

COMMUNICATING THE NATION

National Topographies of Global Media Landscapes

Anna Roosvall & Inka Salovaara-Moring (eds.)



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NORDICOM

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Contents

Acknowledgements	7
<i>Anna Roosvall & Inka Salovaara-Moring</i> Introduction	9
I. THE MAKING OF NATIONS	
<i>Terhi Rantanen</i> Methodological Inter-Nationalism in Comparative Media Research. Flow Studies in International Communication	25
<i>Britta Timm Knudsen</i> The Nation as Media Event	41
<i>Lilie Chouliaraki</i> The Mediation of Death and the Imagination of National Community	59
<i>Göran Bolin & Per Ståhlberg</i> Between Community and Commodity. Nationalism and Nation Branding	79
II. NATIONS AND EMPIRES REVISITED	
<i>Inka Salovaara-Moring</i> The Future is a Foreign Place. Topographies of Post-Communism, Nation and Media	105
<i>Ivan Zassoursky</i> Imperial Glory is Back? Retelling the Russian National Narrative by Representation and Communication	123
<i>Toby Miller</i> Holy Trinity: Nation Pentagon, Screen	143
<i>Andrew Calabrese</i> Vox Americana. Why the Media Forget, and Why it is Important to Remember	163

III. NATIONAL SELVES AND OTHERS

Tamar Ashuri

The National vs. the Global.

Producing National History in a Global Television Era 177

Kristina Riegert

National Television News of the World. Challenges and Consequences 195

Anna Roosvall

Image-Nation.

The National, the Cultural and the Global in Foreign News Slide-shows 215

Anu Kantola

The Disciplined Imaginary.

The Nation Rejuvenated for the Global Condition 237

The Authors 255

Acknowledgements

In considering writing, Samuel Johnson once described the two most engaging powers of an author as the ability to make new things familiar and familiar things new. Writing about the nation challenges an author in both these senses. Exploring the meaning of the nation is a continual balancing act; juggling the conflicting needs for intimacy, independence and academic detachment. To meet this challenge, one has to explore the intimacy a nation brings to its subjects whilst remembering the revulsion this intimacy can cause in those excluded by it. The Janus-faced characteristic of the nation was the starting point for this book.

Academic edited volumes are often said to be written by friends and colleagues who wanted to work together. This is said in a disapproving manner, as if the enjoyment of exploring things in concert would lessen its academic worth. We did have the privilege to work with people we like, but who are also widely respected academics in their fields due to the fact that they have important things to say and write about the subject. So, as we Nordics often say, 'it is not the ship so much as the skilful sailing that assures the prosperous voyage.'

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is the journey itself, he used to say. On different sides of the North Sea, as we are now, we conclude our work on a book that tries to capture the journeys of the national and the global, and their intersections.

Örebro and Oxford, April 2010

Anna Roosvall

Inka Salovaara-Moring

Introduction

Anna Roosvall & Inka Salovaara-Moring

The nation is one of the most resilient concepts in our understanding of the world and its societies. It can be seen as a nodal point of media discourse; an 'empty' but privileged centre around which discourse is organised (Phillips and Jørgensen 2002: 26-28; Laclau and Mouffe 1985/2001). Politics, sports and cultural events, in news as well as in fiction, are largely structured by the national logic. Internationalism – be it in representation, production or consumption – does not challenge the privileged position of the nation, but adds another level to the equation (Beck 2006: 123).¹ Globalising processes do offer an alternative to the primacy of the nation, but have so far been unable to overcome its dominance. The nation's resilience is, in part, due to its continuing relevance: ontologically, it offers a sense of territorial stability and security while epistemologically it can supply a sense of familiarity and order in the global landscape.

The nation is often described as an imagined community, thus media is crucial for the nation to be 'imagined into being' and embraced by large populations (Anderson 1983; Frosch and Wolfsfeld 2007; Chatterjee 1996). One could easily claim that for the media the nation has been and remains to be almost as important, even though it is constantly challenged in times of alleged globalisation. In this book we argue that the nations' roles in different geopolitical and media environments need to be revisited for three main reasons.

Firstly, the nation as a crucial social category has been under-theorised in media studies of the global era. It has either been explicitly written out through terms such as 'post-national' or 'de-nationalisation', or has been forgotten/ignored in discussions about glocalisation as well as in large parts of the more general globalisation paradigm. In the glocalisation trajectory the nation linguistically and, subsequently, conceptually disappears between the global and the local dimensions. A similar disappearance occurs in broader discussions about globalisation as something essentially new and different from previous times and geographies, for instance, as an increasing awareness of a world 'where there are no "others"' (Giddens 1991: 27). However appealing and desirable that idea might be, there are still national others, as well as national selves, and these divisions continue to organise everyday life.

Secondly, simultaneously and paradoxically, the nation has not been forgotten in the structuring of empirical analyses. Rather it has been over-used as an often un-motivated and un-problematised unit of analysis; serving as an explanation of difference without an accompanying critical distance from the different roles it can play in varying geo-political settings and times. Moreover, this has been often acted out without considering alternative explanations, categorisations and spatialisations. The nation has thus served as a nodal point for both media studies and media discourse. This organisation of empirical data and analyses is generally recognised as methodological nationalism (Beck 2006; Calhoun 2007; Ekecrantz 2007) based on a 'territorial trap', and will be discussed and examined further in several chapters in this book.

Thirdly, and following on from the above, at a time of powerful re-organisation of the space around us (spaces of nature, politics and different capitalisms) it is good to remind ourselves that all spheres of human activities create their own geographies. Media geographies are no exception to this rule. They should be approached empirically without territorial presumptions and with consideration that the reproduction of the nation is always an embedded process. Thus its theorisation should begin there where this process is enacted and takes place.

With this book we seek to contribute to the new strand of media research that takes the nation seriously, further the discussion by theorising the nation and its meanings, mainly in relation to globalisation trajectories, and provide empirical studies that do not take the nation for granted as a simple easy-access category. Instead the focus is to reflect upon the nation's defined roles in specific time-spaces as well as in particular media contexts. With this we aim to (re-)politicise the role of the nation in media studies, while explicating it theoretically as well as empirically.²

Nations and Nation-states

As a concept, nation predated the expression of the nation-state in the historic Treaty of Westphalia, and has pre-modern ethnic roots that stretch to the emergence of recorded vernacular history in the West. Yet, it has always been invented, imagined and reproduced in everyday mediated discourses. However, invented categories are no less real. One could claim that all social phenomena, such as class, gender, and ethnicity, are at least partly constructed, and this does not lessen their power in organising communities.

The nation as a concept was invented c. 1300, and originally came from the old French *nacion* (from Latin *nationem* nom. *natio*) 'nation, stock, race', which literally meant 'that which has been born', (from *natus*, of *nasci* 'be born').³ Political sense has become mixed with this racial and ethnic meaning to create the idea of a 'large group of people with a common ancestry'. As a mixture of territoriality and ethnicity it is able to offer a sense of belonging and, through its geographical ethos, it attaches people to often arbitrary po-

litical borders. Hence the early survival of nations depended on their ability to claim and defend their territory both in material (physical) and symbolic (language, culture) dimensions. As described by Ernest Renan, the historical path of Western nation-states has been paved with violence. This is to say that solidarity within a nation has been built on historic tragedies and defeats (Renan 1882/1990), but also on a sense of possible victory. Solidarity within a nation thus connects strongly with a sense of potential – and desirable – superiority over other nations: cultural, economic, political etc. These victories have to be narrated and weaved into the everyday life of the people. The media has typically had a vital role in this task in offering an arena to develop, promulgate and reinforce shared stories and representations.

In revisiting the nation and the media it is pivotal to discuss distinctions between a nation and a (nation-)state. Nations are generally defined as consisting of an ethnic or cultural community, whereas states are political entities with a high degree of sovereignty (Miscevic 2002/2005). Many states are nations in some sense, and we generally recognise the majority of them as nation-states. Coincidentally there are many nations that are not fully sovereign states. The Native American Iroquois constitute, for instance, a nation but not a state as they do not possess a required amount of political authority over their internal or external affairs (*ibid.*). Roma people have a double identity; one coming from the Roma community and the other connected to the nation-state in which these diasporic groups live. Following Max Weber (1918/1946: 47–48, cf Sparks 2007: 148) states can more specifically be defined by their exclusive means, i.e. the use of physical force and what is then considered to be legitimate violence (see also Foucault 2007). The same is not true of nations as such.

The concept of citizenship is most often connected to states, but in recent debates, not the least in relation to questions of globalisation or cosmopolitanisation, suggestions of other understandings of the term have emerged. Cultural citizenship (Stevenson 2003) is such a modification, which links not only to the larger scale processes of the cosmopolitan and the global, but also to the concept of the nation (rather than the nation-state).⁴ Culture can, according to Ernest Gellner (1983: 37–38), be defined as ‘the distinctive style of conduct and communication of a given community’, and ‘a necessary shared medium of the nation’. National cultures hold nations together while the state rests upon other corner stones such as authority, rights, duties etc. There are, however, parallel understandings of nationhood that are connected to citizenship and bound by laws (‘Western model’) and statehood as based on *ethnie* (‘East European or German model’), i.e. statehood as based on the ethnic/cultural communities that are generally recognised as having to do with the nation (Smith 1986 in Frosh and Wolfsfeld 2007: 107). Thus, basic ideas on the foundations of states and nations intersect. Furthermore, states and nations can be connected to related concepts such as community, category and public (see Frosch and Wolfsfeld 2007) in both overlapping and diverging ways. Communities can be recognised as mainly relating to nations, as groups constituted ‘not primarily [...] through formal political-legal institutions’ (Calhoun 1999: 220). Categories,

another main form of social belonging, can also be connected to the nation part of the nation-state (Frosh and Wolfsfeld 2007: 109) since they are 'based on the putative *cultural* similarity or jural equivalence of persons' (Calhoun 1999: 220, italics added). However, statal aspects are also implied in the evocation of the jural, whereas a third main form of social belonging, publics, is even more clearly connected to the state part. It can be defined as 'quasi-groups constituted by mutual engagement in discourse aimed at determining the nature of social institutions including states' (ibid.).

In this book we try to capture how the idea of the nation features in media and communications related representations and experiences of nation-states as well as of national cultures, and how these relate to larger scale processes such as the international, the trans-national and the global. Thus, whether community, category or public aspects are evoked in the chapters of this book, it is the nation as ideological space, and its relation to other extensions and limitations of space, that is the focus.

Nation, Media, and Globalisation

It is a well-known fact that the media has been crucial for the dissemination of nationalism and the idea of the nation since the early days of the printing press in Europe. It has been interwoven with the subsequent spread of folk languages and the concurrent introduction and dissemination of what has been recognised as print capitalism. (Anderson 1983; Eisenstein 1979). National newspapers offered a platform where the nation was narrated, reproduced and held together. The media came to organise space and time by articulating spatial histories and temporal geographies in the everyday-life of the people. Thus the nation's resilience has been based on the intimacy, routines and closeness of the daily rhythms of the people and the media. Media's relation to the nation can be seen as a 'spatio-temporal practice or process because it aims to produce the "same" cultural time and space for the population' (Edensor 2006: 525; see also Adam 1995).

