murdock 1990, Boyd-Barrett 1996, 2000).

One could go on at considerable length probing media production and patterns of consumption as to whether they may be regarded as institutions of nationscape. The question of to what extent, if at all, these institutional and structural conditions of media production and patterns of consumption are organized according to a “national logic” is indeed an intriguing empirical one – and it could probably be fruitfully approached by way of “mapping”, as proposed by Crofts Wiley (2004). Following Jørgensen, however, an institutional-structural analysis cannot exhaustively account for nationality, since institutions and nations rarely, if ever, coincide:⁵

The “discrete units” that different institutional complexes delimit, do not converge by necessity. [...] The mass media today ranges from the local newspaper, addressing a confined geographical area, to the satellite television channels, technically transmitting to a global audience. If nation equals institutions exclusively, one will have considerable trouble locating *the* national units (Jørgensen 1994:67)

Thus, there is more to the media–nationality relationship than the institutional/structural aspects often emphasized in accounts of media globalization. Even if the media’s role in nationscape is diminishing – or, for that matter, even if the institutions making up nationscape are generally destabilizing⁶ – it does not by necessity follow that the ideological closures of nation in media discourse will be less frequent or less totalizing in scope. In fact, it is perfectly possible, maybe even plausible, to assume that articulations of national

horizons both in media and everyday discourse in some respects bear very little correspondence to what the globalization theorists see as the deteriorating structural integrity of nationality. This is where the emphasis will be in the remainder of the text.

Articulation of national horizons in media discourse: representation and communication

As noted earlier, the category “articulation of national horizons” (“nationalism” in Jørgensen’s terminology) covers the actual dynamics of closing states, events and, processes in the world – through linguistic as well as non-linguistic actions – as if the nation always-already exists. Now it is time to lay out the conceptual foundation of what this would mean in the context of mediated communication. Attention will be directed towards media addressing mass audiences (Abercrombie & Longhurst 1998). This choice rests on the assumption that national articulations are in their essence “mass” phenomena, even though, as we will see, articulations of national horizons in mediated communication ultimately will have to involve concrete instances of audience identification in everyday life.

Jørgensen’s perspective on nationality resides at the abstract level of formal social theory, as do the post-structuralist accounts she employs. In this context we need to complete the framework with a substantial theory of articulation for mass-mediated communication. Laclau and Mouffe (1985:105) define articulation as “any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice”.

I suggest that the linking of elements in Laclau and Mouffe’s general sense of the term may take place along two axes in mass-mediated communication: through *representation* and *communication*. The distinction is purified for analytical purposes. It is however not merely analytical in itself. Similar distinctions are quite common both in communication theory and in linguistics. James Carey (1992:18), for instance, distinguishes between a “transmission” and a “ritual” view of communication, where the latter “is directed not toward the extension of messages in space but toward the maintenance of society in time”. In this context, Carey refers to the two general aspects of the *communicative* axis: transmission of texts and commonality of meaning. Norman Fairclough (1990:46), more congenial to the distinction made here, discerns three dimensions of the structuring effects of discourse: “contents”, “relations”, and “subjects”. The *content* dimension would at least roughly correspond to the definition of the *representational* axis here, whereas both “relations” and “subjects” could be subsumed under the *communicative* axis. Typically, post-structuralist political theorists such as Laclau and Mouffe and their followers, analyse representational articulations exclusively, in institutional settings other than the media.

The *communicative* axis of articulations of national horizons is to be understood as specific to the vertical relations established between the social practices of media production, textuality, and reception in mass communications. This relation is comprised of various genre conventions, rituals of production, and everyday-life consumption, among other things, which establish contracts of meaning making between the moments of the mass communication process itself. Stuart Hall (1980:128) has characterized this as a “complex structure in dominance [...] produced and sustained through the articulation of linked but distinctive moments – production, circulation, distribution/consumption, reproduction”. The moments of mass communication have been variously conceptualized as “sender–message–receiver” or “production–text–reception”. In any case, what is important along this articulatory axis is that it provides a linkage between the public and the private domains of the social.

This is nothing more than a relatively mundane description of the moments of mass communication in general. In the context of national horizons, however, this articulatory axis would be crucial. This is so, because it might be said to constitute a communicative space – negotiated, ideally shared – by producer, the implied reader and the real audience. This space is nothing less than a vantage point – or the implied audience’s place in the world, if you will – from which the events, states and processes represented in various genres of media discourse are looked upon. The end result of national articulations along the communicative axis, then, is an *audience of national citizens, presupposed as if it were always and already “there”*. This is very close to Benedict Anderson’s (1991) definition of the very fabric of an *imagined community*. Commenting on newspaper reading, he notes its paradoxical significance:

It is performed in silent privacy, in the lair of the skull. Yet each communicant is well aware that the ceremony he performs is being replicated simultaneously by thousands (or millions) of others of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion (Anderson 1991:35).

Representational articulation refers to the linguistic and semiotic construction of signs that convey information about an *external reality*. The end result of articulations of national horizons along the representational axis is *the Nation as a distinguishable entity in a world of nations*. Or, put otherwise, representational articulations *grant the “national place” with certain qualities distinguishing it from other national places, and communities other than the nation*.

Following the terminology of Laclau (1996), the nation can be considered an *empty signifier* whose meaning is essentially ambiguous because of its inclusion in several opposing discourses. Empty signifiers such as “nation”, “national interest”, “liberation”, “order”, and “revolution” occupy central positions in politics, as their ambiguity makes them well-suited to formulat-

ing a “communitarian order as an absence, an unfulfilled reality” (p. 44) providing closure to a social landscape whose essence cannot be fully represented. Signifiers, as we know, only mean something when they are articulated (that is, syntagmatically and paradigmatically linked) to other signifiers in discourse. Thus, “the nation” in news stories on, say, drug trafficking, the stock exchange, decision making in the EU, or the Olympic Games, means different things depending on the actual articulation of moments. The representational aspects of media textuality consist of syntagmatic and paradigmatic combinations of signifiers, themselves articulated *horizontally* with other texts and cultural artefacts, the interrelatedness of which constitute specific discourses about the world. Consequently they contribute to filling the empty signifier of “nation” with specific contents. The fact that this content is far from fixed poses no theoretical problems, if we concur with the assumption that

[...] the concept of the nation retains its grip on the imaginary of its population precisely by remaining unfixed. In this way, a wide range of persons and collectivities can identify themselves as constituent parts of it without having their readings and their allegiances to it challenged or denied by particular and exclusionary definitions (Bowman 1994:144).

The communicative and the representational axes may be equally present in all forms of mediated communications for mass audiences. Indeed, the distinction might be stretched to institutionalized communication in general. However both the frequency and the degree to which different media, genres, and formats actually tend to articulate *national* horizons vary greatly.

Finally, I suggest that we may stipulate the relation between the dimensions as follows:

1. Representational closures of society within national horizons presuppose communicative articulations of national horizons
2. It is however possible for national horizons to be articulated communicatively without the representational axis being invoked

Next, the representation-communication distinction will be put to the test, along with the stipulated relation of the axes. The methodological operationalization of Jørgensen’s theory on nationality is illustrated by using two case studies of news journalism. The first case consists of previous studies of news media’s representation of issues related to immigration and immigrants. The second case is a first-hand analysis of news coverage of trafficking, especially drug trafficking, in a Swedish elite daily newspaper during the last five years.

Arguably, the implied audience of most news journalism is an audience of national members (Ekecrantz 1998:52, Billig 1995, Yumul & Özkirimli 2000, Law 2001, Brookes 1999, see also Berglez in this volume). This means that

texts produced in news journalism by default articulate national horizons communicatively by means of their implied audience. The cases we consider below are of particular interest because they articulate national horizons along both the communicative and the representational axis. I employ the term *border journalism* for those cases of the news genre where both axes are invoked. This may also signify what really seems to be at stake in representations of this kind: the tendency to “patch up” the frayed ends of nationscape by exerting a discursive “border control”.

Two cases of border journalism

The essentially contested boundaries of nationscape comprise a fruitful empirical point of departure when in search of cases where national horizons are articulated in representations of social reality. Coverage of boundary politics in the Swedish news media of today includes discourses on immigration, international crime policy, trafficking of various kinds, and more generally the consequences of the expansion of EU into Eastern Europe, among other themes. Significantly, most of these issues seem to relate directly or indirectly to the processes described by various accounts on globalization.

Immigration. Influenced by postcolonial theorizing and critique, some Swedish media studies of issues of immigration and race/ethnicity (Brune 1999, 2002, 2004, Bredström, 2002) may be regarded as innovative contributions to an understanding of how national horizons are articulated in the mass media. Studying the media’s reporting and debate surrounding the “Rissne Rape”, a suspected gang rape that occurred in Stockholm in the year 2000, Bredström (2002) discovers that the interpretive framework of the media significantly alters as the immigrant backgrounds of the main suspects are revealed by the police. Up until then, a psychological framework dominated the media coverage, explaining the act of violent sexual behaviour with reference to individual pathologies, using the quasi-scientific language of “low self-esteem”, “lacking empathy”, “ego-deficiency” and so on. Following the disclosure, these explanations are no longer used. With few exceptions, if any, they are replaced by a familiar explanatory model of foreign patriarchal culture, transforming the female victim of non-immigrant origin to something like a symbol of the nation under attack from a male Other (Bredström 2002:196).

In a similar vein, Brune (1999) suggests that Swedish news journalism participates in a double identity construction when covering issues of race/ethnicity and immigration. Drawing on postcolonial theories of stereotyping, she characterizes news discourse on immigration as replete with historically sedimented stereotypes of various kinds, all of which, at the same time as they construct Others, convey information about the very origin of

the stereotype – or, put more precisely, about the desired self-image of the implied community of readers.

Thus, the media discourse on sexual violence offered in the case above can be said to produce an “epidemic theory” of menacing foreign patriarchy. The theory, of course, is wholly contingent on the chauvinistic presupposition of its absent mirror image: Sweden, the “virgin” home territory. By excluding, at least temporarily, sexual violence from the national horizons articulated, the community can emerge united regarding some self-evident assumptions of gender equality. In the last instance, this would be yet another substantiation of the relation between racism and nationalism (Balibar 1991).

Trafficking and Drugs. Concluding his study of the media debate that anticipated some major changes in Swedish drug policy in the 1980s (among others the criminalization of all use of illicit drugs), criminologist Henrik Tham (1992) asserts that the nationalist theme – implicitly as well as explicitly – is what unites most media accounts on the drug problem. In the end, then, “narcotics are conceptualized as the antithesis of ‘Sweden’ and ‘Swedish values’”. In a time of national uncertainty the struggle against drugs has in part manifested itself as a more general project of defence of ‘Swedishness’” (Tham 1992:94).

In much the same vein, I suggest that the elite dailies of today tend to integrate drugs into an overarching discourse on transnational flows and national interest. This grants this case of border journalism some interesting qualities, which will be analysed below.

The largest elite daily in Sweden, *Dagens Nyheter* (Daily News), has run several series of pieces on narcotics during the last five years. Two predominant themes are no doubt trafficking issues and youth issues. The pieces on trafficking nearly always embrace the interpretive framework of the sources, for example the police and customs authorities. Headlines such as “Amphetamines from the East a Growing Problem” (DN 2001-12-27), and “Drug Trafficking: Drugs Flow in From the East” (DN 2001-04-25), unambiguously position Sweden as being under threat from the former communist states. Even when news on “the East” is categorized as “foreign”, the theme of cross-border contamination of the home territory may enter the story. In “Drug Trafficking: Estonian and Russian Gangs behind Finnish Drug Traffic” (DN 2001-04-25) the focus is on Finland. The article however, states by inference that growing numbers of heavy drug addicts in Sweden are causally related to the nowadays more consolidated status of the drug syndicates in Estonia and Russia.

In the 2000 DN series, “New Wave of Drugs”, the articulation of geographical borders joins forces with the perennial issue of the concern for the future generations. This series could not more clearly exemplify a full-fledged epidemic theory of the drug problem. The series consist of four parts, in sum six pieces. Five of them are dedicated to different aspects of young people’s use of illicit drugs, the parental and/or official perspective predominating,

while one provides a strong causal inference: “New Wave of Drugs/Part 1: The Drugs are Pouring in From the East” (DN 2000-05-17). “The East” is thus to be blamed if, or rather when, the powdery white future of Sweden is realized with “our” next generation growing up.

Even at the micro level, these stories are something else. Stylistically, and in terms of the narrative and rhetorical techniques used, critical distance to sources seems less of an issue here than as is customary in other contexts where state authorities are among the main actors. This is manifested in at least three ways.

Firstly, the methods, procedures, and gadgets utilized by the customs and the police to track down and confiscate smuggled goods are portrayed with an almost ethnographic curiosity by border journalism. The everyday minutiae of customs work are carefully depicted in several articles. This is done in a way hardly to be found in pieces on any other state business: “Trafficking: X-rays Reveal the Smuggled Goods” (DN 2003-12-28), “The Customs Crisis: ‘We’re Good at Body Language’” (DN 2001-07-20), “Uneven Struggle at Öresund” (DN 2002-01-19), “The Customs Crisis: Major Busts Drain the Border Protection Resources” (DN 2001-07-20).

The pieces on the work of customs authorities often include “thick descriptions”, or rather, the use of a writing style familiar from the genre of crime novels, where the present tense and a vivid sense for details are crucial components of creating a dramatic tone:

TUESDAY MORNING on the Öresund bridge. A cutting south-southwest wind over the control zone in front of the customs booth. A green BMW 328 with German licence plates is waved in. (“Uneven Struggle at Öresund”, DN 2002-01-19).

The 23rd of June this year customs officials break open the first of 100 bundles of wood seized in the little harbour of Stugsund outside of Söderhamn. Once they have forced the outer layer of wood the officials are able to read the names of well known cigarette labels through a plastic coating. (“Gang of Smugglers Uncovered After Record Seizure. The Investigation Suggests Foreign *[sic]* Connections”, DN 2003-12-29).

– Look here, Joakim Olsson [customs official] says and points to a darker patch of the image on the computer screen.

Are there cigarettes in the cargo? Narcotics? Or does the dark patch just represent goods of a different kind than the rest of the container? (“Trafficking: X-rays Reveal the Smuggled Goods”, DN 2003-12-28).

Secondly, pieces on drug trafficking are replete with strong language and dramatic metaphors, both military and medical:

His colleague Claes Kraft [...] says that the trafficking over the Öresund bridge became what the *threat assessment* predicted [...]. Kraft works with *strategic and operative analysis of suspected criminal matters*.

– The bridge is *seeping pus* today, a customs problem [...].

You stop, at best, one case out of ten. Aren't you *fighting a superior enemy*? ("Uneven *Struggle* at Öresund", DN 2002-01-19, my emphasis).

As Nelkin (1987) and Sontag (1989) among others have suggested, military metaphors in contexts such as technology, science, and medicine tend to carry some specific ideological implications for meaning making; they seek to establish a state of emergency where normal procedures, precautions, and considerations of cost can be negotiated or ignored, in order to pursue a higher cause. Here, these implications enter the discourse of border journalism, suggesting that there is much more at stake here than the trafficking itself – namely the nation.

Thirdly, news representations of trafficking issues are stuffed with numbers, often displayed on the side, in a "facts" section. Apart from their referential properties these numbers may serve specific rhetorical functions. To begin with, they provide short and snappy measurements of the *vastness* of the trafficking problem, although the figures stated for different substances often show inconsistencies when "facts" sections of different articles are compared. Rhetorically, however, inconsistencies matter little. Cigarettes are counted one by one, adding up to tens of "millions". Amphetamines, cannabis and heroin appear as "kilograms" or "tons" with a "street value" of "millions". Of course, it is hard for the lay reader not to be stunned by such figures, especially when she is persistently reminded that the consignments seized by the customs only account for "the tip of the iceberg". Furthermore, numbers are often used selectively to indicate, or explicitly support the thesis that the problem is *increasing*, when such numerical data is available. This may be the very angle of an entire piece, as in "Trafficking: More Cigarettes Smuggled than Previous Years" (DN 2003-12-30), or the proposition may be more subtly placed in the "facts" section. In the corpus of articles reviewed here,⁷ numbers pointing in the opposite direction are never used to support other propositions contained in the texts.

The trafficking case of border journalism, at the surface level completely dissimilar to the issue of sexual violence, may be regarded as an instance of the same general mechanism: an articulation of national horizons through the formulation of an "epidemic theory" of social problems. The empirical illustrations above would qualify this suggestion by demonstrating that the interpretive framework of (drug) trafficking grants Sweden certain "virginal" or "innocent" qualities. These properties in turn imply that drugs as a social problem essentially are a question of contagion from abroad – in these days mainly from "the East". The customs authorities are subtly celebrated as "good

guys” protecting the nation (not least “our” future generations) as they struggle against persistently scarce resources and an ignorantly liberal European environment. Put in more formal terms this means that the limits of nationscape (i.e. the borders of state territory and the customs authorities) are articulated with drugs and “goods out of place” as moments in a discourse. In this way, border journalism performs a hegemonic intervention – a provisional ideological closure – since any other way of conceptualizing the social problem of drugs within this discourse would run the risk of presenting itself as an anomaly, as being counter-productive to a presupposed national interest.

During this brief analysis, several references have been made to “the lay reader” and “the implied reader”. These references have been absolutely necessary for the arguments made. The articulations, along the representational axis, of “epidemic theories” of social problems would certainly not be *national* articulations were they not formulated from the point of view of the “contaminated” nation. Thus, some empirical arguments have been made to support the statement that representational articulations of national horizons presuppose the communicative axis also being articulated.

It was also claimed that it is perfectly possible for articulations of national horizons to take place in mass mediated communication *completely devoid of* any articulations along the axis of representation. In his much commented on one-day survey, Michael Billig (1995:109–127) forcefully argues that the elite dailies of Great Britain banally reproduce the national ideology regardless of which representational articulations are offered to the implied readership. Now consider the following excerpt:

Anna Sjödin: Give all hidden refugees amnesty. We have to show that solidarity not only comes in blue and yellow (Aftonbladet 2005-09-06).

The normative assertion in this column headline can hardly be said to provide any solid articulation of national horizons in its representation of the social landscape. Instead, it suggests we ignore formal citizenship so that “solidarity” may include people on the outside. However, while the representational axis explicitly articulates a community that transcends nationscape, the “We”, does not transcend anything. In fact, this “We” implies and reiterates a readership of nationals.

Furthermore, Olausson (2005, and in this volume) clearly demonstrates that articulations of national horizons frequently occur in her interview material, as the respondents are asked to reflect upon media events that have little or even nothing to do with representing the nation as an object of discourse. In fact, what the study seems to suggest is that the ideological horizons of nationality seem to be nothing short of *the* dominant overarching framework within which meaning making takes place.

On the level of concrete media discourses, however, the two dimensions do not always appear as clear cut as the quotation above may suggest. I take

it as methodologically imperative to study precisely the *relation* between the two dimensions. In this way we would, for instance, be able to empirically determine the role played by articulations of national horizons along the representational axis for audience identifications along the communicative axis.

Conclusion

I will conclude by summarizing the arguments made. Firstly, the theory of nationality offered by Jørgensen (1994) was considered fruitful because of: (1) its emphasis on nationality as a project never finished; (2) its ability to account for the relationship between “subjective” and “objective” aspects of nationality; and (3) its innocence, in the sense that the perspective makes no explicit or implicit assumptions about the future of the nation form.

When following the implications of this theory for the area of mediated communication, it was found that media aspects *of* social reality had to be methodologically separated from media discourse *representing* social reality. The emphasis in Jørgensen’s theory on articulatory practices also meant that the actual dynamics of articulation of national horizons in mediated communication emerged as a pertinent area to focus upon.

Adding the distinction between the representational and communicative axes of articulations to Jørgensen’s formal theory a basic methodological framework for empirical analysis was outlined. The fruitfulness of the framework was tentatively tested on news representations of phenomena that contemporary social theory tends to interpret and explain as part of globalizing tendencies (e.g. increased migration and movement of goods, capital, and labour). Following Jørgensen, however, we found good reasons to believe that these instances of border journalism actually patched up a leaking nationscape, as they ideologically implied a closure of society within the horizons of nationality along both the articulatory axes.

Consequently, the framework proposed here may be regarded as a qualification of Crofts Wiley’s (2004:90) argument “that the space of the national is a porous, perhaps precarious, organization of economic, demographic, and cultural flows that must constantly be redefined and reinforced in the midst of a fluid geography”. The point of qualification in essence consists of the theoretical and methodological emphasis on the possibility that some forms of mediated communication – for example what I call border journalism – may contribute to the constitution of the nation form precisely by *reducing* this allegedly “fluid” and “precarious” feature of the social.

Notes

1. Quotations in languages other than English have been translated by the author.
2. "Nationality" or "the national" will be used when referring to the subject matter in a general sense.
3. Consider, for example, the ultimately false statements "everyone in Sweden speaks Swedish" and "every Swede is a Swedish citizen"/"every Swedish citizen is a Swede".
4. Jørgensen distinguishes between *commonalities* and *communities*. The former simply refers to a group of people empirically agreeing upon something, doing something in concert, or sharing some other characteristics. However, what people have in common must be constituted as objects of discourse to be recognized as communities, by those on the outside as well as by the members themselves. Thus, she concludes, "communities are constituted simultaneously with a conception of how the world as a whole is structured" (Jørgensen 1994:109).
5. The institutional complex of the state would be an exception here. States coincide more often than not with nations, though not by necessity (cf. Scotland–Great Britain).
6. Following Jørgensen, there are many "-scapes" structuring and institutionalizing social reality. One may for instance claim that the consolidation of an "EU-scape" or "Euroscape" (Jørgensen 1994:72) has some pertinent implications for nationscape – particularly when it comes to decision making in state-level politics.
7. The analysis refers to a preliminary study of news articles on trafficking in *Dagens Nyheter* through an online archive service (www.presstext.se) during the period of January 2000 to December 2004. A comprehensive content and genre analysis of the news discourse on the social problem of drugs will be included in the author's forthcoming PhD thesis.

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Ideological Horizons in the Media

Mental Illness and Violent Crime

Joel Rasmussen

Many studies since the 1960s have shown that media representations of severe mental health problems are overtly negative, often associating users of psychiatric services with violent crime (Wahl 1995, Philo 1999). However, the contribution of mental illness to violence in society is low (Walsh & Fahy 2002). This article discusses results from a study of Swedish news media and addresses causes that underlie a criminalizing discourse and the construction of some people as severely different from others. It is shown how irrationality and blameworthiness are connected to mental illness generally when the cause of a violent attack is repeatedly attributed to a person's disposition. In this connection stereotypes of mental illness are invoked, cultural and emotional in nature, which similarly appear in narratives on the screen, in detective novels, and in crime journalism. Moreover, when asking who is speaking in influential media, we find that only a select few are granted access to the arenas of discourse. Social and professional hierarchies clearly penetrate news reporting on mental health issues. This makes for an ideological horizon comprised of certain presumptions and solutions, leaving counter-perspectives outside and beyond.

Introduction

From time to time, certain groups of people find themselves at the centre of negative media attention. They may be leaders of business conducting their enterprises in unethical ways, activists or police turning democratic demonstrations into battlefields, and so on. Even if citizens might understand that there are honest executives in business, non-violent activists and competent policemen, the mismanagement or bad conduct of a few is likely to depreciate a whole group of people. In most of these cases the depreciation of the category is occasional and hardly of a critical nature in the long run. Others however may be the repeated target of negative media attention and put

under permanent disadvantage socially, politically, economically etc. The state of affairs is consistently not defined from the point of view of the ones belonging to the disadvantaged category, but rather from the point of view of the commonsensical majority, and the ones with the proper university degree or plain legitimacy to speak on the matter.

Individuals with severe mental health problems were the target of negative media attention in Sweden during the year 2003. Due to a number of violent attacks by psychiatric patients, including the murder of foreign minister Anna Lindh, the quantity and saturation of media material relating mental illness to violence simply exploded. The psychiatric care service became a major theme in the media, and politicians vied to appear capable of taking action within the neglected domain of psychiatry.¹ News media embarked on the task of describing what had happened in so-called acts of madness and to define the situation of the psychiatric care.

Stuart Hall (1995:356) states that the definition of a situation will heavily influence ideas and actions on the matter in question. Those ideas and actions are, thus, not informed by and negotiated on the basis of some natural, objective, raw information, but rather an event and situation that has been "signified in a particular way". The process of distinguishing an event and its actors may involve journalists, politicians, jurists and other experts – all with a specific range of vision, a particular horizon.

When it comes to the category "mentally ill", there is a burden of cultural information attached to it, derived from medicine, literature, folklore, popular culture, and news media. The collected social product "mentally ill" facilitates particular news media coverage that reproduces the cultural image. This repeated meaning-production may, however, involve social disadvantages for real people, or stigmatization as Goffman (1968) convincingly describes it. This pre-existing baggage of stories and particular connotations attached to the category "mentally ill" comprises a dominant meaning-system. However exaggerated a news story's alarmist portrayal of mental illness may be, biased and discriminatory elements can pass quite unrecognized. One can call such a dominant meaning-system hegemonic, and further refer to the autonomy of ideological processes. "The power involved here is an ideological power; the power to signify events in a particular way" says Hall (1995:356). The power is particularly subtle because media institutions claim to be free, independent, defenders of democracy, and yet they shape and reflect a consensus that favours the powerful (Hall 1995:361f).

Most studies on media representations of mental illness focus on content analysis (Olstead 2002). Olsted (2002) presents an impressive study of the discursive techniques and power structures that uphold the ideological reproduction of mental illness. The aim here is also to present underlying causes of ideological horizons on mental illness, though inspired instead by socio-cognitive theory. There will not be much talk of discursive techniques or strategies, simply because the discourse is not perceived here as all that consciously articulated. As mentioned earlier there is a burden of cultural

connotations attached to the category mental illness. At least to some degree particular cultural and common-sensical meanings and power structures agree with news media representations of mental illness. If news media did not reflect some sort of consensus, people would protest, there would be commotion in the Press Council, or the news stories on mental illness and violence would at least not be presented in such a self-evident way.

This text will mostly deal with everyday common-sense thinking, as ideological horizons are seen as socially constructed and reproduced in everyday life. Common sense will be dealt with along with attribution theory, which is the study of people's perceptions of causes of actions and events. Stereotypes will also be examined because of their involvement in attribution styles that are consistently negative and rigid. Stereotypes are further direct and emotional (Lippmann 1922/2004). People's cognitions can not in fact be separated from their intrinsic feelings at all (Damasio 1996). Even though journalists often treat mental illness as a matter of politics and economics, it is an area of interest that involves personal exposure and vulnerability, at least if approached baldly. It will be argued that a rigid attribution style and stereotypes are in fact readily available as defensive tools to dissociate oneself from the counter-normative, and anxiously array oneself in a normative, accepted social identity. The ideological horizon applied to mental illness thus involves defensive common-sense thinking. The dominant meaning production is also substantiated by a hierarchy of professional horizons, as will be shown when some of the foremost speakers – the custodians of the medical discourse and the psychiatric discipline they represent – are examined. However, to begin with, previous research on media representations of mental illness will be presented as well as some facts on the actual proportion of violent crime attributable to people labelled mentally ill.

Supposed dangerousness

Several studies have shown that media representations of people suffering from mental illness are overtly negative, with violent crime and dangerousness as the most frequent themes in both fiction and news (Philo 1999, Wahl 1995, Signorielli 1993, Seale 2002). In movies, sitcoms, thrillers and detective stories, mental health problems are often portrayed as something strange, threatening, or alternatively comic (Wahl 1995, Wilson et al. 2003, Anderson 2003). It is a reasonable assumption that negative representations in fiction and news have negative effects beyond each media format respectively. News might influence fiction, and vice versa (Anderson 2003).

It has been shown in reception studies that negative attitudes among citizens towards people suffering from mental illness have worsened because of occasional, sensationalist crime reporting (Steadman & Coccozza 1977, Angermeyer & Matschinger 1996, Philo 1999). It has furthermore been shown

that media material that labels and highlights people suffering from mental illness as risk agents has implications for social policy decisions (Philo & Secker 1999, Hallam 2002).

The circumstance that makes the latter studies essential, regards the fact that only a small number of individuals suffering from mental illness have committed any violent crime. Haggård-Grann (2005) refers to a recent Swedish study that sets the level at 5.2 percent. Walsh and Fahy (2002:508) conclude from their review of this research field that “patients with psychotic illness alone have a modest increase in risk for violent behaviour.” Indeed, substance abuse does increase the risk of violent behaviour among people suffering from mental illness, as it does among the average population. Swanson et al. (2002) show evidence of other relevant social-environmental factors, which challenges the preoccupation with the correlation of psychiatric diagnoses and violent behaviour. Apart from gender (male), age (young adult) and substance abuse, homelessness, and therefore exposure to threatening situations indicates an increased risk for violence. Past violent victimization was highly significant, especially when individuals had been subjected to repeated abuse throughout their lives. When all the factors mentioned here pertain to an individual, there is a risk of violence. However, when none or only one of the factors mentioned above applied to the subjects, the prevalence of violent behaviour was 2 percent, that is, on the same level as the average population (Swanson et al. 2002).

Attribution theory and individualized violence

As our illustrative case for the moment deals with the aftermath of the murder of Swedish foreign minister Anna Lindh, attribution theory, with its focal point on the ways we tend to perceive and identify causes of events, is appropriate. It can guide the researcher to relational patterns between the collective and individual, in-groups and out-groups, or a majority and minorities. If a one-sided attribution finds a place in popular media, a certain group can be subjected to widespread and severe distrust. Consequently, the study of attribution styles – as part of common-sense thinking – can be a method to go into detail with ideological practices. As van Dijk (1998) declares, ideologies are social, and close to everyday life; they are reproduced in processes of everyday meaning making. Therefore it is quite consistent to study the articulation of ideology and power, drawing from the theory of social psychology, or more specifically socio-cognitive theory.

People do not explicitly attribute causes of events in any given situation. When people are following the cultural codes of everyday life, there is no pressing need to question their behaviour by finding explanations. One of the foremost theorists in psychology of our time, Jerome Bruner, makes clear that when people act Post Office when in the Post Office they are simply

not a bit puzzled. When things are “as they should be” we do not need to tell stories explaining things (Bruner 1990:40). There is, though, essential common interest in behaviour that exceeds the socially expected, behaviour that is counter-normative. When something unexpected or negative occurs in the world outside us, there is a need for explanation, if social life is to be by any means comprehensible (Augostinos & Walker 1995). Explanation, then, is required when order is disturbed.

Common sense refers to a culturally dependant set of normative descriptions about human life and action: motives, desires, beliefs, intentions, commitments. In a concise version “... a culture’s account of what makes human beings tick” (Bruner 1990:13)². Attribution theory approaches this cultural mindset, though it focuses on the specific subject of people’s common-sense thinking and attributions of causes to actions and events. It is perhaps traditionally not linked with critical theory. Nevertheless it can highlight and distinguish group thinking and social behaviour that continuously reaffirm and draw on ideological horizons. For instance, Bruner (1990:15) makes clear that it is through common sense that “people anticipate and judge one another”.

Furthermore, in speaking of perceived causes of events, attribution theory separates the dispositional attribution from the situational. People’s behaviour is commonly considered as residing in contextual circumstances or an individual’s disposition. This is critical, since that which is considered important in judging causes of events, is narrowed down to the focus of either a person’s individual traits or context (Augoustinos & Walker 1995).

In May 2003, when a man drove a car right into a crowd in a popular shopping street in Stockholm, and another attacked people waiting for the subway train with an iron bar, three people were killed, and the perpetrators were acknowledged as suffering from severe mental illness. Later that year, in September, the Swedish foreign minister Anna Lindh was attacked and murdered one afternoon at a shopping mall. People were shocked. And the violent attacks accumulated as a 5-year old girl was stabbed to death outside her day-care centre the same day Anna Lindh passed away. In brief, order was not disturbed but rather shattered.

To pursue this line of thought, some results from a case study on the violent attacks in 2003 and media images of mental illness (cf. Rasmussen & Höjjer 2005) will be presented. The media outlets analysed were the Swedish television news program Rapport, the tabloid *Aftonbladet*, and the morning paper *Dagens Nyheter*. These are all national media outlets, and the most popular of each media format respectively.³

The cause of violent behaviour that turned out to be the dominating one in the media was the individualized and dispositional. The second most common attribution, and a consequence of the first, was the institutional, dealing with the psychiatric care service and mental health policy. In fact, immediately after the attack on Anna Lindh, there were speculations that the perpetrator might be suffering from mental illness. In Swedish television, the same day Anna Lindh was attacked, a political commentator said:

The minister of foreign affairs will have bodyguards no matter whether it was a political attack or a madman or a mentally deranged person (Rapport 2003-09-10).

Suspects and actual perpetrators were described as suffering from mental illness or mental disorders.⁴ The language varied from the medical discourse of psychiatric diagnostics to everyday designations like “lunatic” and “madman”. Few articles highlighted situational or contextual circumstances in connection to accounts of mental disorders. Few articles or news features went to the bottom of the problem and pointed towards the complexities of the relation between mental illness and violence. In conformity with Philo (1999) the media material relating mental illness to violence was foregrounded, and the material saying something else was kept in the background. Consequently, in the newspapers, dispositional attributions were mostly found in the news pages, whereas the nuanced and oppositional reports challenging the accounts of the “mad killer” were found in debate, cultural pages and letters to the editor. When comparing only news, there was an equal share of complex and oppositional items in the morning paper and the news program. The tabloid drew attention to more crimes that were treated in the same way: mental health problems were related to celebrities and stalkers; past violent crimes were re-emphasized; similar reports of “acts of madness” from abroad were given exposure. The seemingly inexplicable violence was simply given a great deal of space in the tabloid.

Table 1. Different types of attributions in media reporting of violent acts (horizontal percent)

	Dispositional	Institutional	Dispositional and Institutional	Complex or Oppositional	Number of articles
DN	27	18	27	28	(100)
Aftonbladet	42	10	33	15	(96)
Rapport	29	8	46	17	(24)

As table 1 shows there was a dominance of dispositional and institutional attributions. The former means individualized, inner causes of violence, while the latter focuses on the psychiatric care service and mental health policy as the problem. Sometimes, however, a focus opposed to the stereotypical, socially detached, account of mental illness was represented in the media. As Dyer (1999) explains, the exact opposite of the stereotypical account is the novel-like narration, where characters develop as life stories unfold. This requires an attitude and practice that allows people to be dynamic and dependent on context and circumstance. An article in *Dagens Nyheter* on the life story of a woman who had been suffering from mental illness, was the exact reverse of the news stories by criminal reporters about offenders with mental health problems. Context and history were not shrouded in a mist.

Instead, her mental condition appeared to be a reaction to strain and human trouble rather than a fate fallen upon her from the sky.

Establishing causal relations in a culture of stories

It is clear that different violent acts were represented as related to the same cause. In everyday common-sense thinking, the probability of events being related to the same causal pattern increases if things happen in close proximity and if they seem similar. Augoustinos & Walker (1995:61) state that:

In our intuitive causal systems, two events are more likely to be seen as causally related if they are proximal rather than distal. Temporal proximity is especially potent at influencing perceived causality. Likewise, greater similarity between two events makes them more likely to be perceived as a causal unit than is the case for dissimilar events.

In the case of the so called acts of madness in Sweden, proximity and similarity are evident. In September, the episodes of May were still quite recent and fresh in collective memory. All of the attacks seemed random and pointless (cf. Best 1999), and hence similar. Therefore, the murders in September were easily linked to the same course of events as those in late May. The murder of the foreign minister, Anna Lindh, became, as the centre of events the culmination of a perceived trend. Madmen were on the loose to randomly hunt down and kill innocent people. Considering the dramatic brutality and gravity of the acts, and the fact of their proximity and similarity, the gathering media storm was to be expected. The situation simply fit media logic unusually well. Consequently violent crime and representations of mental illness received maximized exposure. To report anything about a suspect or actual offender, as of the perceived trend of mad killers ravaging the streets, became commonsensical and the thing to do for many reporters, however stereotypical and socially harmful to users of psychiatric services. A columnist in the tabloid *Aftonbladet* stated:

In Sweden more than in our neighbouring Nordic countries death walks free. Or at least he's on leave. Who it may be that runs across him is decided by nothing but a lottery – a senior citizen in Nyköping, tourists in Gamla Stan, or a foreign minister at NK. Everybody has the same chance to draw the short straw. A hot summer activates the madmen. Psychiatric science doesn't say, but police experience definitely does. And this summer Stockholm and its environs have been subjected to the madmen's serial killing. In May, a couple of senior citizens in Nyköping were attacked by a man with a knife who believed he was being followed by the the Swedish Security Service. Also in May, a man drove a car at high speed right into a group of tourists in a shopping

district in Gamla stan, killing two and injuring nineteen. He believed a higher force had taken control of the vehicle. About the same time a man was waiting at the subway with an iron bar. He attacked and killed one person and injured several. He said he was being chased by trolls. In this massacre, Anna Lindh became fatal casualty number four.⁵

Such an account of mental illness and violence is strengthened by stereotypes. Augoustinos and Walker refer to a study by de Rosa, where adults and children were asked to imagine and draw pictures representing a “madman”. One of the most usual images was that depicting violent behaviour. Augoustinos and Walker (1995:149) conclude that, “Western history attests to the dominance of the criminalized representation of madness.” Accordingly, when mental illness is linked to violent crime in news, it is a link established quite easily.