The media's development, moreover, was not cocooned from the massive cultural and social changes that took place in other parts of societies. In the late 19th century the development of a multitude of disciplines and traditions came to constitute an explosion of mass mediation that carried with it strong globalising and nationalising tendencies. There was the emergence of anthropology, film, photography, the spread of the national press in the Western world, the arrival of the telegraph and the development of news agencies (McClintock 1995; Carlsson 1998; Eriksen and Nielsen 2004; Askew 2002; Hadenius and Weibull 2007; Schudson 1978). Anthropology, and its sister discipline ethnology, can be seen as the epitome of seemingly contradictory, but nevertheless co-dependent globalising-nationalising tendencies. They travel and connect the world, but still work as an interpretation of one culture to another (Askew 2002; Hannerz 2004; Lidchi 1997); often based on a norm culture that is gener-

ally the national culture of the home nation. The same relationship has been a dominating factor in foreign news.

Public service broadcasting (PSB) companies were true nation-state media and were introduced to the European media landscape with the incorporation of the BBC in 1927. The concept quickly spread in the years that followed with similar organisations being established in Canada, Denmark, France and Sweden. The public service remit had an inherent mission to construct, protect, inform and entertain the nation. Thus, its value was recognised at an early stage by totalitarian states such as Nazi Germany and the USSR.

Following the end of the Second World War, the Eastern Block and the West continued on their divergent paths. The Cold War media landscape was defined in the Communist Block by state control of all media outlets with censors overseeing cultural production. The Western media landscape was increasingly influenced by an American cultural industry, which used soft power to spread US values and norms. The spread of cable and satellite television offered alternate means of access to broadcast media and weakened a nation-state's control of the regulation and distribution of media messages. This process has accelerated through digitisation and the convergence of media to further weaken its attachment to a specific nation.

Contemporary globalisation has challenged the national media's earlier task of narrating the nation. However, it is important to remember that globalisation is not necessarily a new phenomenon (Pieterse 2006). Embedded in the processes following the introduction of the printing press in Europe and the triumphal procession of the ideology of nationalism, were intrinsic features of what is on a slightly larger scale recognised as defining factors of globalisation: increasing connectedness and increasing communication (Jameson 1998; Rantanen 2005; Robertson 1992). Moreover, globalising processes are generally, like federalist developments, contradictory or at least two-sided in their relation to the nation. The mobility of people, for instance, has been a force that has furthered global cosmopolitanism, but it has also caused stricter controls on borders and immigration (Calhoun 2007: 169). In a similar way federations and transnational units, like the European Union, can be seen as extensions of territorial logics that aim for political and economic power in a traditional imperialist way (*ibid.*).

It is now commonplace to consider the internet as the most prominent example of a global medium (see Sparks 2007: 152). Among others, Sparks (*ibid.*) notes, however, that its worldwide reach is still fatally limited. 25 per cent of the world's population has no access to electricity; a number that will increase over the next 25 years (*ibid.*).⁵ Moreover, the internet as a medium is not as de-nationalised as one might assume. When the internet appeared and started gaining ground many predicted that it would threaten the cultural integrity of nations and lead to fragmentation (Eriksen 2007). Even though it might be too early to come to conclusions about the long-term effects of the internet, the evidence so far indicates that nations – as well as other imagined communities – thrive in this medium (*ibid.*). The internet has in fact become a

key technology for keeping nations together. This is particularly clear when it comes to nations that have, at some point, lost their territory, nations that are dispersed, and nations with large temporary or permanent working or vacationing/retired diasporas abroad. In addition, it has been argued that in so-called global formats, like reality television, national identities are being reinforced (Aslama and Pantti 2007).

So, while the world can be said to be globalising in many senses (economically, socially, culturally, politically as well as technologically), sometimes the increasing connectivity is merely international and can include seemingly contradictory tendencies of escalating nationalism. It can be both banal (Billig 1995) and overtly/explicitly political (see van Dijk 2000). Some of these tendencies go hand in hand with more culturally accented identity politics. The emergence of identity politics with the aim of restoring traditions, underlining, for instance, religion and dependency on rather one-dimensional and taken for granted ethnic and national identities – be they majoritarian or minoritarian – can be seen as signifying the post-Cold War period (Eriksen 2005: 25), or even of globalisation as such (Appadurai 1996).

The spatial and temporal ontology of the nation is always in becoming rather than being. It is a process, a trajectory that actualises itself through a myriad of symbolic, semantic, material, emotional and territorial discourses. Therefore, as a key concept or, should we say, as a key process in contemporary media discourse the nation needs to be explicated. How does the nation as written, visualised, and experienced relate to notions of globalisation? Moreover, what is this ‘empty’ core of media discourse filled with in different geo-political settings and in different media forms and contexts today? To try and move beyond methodological nationalism like this, to put the nation under the microscope instead of taking it for granted, to explore how the nation works with or against transnationalising discourses and practices, is an important part in the project of transnationalising media studies (see Ekecrantz 2007: 81).

The Chapters

The contributions to this book have been divided into three sections: I) *The Making of Nations*; II) *Nations and Empires Revisited*; and, III) *National Selves and Others*. However, multiple themes cut across these sections of which perhaps the most salient is memory/remembrance. The nation is closely connected to historical trajectories (Hobsbawm 1996) and geopolitical upheavals. Another prominent feature is the economic aspects of globalisation, and the nations’ role in that process. Political, cultural and technological aspects of globalisation also constitute recurring themes. The chapters discuss the representation, production, promotion, and redefinition of the nation in moving and still pictures, texts, policies and production processes in order to consider media in its broadest sense. The common denominator is an interest in how the media and the nation can be understood in relation to global and/or

trans-national processes. When we deal with the nation as a category in this book, it is thus mainly related to other spatial categories, rather than to other group categories such as class or gender. Group categories are however also discussed in several chapters.

The Making of Nations section explores how nations have been constructed, formulated and practised as part of scientific, affective and economic discourses. The making of nations can be seen as part of late modern governance of this slippery category, whether it is used as part of comparative practices of media studies, a category of affective remembrance, constituting a national community, or in branding a nation for global markets.

Looking back at the history of International Communication as a field of research, Terhi Rantanen captures in her chapter *Methodological Inter-Nationalism in Comparative Media Research. Flow Studies in International Communication* how 'methodological nationalism' has remained un-challenged while other paradigms have shifted. Rantanen's chapter covers the crucial and un-questioned importance of the nation in news flow studies from the 1950s to the mid-1980s. Focusing on key empirical studies, she argues that the concept of methodological inter-nationalism is closely related to that of methodological nationalism, when a new layer is added in comparative studies without problematising the embedded nationalism. Exploring the stages of international propaganda, communications and development, and media imperialism, and how these have been related to specific international organisations, Rantanen suggests that now might be the time to discuss whether flows were ever truly national or international, and whether the division between international and national flows ever made sense.

In her chapter *The Nation as Media Event* Britta Timm Knudsen looks at nostalgic performances of nationhood in media in the Danish context. In exploring the cultivation of the past, especially in media but also in other cultural practices, the author identifies a post-traditional phenomenon that is only understandable within the framework of a rupture with the past. Here the branding of nations often takes place through storytelling, staging or re-enacting well-known periods of the nations' histories. The mediated nostalgia can appear at different levels, semantic as well as ritual, i.e. as part of the viewing situation, but it can also be medium-specific. Whilst the large audiences generated by media events or, for example, national heritage television series are not necessarily proof of a new nationalism due to globalisation, an argument is presented that they can be understood as hyper-modern *performers* of communities. Knudsen asserts that these performances with nationalistic nostalgia are something that communities sometimes display. This takes place in a specifically intense retrospective mode that is playful rather than aggressively nationalistic.

Lilie Chouliaraki explores the relationship between mediation, death and national identity. She discusses two central but largely ignored dimensions of the constitution of media publics as national community: its aestheticised quality and its affective potential. In *The Mediation of Death and the Imagination of National Community* she focuses on a Greek news broadcast of the

killing of a Greek-Cypriot man in the buffer zone in Cyprus and discusses it in terms of aesthetic qualities and the forms for moral agency made possible by the footage. In a detailed analysis of images and voiceover, Chouliaraki illustrates how the nation always has to be fought for; here exemplified by the fight and negotiation over nationhood in Cyprus. It is concluded that Greece is constituted both as a mythical community of fate and as a civil community of Western civility. Chouliaraki draws our attention to how this nationalist discourse – proper to Western democracies and opposed to imperialist or ethnic discourses of nationalism – arises out of a complex regime of pity that is made possible by the witnessing of the dying man and how it is mediated.

In a twin study of nation branding in Estonia and India respectively, Göran Bolin and Per Ståhlberg set out to explore new ways in which nations are constructed culturally and ideologically today. In *Between Community and Commodity. Nationalism and Nation Branding* they argue that contemporary nation-states are increasingly acting in the same way as commercial enterprises. They assert that the traditional way of directing nationalistic rhetoric towards a domestic audience has been incorporated into a new nationalistic rhetoric that is directed towards an international audience of investors. This shift is accompanied by a change in temporality, so that looking backwards into history has been replaced by looking forward into the future. A discussion of 'by whom' and 'for whom' these branding practices are constructed displays both differences and similarities in political history, media related prerequisites and the branding strategies of India and Estonia. Making a distinction between nationalism and nation branding, Bolin and Ståhlberg argue that instead of constituting solidarity in relation to the nation, as done in nationalism, nation branding applies cultural technologies to constitute the nation itself as a commodity.

The *Nations and Empires Revisited* section explores the relationship between former and present economic, political and 'moral' superpowers and their not always so 'soft' media power. The authors analyse how media acts in consolidating the values of certain nations as they aspire to strengthen their imperialist roles by silencing dissent and supporting the hegemonic interests at home front and abroad.

Inka Salovaara-Moring addresses multiple conceptual dilemmas in analysis of media development, nation-building and the protection of small cultures related to Post-Communist countries in a global framework. Her chapter *The Future is a Foreign Place. Topographies of Post-Communism, Nation and Media* focuses on how different generations of journalists and intellectuals see their roles as part of social change and how collective memory and particular legacies of the Soviet era modify the nation-building processes in evolving democratic systems. Two main themes are distinguished in the discourse: 'topographies of stolen time/space' and 'topographies of the nation'. Counter-posing Communist and Western understandings of nationhood, Salovaara-Moring discusses their different implications for media and communications. In the end, the complex relationship between different practices and representations of a nation and a

nation as lived experience are explicated in a distinction of 'before' and 'after' the transition from communism to market driven democracies.

In *Imperial Glory is Back? Retelling the Russian National Narrative by Representation and Communication* Ivan Zassoursky analyses the reconstruction of the former Russian empire after the collapse of Communism. The chapter charts the beginning of a slow but steady reconstruction process starting in the early 1990s, in which the former Soviet Union and its military block reinvented themselves. This, it is argued, was particularly true of the media, which had to factually report on the construction of a nation, of one kind or another, and function successfully in any given environment. As the idealism of the 90s subsided and realism turned to bitterness, there came a need for a new beginning, which included a longing for past grandeurs. Thus, he asserts, it was a movement conveniently suited to the task of nation building. The war in Chechnya was the media event that propelled President Vladimir Putin forward and, thus, Zassoursky argues, 'the Russian dream' eventually settled, not on the pursuit of individualist liberties or a consumer society, but into a collectivist ego of the nation, losing itself in its glory, while expecting prosperity rather than liberty as the reward.

Toby Miller analyses the 'holy trinity' of the United States' soft power at home and abroad by critically examining the close relationship between the screen industries, nationalism, and the government in his chapter *Holy Trinity: Nation, Pentagon, Screen*. Despite common claims that US popular culture is uniquely independent of state support and direction, the chapter shows that the government's forceful nationalism relies on a compliant and even willing partner in the culture industries, which in turn benefit by receiving public subvention. The chapter argues that the trinity of media, Pentagon, and screen is constituted by unwittingly stimulating opponents. Its techniques of nationalism, from secreted state subvention to immense immersive interpellation, would continue for some time in the service of the aestheticising of violence and the sanitisation of war, by focusing on propagandistic elements that develop and index nationalism.