Furthermore, with fiction as a frame of reference there are plenty of images and stereotypes of mentally ill killers cognitively available. It is a reasonable assumption that these enhance the perceived link between violent behaviour and mental illness. For instance in movies like *The Silence of the Lambs*, *Psycho*, and *Hannibal*, the perpetrators embody both madness and horribly violent behaviour; they pose lethal threats and arouse excitement and fear in audiences. Individuals portrayed as suffering from mental illness have been the cause of drama and fear in several TV shows too, ranging from *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* to *Baywatch*. Novels like *By Reason of Insanity* and *Probable Cause*, add to the list of fictional portrayals of one-dimensional killers (Wahl 1995).

Consequently, there is a stereotype in popular culture to activate when a violent act seems to be random, brutal and pointless. At the same time news is put into words and images. Opinions of what is best for the public interest are articulated in editorials, in a tv-news interview, in the discussion from a tv-studio sofa. Politicians begin to consider a new move in mental health policy. As Lippman (1922/2004:49) eloquently expressed:

We are told about the world before we see it. We imagine most things before we experience them. And those preconceptions (...) govern deeply the whole process of perception.

Stereotypes are types from a world of stories – stories that are imaginative and fictitious, sometimes relatively real and factious. Dyer (1999) makes clear that stereotypes trigger these stories, with their fixed person schemas and traits, with their beforehand assumptions of who is good and who is not. Such stereotypes and stories, recognized from culture, affect the perceived link between mental illness and violence. The relevance of stereotypes in the case of the violent acts in Sweden in 2003 is evident when we consider that mental illness, taken out of context and communicated in the media as an individual deficiency, became a categorization of people and the direct cause of violent attacks. On that note, Augoustinos and Walker (1995:226) stress that:

...the invidious part of stereotypes is that they attribute fixed and constitutional qualities to the target group and its members; that is, they function as explanations as well as descriptions.

This is how ideological horizons, articulated in stereotypes, work in processes of meaning-making – when the dangerousness of a few is made the potential characteristic of a whole group.

Alienation and blame: an attempt to restore meaning

When people are depreciated in national media and stereotypes are communicated many times over with little opposition, Lindblom (1999) would argue that it has something to do with the media functioning as a normative rather than explanatory arena. After analysing violent attacks in Sweden in the early 90s, Lindblom states that the media is essentially expressing a need to level strong disapproval against someone blameworthy. Someone has to be held responsible and face consequences in accordance with the severity of the crime. Contextual explanations, or any explanation that tones down individual responsibility and blame, result in a loss of meaning. Consequently, although different experts presented explanations of the perpetrators' behaviour – psychological and societal – the media pursued its own thesis, which basically declared the offenders and their actions evil. Of course, when someone is declared evil, different combined determinants are basically unnecessary, and the possibility of placing blame and depreciation is at a maximum (Lindblom 1999:76ff).

There are clearly points in common between Lindblom's cases from the early nineties and the murder of Anna Lindh and other violent acts in 2003. The events were all labelled meaningless, though attempts to explain them were made in the media. This process of understanding and restoring meaning starts off with the articulation of a flow of questions concerning motives: did the perpetrator know the victim? Did he act out of jealousy? Was the attack an act of revenge, a vendetta, linked to organized crime possibly?

When the police declare that a crime was not caused by evident motives, but was rather acted out randomly and possibly even for reason of insanity, common-sense thinking faces a dilemma. On the one hand there is a need to understand motives and as soon as possible condemn a perpetrator, on the other hand motives are hard to comprehend, and a verdict might be dependant on the judgement of a forensic psychiatric team. Consequently, when confronting this "random violence", this "act of madness", common-sense understanding is quite perplexed. One is in a daze, since motives that are familiar to common-sensical understanding such as jealousy or a desire to avenge some wrong-doing, are not satisfyingly explanatory (Lindblom 1999). Perpetrator and victim were, in the cases of present interest, strangers to each other, at least on a personal level. Hence, the circle is closed:

But since the times of the Gordian knot every closed circle breeds the temptation to cut and the demand for sharp knives... (Bauman 2001:70).

Society is facing something barely understandable, belonging to the domain of psychiatrists or “shrinks”. With no apparent motives at hand, the mediated sense of justice is somewhat challenged. A conscious and calculating criminal is simply more easily condemned and punished than someone whose perception of reality is distorted due to mental health problems. Still, as Lindblom argues, there are ways to confront this challenge. To label perpetrators evil, instead of victims of circumstance and trying social conditions, opens doors for suggestions of severe punishment regardless, or “sharp knives” as Bauman depicts. War rhetoric has been well aware of this throughout history, and still is. And still is. Someone or something evil is, by nature, unchanging, nonnegotiable, the worst imaginable, direct and uncomplicated to act against.

The perpetrators found guilty of the violent acts in Sweden in 2003 were seldom labelled evil, at least not explicitly. Still, the Swedish academic psychologist Grann (2005) calls the mediated association of mental illness and violence a psychiatrization of evil. There are reasons for this, which relate to the practice of simplification and polarization. As stated earlier, the attributions that dominated news pages were dispositional, directing attention towards mental illness as the cause of violent attacks. Despite the importance of gender, age, past traumatic experiences, substance abuse, socio-economic status (Swanson et al. 2002, Bülow 2004:60f) the problem was individualized. In the process of making the problem an individual one, simplification and polarization increase the characteristics of dangerousness, unpredictability and the overall alienation of mental illness. When a morning paper editorial declares, “a madman’s work is never rational”⁶, the dichotomy of rationality and irrationality is foregrounded, with mental illness characterized as the contrary of the comparative ideal. Mental illness is equated with random, unexpected and inexplicable manoeuvres. Consequently, there are no reasons, however subjective, to the behaviour of a person suffering from mental illness. It is represented as a state of mind that simply strikes a person without reason, and that affects behaviour with fatal consequences.

Another kind of frightening contrast applies to media reports of what happened when a 5-year-old girl was murdered.

The 25-year-old man walked calmly up to the kids playing at Gategårdens day-care centre in Arvika. He grabbed a girl, stuck a knife into her several times, and then walked just as calmly away from the scene. He was apprehended an hour later in the psychiatric ward at the hospital in Arvika.⁷

In addition to the Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde portrait – depicting a sudden change of character – indifference is brought to the fore. Notice that the perpetrator walks from the crime scene calmly. He seems emotionally unaffected after murdering a little girl! At least if walking calmly implies feeling calm – in

folk psychology or common sense – he must surely be someone evil. Then, the final point is declaring facts. This point is, however, seemingly explanatory too. The apparent brutality and morbidity of the crime described is explained when attention is directed towards mental illness generally. One can brush the event aside as an act of madness, the doing of a madman. One can indeed send it off to the realms of psychiatric diagnostics.

Likewise, a suspect after the murder of Anna Lindh was diagnosed in the media as suffering from a narcissistic personality disorder. In addition he was characterized as “friendly, charming – and violent”.⁸ Thus, a mental health problem was again equated with unpredictability and articulated with dramatic contradictions of behaviour. Speaking with Olstead (2002:641) there is a “dichotomous framework” of attributed behaviour representative – not of us – but of them.

Headlines that emphasize the “psycho” or “madman” provide a single, thrilling determinant. The frequency and penetration of the mediated association of mental illness and violence provide an idea of causality and order. It is an explanation that avoids context and circumstances, and makes it possible for the media to be this normative arena. Meaning is somewhat restored when an individual or group is held responsible, be it in a stereotypical way, because blame is expressed in accordance with the severity of the crime.

A repressive course of action

As table 1 showed, the most frequent attribution was dispositional, which means the cause of a violent act is described as due to the traits of an individual. The second most frequent attribution, and a consequence of the first, was institutional, directing attention to the psychiatric care organization – an institution whose ambition is to confront and alleviate suffering and help those seeking a remedy. All of the offenders in the so-called acts of madness in Sweden 2003 had previously sought psychiatric help.

When it comes to this second dominating cause, the critique in the media was often formulated from a general point of view. In layman terms the psychiatric care was described as insufficient, dismantled, wrecked, and so forth. When the critique was more substantial, it was directed at quantitative measures and external conditions. The same pattern was found in all three national media that were studied. Consequently, without any journalistic scrutiny of the substance and quality of the psychiatric care, it was widely conveyed and spread in the media that as long as psychiatry's budget, number of psychiatrists, number of institutional care beds, and coercive powers are satisfactory, the Swedish psychiatric care is functioning – supposedly serving those needing care.

Occasionally, the “transformation of psychiatric care” was brought to the fore. The psychiatric reform that came into effect in 1995 was at other times explicitly the target. Patient associations were involved in developing this

reform, and Markström (2003) stresses that the government bill was characterized by a humanitarian ideology seeking to reduce stigmatization and increase the participation and influence of users of services. In addition, there was an ambition to provide psychiatric care in the community rather than in institutions. Before and during the psychiatric reform, due to recessions and deficits in state finances, a downsizing of the psychiatric care service was undertaken. In the media, after the violent acts in 2003, the downsizing and the psychiatric reform were perceived as one and the same phenomenon, a single thing. The psychiatric reform was equated with the dramatic reduction of institutional care beds. The psychiatric reform was equated with the brutal downsizing of the psychiatric care generally. It was a common opinion that the psychiatric reform intended to let users of services “drift aimlessly” and “treat themselves in freedom.”⁹ When this message had been distributed with frequency and penetration, it was impossible to take a stand against the cuts in psychiatric state funding and for the psychiatric reform.

The same sort of discursive censorship affected the issue of out-patient treatment. When vivid descriptions of murders committed by individuals with mental health problems had been spread in the media, there was no chance the discourse would allow for any reasonable account of non-institutional care. Mental illness and violence had been associated together so many times, they formed a causal entity. When mental illness had been associated with risks of violence, people suffering from mental health problems were treated in the media as undesired in the community. The democratization of psychiatric care, with the community care and psychiatric reform as steps in such a process, were discursively articulated as huge risk projects. Therefore, the discussion about forms and quality of psychiatric care was systematically, although perhaps unwittingly, avoided. There was no analysis of what the psychiatric reform really intended to build and develop.

A recent report from The National Board of Health and Welfare brought out clearly that the psychiatric reform has been poorly implemented (Socialstyrelsen 2005). Consequently, as in Britain where similar violent attacks were followed by extensive media critique of a psychiatric reform, the media targeted a reform that was merely half-implemented. And as Hallam (2002) comments, a half-implemented reform can not be judged in its entirety.

Apart from the critique of the reform, compulsory care was on the media's agenda. Several psychiatrists made statements in news and debates about the need for new compulsory legislation.

More beds in the institutional care won't be enough; the law of compulsory care has to be reviewed – this according to Deanne Mannelid, chief physician at St. Görans psychiatric emergency ward.¹⁰

At the same time, and possibly as an effect of the statements by psychiatrists, editorial writers started to claim that expanded powers to impose compulsory treatment was a good solution:

A return to the conditions of the time of the institutions is out of the question. What is needed is rather a stiffening of the compulsory care and – above all – co-ordination and rearmament of the psychiatric care.¹¹

Apart from psychiatrists and journalists, politicians started to propagate for tougher measures in the psychiatric care as well. Compulsory care was brought up again. In the most popular tv-news program Rapport, a leader of one of the parties of parliament said:

Yes, there's a need now, especially in the non institutional care, to put pressure on people to take their medicines. They have to know, that if they don't carefully take the medicines that make them symptom-free and thus less dangerous to themselves and others, they can be compulsorily detained. Many believe that this threat alone will make the non institutional care better (Rapport 2003-10-01).

People with mental health problems were treated as risk agents, possible transgressors of the law. Journalism does not, however, point to any effects of compulsion, any possible decrease of violent attacks because of more frequent compulsory situations. It is perhaps not controversial that compulsory institutional care may fill a short-term purpose when an individual poses a serious threat to others, but then the effort has little to do with care, but rather control. On the other hand, what was discussed in the quotation above was the non institutional care, which is based on the premise that people voluntarily seek help. The measures of compulsory care did nevertheless seem to hold for patients generally. One can easily imagine that the hopes of care givers to reach out to users and provide respectful treatment would be shattered if such a course of action would be carried out. This has also been highlighted as a dilemma in a report from the National Board of Health and Welfare (Crafoord et al. 1997).

Foucault (1972/2005) and his *The History of Madness* become of immediate interest. With the strength of the narrative style of a realist, Foucault describes a repressive institution that was passed off as care-giving. In reality, the business had little to do with care, but was instead about the control of people considered disturbers of the peace, with regard to an ideal of enlightened rationality and the preferences of the bourgeoisie. People with mental health problems were institutionalized along with criminals and other outcasts. At the same time, Foucault raises an important question: what characterizes the psychiatric care of our time? What are the ideas and beliefs that we consider true and scientific today?

Obviously, there are mechanisms of exclusion at work. Some are to be protected, others controlled. When deviancy and dangerousness have been made the distinctive mark of psychiatric patients, calls for repressive measures targeting this group can be made with little opposition. As Bauman suggests (2001) society has always and quite easily treated out-groups with rigidity. With reference to the fact that 70 percent of the women treated in the Swedish

psychiatric care report experiences of different types of abuse, physical, sexual, psychological etc. (Bengtsson-Tops 2004) it would be relevant to discuss the concern that many users of psychiatric services are in fact risk targets rather than risk agents. If such facts had been visible in the media, they would be troublesome and inconvenient for a discourse emphasizing the connections between mental illness and violent behaviour, aiming at a repressive course of action in mental health policy. It would simply be offensive to let an institution force itself upon people described as suffering from abuse and trauma.

An emotional foundation of ideological stereotypes

Heider (1958) assumed that people tend to identify causes of other's mistakes as dispositional, and regard their own mistakes as being due to situational factors – supposedly a face-saving-strategy, since the situational attribution directs attention away from personal blame and dishonour. This attribution style and means of meaning-making has become well known as the fundamental attribution error. The fundamental attribution error has also been supported by several empirical studies (Augoustinos & Walker 1995).

As shown here, violent attacks are often attributed to a person's disposition, to mental illness as an isolated and individual phenomenon. It has also been noticed that temporal proximity and similarity of events influence people to perceive them as related to the same cause; they are managed with the same causal schema and attribution style.

Furthermore, the idea that people suffering from mental illness are violent is common in fiction. There are stereotypes in our culture's storytelling of the mad killer, someone who is beyond dispute the worst imaginable person, and there is a tendency in the media to portray offenders in the same stereotypical way. Rigid person schemas and attribution styles that do not consider context *are* stereotypical. Subsequently, the mad killer in the newspaper is not so different from the unchanging mad-killer-character in our world of fictional crime stories. The preoccupation with mental illness, and the absence of related situational factors, are at the same time characteristic of an enterprise that distinguishes some people as severely different from others. There is an all or nothing distinction made between rationality and irrationality. Again, *there are people and there are people*.

This predicament relates to an individualized society, where everyone is the architect of their own fortunes, where success as well as failure are attributed to the individual (Bauman 2001). From the recent mass-medial preoccupation with and depreciation of mental illness, a hypothesis would be that people have a strong engagement in being normal. Being normal simply signifies an accepted social identity; it implies that I am not to be subjected to mockery, avoidance or hostility; it implies that I have opportunities and options in life.

We are now approaching Lippmann's (1922/2004) original account of stereotyping. In his view, stereotypes confirm positions and identities. The practice of stereotyping has a psychological and social function in distinguishing the self from others, in the positioning of one social group as superior or inferior to others. People can, accordingly, confirm a social order and continuously secure the worth and merit of themselves and their own group by downplaying others. Attributing violent attacks to a person's disposition by designating mental illness as the determinant and causal explanation blackens the character of a group of individuals. By defining others, we define ourselves. Embedded in the pejorative discourse on mental illness, a comparative context is always present, which hails a norm of rationality, health, and indeed something unimpeachable and immaculate. If the definition is challenged, altered, redefined, there is an emotional and social cost to be paid:

No wonder, then, that any disturbance of the stereotypes seems like an attack upon the foundations of the universe. It is an attack upon the foundations of our universe, and, where big things are at stake, we do not readily admit that there is any distinction between our universe and the universe. A world which turns out to be one in which those we honor are unworthy, and those we despise are noble, is nerve-racking. There is anarchy if our order of precedence is not the only possible one. For if the meek should indeed inherit the earth, if the first should be last, if those who are without sin alone may cast a stone, if to Caesar you render only the things that are Caesar's, then the foundations of self-respect would be shaken for those who have arranged their lives as if these maxims were not true (Lippmann 1922/2004:52).

Lippmann (1922/2004:52) clearly defines the stereotype as a defence, a mechanism activated directly and "...highly charged with the feelings attached to them." Stereotypical accounts have also proven to be direct and affective. Negative moods, as well as positive, enhance the practice of stereotyping.

Rigid person schemas and attribution styles designating others as possessing ill character and a negative disposition have been noted in a wide range of literature. The media treatment of so-called acts of madness fits into a history of social and psychological conflict and anxiety. It represents and invokes it, by giving the green light to the depreciation of people considered different and the idealization of a comparative contextual norm.

Violence arouses anxiety and fear (cf. Best 1999, Stattin 1990, Höjjer & Rasmussen 2005). The media treatment reflects this. It is emotional and dramatic; foregrounding the dangerousness of a possible risk agent; enhancing the defensive position of the man on the street. Elements of affective storytelling and media logic are apparant. But the emotion and drama are very likely a consequence of the social and psychological fact that we all, unquestionably, have been subjected to the care or arbitrariness of others. In this sense, a brutal murder represents the absolutely worst imaginable

occurrence. Feelings attached to experiences of care or arbitrariness constitute, then, a foundation of the cognitions and discourses on violent attacks.

The same line of reasoning can include perceptions of mental illness as well. Since we are social beings, brought up and socialized in relationships according to a set of norms, the counter-normative – in this case the seemingly irrational and deviant – implies rejection and anxiety. Again, people have a strong engagement in being normal. Hence it is no wonder that media images of mental illness turn out so anxiously rigid. The all-or-nothing distinction between the normal and seemingly deviant, and the inconceivable irrationality imposed on the latter, might as well be a projection by the ones anxiously exerting themselves to fit an idealized norm. Here, Damasio's perspective on feelings is telling and pertinent:

I see feelings as having a truly privileged status (...) they come first in development and retain a primacy that subtly pervades our mental life. Because the brain is the body's captive audience, feelings are winners among equals. And since what comes first constitutes a frame of reference for what comes after, feelings have a say on how the rest of the brain and cognition go about their business. Their influence is immense (Damasio 1996:160).

We are, then, from day one continuously telling stories of socially embedded experiences and memories, and the feelings attached to them.

Hierarchies of professional horizons

The field of psychiatry is a field of oppositional paradigms and ideologies. On the one hand, you have the medical model, with its foundation in biomedicine and pharmacology. On the other hand you have the sociological and psychodynamic perspectives in social medicine and psychotherapy. In the radical climate of the 1960s and 1970s Foucault (1969/2002, 1972/2005) and Sasz (1970) undertook an immense critique of the concept of mental illness, and the situation of people identified as mentally ill, as well as the scientific foundation of psychiatric diagnostics and practice. At that time Goffman's (1968) work on the implications of stigmatization was influential in the academic world. So one could say, critical analysis in this field is a well worn path. However, the cultural setting and discursive climate have changed, with increasing individualization (Bauman 2001, Beck-Gernsheim 2002), heavily strengthened fields of biomedicine and pharmacology (Svensson 1990, Bülow 2004, Frattaroli 2001) and, since the 1970s a ceasing internal psychiatric debate (Svensson 1990). When it comes to crime and punishment – according to Svensson an interesting parallel phenomenon to psychiatry – we have seen a shift toward sanctions or punishment rather than treatment, ideologically favoured by the media (Estrada 2004).

It seems to be the case that there are different forces intertwined in this process. When it comes to media representation of mental illness, there are scientific and common-sense discourses appearing side by side. Some individuals appear as self-evident actors in the arenas of discourse. Others are more or less non-present. In these circumstances, and in accordance with Foucault, it is useful to bring a few questions to light.

Who is speaking? Who, among the totality of speaking individuals, is accorded the right to use this sort of language? Who is qualified to do so? Who derives from it his own special quality, his prestige, and from whom, in return, does he receive if not the assurance, at least the presumption that what he says is true? What is the status of the individuals who – alone – have the right, sanctioned by law or tradition, juridically defined or spontaneously accepted, to proffer such a discourse? (Foucault 1972/2005:55)

Foucault touches upon the medical discourse, the doctors, physicians. The medical experts, particularly forensic psychiatrists, were also significantly present in media in the fall of 2003. They appeared and were entrusted to speak in a self-evident way on possible perpetrators, on the motives of murderers, the underlying causes of violent behaviour, the conditions of the psychiatric care organization, its shortcomings and immediate needs. Compared to the participation from other disciplines, the dominance of the psychiatric discourse was obvious. (See table 2.)

Table 2. Overview of the amount of articles and news items containing different expert statements

Discipline/profession	DN (33 articles)	Aftonbladet (11 articles)	Rapport (9 items)
Forensic psychiatry/ psychiatry	18	7	7
Social medicine	2	0	1
Psychotherapy	4	0	1
Psychology	1	2	0
Criminology	4	2	0
Gender studies	1	0	0
History	2	0	0
History of science and ideas	1	0	0

Sociologists are, by way of example, unrecorded simply because they are not represented in the sample, not entrusted to speak and possibly not confident to speak on the specific matter. As Lindblom states, sociology had a greater influence on society and the media 30 years ago, an influence possibly equal to that of psychiatric discourse today (Lindblom 1999). The psychiatric debate was also one of competing, contradictory paradigms and ideologies, rather than the situation of today, which is characterized by the

dominance of a medical model and careful eclecticism (Svensson 1990). It is a reasonable assumption that this change has been brought about in a dialectical relationship with the ideological shift mentioned earlier regarding, among other processes, individualization.

So, there is a dominance of psychiatric discourse. Olstead (2002) found an even greater dominance, with 192 speakers identified as psychiatrists or doctors in a sample of 195 Canadian newspaper articles on mental illness. When we bear this in mind it not surprising that mental illness and the violent attacks in 2003 were treated in the media as individual, socially detached problems.

Oppositional accounts of the situation were provided by a few experts from other disciplines, besides laymen and users of services in, mostly, letters to the editor. Some internal psychiatric debate and critique was however articulated during the fall of 2003. Johan Cullberg, a professor of psychiatry, pointed out in a national Swedish newspaper, that the "...humanistic and socio-psychological aspects of the specialist training of psychiatrists are too small in dimension." Furthermore, he states that Sweden is one of the leading nations in neurobiology and pharmacology, and as these fields have become distinguished, the humanistic perspectives have led a more obscure life. The split between biological and humanistic understanding seems serious as Cullberg claims that "...no Swedish professor of psychiatry has, to my knowledge, qualifications in psychotherapy."¹²

Consequently, even though there are social workers, psychologists and psychotherapists working in the organizations, the responsible authorities are chief physicians and psychiatrists. Thus, when journalists are looking for expert comments after a violent attack, the medical profession prevails. Hence, the media reflect hierarchies within the psychiatric care organization, with supposedly little or no awareness of doing so. According to Cullberg's account, these hierarchies and the dominance of the medical model have proven to make for a "mechanistic" and "authoritarian" psychiatric care.

Others look at the state of things in the same way. Frattaroli (2001) describes our time as an age of the brain, referring to the dominance of the medical model, the advances in and supposed redeeming effects of neurobiology and pharmacological treatment. Touching upon Buber and his I and Thou-ideal of interpersonal relations and communication, Frattaroli wishes for a renewed respect for human individuality and experience. Confronted by the complexity of interpersonal relations, evidence-based psychiatry is left to least common denominators, and along those lines human trouble is reduced to descriptive diagnostics, chemical imbalances, statistics, and so forth.

In the Age of the Brain, psychiatric treatment has been reduced to an exclusively I-It relationship, in which patients are objectified, diagnosed as "cases," equated with their brains (and genes), and treated according to standards of statistical science rather than of personal knowledge (Frattaroli 2001:19).

In brief, the combination of violent crime reports, stereotypical depictions of people suffering from mental illness, and the unprecedented ubiquity of a medical discourse, makes for the consolidation of an out-group. When there is a demand in the media for psychiatric explanation, individuals will be labelled according to diagnostic categories, in line with the current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Consequently, stereotyping is not challenged a bit. The medical model rather stimulates stereotyping by providing “hard evidence” of difference, otherness, and deviancy. Consequently, causes of violent attacks are attributed to the isolated individual, to descriptive psychiatric symptoms. The corresponding common-sense dictum declares, *there are people and there are people*. The discourses are simply congruent.

Not surprisingly, there is evidence of stronger public desire for social distance when seemingly deviant behaviour is identified as mental illness. When biological factors and heredity are fore-grounded as determining mental conditions and behaviour, the social distance widens. On the contrary, a narrative mode of thinking, which is the most usual in everyday common sense (Bruner 1990), and a foundation of a psychotherapeutic model of psychiatric care (cf. Bruner 1971:155f) enhances identification and sympathy:

... endorsing biological factors as cause was not associated with reduced social distance. Quite the opposite, the more respondents attributed the disorder to brain disease or heredity, the more they tended to distance themselves from the person depicted in the vignette. Finally, locating the cause in the way the person had been brought up was associated with a decreased desire for social distance (Angermeyer et al. 2003:667).

Angermeyer et al. conclude that the current tendency in psychiatric practice and research may distinguish and aggravate the separation of a majority regarded as normal, and a minority labelled deviant.

Believing in biological aberrations may increase rather than decrease the separation from ‘them’ – individuals considered to be very different from ‘us’ – and, consequently, intensify the desire for distance (Angermeyer et al. 2003:667).

Consequently, I have to conclude that a dominating, professional horizon and discourse might influence social practice negatively. Social interests are shared by members of groups, and social interests are contested and fought for ideologically (Hall 1995). With reference to Van Dijk (1998) it is perhaps the case that representatives of the psychiatric care organization share the same ideology as long as they share the same goals, interests, and social identity. One group may defend the sole right of medical science to define and explain mental health problems, while another is open to including other paradigms to carry out the same task. The latter may include greater influ-

ence of users of services. That is also the reason why psychiatrists could be found opposing each others' positions in the fall of 2003.

Conclusion

This chapter has made it plain how stereotypes and common-sensical meaning-making in the media make for a reinforcement of the association of mental illness and violence. Such practices draw on and reinforce ideological horizons which uphold the idea that people suffering from mental illness are profoundly different from other individuals. The seemingly inconceivable violence, often labelled acts of madness, is also explained when attention is directed towards mental illness generally. And mental illness is, without further clarification, often treated as a sufficient explanation.

When examining how causes of violent acts are attributed to mental illness, results show that the dominating dispositional attribution is seldom complemented by contextual circumstances. There is, however, evidence showing that persons suffering from mental illness who perpetrate violent crimes have often been subjected to difficult socio-environmental contexts (Swanson et al. 2002). In the media, however, people suffering from mental illness are treated as unpredictable, cold-blooded risk agents to be controlled. The frequency and impact of media's association of mental illness and violence overshadow the fact that many are in fact risk targets as opposed to risk agents.

It is also demonstrated how a culture of stories and fiction can comprise a background of the cognitions and mediated representations of mental illness and violence. Consequently there is a broader discourse and ideological horizon that makes the link between mental illness and violence easy to establish. There are basically ready-made schemas and stereotypes for how to interpret a scenario and its participants. With regard to this, Lippmann's original account of stereotypes as emotional and defensive is emphasized.

The dominance and character of the criminalized representation of mental illness, apparent in a wide range of discursive material, makes way for expressions of explicit social power. By way of example, there were demands in the media for a review and reinforcement of the compulsory legislation, while discussions about the quality of care were practically absent. While the murders in 2003 were crying for a solution, a repressive course of action was outlined in the debates on psychiatric care.

Possibly significant to this ideological horizon, is the collective process of individualization. In addition, the hierarchy of professional views may have an effect. The case study presented shows a dominance of forensic psychiatrists, and little presence of humanistic and social scientific expertise. As shown by Angermeyer et al. (2003) a medical model of psychiatry – potent regarding biological factors, descriptive diagnostics and pharmacology – may in-

crease rather than decrease social distance and constructions of Us and Them. Means of identification and sympathy are simply not offered.

Although the times may be gone when users of services appeared in the media with hidden faces or backs turned to the camera¹³, there is a predominance of criminalized and alienating images of mental illness. If one may look ahead, if repressive discourses and ideological horizons are to be challenged, users of services have to gain admission to the arenas of discourse. Only then will the actual state of things, positive and negative, alter the production, and moderate the impact of eye-catching and dramatic slices of reality.

Notes

1. This is still highly topical in 2006 since the powers of control may be extended in the near future. The National Board of Health and Welfare recently proposed to the government that case-book data of people treated in compulsory institutional care should be kept in a register available to the Swedish Security Service (SÄPO) and other authorities.
2. Bruner (1990) uses the term folk psychology which is synonymous with common sense.
3. The time span of the study stretches from 10 September to 10 October 2003. When sports pages, and material dealing with fiction, television and film, had been sifted out, 120 articles were analysed from Aftonbladet, and 123 from Dagens Nyheter. Apart from news, cultural, debate, and editorial articles, letters to the editor were analysed too. As for television, 24 news items were analysed.
4. Some, however, regard the murder of the foreign minister as provoked by her public support of NATO during the bombings of Serbia in the Kosovo war, spring 1999 (as noted in Aftonbladet 2003-09-27). Unlike the perpetrators in the other three cases, the murderer of Anna Lindh, Mijailo Mijailovic, was after some controversy deemed not to suffer from a severe mental disorder, and consequently sentenced to imprisonment instead of forensic psychiatric care.
5. "Mad summer murder spree" (Galningarnas mordsommar) Aftonbladet 2003-09-13.
6. "Her courage was met by laxity, lack of imagination and indifference" (Hennes mod möttes av slapphet, fantasilöshet och nonchalans) DN 2003-09-12.
7. "The five-year-old was killed here" (Här mördades femåringen) Aftonbladet 2003-09-12.
8. "The arrested person is described as friendly, charming – and violent" (Den gripne beskrivs som vänlig, charmig – och våldsam) Aftonbladet 2003-09-17.
9. "Mad summer murder spree" (Galningarnas mordsommar) Aftonbladet 2003-09-13.
10. "Relatives demand compulsory treatment review" (Anhöriga vill att tvångsvården ska ses över) DN 2003-10-04.
11. "Our fear, their freedom" (Vår rädsla och deras frihet) DN 2003-09-20.
12. "Demagogic nonsense on developments in psychiatry" (Demagogiskt struntprat om utvecklingen av psykiatri) DN 2003-09-16.
13. As association chairperson of RSMH (Swedish Association for Social and Mental Health) Jan-Olof Forsén said in the foreword of a report, Rasmussen and Höijer (2005).

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Mediatization of Health and “Citizenship-Consumership” (Con)Fusion

Tanja Kamin

The prolongation and productive optimization of one's lifespan extends way beyond an individual matter. It concerns various societal issues and provokes various public and private interests. As one of the primary parts of a broad health concept, estimated average age is equally important for the individual's identity as it is for the identity of a certain territorial body. Among other things, health of the population counts as one of the basic indicators against which the power and progressive status of a nation state are measured. In this context only a long-living healthy citizen is a good citizen. Following social constructionist reasoning, it is suggested that the mass media, together with public health authorities, hold a central discursive¹ role in constituting the identity of a modern 'healthy' citizen. The main question provoked in this article is: how do the media support and interfere with the ever greater political concern that people live long and healthy lives? How do they contribute to the ideology of health and consequently to health normalization of citizens in the political circumstances in which liberal principles proceed in the foreground, and where accenting of societal interests ahead of the interests of individuals is not admissible?

Ideological horizons of health

Looking from the perspective of various health advocates, for example public health authorities, new health movements, advertisers, mass media etc, health is not simply the opposite of ill-health, but is rather a process, a project that should be mindfully pursued all the time. Health is constructed as an all-embracing benevolence, a goal in itself, and a process that is dependent on continuous measuring, monitoring and (self)control (WHO 1981, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2001). In this way health is constituted as a way of life or, according to Mechanic (1999:713), as a behaviour that accompanies ordinary everyday activities. Crawford (1980:380) even speaks of “super health”, which includes the whole spectrum of values: “a sense of happiness and purpose”,

“a high level of self-esteem”, “work satisfaction”, “the ability to engage in creative expression”, “the capacity to function effectively under stress”, the ability “to celebrate one’s life” etc.

A great deal of research nowadays supports Crawford’s concept of super health. According to a Slovenian public opinion survey, for example, health is becoming a high priority value in people’s lives and a project with no end of concern (Tos & Malnar 2003). People express explicit worries regarding health and particularly the feeling of powerlessness in its management. They often strongly believe that no matter how much they care for their health, they are not doing enough for it and therefore feel guilty, questioning their identity and their ability to achieve well-being (Tivadar & Kamin 2002). What makes people constantly think in a guilty way regarding health? Why would they want to do more for their health, if they already think they are taking a good care of it?

The all-inclusive wideness of the health concept, which is proposed by health authorities and is more and more reflected in various arenas of everyday life, could be emphasized with the statement that no area of everyday life remains free from health. Considered in this way it is absolutely impossible for a person to manage all health dimensions at all times. Although variously conceptualized, health has, more or less, been an issue in all preceding societies (Turner 2000, Lupton 2000, Ule 2003, Albrecht et al. 2000). Nevertheless, the concern with health issue has never before been so omnipresent, both on the individual and the societal level. According to Crawford (1993) the reason for valuing the body and health so highly is related to a growing need for self-discipline and self-denial in difficult economic conditions and in life in general. Our bodies are, according to his opinion, the ultimate metaphor for the greater need for everyday struggle. There is nobody one can rely on but oneself. Therefore, one is supposed to unquestioningly invest in one’s health and in doing so invest in his or her future. Like all investments, one’s investment in health becomes constituted as something that can and should be maximized (Metcalf 1993, Crawford 1980). As such, health is constructed as a possible place of constraint, but also as a space of self-realization.

Preoccupation with personal health as a primary focus for the definition and achievement of well-being, which is to be attained primarily through the modification of lifestyles, with or without therapeutic help, is understood by Crawford (1980:368) as healthism. Within healthism paradigmatic solutions for achieving well-being are seen to lie primarily within the realm of individual choice. These choices are either right or wrong. They are right if they are subordinated to health authorities’ recommendations, and they are wrong if they are not in accordance with the dominant demands. In this way health discourse shapes good and bad identities: those who follow the norms and those who do not, responsible and irresponsible, beautiful and ugly, successful and unsuccessful etc. Healthy identity is therefore identity that manages the interplay between control and release, that recognizes and limits

various risks and on the whole suits the dominant health discourse. I would argue that this health discourse is the one that is mediatized and closely linked to individual lifestyle and consumption choices.

From the moment that health is understood as a by-product of ordinary everyday activities, it becomes widely opened to various spaces of consumption, beyond the services that are organized by the health care system and the national public health system. By being considered as part of a lifestyle (and various consumption activities: eating, clothing, jogging, dwelling etc.), health offers itself as an important economic field, for example for the cosmetics industry, wellness centres, the fitness industry, the food industry, the pharmaceuticals industry, not least the media industry, social marketing and communications agencies etc. From this perspective health is constructed not only as something to be achieved, but also as something to be consumed.