In *Vox Americana. Why the Media Forget, and Why it is Important to Remember*, Andrew Calabrese critically considers the US military intervention in Iraq and its domestic media coverage. He describes how during the Iraq war(s) the US media found it difficult to recognize themselves as non-neutral political actors, and to accept greater responsibility for tacit and manifest support to the war. Moreover, the author argues that, as media institutions become increasingly concentrated, the reciprocal relationship between political power and media power posed a threat to democratic principles and the American public sphere. The chapter offers a critical perspective on one aspect of the media's role in particular: the value of remembering. Calabrese suggests that neither the government nor the major media institutions of the United States can control or prevent efforts to construct and preserve the memory of the Iraq war. Historical memory through popular records, individual testimony, and other sources that do not fall under official or authoritative control, should not be

obliterated. The author concludes that media will play a profoundly important role in the popular understanding of history.

The *National Selves and Others* section explores the 'other' in a globalised world where it is increasingly hard to deny 'others' respect, recognition and concern (Appiah 2006: 77; Corpus Ong 2009: 460). It has been argued that it is in the ruptures in communication that we can experience the most genuine meetings with the 'other' rather than in established modes of representation (Pinchevski 2005). News and documentary, considered in this section, are indeed transforming, not least on-line, but they still seem to be rather rigid in keeping others in specific genres. The authors of this section explore reporting and narrating on selves and others in traditional and emerging news and documentary media. Economic and cultural aspects of globalisation are recurring themes, when media representations in texts and pictures as well as production processes aiming at capturing both the domestic and the foreign are scrutinised.

Tamar Ashuri's *The National vs. The Global. Producing National History in a Global Television Era* expresses a critique of the 'post-national' approach and its strong emphasis on territory and place in a global era where physical location, it is argued, is often irrelevant. This is, however, not to be understood as though the nation is irrelevant as such, only that it may be irrelevant as a physical place. Ashuri considers the economical and cultural interplay between the national and the global in the television arena and emphasises how national interests come into play in international co-production of television programmes. The empirical focus is on the reasoning and actions of the different national producers of the documentary 'The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs' and how two conflicting elements – economic interests and cultural constraints – affect the process. Within a framework of an alleged global product all co-producers insisted on reproducing separate narratives that constituted different national/cultural self-images familiar to their own national/cultural communities.

In the chapter *National Television News of the World. Challenges and Consequences* Kristina Riegert considers how the academic discussion on media globalisation places television news paradoxically into a category between domestic and foreign due to their transnational and national production processes. Riegert argues that 'foreign' news, as seen on national television, seems to be a relatively rigid genre where people and events are mainly viewed through national prisms. At the same time, and especially in cases of distant crises, international news stories tend to exhibit generic characteristics similar to those in the Anglo-American news culture. The chapter concludes that despite the concentration of ownership caused by global capitalism and changing formats in different media there is little to demonstrate that media globalisation has reshaped national mainstream news agendas. Yet, she argues, it remains to be seen whether mainstream television news will utilise the possibilities of the changing digital media environment to broaden its source dependency. Even though for those audiences who do have the knowledge, the time and the money to compare, there are greater possibilities to balance different national or transnational perspectives.

In the chapter *Image-Nation. The National, the Cultural and the Global in Foreign News Slide-shows* Anna Roosvall explores junctions of nation, culture and globalisation by considering their assigned significance in year review picture paragraphs in foreign news, building on Swedish, British and American depictions of the world. Roosvall traces what can be described as a non-agency discourse, a focus on a popular notion of culture and, by the ratio of the genre, a reinforcement of nationhood. The picture paragraphs appear in a battlefield of tensions between space- and place related dimensions. They display well-known national symbols, anonymous cultural signifiers, and, to a lesser degree, manifestations of global aspects. In the slide-shows World culture seems to be easy to grasp, but nevertheless or through that it is also controlled. The author argues that visual knowledge is created, not understanding, but knowledge based on stereotypes. In the end, what a nation is depends on the geopolitical context, its relation to peripheries and centres, and – in the cases of the homelands of the examined newspapers – its image about a national self.

Focusing on international financial journalism, Anu Kantola studies in the chapter *The Disciplined Imaginary. The Nation Rejuvenated for the Global Condition* how Finland is narrated in the *Financial Times*, and problematises how transnational media mediates between state and globalisation. More specifically Kantola relates economic aspects of globalisation to a discussion about disciplinary and romantic nationalist narratives about ‘the competition state’, where the romance of the Finnish struggle against Soviet invaders in 1939 is paralleled by the heroic saga of *Nokialand*, with corporate leaders cast as the heroes. Finland’s Eastern past, with the Finns as professional savages, is concurrently presented as a threat to the new ways and dwells in the background of the stories of Finland as a model nation of internationalisation and structural change. Global power is suggested to be operating within the skin of the nation-state, and it seems, argues Kantola, that globalisation, and economic globalisation in particular, has opened up the question of the nation rather than dooming it to obsolescence.

Notes

1. See also Rantanen’s chapter in this book
2. Much like Nancy Fraser (2007: 9) aims to re-politicise public sphere theory by explicating its Westphalian presuppositions and show how they have persisted even in major feminist, anti-racist and multicultural critiques of the theory.
3. See Online Etymology Dictionary, <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?search=nation&searchmode=nl>. (accessed September 15, 2009)
4. Yet another understanding of citizenship is citizenship as a gendered phenomenon. As Nira Yuval-Davis (1997) points out, gender, ethnicity, class, sexuality, ability etc. are all factors that affect citizenship.
5. Figures from 2002.

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I. The Making of Nations

Methodological Inter-Nationalism in Comparative Media Research

Flow Studies in International Communication

Terhi Rantanen

By and large Western thinkers have assumed that the 'nation' and the 'state' are 'natural' phenomena which are reflections of the essential characters of the particular societies which gave rise to them and which continue to provide them with their fundamental dynamism. (Pye 1963: 12)

International communication as a field of study has often been roughly divided, on the basis of its key theoretical concepts, into three or four stages or paradigms. These are: (1) international propaganda; (2) media and development; (3) media imperialism; and (4) globalisation (Sparks 2007: 3; Boyd-Barrett 1977: 16-21; Sreberny 1996: 178-179). In this chapter I argue that, in the first three stages, despite those paradigmatic changes that Oliver Boyd-Barrett, Colin Sparks and Annabelle Sreberny have argued for, one paradigm has remained unchanged, namely that of *methodological inter-nationalism*. This is a fundamental choice that has influenced all *news flow* studies in international communication, but has not been debated or challenged. Unlike Thomas Kuhn's (1962) examples of paradigmatic choices that are contested, methodological inter-nationalism has not been challenged when there has been a paradigm change as has been suggested before.

My empirical cases in this chapter come from a field of study often labelled as *international communication*, and especially its sub-field of *flow studies*, which was founded in the US after World War II and rapidly spread to other countries. Hamid Mowlana (1985: 11) defines flow studies as 'the study of the movement of messages across national boundaries between and among two or more national and cultural systems, which should combine both a national and an international dimension'. He argues that international communication in general and information flows in particular, like other areas of inquiry in the social sciences, largely acquire their *legitimacy* and *consistency* from the perspectives and methods of analysis used by those who study the subject (Mowlana 1985: 12). Mowlana thus suggests that they are achieved in terms of the theories and methods which have primarily been used in the field. However, even if dominant theories have changed

at different stages the methodologies used in the studies have remained the same.

This chapter argues that, despite the differences in their theoretical approaches, many, if not most, researchers in the field in question have been influenced by the same methodological inter-nationalism paradigm in which the media and especially news media have been seen as representatives of their respective nation-states and susceptible as such to comparison with each other as *national* news media. If a paradigm is defined as a conceptual or methodological model underlying the theories and practices of a science or discipline at a particular time¹ methodological inter-nationalism has been dominant in all the paradigms of news flow studies in international communications so far even if dominant theories have changed.

Empirical evidence in support of my argument comes from the key studies carried out on international flows in three different periods, as follows.

Table 1. Three Stages in International Communication Research

Period	International Propaganda	Media and Development	Media Imperialism
Key studies	<i>The Flow of News</i> , 1953; Buchanan and Cantril, 1953; Kayser, 1953	Schramm, 1959, 1964	Nordenstreng and Varis, 1974; Sreberny- Mohammadi et al., 1985

From each of these periods key empirical studies have been chosen. They are the studies that are often cited in the literature and had a long-standing life after they were published. These studies deal mainly with information flows (mostly but not exclusively news) and were published by international organisations or had some kind of a connection, either personal or institutional, to them. The time frame for this study is from the 1940s to the mid-1980s. The globalisation stage is not covered in this chapter, mainly because news flow studies had lost much of their popularity by the beginning of that period.

The Concept of Methodological Inter-nationalism

Ulrich Beck (Rantanen 2005: 257) defines *methodological nationalism* as a 'both and' approach, compared to an 'either or' approach which would see the relationship between the new analytical concepts such as the national and the global, or the global and the local, purely in dichotomist terms. Methodological nationalism has been practiced by academics when they have established, for comparative research, rigid categories of different forms of the national, and forced their empirical materials to follow these categories. As Kevin Robins writes 'the social sciences were looking through national spectacles without realizing that they were wearing any. It was not even realized that the nation-state has become the ontological basis upon which social research and policy have been grounded' (Robins 2006: 22). Or, to quote Andreas Wimmer and

Nina Glick Schiller (2002: 307) 'social sciences have been captured by the apparent naturalness and given-ness of a world divided into societies along the lines of nation-states'. Beck himself writes:

Methodological nationalism takes the following ideal premises for granted: it equates societies with nation-state societies, and sees states and their governments as the cornerstones of a social sciences analysis. It assumes that humanity is naturally divided into a limited number of nations, which on the inside, organize themselves as nation-states and, on the outside, set boundaries to distinguish themselves from other nation-states. It goes even further: this outer delimitation as well as the competition between nation-states, represents the most fundamental category of political organization. [...] Indeed, the social science stance is rooted in the concept of nation-state. It is a nation-state outlook on society and politics, law, justice and history, which governs the sociological imagination. (Beck 2002b: 51-52)

Beck does not explicitly refer to the media. In this chapter, I extend his argument to media and communications, and argue that information flows in international communication studies have been defined primarily by their nationality and thus 'naturalised', making a particular medium represent a particular nation-state or even its culture or identity. But this is not enough: by comparing 'national media' to each other, they also apply methodological inter-nationalism to the study of information flows. Robins (2006: 22) writes about the consequences of naturalisation to media studies:

The consequence, with respect to contemporary media developments, is an insistence on the national model – what Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002: 307) call the 'container model', in which societies are imagined in terms of an isomorphism of culture, polity, economy, territory and a bounded social group.

I further argue that the concept of methodological inter-nationalism is closely related to that of methodological nationalism. The former exists when the latter is taken as a starting point and a new layer is added, without problematising embedded nationalism. Methodological inter-nationalism is a kind of *doubled* nationalism, nationalism twice or multiplied over, which compares different nationalisms and implies that true internationalism is presented by representatives of the nation, be these states, governments or media.

Although contemporary academics have started to question the usefulness of theoretical and methodological nationalism, it is still the dominant model for most of the comparative research carried out in international communication. Sonia Livingstone (2003: 480) argues that 'any project seeking to conduct cross-national comparisons must surely, rather than simply presuming the legitimacy of such a research strategy, argue the case for treating the nation as a unit'. I argue in this chapter that this has not happened in international flow studies

and that methodological *inter-nationalism* has been embedded at the first three first stages in international communication research since World War II.