Therefore consumption is inherent to healthism – the new (moralizing) ideology of health, which 'ideally' bridges the gap between explicit collective health normalization, constraint and control on the one hand, and liberal, sovereign consumer choice and private interests on the other. And what is the role of the media in spreading the ideology of health? I argue that the media take an integral part in it. The media spread, as well as exploit, the authoritative and demanding voice of medical discourse, which is predominantly risk discourse. Together with other economic forces they transform collective needs and social obligations into individual interests, the realm of consumer choice and private responsibility.

Mediatization of health

The mass media took a role, both as a mediator and as a producer of "health". What started off as a place for the dissemination of public health intervention messages, took on its own production life in the form of lifestyle and health journalism (Bunton 1997, Kamin 2004). By producing and/or disseminating various health messages, the media have an integrative role between citizens-consumers, state and industry; they connect information and interests around health, which is more and more perceived as capital that an individual, social or economic body can and must possess.

With the term mediatization I explicitly stress the role of the mass media in the process of mediation, which is "movement of meaning from one text to another, from one discourse to another, from one event to another. It involves the constant transformation of meanings, both large scale and small, significant and insignificant, as media text and texts about media circulate in writing, in speech and audiovisual forms, and as we, individually and collectively, directly and indirectly, contribute to their production" (Silverstone 1999:13).

Mediatization of contents in the first instance indisputably determines what knowledge is important for society and, consequently, what is on the other

side of perceived social reality and “unimportant”. In the broadest sense of agenda-setting theory (McCombs & Shaw (1972/1995), mediatization speaks of potential: what, to whom and in what form something can become visible. It speaks of the power to legitimize certain themes and issues, and how they are discussed. In this respect mediatization is connected to the “management of visibility” (Thompson 1995). It acknowledges that the media amount to a fundamental generator of meaning networks for contemporary mankind (Thompson 1995:11, Beck 1992, Giddens 1991, Castells 2000). Together with science, they are in a position to structure and disseminate knowledge (Beck 1991:23-46).

This is equally true for the knowledge about health, which is inseparably connected to risk discourse. Evaluation of health risks is ever more dependent on scientific measurements and has come to represent both “real” dangers as well as a market niche. It should be noted, that there are differences between the terms risk and danger, since they apply to different social situations. I understand danger as an event that has happened (or not) independently of us. Risk, on the other hand, includes the act of decision where we proceed towards a certain goal knowingly taking into account possible harmful consequences (Mali 2002:165). Risk discourse – negative news and research about dangers – is likely to attract public attention. In this respect Skolbekken (1995), for example, speaks of an epidemical focus on risks in academic circles, Glassner (1999) writes on the role of journalism in (re)producing the culture of fear and Castel (1991) acknowledges a misleading technocratic dream of absolute control of coincidences and dangers. Within culture of fear Glassner (1999) discusses growing fear against number of dangers that allegedly threaten one’s health. He reports on a study from 1996, which has calculated great health danger reports by main newspapers in the USA. The research concludes that in a population of 266 million, 543 million people, according to the reports, are seriously ill.

In general, mass media constitute a field where an agenda of “relevant” “risk” or health issues is shaped, where behaviours relevant to health are portrayed, meanings of health and illness are outlined, and a whole range of risks, which individuals are supposed to calculate and be responsible for, is communicated. Different health issues are framed in different ways, as well as those considered being at risk. Consequently, the identities of healthy and unhealthy individuals are shaped.

Many researchers have found effects of mediated health risks on the population’s perceptions of health and health risks (Verbek et al. 1999, Chapman & Lupton 1995, Seale 2002, Tivadar & Kamin 2002), and ascertain that the media, beside medical doctors, are the main sources of peoples’ health and risk information (Johnson 1998, Gibney et al. 1997, Robertson 1978, Brodie et al. 1999, Tivadar & Kamin 2002).

Information on health and risks is particularly attractive to the media industry itself. American studies show that among information programmes audiences the audience most desire those contributions that deal with health

(Johnson 1998, Atkin & Arkin 1990). From this point of view mediatization of health is in the first instance the managerial question of attracting the audiences' and advertisers' money. In Slovenia a constantly growing assortment of programmes, periodicals and media sections on health is available. Especially successful seem to be those that do not speak of ill-health and diseases, but teach about "super health" and ways to retain one's health and improve it (Kamin 2004:69). In Slovenian lifestyle journalism, health is primarily equated with one's looks, which have to be worked upon by strict management of pleasure and control. Looks are thought to lie within the sphere of surveillance since they signal ones physical and mental capability, degree of self-discipline, and responsibility to oneself and the rest of the society (Kamin 2005).

Similar relations between looks and health have been found by a Swedish researcher by analysing the main national newspapers' reporting about being overweight, which is one of the growing health problems in affluent societies. She has found that being overweight is often mediatized as a beauty dilemma or cosmetic problem, especially when it comes to women. Women's bodies are described and valued in much more strict way than men's bodies; men's being overweight usually gets accepted, but women's definitely not (Sandberg 2004). However, in general overweight and obese people are in the media primarily constructed as ugly, stupid, lazy, repugnant, and a burden to medical service, thus described as parasites of the society (Sandberg 2004:267). Similarly, in Slovenian media drug users are described as a health threat, parasites and walking danger (Drev et al. 2006), and people with psychiatric disabilities are often constructed as a great societal burden (Kamin 2006).

It seems that everything and everybody on the other side of health, which is nowadays defined as a sack without a bottom, gets constructed as a possible danger to the prosperity of a society. One is "constantly potentially ill" (Conevey 2000:123). In this respect it is only a matter of time, when one will fall from grace due to the lack of good will, emotional unbalance, irrational choice, lack of love for life etc, and an unhealthy (not normal) life will result in the dysfunction of one's bodily organs. Thus everybody presents a risk to the society; everybody can at certain stage become seen as a burden to oneself and society.

Types of mediatized health

One could distinguish between at least four types of mediatized health production: health journalism (for ex. the production of articles and other journalistic contributions on health problems and the health care system), the production of entertainment programmes about health issues (for ex. movies and series dramatizing health care, such as *Emergency*, *Chicago hope*,

Schwarzwaldklinik etc.), the production of infotainment on health issues (for ex. lifestyle journalism, the production of soap-operas etc.) and advertising which explicitly (for ex. public health communication interventions) or implicitly (facial crème for healthy looking skin; yogurt for a healthy start to the day etc.) communicate health.

All types have grown in number in the last decades. By analysing the magazine *Good Housekeeping* from 1959 to 1995 Bunton (1997) has reported an increase in the number of contributions connected to health by three times. He has also found a growth in the number of advertisements that explicitly express the health value of advertised products, which are usually juxtaposed with symbols of discipline, happiness and profit.

There has been a significant increase in public health communication interventions as well. In Slovenia, for example, there were 5 health communication interventions in 1991, and in only 11 years this number has grown to 444, which means that in the last decade there were approximately 36 health communication interventions per year (Kamin 2004). The scope will probably become bigger if one looks at the efforts of a vast number of theorists, researchers and practitioners to increase the effectiveness of health communication campaigns on the one hand and the individualization discourse of public health policy programmes on the other (Kamin 2004).

Many health advocates look to improve health communication interventions creating hybrids of mediatized health types: by integrating health informational content into news and entertainment programming, (Atkin et al. 1990, Wallack 1990); and integrating health information from public health authorities into advertisements for various products. In the USA, the Federal Trade Commission has since 1984 “encouraged food producers to make health claims in their marketing campaigns as a way of communicating more health-related information to the consumer” (Novelli 1990:80). Similar efforts are seen in Slovenia with one of the largest retailer’s advertisements for fruits and vegetables, which at the same time promote products and the importance of consuming fresh vegetables and fruits, using the same claims as the public health authorities in their campaigns. As elsewhere in affluent societies, various healthy brands, or brands for healthier life, have been introduced in Slovenia in the last decade, and all of them are heavily advertised in the media, becoming also the very essence of lifestyle discourse in editorials. It is as if health itself is becoming a brand, a playful label on various commodities that could, if properly consumed, contribute to risk management.

Health risk agenda

One of the most active framers of health risks are the health authorities. They are the ones who usually distribute hot research findings on health risks and fight for the visibility of certain epidemiologically important issues. Research

findings show that health authorities are convinced of the importance of getting their message out in the media. Therefore they cultivate close relationships with journalists, so called health-journalists, and supply them with attractively formatted health information. This information, is usually slanted to expose the negative side of the health issue, or bad, urgent or dangerous findings, since this is more easily published. In order to get as much publicity as possible, health authorities, together with journalists, prepare shows for the radio and television, arrange interviews, and organize press conferences and pseudo events (Kamin 2004, Drev et al. 2006).

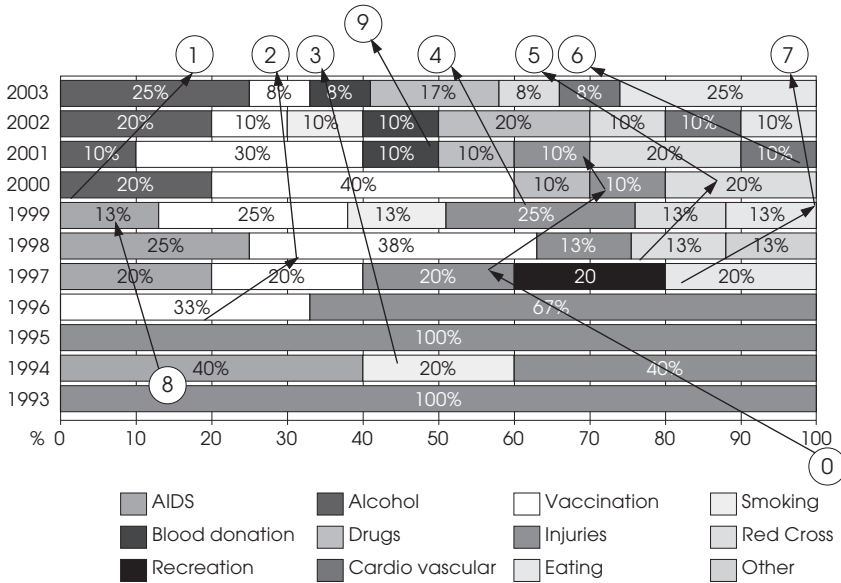
Besides finding a way into the editorial content, health authorities also explicitly address citizens through the media with health communication interventions and thus explicitly set the relevant health risk agenda. Research into health communication interventions in Slovenia in the period from 1991 until 2003 (Kamin 2004) shows a constant growth of health risks communicated through the mass media.

The distribution of traditional mass media (television, radio, newspapers, magazines and billboards) used as a primary communication channel for health communication interventions has significantly changed over time. In 1994, for example, only 12 % of health communication interventions used the mass media as their primary communication channel. In 2003 already more than half of all health communication interventions used mass media as their primary communication channel. Communication interventions that use the mass media as their primary communication channel are usually more extensive, get more publicity and consequently are more visible than communication interventions that use other outlets as their primary communication channel, such as, for example, brochures, posters, leaflets etc. In this way, the themes, which are addressed via mediatised health communication interventions, are more exposed as primary health problems in the country.

As shown in figure 1, until 1996, the most represented theme of health communication intervention in the mass media was "injuries" (labelled as trend 0). In the year 2003 the most covered themes were "alcohol consumption" (labelled as trend 1) "healthy eating" (labelled as trend 7) and "forbidden drugs" (labelled as trend 4). Other more represented themes through the years were also "smoking" (labelled as trend 3), "cardio vascular health" (labelled as trend 6), and "vaccination" (labelled with the trend 2). Label 8 presents the trend of decreasing attention to AIDS; label 9 presents communication regarding blood donation, and label 5 presents communication regarding the Red Cross. Recreation, as a health communication intervention was representatively present in the mass media only in the 1997 (20%).

In general the research showed a constant trend of attention in the last twelve years to the themes "injuries", "health education", "smoking" and "vaccination", and an increase in attention to the themes "alcohol", "drugs", "healthy eating", "cardio vascular diseases" and "recreation". These are the themes that increasingly interfere with the way of life of individuals, since

Figure 1. Distribution of the public health communication intervention themes in the cases when the primary communication channel of the intervention was the mass media (Kamin 2005:90)



they address their lifestyles. Prioritization of such health themes exposes the power of an individual to avoid major health risks, and in so doing, stay healthy. The collection of certain themes in itself already constructs health as being totally within the realm of an individual's will and responsibility.

The research data also support the widening of the health concept by the constant increase in the number of different health themes communicated each year. This helps construct the all-inclusive health concept, since more and more health risks are communicated to the public. Among these, those that are especially increasing are those that speak of an individual lifestyle and voluntary risk-taking, if avoiding the advice of the health authorities.

Although the themes exposed by communication interventions construct the main health problems in the country, these are not necessarily in accordance with the most urgent and "real" health problems in the country. Prioritized themes are also a reflection of various power relations: the ability of communicators to raise money, to get free media space and broadcast time etc. The interest for communication may as well lie in communicator's need to get publicly recognized as an active organization, trustworthy for money-raising for future projects.

Commodification of health

Regarding agenda-setting reasoning or the management of risk visibility, another issue has to be taken up. It concerns not only the frequency of a theme in the media but also the way the themes are presented. In other words, it does not only matter what themes appear in the media, but also how they appear, what meanings of "health" they offer, how urgently they construct certain health risks, etc. These meanings could be analysed in different ways, one of which being the analysis of the appeals in the communication interventions. These are, as research data show, also consistently supported in editorials, due to strong relations between public health authorities and health journalists (Kamin 2004).

In Slovenian health communication interventions paternalistic and fear appeals prevailed. The right, healthy behaviours were for the most part in the form of commands, explicitly or implicitly. "Don't be a fool, get vaccinated!" for vaccination against hepatitis B, "The decision is yours!" for stopping smoking, "Aids doesn't choose, you can!", "Enjoy!", for eating fruits and vegetables, are some of the appeals addressed to the population in the last years. However, public health authorities more and more think about speaking to the public in a more positive and playful way. This is similar to what is typical in commercial advertising: "Healthy life" brand, "5 a day. Let's put some colour in our lives" for eating fruits and vegetables, and "Health is basic. Start with your skin" for cosmetic products etc. (Kamin 2005:91)

Public health authorities increasingly show an effort to inform citizens regarding health issues in an impartial way, while at the same time their communication activity consists of "effective" persuasion in order to achieve "preferred behaviour".

This leads to the following dilemma. Public health authorities often employ regulation strategies that are supposed to be perceived as consumer oriented, in terms of being an offer without coercion. This is to say: individuals are instructed in a way that gives them the feeling of making a free decision regarding whether or not to choose instructed or advised health behaviour, and whether or not to participate in risky behaviour. What is also given to the individuals in this way is a sense of personal responsibility for their health.

The need to somehow disguise the "obligation" and "regulation" discourse by all means, even in the regulative bodies of the state, is connected with the "climate of consumer authority" or sovereignty (Heward 1994, Fairclough 1994, Keath et al. 1994, Slater 1997). The exposed dilemma thus derives from a fusion of two different "concepts of society" and approaches to the one and the same task: "health regulation". The first concept is about citizenship and the idea of common good, and the second is about consumerism and the idea of the individual's take. This (con)fusion could also be discussed as a feature of the commodification's sub-process that Fairclough (1994) conceptualizes as a conversationalisation of public discourse.

Conclusion

A great deal of research acknowledges that people get the majority of health information from the media. This information could be in the form of articles and other journalistic contributions on health problems and the health care system, movies and series dramatizing health care, lifestyle magazines, soap-operas and advertising for various healthy products or services.

A great amount of the health information in the media is sent from the public health authorities. Some of them are recognized by the public as health campaigns, but some are perceived as media content, since the public health authorities are hidden as a source and initiator of media content. Public health authorities show a great effort to cooperate with journalists who might disguise regulation discourse in more friendly journalism, either an informative or entertainment type of mediated health. And the media welcome health contents since they realise, as do all other industries, that health sells. The number of editorial items that explicitly deal with health, has in Slovenia, as in other Western countries, significantly increased. There are a number of new magazines and broadcast programmes dealing with health or health and beauty, new health supplements in national newspapers and there is more and more space for health themes in lifestyle magazines (Kamin 2004:69).

It needs to be noted that health communication is not always driven by the same interests. The pharmaceutical industry will communicate health with different interests than a local organic farm, and still differently than the Institute for public health and the mass media. The latter is often subject to the issue of audience attraction, which often leads to sensationalism and false health-risk alarms.

What all these health communicators have in common is that they primarily juxtapose health with individual lifestyles. And since lifestyle is distinctly connected to the processes of individualization and consumption, not least the consumption sphere in general, the idea of the healthy citizen is more and more related to an idea of a good consumer – a consumer who is familiar with his/her private interests and consumer rights as well as obligations, and who is aware of the risks and benefits of his/her consumption choices. Thus, in new ideology of health, the individual, by taking care of his or her health, on the one hand, works for him/herself and his or her interests, and on the other fulfils social expectations of good (healthy) citizenship.

Note

1. Discourse is a term that has not yet achieved general agreement as to what it stands for. I understand discourse as a limited body of knowledge and the ways of its usage, recognized as particular comprehension of different phenomena, their understanding through words, images and the relations between them (more in Fairclough 1995).

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The Making of An Employable Individual

Marinette Fogde

In contemporary working life there are two central discourses that are relevant for the understanding of the restructuring of work. They are on the one hand the discourse of *flexibility*, and on the other the discourse of *employability*. These discourses are global in terms of being transnational and widespread. Flexibility and employability have great influence in government policies, in influencing workplaces, and among individuals (Garsten & Jacobsson 2004). In this chapter I will elaborate these discourses and relate them to structural changes. The focus is upon political changes, more precisely the impact of neo liberalism, the decline of the welfare state, and changes in working life. Another theme that will be discussed is in what way these changes can be related to the construction of an employable subject, here taking inspiration from the foucauldian concept *governmentality*. From a critical point of view the discourses of flexibility and employability are analytically fruitful when talking about articulations of an ideological horizon in working life. Further on, the intention is to discuss how these global discourses are seen on a national level. Some empirical examples from Sweden, one from the web site campus.se and another from Sif, a white-collar trade union¹, are analysed about *how to apply for work*.