International Propaganda

International communication studies, as a field of study, and studies of propaganda as a sub-field, have consisted to a large extent of applied research responding to the new political situation following two devastating world wars. Already, in the midst of World War II, the United Nations (UN) was founded as a way to try and prevent any new world war. The UN Charter, signed in 1942, testifies to this spirit, referring to 'we the people of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind'.² By virtue of their role as founders of the UN, nation-states were accepted as the *de facto* starting point for organising international politics.

Mowlana (1997: 2) writes that post-World War II theorists on international relations draw a distinction between domestic and international politics and viewed nation-states or their decision makers as the most important actors in international relations. Between 1945 and 1955, the major sponsors of studies in international communication, in the United States and in other countries, were national governments. According to Smith, one of the striking trends of the decade was the willingness of policy makers to commission important research on international communication and opinion, and to pay attention to results (Smith 1956: 184).

International communication became a primary concern for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), founded on November 16, 1945. Its constitution followed the spirit of the UN, but referred explicitly to the role of the media in maintaining peace by 'collaborating in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of *peoples*, through all means of mass communication and to that end recommend such *international agreements* as may be necessary to promote the *free flow of ideas by word and image*' (my emphasis).³ One of the first special conferences organised by the UN in 1948 was devoted to freedom of information. News was given a special status in the flow of ideas and was considered 'the most serious information as a fundamental human right and essential in the cause of peace and for the achievement of political, social and economic progress' (*United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information*, 1948: 39-40).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1948. Its Article 19 on Freedom of Expression and Information states that: 'Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers'⁴. In this way, the concepts of freedom of opinion and of information were defined as universal rights, 'regardless of

frontiers', i.e. going beyond the borders of nation-states. Thus the starting point, ideologically and politically, was an acknowledgement of the role of media and information (and especially news) in contributing not only to freedom of opinion and information, but also to peace and progress. As a consequence, UNESCO commissioned studies both of public opinion and of news.

William Buchanan's and Hadley Cantril's *How Nations See Each Other* (1953) exemplifies the spirit of that time. Acting upon UNESCO's social-psychological assumption that 'wars begin in the minds of men', the organisation's project of 1948 on *Tensions Affecting International Understanding* sought to explore stereotypes by sponsoring public opinion surveys in nine countries: Australia, Britain, France, West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and the United States. The results indicated (1) that there existed in all eight countries surveyed a tendency to ascribe certain characteristics to certain people; (2) that respondents in all the countries taken as a whole tended to describe Russians in the same terms, but showed somewhat less agreement about Americans; (3) that stereotypes of one's own countrymen were invariably flattering; (4) that the prevalence of complimentary over derogatory terms in a national stereotype was a good index of friendliness between nations (Buchanan and Cantril 1953: 57; Barbour 1954: 106). One of the suggestions for action made by the authors in order to 'to make each individual citizen of any country a citizen of the world' was to improve facilities for communications and perception (Buchanan and Cantril 1953: 57)

A close connection was implied between what was in 'men's minds' and what was offered to them as information. Since news was considered the most serious form of information⁵, it became a key focus of UNESCO's research. Among the first research reports that dealt with news were *News Agencies* (1953) and Kayser's *One Week's News* (1953), both carried out by UNESCO, and *The Flow of News* (1953), carried out by the International Press Institute (IPI).

The provisional agenda of the UN Conference on Freedom of Information included recommending means to 'increase the amount of domestic and international information available to all peoples by specifically referring to news agencies and to prevent such cartelisation of news agencies as may endanger the freedom of the Press⁶ (*Freedom of Information*, 1950, xi). The UNESCO *News Agencies* study (1953) fitted perfectly with this agenda. It was partly based on the world-wide UNESCO survey of mass media, conducted between 1947 and 1951, which showed 'the capital role played by telegraphic news agencies in informing public opinion'. (*News Agencies*, 1953: 7). As the report stated, 'for the man in the street, his sources of news lie in the newspaper, the radio, the newsreel and the documentary, but a special study was needed to examine the way in which the raw news material reaches these media and understand the functioning of national and world news agencies and the relations between them'. (*News Agencies*, 1953: i).

The report argued that no truly international news agency had yet come into existence because there was nothing to prevent the six world agencies (INS, UPI, AP, AFP, Reuters, TASS) from extending their activities to any country they

pleased (except countries like the Soviet Union). According to the report, the six world agencies were themselves in reality national in character. It concluded that it was desirable that there should be in each country one independent national agency to collect domestic news of interest to the general public for the local press and broadcasting companies, and also to furnish the big world agencies with a local news service, far fuller than they could provide themselves. It suggested that, in order to be able to spread news on an international basis, there were two options: (1) the creation of a telegraphic agency attached to an appropriate body of the United Nations, or (2) the creation of a world-wide co-operative agency. The report stated:

The world agencies are not truly international. They maintain their national characteristics, since they are either co-operative organizations [...] or the property of a national commercial company, or again an official government department. (*News Agencies*, 1953: 200-201)

The author of *One Week's News* was Jacques Kayser⁷ assisted by Fernand Terrou, who had also been actively involved in drafting Article 19 during the UN Conference on Freedom of Information in 1948.⁸ The study covered 17 newspapers published in different countries for the week of March 5-11, 1951. The author acknowledged the difficulty of carrying out a comparative study of papers that varied in size, wealth and political orientation, but nevertheless argued that it was possible to draw some conclusions of value from the study of national customs, cultural development and political psychology (Kayser 1953: 11)

Kayser concluded his report on *One Week's News*:

In the international news market, national voices are generally becoming more and more inaudible. News has become internationalized, often lacking in that national subjectivity which may be essential to clear understanding. This 'internationalization' of news tends to produce ready-made judgements, and though it may be compatible with 'freedom of information' it seriously hampers 'freedom of opinion'. (Kayser 1953: 93)

It is evident from Kayser's statement that he was seeing 'international' as something more threatening than national. Although Kayser collaborated with international organisations, he had a preference for the national rather than the international in news that presented the wrong kind of internationalism.

The UNESCO study by Kayser is strikingly similar to the International Press Institute (IPI) study and shares the same faith in the power of information and news. The International Press Institute was (and is) not a governmental organisation. It was founded in October 1950, when 34 editors from 15 countries met at Columbia University in New York to form an international organisation dedicated to the promotion and protection of press freedom and the improvement of the practices of journalism.⁹ Its constitution states: 'World

peace depends on understanding between peoples and peoples. If peoples are to understand one another, it is essential that they have good information. Therefore, a fundamental step towards understanding among peoples is to bring about understanding among the journalists of the world'.¹⁰

The IPI study starts with the sentence 'This is a report of a study of the flow of news among *nations*' (my emphasis). It is undertaken

...because of the importance of foreign news not merely as 'news' but as information upon which *the people* of free countries base their vital decisions. Relations between governments are now more than ever strongly influenced by the people's view of their own interests: this view is itself largely shaped by the people's information. (*The Flow of News*, 1953: 3).

The quantitative study sought to find out how much foreign news the news agencies were supplying to newspapers, what areas of the world were covered in that news, what kinds of news it was, and what use was made of it by newspapers. One hundred and seventy-seven newspapers in ten countries and forty-five wire service reports were examined daily over periods of one week in October-December 1952 and in January 1953. Editors, news agency executives and foreign correspondents were asked for their views on how their countries were seen to be covered by the press in the countries they were stationed. Finally, news readers were interviewed (*The Flow of News*, 1953: 8-9).

The study concluded that news agencies supplied a very large volume of foreign news to their clients. Their coverage was cantered heavily on a few major countries – the US, the UK, Germany, France and one or two others – and on the international organisations (UN, NATO and so on). The official acts, attitudes and problems of these countries and organisations formed the subject of a majority of agency foreign news stories. It argued that the average reader knew very little of the foreign news in his favourite paper (*The Flow of News*, 1953: 9).

In this way, by the mid-1950s UNESCO had established its own research agenda, applying its principles to actual studies. Concepts such as the flow of news and the division between national and international news and agencies were used in all these studies. New methodologies, polls and content analysis were widely used.

Academics and UNESCO

The close connection between UNESCO's political aims and academic research was further consolidated in November 1956, when the UNESCO General Conference authorised its Director General 'to promote the coordination of activities of national research institutes in the field of mass communication in particular by encouraging the establishment of an international association of such institutes'. The International Association for Mass Communication Re-

search (IAMCR) was founded in 1957. As UNESCO press release No. 1727 of December 23, 1957 stated:

Fifty experts on information media, from 15 countries, have just completed in a two-day session at UNESCO House, Paris, the task of establishing the International Association for Mass Communication Research. Created with the co-operation of UNESCO, the new Association, which is independent, has its headquarters in Paris, in the offices of the Institut Français de Presse of the University of Paris. Its function is the promotion throughout the world of the development of research on problems related to press, radio, television and films.¹¹

The newly founded organisation fully identified with the UN and its goals and did not see any problems in its members' participation in UNESCO activities and their own academic research.¹² Two of its founder presidents were actively involved in drafting Article 19 during the Conference on Freedom of Information. Fernand Terrou and Jacques Kayser, who were both actively involved in the 1948 UN conference and in UNESCO studies on news, became the first President and Vice-President of the IAMCR.

Communications and Development

According to Sreberny (1996: 178-179), communications and development theorists such as Daniel Lerner (1958) and Wilbur Schramm (1964), who dominated in the 1960s, suggested that the traditional values of the developing world were the central obstacles to political participation and economic activity, the two key elements of the development process. The solution was seen as 'the more communication, the better', and the promotion of the use of communications media to alter attitudes and values. As Sreberny (1996: 179) observes, the solution was seen as the promotion of the use of communications and media to alter attitudes and values, embodied in 'media indicators' (minimum numbers of cinema seats, radio and television receivers, and copies of daily newspapers as a ratio of population) which were adopted by UNESCO. Schramm even drew up a six-point communication plan of action, designed both to stabilise the new states and to use them for social development. According to him, communication must first be used to 'contribute to the feeling of nation-ness'. Second, it had a role as the voice of national planning. Finally, it had the task of preparing people to play their role as a nation among nations. (Schramm 1964: 38-42; Sparks 2007: 25)

The role of national communication was seen as central to the promotion of modernity. As Pye writes

Countries must follow the international styles if they are to be considered sovereign states. [...] The nation-state must rest upon a sense of national identity,

and in human affairs a sense of identity always requires a feeling of continuity, of stability over time, and a capacity not to yield always to the demands of the outside and foreign world. Political development thus requires a recognition of the tension between meeting the universal standards of nation-state and adhering to the particular standards of a cultural tradition. (Pye 1963: 27)

Schramm himself was actively involved in the study of news (Schramm and Atwood, 1981) and in a joint project of the Institut Français de Presse of the University of Paris, where Jacques Kayser worked, and the Institute for Communication Research of Stanford University. The study remained unfinished because of the death of Jacques Kayser. This world news flow study dealt with '13 nations of five continents, including highly developed and developing countries. From each of these nations, three daily newspapers were selected – a 'prestige' paper (e.g. *The Times of London*), a large-circulation 'popular' paper (e.g.; *The Daily Express of London*), a 'provincial' paper (e.g. *The Scotsman*, of Edinburgh) – or the nearest possible approximation to that combination in the press system of a given country' (Schramm 1964: 59).

According to Schramm, although the proportion of national news ranged usually from 60 to 90 per cent, some of the results of this study were surprising. Some of the countries never appeared in the news columns of the other 12 countries at any time during the test month. Some of the countries received less than a column in the papers of the other 12 during the month. According to Schramm:

...attention to foreign news was dominated, throughout, by four countries – the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and France. [...] It was also clear that news flowed from the highly developed to the less-developed countries. It flowed from Europe and North America to other continents. It flowed from the United States and the Soviet Union to all other countries. It was possibly more than coincidence that the four countries that dominated this news flow were also the homes of the world news agencies. (Schramm 1964: 60-61)

Schramm's own study, *One Day in the World's Press* (1959), was a study of fourteen newspapers¹³ on a day of crisis, November 2, 1959. Coincidentally, this was the day when Soviet tanks arrived in Budapest. Schramm wrote:

A country can act on only what it knows. In a very real sense, a country is only what it knows. Each of these papers in an interesting way mirrors, and at the same time influences, the leadership and culture of the country. These prestige papers are shaped, at least to an important degree, by what the leadership in the country wants to know and wants to be known. The leadership in the country is shaped, at least to an important degree, by what these papers tell them. Therefore, to examine the prestige papers of a country is to see the country very much for what it is. (Schramm 1959: 5)

Nordenstreng and Schiller (1979: 4-7) argue that the first generation of development studies uncritically accepted a taken-for-granted concept of development more or less derivative of the Western model. There is evidence to support their argument. Schramm once wrote that 'Under-developed Lands, nations. There is only one principle that is universally applicable: the more highly developed states have experienced the Industrial Revolution...' (Schramm 1964: 12-13). According to Pye, one of the key questions was '[...] how governments in transitional societies can best manage the communications media to facilitate modernization' (Pye 1953: 5). There is no doubt that development and modernisation were both defined and measured in the Western way.

However, what has not received similar attention is the uncritical, Western-type use of the concept of nation-ness. As Hedebrö (1979: 17) writes: 'Several authors stressed the importance of creating the sense of nation-ness. Many developing countries are mixtures of different cultures, languages, political systems and religious beliefs. This is regarded as a serious obstacle to social change on the national level'. In the previous period of international propaganda, the concept of the international had been critically reviewed as false internationalism. In the period of developmental communication the emphasis had shifted from the international to the national and to the establishment of nation-states.

Media Imperialism

According to Sreberny (1996: 179), the cultural imperialism model argued that, far from aiding Third World nations to develop, the international flows of technology transfer and media 'hardware', coupled with the 'software' flows of cultural products, actually strengthened one-way dependency between developed and developing countries and prevented true development. Again, media and communications were seen as powerful, and possibly even more powerful than in the previous stages of development and communication since they could threaten the cultural independence of these nations. Fred Fejes writes that, while earlier models viewed modern communications media as a 'tool' for development, the media imperialism approach viewed the media, situated as they were in a transnational context, as an *obstacle* to meaningful and well-balanced socio-economic progress (Fejes 1981: 281). Sreberny (1996: 180) observes that, like the earlier arguments for communications and development, the cultural imperialism model was based on a situation of comparative media *scarcity*.

As Mattelart et al. write, since 1973, through organisations like UNESCO or the Non-Aligned movement, Third World governments had repeatedly denounced the unequal international flow of news, produced and distributed by a limited number of news agencies belonging to the developed nations. The demand for a 'New World Information and Communication Order' subsequently gave rise to a series of meetings and conferences. These meetings led up to the General

Conference of UNESCO in Belgrade (1980) where the McBride report (*Many Voices, One World*, 1980) on the problems of communications was approved (Mattelart, Delcourt and Mattelart 1984/1988: 13).

A new paradigm of media or cultural imperialism was thus born. Boyd-Barrett (1977: 119) defines 'media imperialism in action as when *international flows of television programmes* are unequal and dominated by exports from the United States and, some way behind, the United Kingdom' (emphasis mine). In this approach, as Nordenstreng and Schiller (1979: 4-7) wrote, 'national conditions – including class contradictions – serve as more or less intervening variables of influences emanating from a historically determined global design. And this time the concept of national sovereignty has become the center of attention'. *The Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding* (1978)¹⁴ states that:

The world consists of *individual and national* actors, and since it is axiomatic that action is based on the actor's image of reality, international action will be based on the image of international reality [...] But the regularity, ubiquity and perseverance of news media will in any case make them first-rate competitors for number one position as international image-former. (Quoted in Sreberny-Mohammadi et al. 1985: 9)

The language used in reports and policy papers reflects this change. The most famous UNESCO research report, *Television traffic – a one-way street?* by Kaarle Nordenstreng and Tapio Varis (1974), is a survey and an analysis of the international flow of television programme materials (including news) in 1970 in 16 countries. The authors do not discuss their sampling at length, but they had roughly chosen one TV station to represent each country.¹⁵ The authors found two indisputable trends: (1) an unbalanced one-way traffic from the big exporting countries to the rest of the world; and (2) a dominance of entertainment material in the flow. The word 'nation' re-appears in the statement of conclusions and recommendations issued. Their report states that:

...the flow of information is a vital necessity in the well-being of people and *nations* and critical research is a necessary element in the reformulation of national and international policies regarding it, [...] information flows should serve the mutual understanding of peoples and the cause of peace. This pre-supposes non-interference in the international affairs of countries, non-discrimination against peoples and races and the exclusion of war propaganda. (Nordenstreng and Varis 1974: 59)

Much of the debate in the 1970s and early 1980s on a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) revolved around news flows across national borders that showed an imbalance in the news flows between the North and the South (Carlsson 2003: 56). A major UNESCO study on news

flows of this period is Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi's et al. *Foreign News in the Media* (1985). A co-ordinated comparative research design was agreed on and carried out in 1979 by thirteen national teams, covering twenty-nine different countries. 'The Participating Nations' included 'three or four daily papers in each country, including wherever possible the largest circulation national daily', since only one news cast each for radio and television were included, and news magazines and periodicals were omitted (Sreberny-Mohammadi et al. 1985: 13). This report also indirectly reveals the difficulties in defining what foreign news is, including as it does four different types of foreign news, home news abroad; foreign news at home; foreign news abroad, other or uncertain (Sreberny-Mohammadi et al. 1985: 63). The authors concluded that:

...national systems are exerting important secondary gate-keeping functions of selecting, interpreting and processing news from external sources. It could also be argued, however, that the selection is restricted, as it is taken from an already limited agenda -an agenda which is influenced, if not entirely provided, by the major news agencies. (Sreberny-Mohammadi et al. 1985: 53).

In this way, starting from flow studies in the 1950s, international news agencies and news became a major object of UNESCO-initiated and sponsored studies. The scholars who accepted UNESCO's invitation supported its political goals and agendas and even took them further, as happened when the authors became directly involved in policy-making efforts. However, the agenda had been set in the 1950s with the first flow studies and many criticisms were already being expressed at that time even, if not as extremely as was the case in the campaign for the NWICO.

Conclusion

This chapter has showed how the concept of methodological inter-nationalism was applied to UNESCO-sponsored and other studies of international flows from the 1950s until the mid-1980s. The flow studies to a large extent followed UNESCO's research agendas. They never questioned (and how could they) UNESCO's goals and principles and accepted methodological inter-nationalism as their starting point. As a result, early news flow studies identified international (i.e. Western) news agencies as their primary target of criticism for practicing the wrong kind of internationalism that did not reflect the interests of developing nation-states. This criticism was then extended specifically to Western countries, primarily to the US.

When we evaluate research carried out in the past, we need to do so respectfully and to give credit to the researchers for their work and achievements. Much of it was new and progressive, even radical, at the time. We also cannot reach *the structure of feeling* (Williams 1980: 64-66) of the times, especially of the post-World War II period, when people were determined to

avoid another world war and believed strongly in the new internationalism promoted by the UN.

Having said that, one cannot fully understand the close relationship between UNESCO and individual researchers. As Sparks (2007: 109) writes, organisations like the IAMCR were, and still are, clearly independent of governments, but the fact remains that the logic of struggle for a NWICO tended to drag even those into a discourse dominated by states and their struggles to realise their interests. According to Nordenstreng (2001: 155), 'like all paradigms that convert sensitive social realities into scientific and/or political narratives, media imperialism and its cousin, the New World Information and Communication Order, were turned into mantras serving political agitation rather than political analysis'.

So far, attention has been given mainly to the political differences that divided UNESCO and academics around the NWICO. The invisible heritage so far hardly discussed¹⁶ is the methodological inter-nationalism adopted by academic researchers in comparative flow studies throughout the paradigmatic changes (international propaganda, media and development, media imperialism) in international communication. This has affected for decades the research carried out on international news flows. Perhaps now it is time to ask whether flows ever were truly national or international, and whether the division between international and national flows ever made sense. It could be argued that flows of information need not be either international or national, but can be both.

Notes

1. <http://dictionary.oed.com>. (accessed January 20, 2009)
2. <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/>. (accessed January 21, 2009)
3. <http://promotingpeace.org/2007/4/unesco.html>. (accessed January 20, 2009)
4. <http://un.org/Overview/rights.html#a2>. (accessed January 21, 2009)
5. 'By information, for the purpose of the conference, is meant: the following means of bringing current situations, events and opinions thereon to the knowledge of the public: newspapers, news periodicals, radio broadcasts and newsreels. The provisional agenda of the UN Conference on Freedom of Information' (*Freedom of Information*, 1950: x).
6. Chapter II;B:iv considering the present unequal development of news agencies in certain countries and recognising the problem of development of national news agencies through provisional measures until such time as these news agencies are capable of meeting international competition
7. Kayser was a member of the French delegation at the International UNESCO Conference on the Freedom of Information in Geneva (1948) and subsequently took a regular part in the United Nations and its activities on mass communications, as a delegate of France or as an international expert. (Terrou 1963: 2)
8. <http://www.iamcr.org/content/blogcategory/134/329>. (accessed January 20, 2009)
9. http://www.freemedia.at/cms/ipi/about_detail.html?ctxid=CH0058&docid=CMS1132651076756. (accessed January 21, 2009)
10. This Constitution supersedes the earlier Constitution framed by the Organising Committee in Paris on May 15-16, 1951. http://www.freemedia.at/cms/ipi/about_detail.html?ctxid=CH0058&docid=CMS1132663470693. (accessed January 20, 2009)
11. <http://www.iamcr.org/content/view/306/329/>. (accessed January 20, 2009)
12. <http://www.iamcr.org/content/view/306/329/>. (accessed January 20, 2009)

13. The papers were *Pravda* (Moscow), *Le Monde* (Paris), *Trybuna Ludu* (Warsaw), *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (Frankfurt), *Rude Pravo* (Prague), *Dagens Nyheter* (Stockholm), *Borba* (Belgrade), *Al Abram* (Cairo), *Jen-min Jib-pao* (Beijing), *Asabi* (Tokyo), *La Prensa* (Buenos Aires), *The Times of India* (Bombay and New Delhi), *The Times* (London), and *The New York Times* (New York).
14. www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/d_media.htm. (accessed on January 26, 2009)
15. But there is often another problem of selection to be faced in a country: there may be several national and/or local stations operating partly or completely independently of each other (Nordenstreng and Varis 1973: 8).
16. The only notable exception is Robins (2006).