The discourse of flexibility and structural changes

In the discourse about changes in working life in general, and in modern management thinking, the concept of flexibility has been frequently used. The hegemonic rhetoric is about contemporary working life being characterized as flexible; firstly in terms of markets being global and competitive, and secondly, in terms of how companies and organizations need to be flexible to meet the demands of the markets. As a logical outcome individuals should be multi-skilled and flexible in the labour market (i.e. short term employments, social competence etc.). According to Eriksson and Karlsson

(2000) this kind of argumentation is common both within the scientific community as well as in the media. The changes are often, normatively described as being unavoidable and necessary.

The concept flexibility is often left undefined. The meaning of the concept is somehow blurred. As Stråth (2000:23) puts it, the concept flexibility "has been so diluted that it can mean both everything and nothing". But still it is commonly used within mainstream vocabulary. One general definition has to do with the ability to adapt to different conditions (Anell & Wilson 2000). This definition can in many ways be described as the core of the concept; no matter if it is about organizations or employees, the ability to adapt is the main issue. It must be noted, of course, that the concept is much more complex in relation to the organization and division of labour.² When talking about flexible organizations, Anell and Wilson (2000) argue that there are degrees of flexibility in regard to how organizations react to market changes. The meaning of individual flexibility has several dimensions as different forms of employment, for example project workers, temps, or the self-employed. Different terms of employment can also be viewed in terms of risk or safety concerning benefits or economic guarantees. Being a temporary worker means not having the same safety net as those employed for an indeterminate period of time.

Another aspect of the concept of flexibility is the historical background. Wagner (2000) positions the concept of flexibility in a historical context; in the 1960s and until the mid 1970s the word 'flexibility' was connected to the exchange rate of national currencies. It was not until in the mid 1980s that the connotations of the word were associated with the labour market. Flexibility was then connected to labour market flexibility, in a broad sense meaning the supply of labour, such as working hours, working conditions and so forth. The connotations of the concept were then connected to 'de-regulation' and became almost synonymous with it, as part of criticism of the state and union activity.

The discourse of flexibility is also in a broader sense related to what is often labelled as transition from fordism to post-fordism. Jessop (1994) argues that the characteristics of a post-fordist system can be defined as a flexible production process. Two factors behind the gradual transition are the rise of new technological innovations and the growing internationalization in which the welfare state was called into question. The post-fordist system can be viewed as a phase in the capitalistic development which on a national state level has changed the conditions of national economies. A key feature is to focus on international competitiveness and thereby subordinate welfare policy to the demands of flexibility.

Wagner (2000:42) claims that most of the contributions that highlight flexibility see it as a "key characteristic of a new social formation". In relation to flexibility the notion of post-fordism is connected to major socio-economic changes and often to political transformations. As Fairclough (2000:16) puts it, the concept flexibility is a word that "tends to stand for the whole neo-

liberal project". According to Fairclough it stands for a view where the state no longer tries to direct or control the market. In his argumentation the rhetoric of New Labour with their emphasis on flexibility and globalization, as a well as, that of other social democratic parties in the European Union, means they have reduced the role of the welfare state.

Flexibility and the individual

Researchers like Sennet (2000) and Gee et al. (1996) question the assumptions of individual freedom and risk-taking which the discourse of flexibility brings about. They argue instead for bringing forth the underlying assumptions of management language and its ideological consequences. These researchers are questioning common assumptions about the democratic potential in workplace democracy as flattening of hierarchies and teamwork within organizations. Behind the rhetoric of democracy new kinds of power relationships are formed. A strand of their argumentation is that the 'new work order' or flexible capitalism has great influence on an individual level.

According to Sennet (2002) the talk of greater influence in the work place has more to do with fulfilling the goals of the employers than having employees themselves decide over their own situation. The employees work harder to fulfil the high demands in terms of goals, and at the same time the chance of failing is considerably high if the goals are unrealistic. In that way the employees are living under insecure conditions in that they are at risk of their jobs if the goals are not fulfilled. This creates greater inequalities instead of liberating the employees. Flexible capitalism is based on a short term mentality in contrast to the need that individuals have to find continuity and build social bonds over time. The ideal type of the flexible individual is open to constant changes and discontinuity. Sennet argues that flexible capitalism results in "corrosion of character", making individuals fragmented in their sense of continuity of personal life-projects, as working life and society are based on discontinuity. Du Gay (1996) argues that it is important not to presuppose in what ways people react to these changes. For some people the new work order can have advantages while others have problems adjusting to the ideals. Iedema and Scheeres (2003) claim that changes in working life can be looked upon as either liberating or oppressing. According to them it could rather be reflexivity that is the main change, as people are encouraged to reflect upon work and on themselves.

In the changing conditions in the labour market from full time jobs to more 'flexible' forms of employment, the view of work has also changed according to Bauman (1998). The traditional view of work had to do with morality, and a worker was looked upon as a good citizen. The satisfaction of the job was to fulfil one's duty. Work was an important identity position no matter what kind of job you had. The flexible labour market, with more temporary

job arrangements and the insecurity of not knowing what the future will demand, makes work as an identity position more instable. The only way to cope is for the identity to also be flexible or temporary. This insecurity means that you do not know what is around the next corner, or in what way you have to change to fit in.

The welfare state and the discourse of employability

A way to illustrate the changing role of the welfare state in connection to employment is the term employability. In welfare states, on a governmental level, the view of employment was earlier considered a state responsibility, and the goal was to achieve full employment (Garsten & Jacobsson 2004, Finn 2000, Stråth 2000). The welfare state and the consensus of welfare for all citizens were in many countries a democratic ideal fifty years ago (Bauman 1998). This view has gradually changed due to the impact of neo-liberal ideas. For instance in the UK New Labour abandoned the goal of full employment and proposed a way to 'modernize' the welfare state by improving the *employability* of individuals as a way of tackling poverty and unemployment. The main line of argument was to secure jobs by developing the employability of the workforce (Finn 2000: 386ff).

Stråth (2000) asserts that the concept of employability is fundamentally about social responsibility. In one sense it is about how to deal with employment/unemployment and what responsibility the state has in this issue. A main strand of Stråth's argumentation is that there has been a shift from state responsibility to a greater emphasis on worker responsibility. The concept of employability is, reading it from an ideological point of view, related to changes and ideas regarding responsibility and learning, as well as to changes in ideas about the divisions of risk between the state, enterprises, and individuals (Garsten & Jacobsson 2004). The transformation of the idea of full employment has been made into a flexibility discourse. The division of risks in the discourse of flexibility has become a question of risk solely taken by the individual. As Beck & Beck-Gernsheim (2002:4) claim, individualization in contemporary society is like;

...a compulsion, albeit a paradoxical one, to create, to stage manage, not only one's own biography but the bonds and networks surrounding it and to this amid changing preferences at successive stages of life, while constantly adapting to the conditions of the labour market, the education system, the welfare state and so on

Employability is also a key concept in labour market policy discourse in the EU and OECD. As Jacobsson (2004:43) argues, these organizations have made it to official policy and popularized it. This has inspired the labour market

discourse on national levels as well. The concept of employability however, has no single definition, but it basically has to do with work and is fundamentally about being employable. A related concept in the discussions of employability is the concept of life-long learning, to develop and learn new things throughout life. The ideal of being employable is related to the discourse of competence development in working life. In connection to the labour market this means being a flexible worker open to change and taking the responsibility to learn new things. The concept of employability is then connected to the ideals of individuals taking responsibility for being employable, that is, having the 'right' education and skills for the demands of the (labour) market (Salomonsson 2003a). Further ideals that are part of being an employable individual are having 'soft' skills and personal characteristics such as social competence, working well in teams, etc.

Bauman (1998) further shows that the changed view of work is closely connected to consumer society. Consumer society is temporary and founded on making choices. It also has to do with aesthetic values, to find pleasure in enjoyment and variation. The transition from *work ethics* to *consumer ethics* can be understood as connected to choice and responsibility. In relation to a consumer culture where you have to choose all the time, it is the same responsibility but now in terms of work. The ideal picture of work is that it should be self-fulfilling and interesting. This results in a division between interesting and not-so-interesting jobs and the awareness of choice in changing it. Only a small group in society can achieve a self-fulfilling job and for them work has become their mission in life. Dean (1999) also shows how the unemployed are constructed as consumers. Being an active job seeker also involves the need for the unemployed to work on themselves and receive training in order to be ready to take the opportunities in the labour market. As a consumer of employment services the unemployed are required to learn through guidance and training. A part of this kind of government is reflexivity, to reflect and talk about life, and seek support from different expert systems. Cameron (2000) argues for greater reflexivity in different areas in society including working life. This point is reinforced by the argumentation for tendencies of greater reflexivity and individualization in society (Giddens 1991; Beck & Beck Gernsheim 2002). One example of individualization is the way the unemployed are constructed as active job seekers. In this sense enterprising qualities treated as important in succeeding to get a job. Dean (1999) gives an example of this from an Australian context in which the nation state constructs the unemployed as active job seekers by providing job search assistance and training, and in return the unemployed gets access to benefits. As earlier mentioned the responsibility for getting a job is placed on the individual. A similar example from a Swedish context is Persson Thunqvist's (2003) study of how municipalities construct temporary youth projects for young unemployed people to learn how to get a job by training skills in simulated job interviews.

But what about the role of the union in terms of this supposed change? It comes quite naturally to ask that question in a Swedish context where the union has historically had a strong role in regulating the labour market. The so-called Swedish model was characterized by consensus built on social democratic hegemony putting pressure on employers to take social responsibility in the context of a capitalistic economy. During the 90's Sweden among other countries suffered from an economic 'crisis' with high unemployment rates. The political landscape changed and one of the consequences of that change was a weaker role for the unions (Bruhn 1999). From an international perspective many countries experienced a decreased interest in union activity. In Sweden the unions still have a great deal of influence, and around 80% of the working age population are unionized. The union movement still has a key role in regulating the labour process in contrast to other countries, such as the as UK or US (Huzzard 2000, 2004, Bruhn 1999).

The emphasis on learning and knowledge in organizations has become an important factor for the unions to strive for. In relation to employability, the competence of workers and life-long learning are crucial to having a workforce fit for the flexible demands of working life. Competence development has become a central union question and for securing the employability of the workforce. Huzzard (2004) shows that the unions prioritize life-long learning, and their members, perceived as individuals, are supposed to take responsibility for their own education. Näswall et al. (2003) argue that due to insecurity in the flexible labour market, the individual can experience stress and ill health. As a way of reducing the feeling of insecurity they suggest that the role of the unions is to make their members employable in terms of competence development. On an individual level competence development can reduce the feeling of insecurity of not knowing about one's future working situation. In this respect there are several positive things, such as better self-confidence and getting the possibility to learn new skills.

A review

The preceding sections presented some features of changes in working life. The intention was to illuminate some of the structural changes in relation to the discourses of flexibility and employability. I position the concepts in the context of other transformations, such as neo-liberalism and the consequences of the ideological decline of social responsibility connected to the ideal of a welfare state for all citizens. On an individual level, I argue the concepts of flexibility and employability are intricately tied up with consequences for the view of work. Furthermore, I argue, for the importance of these concepts in the construction of an employable subject. The ideological horizon of the way society and working life are articulated through the discourse of flexibility and employability are important for understanding contemporary working

life and practices. The following section considers how the subject is located in relation to this ideological horizon from a governmentality perspective.

A Making of an Employable Individual in a governmentality perspective

As I now continue, a key point is how this making of an employable individual can be viewed upon, and which theoretical concepts could be useful. By the term 'making' I mean constructed through discourse or rather systems of beliefs as I take a more foucauldian stance. The term 'making' is taken from Hacking (1986, 1999) and underlines the social constructionist approach taken to social phenomena. A position from an ideology critique perspective is here considered as too simplistic. The concept *governmentality* provides a more thorough approach in relation to questions of norms and power in society. Viewed from this angle the concept of 'governmentality' can be a useful point of departure because it is intricately tied up with the notion of power and identity (Foucault 1991). In discussing this approach I will refer to researchers who have elaborated the concept further, and two of the most influential researchers in this tradition are Mitchell Dean and Nikolas Rose. The word government is defined as "the conduct of conduct" which means to lead, direct, or guide (Dean 1999:10). In a broader sense it includes regulation both in a self-regulatory sense, and attempts to shape our behaviour to fit sets of norms invoked to underpin conduct. An analysis of government is then interested in questions of how conduct is managed, and a plurality of agencies and authorities are seen as active in the techniques and forms of knowledge in shaping conduct. Rose (1998) explains this as that political power not being considered to be divided between the state and private life. Instead the subject is located as a target for normative practices of power. As he puts it "is not a matter of lamenting the ways in which our autonomy is suppressed by the state, but of investigating the ways in which subjectivity has become an essential object, target and resource for certain strategies, tactics and procedures of regulation" (Rose 1998:152). A main line in this governmentality perspective is to question taken-for-granted ways of thinking and 'truths'.

Put briefly a foucauldian position presupposes a specific view of power and knowledge. Power is not viewed as imposed from above by force; the subject is instead active in adapting to certain ideals and notions. In relation to regimes of truth; practices considered desirable and normal make the subject want to internalize them. These normative practises are labelled 'technologies of self' when the subject tries to adapt to these by self-regulation. However, the institutional level as well is considered important in shaping notions and normative practices (Dean 1999, Rose 1998). Rose (1999:13) uses the concept "knowledge practices" in order to emphasise the productive role

of knowledge formation. By that he aims to describe how knowledge practices take shape and what they make thinkable and practicable:

However I do not treat knowledge practices as purely representational or reflective, but analyze the 'regimes of truth' established, the relations between the webs of representations (words, images, texts, tables, inscriptions etc.) that constitute a particular body of knowledge and the practises of investigation, experimentation and intervention within which phenomena are rendered visible, facts are produced, and attempts are made to realize theories. In short, I attempt to describe the material and practical conditions under which truths, facts explanations come to be formulated and accepted and to examine their consequences – what they make possible (Rose 1999:14).

In contrast to an ideology critique tradition, from a governmentality perspective it is considered more interesting to pose the question *how* governing operates than establishing *where* power is located (Dean 1999). Laliberte Rudman (2006) states that governmentality theorists show how political power operates by shaping approved subjectivities through discursive practises. An *ideological horizon*, as used in this article, is a horizon of thinkability which is related to a horizon of 'truth', something that is constructed as normal in terms of what is thinkable and practicable. The discursive practices are important to study as well as what is not made thinkable and practicable. In relation to examining the making of an employable subject, the issue at stake, then, is what is taken for granted in terms of behaviour, attitudes, and practices.

In a governmentality perspective the ethical dimension is also highlighted. The moral conduct of subjects is discussed in relation to constructions of norms of behaviour, attitudes, and practices.

The focus is on the ethical dimension of what is considered good or desirable in terms of behaviour or action. In advanced liberal welfare states, active citizenship for example is a key rationality, and at the level of citizens it involves both individualization and responsabilization (McDonald & Marston 2005). Dean (1999:173) has used the terms *technologies of agency* and *technologies of performance* to describe the processes whereby individuals are encouraged to participate and improve capacities in contemporary welfare regimes. As an example the unemployed are considered a population at risk and active citizenship has become conditional in active labour market programs. As McDonald and Marston (2005) have found in analyses of the case of workfare programs, a desired or ethical citizen is an individual capable of self-government and of managing her or his own risks.

The spatiality of power and mediated communication

In connection with power and governmentality Barnett (1999) stresses that Foucault does not propose a general formula of how power is exercised, but rather the heterogeneity of governing is accentuated. Consequently power is exercised in different ways at different sites and institutions. With regard to this claim Barnett argues that the *spatiality of power* must be considered. The dimension of spatiality has been addressed in a variety of disciplines, among others in media and communication studies (e.g. Carey 1989, Thompson 1995). The exercise of power must then be seen in accordance with the spatial characteristics of different practices. From Barnett (1999) I would like to draw upon two points that are important for the discussion in this article. First, considering the spatiality of power, the process of globalization must be considered in terms of economic production and distribution as well as identity formation and political participation stretched out into various networks and spatial scales (eg. Appadurai 2002). As has been discussed above the discourses of flexibility and employability are imbedded in networks that transcend the levels of institutions and nation-states. Second, the use of the concept of governmentality must consider the specific configuration of regulation in relation to spatiality. In this article I would argue that the cultural modes of regulation construct specific forms of spatial and temporal social relations in the making of subjects. As Thompson (1995) argues, a mediated publicness is a space of visibility which is integrated in citizens' everyday life. The production of knowledge practices will in this case be seen in connection to the mediated forms of communication in the exchange of symbolic resources and be considered *technologies of representation*. It follows that the audience-subject as an object of regulation cannot simply be reduced to the actual practices and agency of the governed. To be more precise the cultural modes of regulation could be seen as a cultivation of identities, and the outcome as not given in terms of the actual behaviour.

As a number of researchers have pointed out, a characteristic of today's society is the increased significance of symbol production, and, as some researchers argue, we are living in a *media culture* (e.g. Castells 1999, Thompson 1995). Labels as *global information society* and an emphasis on information and communication as essential forms of capital for managing life are also common (Lash & Urry 2002). The ideological horizon constructed in symbol production (media, ads) about the practice of job searching is thus an important contribution to the making of an employable subject. Through an analysis of the intricate interdependencies between the change in the labour market – the increased significance of symbol production and communication as important skills in society – we can get an understanding of contemporary job search practices. The next section will provide some examples from a Swedish context, in order to analyse the ideological horizon in the making of an employable individual and what this kind of knowledge production makes possible.

Symbol production in the making of an employable individual

As already indicated there are different sites for constructions of norms and the making of an employable subject. Norms about work and work practices can be analytically understood as the subject being located at different sites. The most obvious site is, of course, the workplace, where specific rules construct formal dimensions as time and skills to perform work in a certain way. There are also different rules and obligations connected with different types of work. In some jobs there are communication training materials in how to perform and talk at work (Cameron 2000). From another site the influence of the discourse of flexibility within organizations has consequences for individuals (Allvin et al. 1999). In a broader sense employability is a key concept in labour market policies as an ideal in making people employable. In the EU discourse, education and training are emphasized as ways of improving employability (Jacobsson 2004).

Institutions in Swedish society advise people on how to become employed, for example in employment offices, private employment services, and from the white-collar unions. The advice given on *how to apply for work* is communicated to people in search of a job. It is a contemporary practice which is an interesting point of departure in order to grasp norms in searching for jobs. The job seekers are taught how to write a CV and behave in an interview situation which entails ideals and norms in the process of gaining entrance to the labour market. I will give some examples of what kind of attitudes, behaviour and practices that constitute this practise of how to apply for work. The analysis seeks to demonstrate the ways in which certain subjectivities and practices of the self are being shaped as ideal for the job seekers. The empirical examples are from a) the web site campus.se, owned by a multinational company in employer branding, which is a site for students on their way to working life and b) from a Swedish white-collar union, Sif, in leaflets and on the homepage about advice in the job search.