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The Nation as Media Event

Britta Timm Knudsen

The reappearing celebrations of the past that we witness in the present do not only concern commemorative events on special occasions, but have spread throughout the cultural sphere. The cultivation of the past, whether it appears in the form of leisure activities such as middle age or renaissance festivals, role-playing, historic-site-specific tourism, or in the design or marketing strategies of all kinds of products (Stephen Brown et al. 2003), seems to be a post-traditional phenomenon only understandable within the framework of a rupture with the past (Loewenthal, 1985; Boym 2000). Money, people, services, images and things circulate in the global economy, as do symbolic meaning and value. The branding of nations very often takes place through storytelling, staging or re-enacting well-known periods of the nations' histories. In the last 10 years in Europe, we have witnessed a restaging of the formerly communist Eastern Europe, due to increasing tourism, both locally and globally. The *nostalgic* movement in former East Germany, detectable in merchandise, tourist items, film and television series, and the *Crazy Guides Communism Tours* in genuine Eastern Bloc Trabants or Polski Fiat 125 automobiles, offered by young Polish citizens in Krakow, are good examples of the symbolic revitalising use of the not-so-glorious past in a globalised and de-territorialised global sphere. Cultural diversity and the cult of exotic otherness are symbolic values in the global market of place-branding.

To investigate the subject of this article – nostalgic performances of nationhood – I establish two frameworks, taking as my theoretical points of departure relational constructivist identity theories, in order to give insight into contemporary uses of the past, with regard to nationhood in the media. The first postmodern community frame looks at the relationship between globalisation and nation, and the main premise is that globalisation already *has* challenged, and thereby altered the national community, by suggesting the possibility of other communities. Key concepts such as cultural re-embedding and mediated proximity (Tomlinson 1999) as well as theories of postmodern community-making come into play. The main question will be: How can we characterise postmodern or hyper-modern¹ national communities in a global world?

The second media theory frame will take seriously a citation from *Global Culture Industry*, ‘Contemporary culture is “event-culture”’ (Lash and Lury 2006: 15), and set up an experience economy or experience culture framework in which emotions connect individuals to each other, to things, to places and to communities. In this section I will investigate the nation as an event – especially as a media event – and I will first and foremost look closely at nostalgia as a privileged feeling, concerning the ‘shared’ past. Lastly, I will present two case-studies of nostalgic events in the media, to further qualitatively discuss the emotional relationship between individuals and national community.

Goodbye and Hello to the Nation

My argument regarding the relationship between globalisation and nation is threefold: 1) Globalisation *has* altered the role of the nation-state and created spaces (online and offline) for new types of communities; 2) in the globalisation process, the reinventions of homelands are important cultural re-embedding strategies, and their cultural significance must be analysed in every single case. I claim that it is possible to reinvent a whole nation as a homeland instantaneously as part of a re-embedding strategy; 3) the invented homeland is at once old and new, and it must be reinvested and *performed* by citizens to come into being.

Globalisation is a historically new situation of world-wide mutual dependency and dynamic influences, presenting alternatives or challenges to cultures within the old nation-states. The process of globalisation is all-encompassing but uneven, signifying that there is no ‘outside’ of globalisation. It has already had remarkable consequences for all, but our positions, and thus our opportunities for agency within the globalisation process, vary greatly. The globalisation of cultures can imply openness: ‘One paradoxical consequence of the process of globalisation is not to produce homogeneity but to familiarise us with greater diversity’ (Featherstone 1995: 86), as well as all sorts of culturally reactive movements of traditional, fundamentalist, or ethnicity-cultivating nature.

Relocation of cultures within the context of globalisation takes place at several levels, from identity politics on the national level, called *culturalism* by Appadurai (1996: 15), through protectionist policies on local cultures, to the reinvention of cultural roots. Reinvention takes the form of the creation of theme parks in which the themes are (nostalgic) national cultures, such as Solvang, the little Danish replica village in California² and of cultural reinventions of regions, places and traditions, often as an element of branding (national, regional, local) on a global scale. In 2007, the 13-part television series, *The Taste of Denmark – New Scandinavian Cooking*, took the viewer to the periphery of the kingdom, to the island of Bornholm (close to Sweden), for example, and to Greenland, in order to brand the region on a global scale. The remarkable feature here is that the cultural and symbolic periphery is able to

become the centre – or to become inscribed in the majority perspective – due to the difference-cultivating gaze of the branding strategy.³

Both Solvang and *New Scandinavian Cooking* are examples of re-territorialisation or re-embedding within the globalisation process. These are – with all the charm of their “staged authenticity” (MacCannell 1976) – precise expressions of ‘various attempts to re-establish a cultural “home”’ (Tomlinson, 1999: 148). Re-embedding processes or re-traditionalisation (Beck 2002: 27) can be seen both in collective cultural-imaginative projects and in the more routine, everyday ways in which individuals try to make themselves at home.

Ulf Hannerz’s argument with regard to global citizenship is cautiously positioned between the two conflicting analyses of globalisation and the creation of new trans-national or post-national cultures represented by, respectively, Eric Hobsbawm (1990) and his scepticism towards nation-building in the 20th and 21st centuries, and Anthony D. Smith’s (1990; 1991) steady belief in ‘the continued viability of nations as imagined communities’ (Hannerz 1996: 83). In Hannerz’s view new transnationalism and globalisation have cultural resonance for a still growing number of people. Hannerz puts forward an argument on the relative weakening of nations, especially in Western Europe and North America. This argument is based on the capacity for community-building that globalisation facilitates: communities of kin, friends, colleagues, business associates, communities of occupational interests, dislikes, adherents to a youth style, of belief in a new faith, new lifestyle, etc. I will address this argument more closely below. At the very same time as these new forms of community-making see the light of day, especially due to the extension of new media, we see that ‘nations and nationalism appear to be on an upswing’ (Hannerz 1996: 90).

Intensities, Old and New Communities

The Anderson version of an imagined national community relates to ‘old’ media, especially printed material. The inherent quality of the new media upon which a shift away from an *imagined* community is based, is, I think, on the one hand the eventual live or ‘documentary-real’ (Doane 1990) character, specific to the television image, with its ability to deliver mediated immediacy (Bolter and Grusin 1999; Tomlinson 1999; Manovich 2001). On the other hand, the time-space simultaneity of the viewing situation (of televised news on public channels, of media events, catastrophic as well as celebratory, of extremely popular television series) brings the viewers together in different communities on different scales. Such events can be global (The Olympic Games), national (television series in Denmark such as *Rejseboldet*, *Unit One* (winner of an Emmy for best drama series 2002), *Nikolaj and Julie* in 2003 and *Ørnen* ‘The Eagle’, in 2005) or simultaneously global and national (royal weddings, 9/11). All these televised events not only create ties and relations both to the anonymous and distant others on the screen, but also to the anonymous others, watching here and now. The time-space compression of the viewing situation is to be con-

sidered as performing a community. I propose here a shift from an imagined community to a short-term performance as a community, consisting of those sharing the feeling of the moment.

The citation from Lash and Lury 2007 'Contemporary culture is event-culture' concerning the event-making of contemporary culture, and the over-all aim of the book, considering globalisation, addresses the understanding of the transition from a culture industry to a global culture industry. This transition means a shift from the symbolic to the real:

Global culture industry operates in this space of the real. In the symbolic, signification works through structures to produce meaning. In the desert of the real, signification works through brute force and immediacy. Meaning is no longer hermeneutic; it is operational, as in computer games – that is, meaning is not interpretative; it is doing, it is impact. (Lash and Lury 2007: 12)

Power has thus become the power *to move* physically, sensuously and emotionally, to change things through affects (Thrift 2004). A characteristic of event-culture or experience culture is the amount of energy used to produce atmosphere and intensity (Löfgren 2005). Like cityscapes, mediascapes take on intensive qualities (Appadurai 1996; Jansson and Falkheimer 2006). The media environment is an environment of intensity-producing affects that possibly move people (and make them move).

One of the main characteristics of new media environments is the production of an intensity which answers and produces the desire of hyper-modern man's will, with regard to affects and to relations (Lipovetsky 2004: 80). Here, one can add the will to establish a community with intimate as well as distant others. Media technology is able to produce intimacy over distance, and is able to involve the viewer morally and emotionally with distant others (Thompson 1995; Tomlinson 1999; Boltanski 1999; Chouliaraki 2003, 2006; Knudsen 2003; Silverstone 2007). Tomlinson discusses the possibility of a new mediated public intimacy, and he stresses the fact that more and more effort – intensity – is required to morally and emotionally engage in the life situations of others. What I am interested in is the ability of media environments to produce relationships with the mediated other and with the viewing other.

Let us take into consideration new ideas of community-making based on affects. We can put these into two main categories: those which theorise the viewing/participating situation as affective bonding, which applies to the post-modern affective alliances and moods that Grossberg presented to us (Grossberg 1997), and those which thematise the mediated relationship between the viewer and the viewed. The former are short-term 'loose' communities or groups that individuals join, in order to produce and consume feelings together (e.g. watching horror movies with a bunch of other horror movie-lovers). 'What matters is how much you care (I'd rather feel bad than not feel anything at all), not how you care, or about what you care' (Grossberg 1997: 163). 'Postmodern tribes' (Maffesoli 1988) is a term qualifying community-making based on the intensity

of the feeling: 'In formulating a sociological "law", I will state as a leitmotif that less weight shall be given to what each individual will voluntarily adhere to (contractually or mechanically) than to that which is emotionally common to all (sentimentally and organically)' (Maffesoli 1996: 18). Postmodern tribes do not have exclusive membership (one can be member of several tribes at the same time), they share feelings and sensations, have a re-sacralising and mythifying sensibility, and cultivate mana, aura and magic. Even if the Maffesolien tribes are not originally thought of as mediated communities or media environment communities, we can none the less use those elements, in order to characterise the new affective communities.

The mediated affective bonding between the viewer and the viewed, and its cultural consequences, is analysed and commented upon by media scholars and sociologists (Thompson 1999; Tomlinson 1999; Thrift 2004). Other scholars have made more detailed studies of the form, characteristics and significations of these new global or/and national affective communities (Boltanski 1999; Dovey 2000; Knudsen 2004; Jerslev 2004; Chouliaraki 2006). In their analyses of the formal traits of certain global/local formats (reality TV, documentaries, video diaries, news) all these scholars confirm the community-building ability of the media, and some note the self-reflexiveness that these communities support and produce. These communities are intensely felt, with a strong moral engagement that transcends the national community as one frequently produced consequence. If we see new media environments as global spaces of intensity, we can conclude that one result of globalisation and new mediated communities is that new affective alliances are created beyond the cultural spheres of political, ethnic, and economic differences. These communities are more inclusive both inside and outside national borders. Dovey uses the term *emotional democracy* when referring to Anthony Giddens (Dovey 2000: 168, 131) to describe the inclusive character of the affective alliance, and he sees the ubiquitous media as super-panoptical devices *taking care* of and familiarising us with the unknown, the rejected and abject others (Knudsen 2007). The affective and emotional character of the media can both be strategically used for political ends, and it can be overdone, creating emotional fatigue and scepticism. As critical scholars, we must always remain aware of this.

From a user perspective, we can join media environments in order to be part of an intensity-producing and relational space. To whom are we connecting? The point is that not only do we connect to the anonymous and distant others that we hardly ever encounter face-to-face, but perhaps first and foremost we use media to intensify and re-intensify the relationship with the familiar other: family, friends, distant relatives.

The central question here is, 'what happens when new affective strivings/strategies due to new media environments meet the "old" symbolic communities?' Is the result that the old communities fall into a state of disuse? Or do the old national communities regain a new lease of life as an effect of the re-intensifying effort, giving new strength to nationalist efforts? My case studies in this article present examples of intensive media environments that, to some

extent, echo the national community. My claim is that old communities, like individuals, change qualitatively, due to globalisation. The two case studies I present show that the intensifying media environment is something that we may join for a moment, in order to play at being a community or to (re)produce a feeling, *not* in order to confirm the nation as a symbolic centre. In the context of this article, the feeling of nostalgia is something we use in order to re-intensify the national community.⁴

Nation as Event

New post-national theories of nationalism have focused on the everyday, unconscious and embodied concrete reproduction or negotiation of the national in ordinary people's lives (Billig 1995; Edensor 2002). Both Billig and Edensor look at the pragmatic everyday level to understand the persistence of the national. Edensor focuses on how people materially and spatially embody the national, and Billig on how the national level in daily media is often the unnoticed and banal, for example the linguistic use of deixis in order to create a referential here and now: 'the weather...', 'we', 'us'.

I entirely agree with the need for a focus on the pragmatic level, in order to determine how symbolic frameworks and meanings are lived out, understood and negotiated by different groups of people. But following the line of my argument about the event-character of contemporary culture, media events must be seen as a part of everyday life. In order to approach the event-character of media events, and in order to describe the intensifying and relational character of contemporary media environments, I will turn to a media event perspective.

Dayan and Katz distinguish three levels of analysis of media events: a syntactic level (the formal staging of the event), a semantic level (at which narrative frames are used to understand the event, as often one has to seek information on other contextual levels) and a pragmatic level (how concrete viewers respond to and participate in the event). Dayan and Katz see different kinds of events as serving different functions: commemorative, restorative and transformative (Dayan and Katz 1992: 20), and qualify these as able to remind, to restore (e.g. USA after September 11) and to transform. Dayan and Katz are inspired by Durkheim and Turner in pointing to the overflowing of 'communitas' (Dayan and Katz 1992: 104). A key term used by Dayan and Katz to characterise the experience of a media event is 'the subjunctive mode'. We let ourselves go in a momentary suspension of disbelief: 'I know, but...': 'If successfully transmitted, the event evokes images of a better world, a more fraternal or equal society, a hint of the possibility of peace, a rededication to central institutions. Subjunctivity requires a suspension of disbelief, an intermission from reality' (Dayan and Katz 1992: 141).

Dayan and Katz transcend the national level, but nevertheless confirm the conservative or conserving nature of media events. Couldry (2003) notes the power perspective and social implications of media rituals. In his view, they

appear to be performances of the centre (e.g. Denmark as an old kingdom) encoding strong values and narratives that the viewers decode seriously, while enrolling themselves in the celebration of status quo: 'Media events are those large-scale event-based media focussed narratives where the claims associated with the myth of the [...] centre are particularly intense' (Couldry 2003: 67). Of the two approaches to media events, Couldry's seems to be the more structuralist and less inclined to take different decoding positions and pragmatic user perspectives into account. In my perspective, media events – with their live aura and simultaneity in the time/space of action and viewing, in other words, their ritual functions – are very good examples of intensive media environments. The major discussion here is whether we are dealing with pure celebrations of symbolic centres (e.g. 'the nation'), or whether other readings are possible. In the following section I will argue that the nostalgic performances of nationhood that are effectuated in particular by viewers of media events or of heritage television series, can be seen as globalisation-based (post-national) emotional inscriptions in the national past, on a 'what if' mode. We naturally have different decoding positions, but my argument is that the community performed in these emotional inscriptions is a nostalgic national community parallel to the post-modern tribes or momentary affective alliances.

The Nostalgic Feeling

The concept of nostalgia was formally identified by Swiss doctor Johannes Hofer, as a consequence of his work amongst soldiers in the second half of the 18th century. They sometimes suffered from an incurable disease when serving a long way from home (Bronfen 1998; Boym 2001; Johannisson 2001; Rasmussen-Hornbek 2001; Knudsen 2004, 2007). Hofer described symptoms such as dizziness, loathing of food etc. These symptoms sometimes caused these soldiers' deaths. *Nostos* means 'home' and *algos* means 'longing'; 'nostalgia' is a concept that acquires its contemporary meaning of 'longing of home' in both space and time (Loewenthal 1985; Boym 2001). The feeling of nostalgia does not appear until past, present and future become three ontologically different places (as witness the title of Loewenthal's book: *The Past is a Foreign Country*).

The important theoretical contributions to the concept of nostalgia come from the psychoanalytical approach of Elisabeth Bronfen via Karl Jaspers (1998), and the more cultural-analytical approach of Svetlana Boym (2001). Bronfen describes nostalgia as the production of 'protective fictions' (Bronfen 1998: 259). Nostalgia expresses the feeling of loss and the feeling of homeliness, but this feeling also expresses a kind of romance with fantasy, a kind of poetic, idealised version of the past and the home. Fiction is part of the nostalgic representation of the past and the lost home. We are dealing with a longing for *a home that never existed*, a kind of utopia of the past. Not the past as it approximately was, but the past as I/we would have liked it to be, a subjunctive version of the past.

Idealising representations are part of every presentation of self (Goffman 1959) and also of every memory process, but the politically dangerous aspect of nostalgia lies in the possible collapse of the distinction between the real and the imaginary home, or more precisely in the will to let the imaginary home come true and become a political reality: 'The danger of nostalgia is that it tends to confuse the actual home and the imaginary one. In extreme cases it can create a phantom homeland, for the sake of which one is ready to die or kill' (Boym 2001: xvi).

Boym links the feeling of nostalgia to globalisation and its limitless space of experience. When we no longer encounter borders in our will to expand, the longing for more limited spaces and nostalgic stagings becomes much more pronounced. Nostalgia is a kind of defence mechanism, and expresses the longing for community and common memory production in an era notable for the disappearance of traditional communities. Nostalgia concerns the relationship between individual and collective memories, and, in contrast to melancholia, is never only an individual feeling. Nostalgic reconstructions and nostalgic performances deal more with the present and a possible future than with the past: 'Nostalgic reconstructions are based on mimicry; the past is remade in the image of the present or a desired future' (Boym 2001: 354).

Boym distinguishes between two types of nostalgia: a restorative and a reflexive nostalgia. I would suggest that these two types of nostalgia should instead be considered as two possible modes of nostalgic feeling. Restorative nostalgia tries to reinstate the lost home, considered as an essence and not as a changeable image of the past. Nostalgia as restorative mode does not consider itself to be nostalgic, but considers itself to be truth-seeking and conservative. Restorative nostalgia tells the story of an individual, nation or civilisation as one of decay and loss ('before' is always better than 'after' in a nostalgic narrative). In this way, restorative nostalgia gets along very well with essentialism and criticism of civilisation (Knudsen 2004: 72).

Reflective nostalgia knows that it is nostalgic. It expresses longing as well as knowledge of the impossible fulfilment of that longing. The restorative mode stresses the home, *nostos*, as most important, while the reflective mode lays more stress on the longing, *algia*, and thereby focuses more on the tie and the point of departure in the present. Reflective nostalgia speaks the truth about the past and does not reflect upon the relationship between constructing the present and the reconstructed past. In the reflective mode of nostalgia, a distance between the longing and the reconstructed aim of the longing is acknowledged. In the reflective longing we see two main characteristics: one is the sensation of the past, another is the self-reflective gaze upon the longing itself, often humorous or ironic; nostalgia having a 'secret hermeneutic kinship with irony' (Hutcheon 1998: 4).

A final very important feature of nostalgia – which stresses the relationship between irony and nostalgia – is that it is not something structurally inherent in things, but concerns our emotional responses to phenomena. In the feeling of nostalgia we have to deal with embodied memories (as was the case with

the Swiss soldiers), but this is a feature inherent in all sensations of the past. It may be that all representations or memories of the past are nostalgic, but the aftermath (cognitively, emotionally, symbolically, pragmatically) of a nostalgic longing depends on the arena in which it is performed. I would add to Linda Hutcheon's claim that nostalgia is a feeling between a phenomenon and an individual, that the phenomenon capable of inspiring the feeling of nostalgia must have certain features to be able to do this. Nostalgic representations seem – due to the embodied and sensuous qualities they evoke – to be close to body-genres such as pornography, horror and melodrama (Williams 1991). But the relationship between irony and nostalgia, and the fact that nostalgia is (self)reflective, creates a hybrid, or a productive oxymoron between distance and closeness. A nostalgic feeling can at the same time be embodied (hot) and observe itself (cool).

Television as a Heritage Site

The television series *Krøniken* ('Better Times'), staging the foundation of the modern Danish welfare state from around 1950 to 1977, was broadcasted from 2000-2007, had 22 episodes. The manuscript was written by Stig Thornsboe and Hanna Lundblad, and it was directed by Charlotte Sieling and Henrik Ruben Genz, with some episodes featuring a few guest directors.



In *Better Times* the narration is quite traditional, consisting of the portraits of the class, gender and generational struggles of three generations over three decades. Classical welfare themes, such as the beginnings of the abolition of class-determined destinies, of the role of education in abolishing traditional structures, are portrayed in this series. The series featured two couples formed across the classes: the upper class girl, Søs, who dreams of becoming an actress,

marries Palle, the hard-working, working class son with a master's degree in political science, and an up-and-coming politician. The creative but psychologically unstable upper class son, Erik, marries Ida, independent and determined daughter of a public servant from a small provincial town in Jutland. She goes to Copenhagen and climbs slowly but surely up the educational ladder, while working to make ends meet. The special feature of this television series is that it connects modern sociological development and changes to media development. In the 18th century, imagined communities were created through novels and the newspapers (Anderson, 2001: 69), whereas the community construction in *Better Times* takes place through television. The story of the establishment of the modern Danish welfare state is told through the production and viewing of television. Obviously, *Better Times* is not a media event in the sense described above. It does not have a live presence or the community-building ability of sharing sacred moments, but it has some of the characteristics of a media event. The first 10 episodes of *Better Times* had, on average, an audience of 2.5-3 million viewers⁵, nearly half the total population with episode 10 reaching an audience of 2,713 million viewers⁶. Thus, a huge number of people watched the early history-telling and foundational myth of modern Denmark. Thematically the history is full of conflicts, but from the narrative and formal points of view, the story is told very classically.

The series' home page presents itself as a catalogue of the historical period represented. Besides summaries of the episodes, the web page contains lots of documentary clips and selected scenes from well known broadcasted historical moments, as well as news from everyday life on a national as well as a global scale: fashion, linguistic neologism, etc. One beam was called 'Share your memories', and invited users to tell the stories of their childhoods in the 50s. This beam was closed down relatively quickly – possibly because of 'overheating'. On the web page, *Better Times* is contextualised as a historical document, it gets a historical aura from the 'real' history, as well as it being stressed that history is broadcasted through television.

The story of the foundation of the modern Danish welfare state is told through the *import, production and consumption* of television sets, materially and symbolically. This feature distinguishes *Better Times* from any average family saga told over and over again on television. We deal here with television as a product and television as an important ingredient in media environments of the emergent welfare state. The primary axis of conflict exists between the old patriarch and radio factory manager, Kaj-Holger, and his imaginative son, Erik, who, after a trip to the USA, predicts a glorious future for the new global medium: television. Significantly, Kaj-Holger is not convinced, until he witnesses the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II on June 2, 1953, the first media event in the history of television. Throughout the series we detect a development of the viewing positions being represented, and the immediate consequence of this is that the contemporary viewer of *Better Times* is confirmed as a media-conscious media-user.