Attitudes, behaviour and practices in the job search

The attitude that an ideal job seeker should aspire to is first of all marketing oneself on the labour market. The subject is then located as an individual by marketing his or her personal characteristics. This indicates that entrepreneurial skills are considered important for the job seeker. In order to be able to market oneself it is crucial to know who you are as a person. On the job market there are self assessment tests with the purpose of identifying personal strengths and characteristics of individuals. To know who you are is two-fold; it is essential in order to be able to market oneself and to be prepared for answering questions that can be posed by employers. The ideal

subject is a person engaged in personal labour to find out and reflect about the self, in other words to engage in a “therapeutic project of self” (Rose 1998:116-117) In order to succeed, the reflexive ability is emphasized in evaluating and constructing oneself. Being in the position of a job-seeker you need, in order to get a job, the knowledge of how to present yourself to an employer, to show that you are the right person for the job. As the following example from Sif shows, the individual is required to learn how to communicate in this process of getting work:

Your application is about selling. You have to convince the person who reads it that you can solve the need the company has and that the appointment is within your sphere of interest... If an application is full of spelling mistakes it is never positive... When you describe yourself you should avoid empty phrases. Instead describe characteristics by giving specific examples: “In my present role as a project leader I am responsible of four projects at the same time and I regularly have new contacts, which I find very stimulating.”³ (www.sif.se)

In constructing a CV the job seeking advice above offers formal guidelines on how to write, and examples of how to present the self. This includes layout, what to be included or not, the order of certain skills and certain words or phrases to be emphasized. The style of the discourse of job searching is informative and normative, as in the example from the website campus.se below.

This is a way to write a functional CV. 1. Goal – what you want to accomplish in your working life, right now. In one or two sentences. 2. A summary of your qualifications, quick-witted as a slogan. Around two or three sentences are enough⁴ (www.campus.se)

In a Swedish context a personal letter is also recommended to be sent to an employer which includes an overview of education, reason for seeking the position, and hobbies. It is communicated that it is important to show who you are as an individual. This can be displayed by mentioning hobbies or positions of responsibility in organizations. To be honest and to be yourself are emphasized, and there are strict guidelines about what is considered desirable in how to act and be as a person. In that respect an ideal job seeker should be confident and be able to market his or herself. It can be considered quite paradoxical that the authenticity of the self is accentuated alongside the performativity in how to communicate in the right way. As Foucault argues, the constitution of self is not only constituted in a symbolic system, it is by using and acting in real practices that the self is constituted (Foucault in Rabinow 1984: 369). And that is the practice of writing a CV, going to an interview and preparing for it. These practices are in relation to the normative representations of how to apply for work, something that the individual

has to negotiate and internalize in doing it ‘the right way’. The performative dimension of this – in the words of Goffman (1959) – “impression management” is central in constructing an employable subject. Another example of the performativity is that the job seeker is urged to be aware of his or her body language in an interview with an employer such as making eye contact, having a firm handshake, being calm and listening to the interviewer. In an example from a simulated interview presented at campus.se the expert evaluates and comments on the job seeker called Gustav in the following words;

Johanna: Gustav did not seem to be nervous and he had a firm handshake. He gave a very calm first impression, but had difficulties looking in the eyes. Proper and clean clothes, nice haircut. Overall tidy.⁵ (www.campus.se)

In an interview situation the job seeker is also supposed to be prepared for questions like how he or she handles stress or questions about negative or positive characteristics of oneself, and also to think about possible answers before the interview. Planning and careful preparation are considered crucial. Commonly asked questions are listed, and the job seeker should prepare answers to them in advance. The ideals communicated about how to behave and act before the employer are communicated from an employer perspective. These ideals can be classified as a typical management discourse emphasizing flexibility, enjoying working in teams, and personal characteristics like social competence. Below is an example from a leaflet from the white collar union Sif:

How would you describe yourself in regards to:

- Effectiveness
- Ability to cooperate
- Stress tolerance
- Initiative
- Capacity to lead
- Flexibility⁶

A common piece of advice in describing positive and negative characteristics is to mention negative characteristics that can have both positive and negative aspects to them and something that one could work on to improve. The advice given to the job seeker is constructed as a project in learning to manage the self. Ways of improving and learning the skills of presenting the self, as for instance, the possibility to get help with feedback on one’s CV and simulated interviews. Moreover training is also offered in getting more confidence in the identity position as a job seeker. The individual has the possibility to rely on expert knowledge from career coaches, such as for example sending in one’s CV to the so-called “CV-emergency ward” at campus.se. (2005-03-02) The white collar union, Sif, provides help for mem-

bers in examining the quality of CV's and simulated interviews. These practices locate the subject as a self-governing individual, taking responsibility for his or her own situation, but with some expert knowledge provided from the union. This is an example of what Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) describe as institutionalized individualism. The individualization is closely connected to institutions, but the individual must interpret and act as an individual. The individual must take contemporary regulations or guidelines into his or her biography through own actions. The union Sif, in this case, gives the individual tools for making it on your own. It is a goal within the union to be employable, and the practices could be seen as one way of contributing to the ideals of employability. An interesting part of this learning to be employable is communication of how to act in job search discourse. The normative language is powerful in shaping ideals of what is desirable and the ideal of an individual in working life. This, I believe, is an important part of internalizing the ideals of flexibility and employability.

Some concluding comments

As Fairclough (2002) argues the spirit of new capitalism has emerged from different contemporary transformations and influences social life in many ways. What we are dealing with as critical researchers is to get a grip on an array of many intertwined tendencies in contemporary society. One way of understanding the complexity is the concept of governmentality with its focus on how governing operates and knowledge practices. In relation to power the heterogeneity and the spatiality must be considered. The rationality of self-governance and the self-steering capacities of individuals are, as shown in the empirical examples, called upon in the making of an employable individual. This ideological horizon constructs subjects who are obliged to take individual responsibility. A conclusion is that the practice of how to apply for work must be understood in relation to the discourses of employability and flexibility.

The discursive shaping of job seeker subjectivity is a combination of self-reflection and improvement, self-marketing, and risk management. In constructing oneself as an employable individual it focuses upon individual action. This making of a job seeker is also a part of being employable in working life and performing the ideals of management discourse. The responsibility for becoming employable is an individual responsibility, and risk avoiding means to mastering the skills of communicating and planning in relation to the job search. To make oneself into an employable worker must be problematized in relation to a flexible insecure labour market considering the division of risk and responsibility. There is, in addition, a need to investigate how people shape their ways of being and acting in real life in order to see in what ways these norms are reproduced and challenged.

Notes

1. (Sif) The white-collar Swedish union of Industrial and Technical Workers in Industry. They have 360 000 members and they are the second largest union in Sweden. Members are mostly employed in the private sector.
2. For instance Eriksson & Karlsson (2000) provides different definitions of flexibility.
3. The original text in Swedish:
Din ansökan handlar om försäljning. Du måste övertyga personen som läser om att du kan lösa det behov företaget har och att tjänsten ligger inom ditt intresseområde....Om en ansökan är full av stavfel och felaktigt formulerade meningar är det aldrig positivt....När du beskriver dig själv som person gäller det att se upp för flaskor. Beskriv istället dina egenskaper genom att ge konkreta exempel: I min nuvarande roll som projektledare ansvarar jag för fyra projekt parallellt och jag stiftar ständigt nya bekantskaper, vilket jag finner mycket stimulerande (2006-01-18).
4. The original text in Swedish:
Så här kan ett funktionellt CV vara upplagt. 1. Mål –det här vill du uppnå i ditt yrkesliv, just nu. En eller två meningar långt. 2. Sammanfattning av dina meriter, slagfärdigt som en reklamslogan. Ett par- tre meningar räcker , (2006-01-20).
5. The original text in Swedish:
Johanna- Gustav verkade inte nervös och han hade ett fast handslag. Han gav ett väldigt lugnt första intryck, men verkade ha svårt att titta mig i ögonen. Hela och rena kläder, trevlig frisyra. Hela han såg välvärdad ut (2005-09-05).
6. The original text in Swedish from 'Att söka jobb. Sifs guide till ditt nya arbete, 2002'.
Hur skulle du beskriva dig själv med avseende på:
 - effektivitet
 - samarbetsförmåga
 - stresstolerans
 - initiativförmåga
 - ledarförmåga
 - flexibilitet

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For A Transnational Mode of Journalistic Writing

Peter Berglez

This article theoretically investigates the democratic role of journalism under the conditions of global capitalism. What kinds of archaic ideological horizons are preventing the development of so-called global journalism, and from what new horizon(s) should social reality be represented in order to achieve a global mode of journalistic writing?

Introduction

According to Fredric Jameson (1991), it is possible to divide the historical development of the capitalist system into three main periods, each endowed with a particular kind of *spatial* formation. The successive changeover from one kind of spatial formation to another is related to the development of the economy and the discontinuous expansion and enlargement of capital, leading to capital's 'penetration and colonization of hitherto uncommodified areas' (Jameson 1991:410). To begin with, (1) the first period involved the successive break-up from feudalism and the rise of classic market capitalism. This was a process going from heterogeneous and fragmented space towards a more decisive structuring and *organisation* of space, i.e. towards a geometrical homogeneity within the spatial framework of the *nation state*. In this historical context the capitalist market economy was not yet essentially transnational, but was instead constituted upon the economic doings within the territory of the nation state. Social reality was thus not yet so complex; under these (spatial) conditions it was still quite easy for the subject to intellectually capture the forces and processes that were shaping everyday life and to cognitively structure the social whole as a coherent story or *narrative*. (2) The second period involved the passage from market capitalism to monopoly capitalism and the successive breakthrough of a *global economy*, which took place in the context of imperialism and colonialism. During this period, however, according to Jameson, a *crisis for narration* appeared, characterised by a:

...growing contradiction between lived experience and structure, or between a phenomenological description of the life of an individual and a more properly structural model of the conditions of existence of that experience. Too rapidly we can say that, while in older societies and perhaps even in the earlier stages of market capitalism, the immediate and limited experience of individuals is still able to encompass and coincide with the true economic and social form that governs that experience, in the next moment these two levels drift ever further apart and really begin to constitute themselves into that opposition the classic dialectic describes as *Wesen* and *Erscheinung*, essence and appearance, structure and lived experience (Jameson 1991:410-411).

The more complex the capitalist system became, and the more it expanded, spatially speaking, the more difficult it became to intellectually grasp the social totality, to identify and interrelate all the processes and structures that shaped life at the local level. According to Jameson, at the present time (3) we are situated in the late (postmodern) period of global capitalism with its tricky network character (Castells 1996, Hardt & Negri 2000), in which the crisis for narration has deepened even more. The relationship between lived experience (my life at the local level) and structure (the whole global economic system) has now become even more complex to map, cognitively speaking.

The need for transnational journalistic labour

This article is occupied with the following question: how should journalism deal with the problem that Jameson stakes out, that is, in what way can journalism constitute new narrative forms for the sake of a better understanding and mapping of life under transnational conditions, and thereby contribute to democracy and political citizenship?

The central problem is that current journalism still tends to construct reality from *the ideological horizon of the nation state*. Reality is still very much constructed in accordance with the rationale of the internal (the nation state) versus the external (the world outside the nation state), and as 'relations between nation states'. The aim should, however, be to communicate about the world in accordance with a more radical *transnational mode*, a mode that increasingly internalises the way reality 'works' under *post-national* conditions and decisively includes the existence of the global economy within miscellaneous journalistic writing.

My intention is not to consider social scientific theory as an unquestionable authority that could easily guide journalism towards qualitative improvement, as is the tendency in for example Lippman's (1922) or Althusser's (1971) critique of the mass media. But at the same time I think that the social sciences are able to contribute to the discussion about what possible basic intellectual tools are needed for the continuing development of *a global or transnational mode of journalistic practice*. This article suggests that jour-

nalism should (1) redefine its everyday understanding of *power*, and (2) generate partly new ways of constructing the *space* of social, political, economic and cultural reality. The intended intellectual means should be realistic and applicable in a journalistic context, and adjusted to various structural constraints and barriers, such as economic resources, policies, and time.

Global journalism is local journalism

It all comes down to the phenomenon of *local journalism*. In a study done by Steve Barkin (1987), the purpose is to define local journalism in contrast to other modes of journalism (foreign journalism, popular journalism etc.). According to Barkin (1987:79 f.), the practice of local journalism is defined by its constitution of:

- (1) geographical proximity,
- (2) a microcosm,
- (3) a sphere of practical knowledge,
- (4) a social system of internal relations,
- (5) a place for personal bonds.

The above picture of the local world seems to coincidence with miscellaneous definitions of the *global* (see Lechner & Boli 2000). If the local world is 'a social system of internal relations', 'geographical proximity' and 'a place for personal bonds', what is globalisation if not the successive development towards the same kind of (internal) world – although, in this context, at the transnational level (generated by the global capital, ICTs, international mass media etc.)?

The potentially blurred difference between the 'local world' and the 'global world' can lead to confusion when it comes down to the task of distinguishing local journalism from global journalism. Global or transnational journalism (de Beer & Merrill 2004) is supposed to consider the entire world as its natural field of operation, and it is associated with such globally reaching news media as CNN or BBC World. However, at a more basic level, local journalism and global journalism are like two sides of the same cognitive coin, as they both establish internal social systems and internal worlds (communities). Provided that the global world is *one* place, *one* space, constituted upon internal relations of peoples, spaces, economic exchanges etc., then the basic rationale of global journalism is not radically different from ordinary local journalism. Or, one might perhaps put it in the following manner: a relevant mode of global journalism is the kind of journalism that manages to apply the principles of local journalism to the world as a whole.

Global journalism is thus a particular kind of local journalism. Local journalism (in general) seems to be defined by an introverted as well as an

extroverted dimension. The *introverted* aspect is related to journalistic strategies that shut out the foreign world in order to achieve cultural proximity (domestic emotions). This is achieved by explicitly dealing with processes within a defined (local) space, for example, by exclusively focusing on local events, local personalities etc. According to Østgaard (1968), the journalistic practice of creating local proximity and stimulating identification with local affairs, a local person etc. are essential ingredients for news production in general. This (introverted) dimension of local journalism, to discursively shut out the rest of the world, is not necessarily a bad thing, but it could become problematic if it is not combined with more extroverted efforts.

The *extroverted* dimension of local journalism involves the kinds of practices that reach out to the outside world, that try to *integrate* the foreign world 'within' the local. Not only in the simplest sense, in terms of various announcements that the 'outside world' is coming to the local ('The circus is in town', 'New jobs to our region' etc.) but also in terms of various *localising* efforts: how local life is caused by, or intertwined with, processes 'outside' the local domain. It concerns, for example, the kinds of journalistic practices that identify a more general process 'outside' the local domain (a process with national or transnational scope) and then focus on the effects or visible traces of this process locally speaking: 'at home' (Ekecrantz & Olsson 1994:204).

When imagining global journalism as a particular form of local journalism, what is central is precisely this *extroverted* dimension, the 'localising practice', and thereby the mediating kind of journalism that tries to mediate between various spatial strata of reality (local, semi-local and global). This is already a natural component of contemporary local journalism, but what should be stressed here is the necessity of enlarging and extending it, to make it standard practice to localise the processes and structures that shape our lives, us situated at *local places* like, for example, Sweden, Slovenia or Europe.

On money, information and cognitive fences

We are all familiar with expressions such as the global village (McLuhan 1964) or globalisation depicting the world as a single place (Robertson 1994). These academic buzzwords can, however, no longer be considered utopian reflections of a possible future world, since, in many respects, the future has already arrived. The problem is that while the world already is a single place, economically and information-technologically speaking, from a *journalistic communicative* point of view, there is no single world. There are only rare examples of news media that more seriously define the global world as their home territory, trying to cover this single place in accordance with the general principles of local journalism.

When reflecting upon a 'global village kind of journalism', I do not have in mind the flow of information that one can experience on CNN or BBC World. What one primarily sees here is either the kind of journalism that

rapidly transmits images and pieces of information (*breaking news*) in a fragmentary and disconnected manner (oil prices rising, warfare in Uganda, terror attack in Moscow etc.), or that reduces global news into spectacular and western propagandistic serial stories, such as Liberating Kosovo, Air Strikes against Iraq, the War against Terrorism etc. (see Nohrstedt & Ottosen 2004). By global or transnational journalism, what one wants here, and is hoping for, is something radically different, a journalism that:

(1) *increasingly internalises the totality (of the global capitalist system)*: a journalism that makes it into an everyday routine to investigate how people and their actions, practices, problems, life conditions etc. in different parts of the world are *interrelated*. Capital is not restrained or stopped by any borders, but (national) journalism still is, through its upholding of cognitive borders between territories, continents, cultures etc. ('domestic vs foreign news', the nation state territory vs 'the rest' etc.) – thereby sustaining *unnecessary distance and separation* between spaces, peoples, practices, processes, problems, interests etc. that are in fact *intertwined* and/or *held in common*.

(2) *establishes a standardised (transnational) 'language'*; i.e. a more natural journalistic way of discursively constructing *one* world; a 'language' for the reporting on a 'global people' and its structural interconnectedness in the context of a singular territory. Journalism must invent a 'language' that, as easily as commodities and capital, transports itself across the globe, intellectually and cognitively speaking, that explains 'events' and social problems in such a way that real as well as imaginary barricades and borders are diminished – thereby making the global world into a *local territory* and field for *local journalism*.

To constitute such a 'language' is, of course, not an easy task, and the above formulations do not actually provide us with any concrete tools or solutions on how to proceed with this matter (it is still very theoretical). But no matter how insuperable this intellectual challenge might seem to be, still, the method is, in matter of fact, quite basic, namely to apply (traditional) local journalism. To do global journalism should not be anything else than working in accordance with the principles that Barkin (1987) found when investigating that particular local TV-station: *to construct space as a space of internal relations*.

The journalistic updating mission

In the following section there will be a more specialised discussion on the future development of global or transnational journalism. The following discussion is restricted to *national* news media, and is related to two democratic long term projects, highly relevant for contemporary European nation states:

The semi-global (regional) project involves the semi-global EU and the necessary development of a journalism that increasingly *internalises* the existence of this institution *within* the nation state and *within* citizens' everyday lives. It concerns the development of a news journalism that more decisively establishes routines for the creation of *communicative links* between political processes in Brussels and Strasbourg and the ones being affected by these processes: the citizens within the particular (national) regions.

The global project involves the above discussed development of a journalism that increasingly brings people in the world closer in terms of an everyday journalistic 'language' for describing and explaining how people in different geographical areas are intertwined through their common existence within the global capitalist economy.

In so-called late modern society, most institutions are continually occupied with *updating their internal systems*. There is a constant collection of inputs from the surrounding world, registrations of how social reality is transforming, and, in order to keep pace with a constantly changing reality, the actual institution is necessarily forced to act in a reflexive manner (Giddens 1997:36-45), it must continually *update* its routines, produce new knowledge, make new investments, and so forth. The same goes for the institution of the mass media. The suggestion here then is that, in order to make the two above-defined democratic projects succeed, the news media need to 'update their internal systems'. More precisely, the news media need to update:

Their everyday definitions of *power*, power relations and notions about where power mainly derives from.

Their modes of *dividing* social material reality, that is, their everyday production of cognitive *distinctions* or *borders*.

Updating the definition of power

To begin with, I would like to theoretically relate this matter to a particular *objectivity* criterion, which is the criterion of *relevancy*. Besides the news-journalistic aspiration for impartiality and balance, if a news medium wants to inform the public about existing powers and power relations in a somewhat objective manner, an important criterion is that the news information must be *relevant* for the involved citizens. However, for news journalism, fulfilling the demand for relevancy is a rather difficult task. According to Jörgen Westerståhl (1972), in the most basic sense, relevancy is related to the striving for factuality, the generation of 'factual' information. It involves how to produce the 'right kind of knowledge' when reporting and describing an event, a course of events, a process or a structural condition. Provided that a news journalist has the intention to describe the effects of a political reform, or to explain the EU Commission's impact on people's everyday lives – what

kind of information is really essential and what kind of information is less important? The relevancy problem however involves a second dimension:

Questions on relevancy are not only related to the framework of a particular course of events. They also appear in the context of a comparison of different events: how relevant is the war in Indochina in relation to the crisis in the Middle East or in relation to journeys to the moon? (Westerståhl 1972:14).

Relevancy consequently not only concerns *how* to report about power or power relations (what kind of information is relevant in order to explain a new piece of legislation, or the political relationship between the EU and the US) but also involves the tricky intellectual business of achieving a proper *balance* between all the potential powers that might be relevant to report on. In the daily news flow, how 'much' information from the White House should be transmitted in relation to national domestic politics and news from Brussels?

Such complexities are hardly reflected upon in the everyday practice of journalism, since here, intellectual labour is rather constituted upon established routines and frameworks for constructing reality (Westerståhl 1972:15, Tuchman 1978). However, if a particular news medium would actually decide to update its routines on how to journalistically deal with *power* in accordance with the mentioned demands for *relevancy*, then, at least to begin with, such an 'internal investigation' would necessarily involve the following basic questions:

Who are we writing/reporting for? ('The people', 'the Swedes', 'the bourgeoisie', 'the working class?')

What do these people do? (Wage earners, consumers, identity-builders, unemployed, political radicals?)

What kinds of *powers*, operating as institutions, processes and structures primarily affect, and are involved in, these people's lives? (legally, economically, politically, culturally?)

The updating mission is completed provided that the news medium manages to *internalise* social change by producing relevant information about *newly* identified powers/power relations – and by achieving a proper balance between miscellaneous powers, that is, to make them appear in the daily news flow in accordance with *the proportional extent that they de facto influence people's lives* (if, for example, the political and economic power of the EU has been expanding lately, then EU's presence in the everyday news should expand, and so forth).

In the below section, two particular power updating matters are discussed and reflected upon. The first case involves news journalism's handling of the power of the EU, while the second is about the power structures of the entire global capitalist system.

Power updating issue I: The power of the EU

The EU is an economic and political power operating within, and in relation to, such countries as Sweden, Germany or Slovenia. Therefore, due to EU's causal powers and great influence on people's everyday lives, should not this institution become more *present* in national news media? More precisely, should not the EU achieve more attention in the everyday news at the expense of the traditional reporting on 'national matters', or, at least, should not the EU and national domestic politics become increasingly *discursively intertwined* in the everyday news?

Considering the (hegemonic) impact of the 'nation state rationale', that is, the journalistic construction of social reality in accordance with a national mode or national perspective (Anderson 1991, Palm 2002), as a proposal, news media of various kinds should reflect upon how to deal with the power of the EU in a *proportional* sense. As the EU exists and operates *within* the nation state and *within* people's life worlds, from a democratic point of view, it is important that this (transnational) condition be correctly reflected in the general (national) news flow. Current editorial staffs might need to take a closer look at their everyday news products and ask the following question: in comparison with the daily amount of information about (local) matters, is there a *deficit* of everyday EU-information? If such an investigation demonstrates that the EU is accorded with less attention than it should have, then there is a need for partly new routines in order to adjust to the new situation.

This kind of 'updating mission' could also involve more *qualitative* matters such as deepened reflections upon the actual journalistic *modes* that characterise everyday EU-reporting. There is Danish research concluding that journalists as well as national politicians lack knowledge about the EU as such (Ørsten 2004), which is a serious democratic problem. Furthermore, there is research concluding that many journalists find the EU too complex to understand and to explain. Due to the bureaucratic and sutured character of the EU, it is quite hard for journalists to operate in the 'corridors of power', that is, to gain access to relevant sources in Brussels (see Palm 1996, 2002, Sjöblom 1994). The overall development of EU-journalism consequently seems to be dependent on deepened education among journalists on how this institution actually works how political decisions are made and implemented, and so on. Journalists need further education on the democratically worrying aspects of the EU-project as such (the inaccessibility of publicly relevant information etc.), which also call for a democratic reformation of the EU.

It is possible to assume that the discussion about the shortcomings of EU-journalism looks different in different member states. In the Swedish context, there is a great deal of emphasis on the so called 'info-access' problem in Brussels, which is partly related to the fact that Sweden nurtures a quite open policy concerning public access to official documents (*den svenska offentlighetsprincipen*). However, beyond all the potential internal differences between various nation states and their particular demands on EU-journal-

ism, there is a more *general* problem that should be focused on: how to construct the EU-project in the *cultural* sense.

First and foremost, this cultural matter should include the journalistic task of modulating the discursive image of the entire EU, and more precisely, paving the way for constructing the EU as a *semi-transnational process*. Rather than operating as a *distant abstract power* in the everyday news flow, as a necessary counter-balance, the EU should appear in terms of what it essentially is, *an ongoing process of human (power) relations of the nationally, culturally, and ideologically complex and mixed kind* (while embraced by all the classic features of politics: consent, elitism, conflicts, debates, political agendas, injustice, bureaucracy, corruption etc.).

The EU is a patchwork of transnational relations and actions, endowed with mixed and antagonistic cultures, wills, ideologies, traditions and notions. Miscellaneous news media should however ask themselves to what extent this *complex transnational and transpolitical identity* of the EU actually appears in their particular news products? Regarding the EU, there is thus a need for the following:

More diverse pictures. The need for reducing the impact of certain worn out and stereotypical pictures of the EU, such as the constantly occurring group photos of men in grey suits at some ministry council meeting, or of the EU-building in Brussels from a worm's eye view, reducing the EU to an incomprehensible bureaucratic force. The everyday reporting on EU's power should increasingly include the miscellaneous political *activities* of organisations, groups, peoples, individuals etc. working within, for, or against the EU. In this way EU's power becomes constructed as an *ongoing process of transnational and transpolitical relations and actions* (instead of an abstract/distant 'thing' in Brussels).

More nationally mixed sources. There is need for a greater national *mixture* of news sources in the everyday EU-reporting: to make Greek communists, Danish social democrats, Spanish liberals etc. more present in the everyday Swedish EU-reporting. What is potentially counteracted is the generation of cultural homogeneity in which the journalists mainly rely on domestic sources (national politicians, experts etc.) and reproduce a national worldview when reporting about the EU (see Beck 2003).

More ideological antagonism. There is a need for constructing the EU-project, not only as an institutional space for national antagonism (between different nation states) but as a field of *ideological conflicts* and *struggles* (between Leftist and Rightist modes of thinking). If journalism more decisively constructs the EU as a field of ongoing *ideological antagonism* (Mouffe 2003), what is potentially counteracted is the picture of EU as only a homogenous bureaucratic force. Furthermore this journalism could stimulate public debate and communication about the ideological future of EU, which ideological direction should it take.

Power updating issue II: The power of global capitalism

The second 'updating' matter concerns the power structures of the global capitalist system as such, or more precisely its complex *power relations*. There is a constantly occurring and ongoing relation between one person and his/her actions in one part of the globe (as a labourer, consumer, producer, exploiter etc.) and somebody else's actions, situated in some other part of the globe (as a labourer, consumer, victim etc.). My consumption of a pair of Adidas shoes and the underpaid child worker in Indonesia – the economic system is binding us together, while journalism is then still this (nationally) oriented institution that too often tends to separate our realities, somehow disconnecting us (Berglez 2006:147). If one considers how often such 'global relationships' are established in everyday contexts (when labouring, consuming, producing), that is, *all the time*, it seems rather logical that the news media should increasingly write in a more 'transnational mode' in order to more decisively demonstrate how people and their everyday actions are intertwined. A realistic and practical journalistic reform would be to *extend political journalism to include the coverage of multinational companies*. In other words, global or transnational journalism could develop provided that traditional political journalism is partly *transferred* to the area of global institutions, conglomerates and companies, possibly involving a radical increase of everyday reporting about, and critical investigations of, Microsoft, Adidas, Nestle, Disney, Vodafone and other powers that are assumed to occupy people's everyday lives and spaces (Klein 2002).

This form of global journalism should be related to the changing role and function of companies in today's world, the assumed political dimension of capitalist economic actors (companies), which increasingly tend to market themselves as socially caring, ethical, environment-oriented, open-minded, queer etc. This development is furthermore related to lifestyle and consumer politics as well as to the so-called corporate citizenship phenomenon (Slater 1997, 2000, McIntosh 2004). The energy and compassion previously invested in collective modes of political engagement (Putnam 2000) are assumed to be increasingly transferred to the domain of individual consumption (see Bennett & Entman 2001). The traditional political election system is somehow re-invented in people's relations to commodities and through everyday consumer choice (see Hirschman 2002). Political citizenship increasingly converges with consumership, and loyalty towards (or boycotting of) brands becomes an important form of *political action* as well as a mode for constructing one's political identity.

It is somehow taken for granted that public journalism should primarily critically investigate *political institutions* (the State and its institutions, the bureaucracy, etc.). However, due to the increasing power of the global capital, and due to the ongoing implosion of economic, political and cultural processes as such (corporate citizenship, the symbolic economy etc.), traditional political watchdog journalism must try to expand into the corporate world.

What is intended here is a political journalism that, in contrast to the traditional reporting on financial issues (*business news*), treats financial institutions and enterprises in a holistic manner. This means reporting about multinational companies in terms of their *entire identities*, their ethics and view on democracy, policies, involvement in social issues, and the working conditions of their employees (Klein 2002). In contemporary news media, such examples of global journalism occur only on particular occasions, clearly distinguished from the ordinary news flow, while the very aim should be to make it into an everyday news phenomenon.

The updating of distinctions and borders

Globalisation also raises the demand for partly new journalistic *distinctions* that are better adjusted to the transnational circumstances and conditions of contemporary times. There is, I think, a need for relatively new modes of *organising/dividing* social reality, while this complex task involves how to intellectually deal with and interrelate various territories, practices and problems.

In the following theoretical discussion, I will particularly focus on how the news media divide and separate *national* space/problems/concerns from what should be referred to as *transnational* space/problems/concerns, and demonstrate the negative consequences of this. Initially, this matter will be related to the journalistic division of the nation-state/the EU, followed by a discussion on the division of the nation-state/the global world

The nation-state/EU division

An example: The Swedish tabloid *Expressen* announces that there is a 'Total Booze War between Sweden and the EU' (14/7 2004). The news story here is that the EU is dismantling the Swedish State monopoly on the import of alcohol, and is thereby opening up the gates for free import of cheap booze. Due to this development, the EU is accused of ignoring Sweden's unique and rather traumatic relationship to alcohol. This is a quite spectacular example of the creation of a sharp *division* of the nation state and the EU – a division which could be observed in most member states (see Tjernström 2001). This kind of (national) media discourse is consequently related to the hegemonic influence of a nation-state-oriented way of thinking/acting in general, as well as to the fact that this way of constructing reality is commercially attractive for the news media (Palm 2002:250-256).

The nation-state/EU division operates in several different ways in the general news flow. The most obvious example is the routine placement of EU-information in the *foreign* news section (instead of trying to integrate it with national domestic news). Another common example is the habit by which

a journalist defines him- or herself as being 'away' (in Brussels, Strasbourg) while reporting 'home' to the 'national people' ('the Swedes' etc.). A third version is represented by the kind of political journalism that primarily constructs EU-politicians as representatives of their home countries, not of political parties or ideologies.

To summarise these examples, the most obvious consequence here is that the EU and the nation state operate as two separate worlds, instead of becoming internally related. What is thus generated is the imaginary category of a national people (Anderson 1991), with the mass media acting as if there were this group of people ('the Swedes', etc.), always sharing a common interest.

The spontaneous question then arises: is this kind of *division* (EU versus the nation state) democratically relevant and legitimate? There is naturally no absolute answer to such an ideological question. In some contexts the 'national perspective' could perhaps be defended (for the 'Swedes', the booze matter might be such a case due to historical reasons) while in other cases, the same kind of cognitive division might be somewhat irrelevant, as well as having damaging effects, democratically speaking.

The news media should increasingly reflect upon the following question: to what extent does a Swedish citizen have common interests with all other citizens in Sweden? Is not a citizen of a specific country more likely to have common interests with individuals, groups, and organisations in other nation states and regions? How, then, are these transnational interests and engagements supposed to be *stimulated* if journalism is continually *over-producing* the national identity? For democratic reasons, EU-journalism should consequently not be synonymous with reporting home to an imagined national body (the Swedes, the Slovenes etc.) but instead a case of addressing the actual news information to particular groups and identities (to steel industry workers, farmers, researchers, environmentalists, etc. within the entire EU). In order to stimulate a political engagement based on *transnational group interests* instead of (imaginary) national interests, the 'nation state versus the EU' rationale ought to be less dominant in many national news media.

The overall aim of all this should thus be to repress the worn out cognitive category of the National People ('the Swedes' etc.) versus the distant power of the EU-bureaucrats ('those down in Brussels'). In this manner the news media could possibly also counteract the kind of national egoism that tends to characterise EU-politics, and instead stimulate *transnational*, grass-roots-based political engagement within the EU. The national news media ought to have this democratic responsibility to stimulate the development of an EU-related public sphere (Moring 2006) characterised by transnationally organised parties, groups and organisations consisting of members from various member states, the struggle for new EU-policies, the demand for particular rights, and criticism of and challenges to the Commission, etc.

The nation-state/rest-of-the-world division

Alongside the EU matter, it is equally important, for contemporary news journalism, to deal with the global world and fulfil the need for 'cognitive updating' when it comes to the intellectual handling of the 'entire world'.

A realistic way of developing the global perspective in everyday news communication would be to increasingly replace territory-oriented sections (the national versus foreign news rationale) with sections that are centred on transnational issues and *problems*. Problem-oriented sections do, of course, already exist in miscellaneous mass media (science, family issues, etc.). What is specifically intended here is, however, essentially global or transnational matters, that is, problems that are not restricted by any borders whatsoever, cultural, spatial or economic. What I have in mind here is a globally-oriented journalism in which a particular public problem (involving the environment, health, etc.) is explained and reported in terms of *relating* events, processes and structures, occurring at local, semi-global and global levels of reality. This kind of journalism is highly challenging and difficult to develop into everyday news journalism, while on the other hand, considering the transnational nature of contemporary social reality, it is quite necessary from a democratic point of view .

Problem-based sections of the global kind have two main epistemological advantages. First, they contain the inherent potential to cognitively dissolve spatial distinctions (the nation state versus the rest of the world, etc.), and second, they are endowed with the ability to challenge the rigid (*modern*) separation of political problems, economic problems, *and* cultural problems (Berglez 2006:157-166). Considering transnationally defined problems, like global health, it is clear that they *simultaneously* include political, economic, technological and cultural processes. Therefore it is also reasonable to think that, in contrast to miscellaneous modern distinctions, problem-oriented sections/problems somehow correspond to the complex nature of the global capitalist reality (Beck, Bonss & Lau 2003).

In conclusion

I would like to emphasise my awareness of the fact that there is a great deal of journalism that already includes all the mentioned suggestions. However, the problem is that these forms of semi-global or global journalism occur too sporadically, and are consequently not yet well-established as narrative structures. Therefore the aim here has been to reflect upon how to, as easily as possible, transform global journalism into an *everyday* news phenomenon.

On several occasions, what has been implied is the possible development of transnational forms of democracy (Beck 1998) and the rise of a post-national, i.e. transnational people (Carleheden 2001). Some would here per-

haps remind me that society cannot develop in this direction by means of journalistic language use and communication alone – that radical social change is only possible if action is mobilised ‘at all possible levels’ (material, economic etc.). It is, however, my conviction that communicative practices (like journalism and writing in general) are themselves important ‘material forces’ in society (Williams 1977, Berglez 2006), characterised by the potential to really make a difference. By communicating differently, society *could* change.

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In which ways does the media discursively make sense of contemporary society? In which ways does the public, through the media, deal with and negotiate ongoing changes in society? How can we study this?

Such questions are addressed in this volume. The authors consider societal changes not only as structural, material processes, but also as deeply ideological. They further consider ideologies to be observable in various discursive practices. A new concept, ideological horizon, is introduced, and its theoretical and methodological fruitfulness is developed. The analytical richness of the concept is demonstrated and different methods are suggested for empirically studying ideological horizons in the media and among citizens. Areas of current interests, such as "the global war on terrorism", drug trafficking, crises events, mental illness and violence, health and healthism, and contemporary working life, are analysed.

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