Several media technologies and genres are represented in the series, and I choose one significant scene to illustrate the complexity of the media theme in

Better Times. The key actor is Erik, who, after suffering another defeat at the hands of his father, regarding the reorganisation of the production of television sets, walks down memory lane – which takes the form of nostalgic, sepia cinema recordings from his childhood – with scissors in his hand, ready to ‘cut the father out’ every time he appears, which in Erik’s opinion is not difficult as he was ‘never there’. In this scene the viewer can assume a triple role: 1) we are onlookers to the childhood images, together with Erik and his wife Ida, viewers within the scene. We watch them watching the past. Here we are able to reject or confirm the version that Erik offers to us (his version is partly rejected, as we see Kaj-Holger in fact taking care of his children); 2) we are likewise witnesses to the editing process that Erik carries out, reconstructing the past in order to become somebody else (Storey 2003: 83). This highlights the constant dynamic relationship, from the viewpoint of the present, between documenting and constructing the past (Ricoeur 2000). Because of this double viewing position, we begin to doubt, or we become more sensitive, to the nuances of the versions presented. The past offers itself to several interpretations. 3) The viewer is offered a meta-gaze, witnessing the emotional reactions to the images (of the two characters in the scene), and to the discrepancy between the representational levels.



Better Times creates a foundational myth of the modern Danish welfare state (Scandinavian, perhaps, considering its large audiences throughout the Nordic region), and the myth is that of community-making through television. The series celebrates the original welfare state’s foundational values, such as social mobility, the serious uprooting of traditions, educational opportunities for everybody, and, of course, we are offered material, visual and aural memories by which we can be touched, but the success of the series is, in my opinion,

based more on the viewing situation as a nostalgic ritual. Reflecting ourselves in the (hi)story of the nation we perform a community in the present that reflects the one we had, or more precisely, the one we like to pretend we have had. The 'good old days' of gathering around the television set: that media-environment-based understanding of the national past is the one this national heritage series is celebrating thematically, formally, pragmatically.

Suspension of Disbelief

The wedding of Danish Crown Prince Frederik and the Australian, Mary Elizabeth Donaldson,⁷ on May 14, 2004 showed itself to be a media event of huge dimensions.

The wedding took place in several arenas, the core event being the wedding ceremony itself, in the Church of Our Lady in Copenhagen. There were celebrations and decorations in the streets, there were all the private celebrations, and finally, we had the media coverage (at the peak 2.6 million viewers⁸ on two national television stations).

The wedding had a solid effect on the capital, Copenhagen. The brand value of the event was important, and as an urban event, the streets of Copenhagen were inflicted and intensely involved in the event. Thousands of people lined up in front of the church, awaiting the arrival of the wedding guests, and, most importantly, to get a glimpse of the bride; thousands were present at the barricades along the route taken by the coach through the city, after the ceremony, and thousands were standing in front of Amalienborg, to catch a glimpse of the whole royal family waving from the balcony, and the newlyweds' obligatory kiss. The site of the wedding reception, the castle of Fredensborg, in the Northern part of Zealand, was also a centre of public interest.

The event itself had a long prelude, with several channels broadcasting documentary and interview programmes with Mary Donaldson and her family, travel programmes from Tasmania (*Signe and BS in Tasmania*, May 2004, TV 2), the native region of the future bride, the *Rock'n Royal Rock Concert* at the Stadium (Idrætsparken) in Copenhagen, a present from the 'Danish people' to the royal couple, *Match Race* May 9, a royal sailing boat race between the future husband and wife, DR1, etc.

On May 14, the two public channels broadcasted throughout the entire day, in order to document the preparation at many levels: from the hosts and journalists at the production level itself, to the experts fulfilling certain professional roles in the event: priest, wedding cake baker, singer in the church, the creators of the triumphal arch, flower arrangers, designers, hairdressers and many others, to the level of those experts commenting on all the preparations: designers, historians, sociologists, family therapists, etc. Finally, the viewers witnessed several levels of commitment and active participation in the event: there were those who brought gifts of a certain professional level, e.g. from the Royal Academy of Beaux Arts, but also those who brought private gifts (one little girl

bringing her personal drawing of a prince and a princess), there were those who actively paid tribute to the event, for example by playing the Australian didgeridoo, by wearing socks with crowns, by getting married themselves on that day, and all those who were simply present, looking on and waving.

The viewer was also able to follow the preparations of people who, around the country in their private homes, dressed up and gathered with family and friends to celebrate, using the occasion to throw a party. It was a major event in Danish television, and even though some minor radio channels declared themselves wedding-free zones, and one of the young semi-private television-channels, TV 2 Zulu, made a satirical live version of the whole event, none were unaware of the huge event.

Bringing to mind the three levels of a media event, according to Dayan and Katz, we can say that at the syntactic level, the royal event imposed a monopoly situation in which all primary official channels broadcasted the event – a monopoly situation we have not seen in Denmark since 1988. The producers of the event – hostesses and journalists on the street – to a large extent took part in the event, being *embodied witnesses* to the event within the event, for example by bursting into tears when that kind of decoding was required.⁹

On the semantic level we were not so much witnessing a Cinderella story (as in the case of the British royal family), but more a story of equal partners, competing on equal terms. The *Match Race* (which Mary won, by the way) is a good example of that. At the pragmatic level we really saw a lot of involvement and participation in the event.

The royal wedding is an interesting case because one could link this event to nationalism, seeing it as an occasion in which the symbolic power re-intensifies its impact on the people. Several journalists phoned and asked me, as ‘a royal expert’, if the Danes had all got madly royalist, and how that turn should be perceived. Whether or not the television medium tries to encode a symbolic centre as a believable myth, audiences decode the event in many different ways (I shall note some of the decoding positions below). I would state that the royal wedding offered an occasion to play at being Danish on post-national terms. The wedding offered a perfect short-term occasion to perform a community on dream terms, in a subjunctive-nostalgic mode; *we perform it momentarily without believing in it*. The community performed obviously implies a suspension of disbelief and of momentary obliviousness to differences and disagreements. The members of the community included people attending the media event on a global scale (many Australians attended it), but also all those who just watched it for romantic reasons, decoding its fairy-tale narrative: two beautiful and sympathetic young people who love each other are getting married.

The nostalgia of this event arises from its royal setting. Denmark as a kingdom is part of the ‘old-fashioned fairy-tale’ character of the nation, to which we momentarily give ourselves, reflexively. It is also due to the viewing situation itself: we, as viewers, watch the same scenes repeatedly, and simultaneously suspend other viewing possibilities corresponding to our contemporary plurimedia condition. And television itself (the two public channels showing

the same scenes) here relives its glorious days of single-channel broadcasted live events unifying the nation.

Missika notes a change from television with a message (*une télévision à message*), a message from the position of power to the many, to television with a mission, which he qualifies as a post-television phase. The mission is simple: it is no longer that of solving the problems of the community, but that of confronting the crises of individuals (Missika 2006: 22). In other words, Missika looks upon the development as going from community-forming, to a medium through which individuals communicate and solve their crises. On special occasions however, television retrieves '*la sacralité de l'événement*', the sacred quality of the event, the importance of the live transmission, of the encounter, of the exact moment when the clock stops (Missika 2006: 89). These special occasions are, for example, those media events in which a certain community is performed through a nostalgic mode. We can add to the post-television provisions of Missika, that the future of television is its nostalgia.

The viewing or performative positions of my material are of at least three different kinds. We can speak first of a level of *imaginary identifications*, noting the princes and princesses of the day amongst the participants/viewers. We here address an identification level and an investment of libidinal desire. We are offered the possibility of playing out our fairy-tale desires on a concrete bodily level (those who dressed up for celebrating of the occasion) or on an imaginary level. Second, the media event, framed as a public wedding, can be used as a mood-producing occasion to get in a romantic/nostalgic mood. Parallel to viewing other emotion-producing genres such as melodrama or horror movies, the wedding can be looked upon as an occasion one seeks out in order to self-impose feelings. We have to deal here with a self-imposed *affective economy of mood*. Third, we can experience a lack of distance between our body and the event, perhaps experienced as the most intense moment of all. In these moments we, or parts of our bodies, take part in the event by reacting instinctively, *imitating the images* (e.g. the tears of the groom). In these moments the body of the viewer is doing the thinking, living out the embodied feeling.

In this chapter I have tried to establish an understanding of a post-national celebration of the nation in a nostalgic mode. That nostalgia can appear at different levels, semantic as well as ritual (the viewing situation) and medium-specific (one is nostalgic of the medium itself). The large audiences of media events or national heritage television series are not necessarily a proof of a new nationalism due to globalisation, but can be understood as hyper-modern *performers* of communities. These communities are something at which we sometimes play, very intensely in a nostalgic mode, hot and cool at the same time, but we do not want to die or kill for it.

Notes

1. Gilles Lipovetsky (2004, 2006) puts forward an argument about a qualitative change from a postmodern perspective (the getting rid of ties, traditions and ideologies) to a hyper-modern perspective, which is much more existentially invested with particular stress on emotions and relations. One of the important features of hypermodernity being the interconnectedness between culture and market activities, Lipovetsky notes the consumption patterns of hyper-modern man, in order to stress the sentimental, spiritual and relational longings inherent in these patterns. See also Schulze (1997).
2. <http://www.solvangca.com> (accessed August 3, 2009)
3. <http://www.visitdenmark.com/danmark/da-dk/menu/turist/inspiration/nydlivet/gastronomi/new-scandinavian-cooking-en-madreise-i-dejlige-dk.htm>. (accessed August 3, 2009)
4. Nostalgia can be part of a deliberate political strategy, as is the case with the right wing, immigration-hostile and racist party, Dansk Folkeparti, which uses a nationalist and nostalgic image of Denmark to reflect present problems. Their use of nostalgia is sophisticated, because they not only make essentialist claims but they also use irony and have a playful relationship to their public image.
5. http://www.denstoredanske.dk/Samfund,_jura_og_politik/Massemedier/Tv-programmer/Kr%C3%B8niken. (accessed August 3, 2009)
6. <http://tv2tid.tv2.dk/nytomtv/article.php?id=20269086.html>. (accessed August 3, 2009)
7. http://kongehuset.dk/publish.php?dogtag=k_dk_familien_mary (accessed August 3, 2009)
8. <http://www.business.dk/article/20080526/medier/80526092>. (accessed August 3, 2009)
9. One particular image has stayed from this event, the image of the crown prince crying in the church at the sight of Mary walking up the aisle. These tears have become famous, and are part of the reactions expected from him at such events. Before other ceremonial events (e.g. the birth and baptism of their two children) newspaper headlines express the expectations of tears... The tears sustain the image of the prince as a modern man, masculine yet sensitive.

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The Mediation of Death and the Imagination of National Community

Lilie Chouliaraki

Suffering, Pity and National Identity

The mediation of suffering and death has so far been studied for the insight it provides on compassion fatigue (Moeller 1999; Lidchi 1999), psychological denial and social apathy (Cohen 2001; Sontag 2003) or the construction of trans-national communities of care and responsibility (Silverstone 2007; Chouliaraki 2006a).

My aim, in this chapter, is to extend the scope of such insight by studying the role of the mediation of death and suffering in constructing the nation as an imagined community. To be sure, the links between national identity and victimhood have already been the object of critical study insofar as they function to perpetuate hegemonic conceptions of civil justice within and between nations.¹

It is the focus on the *mediation* of death and suffering that I wish to introduce as a distinct element in my own analysis of national identity.² Specifically, it is the manner in which the spectacle of death introduces into the sphere of public visibility a particular logic of representation, the politics of pity, that I find productive in the study of national identity. The politics of pity refers to those practices of communication through which human suffering is represented as a spectacle that deserves a public response, collective or individual (Boltanski 1999: 6-7).

Given that mediation is about action at a distance, rather than action in physical co-presence, the politics of pity seeks to manage the affective potential of audiences *vis-à-vis* the spectacle of suffering in ways that motivate a particular orientation to action on their behalf, as if they were present in the scene of action. Organised around the presence (or absence) of the two paradigmatic figures of suffering, the persecutor who inflicts pain or the benefactor who seeks to alleviate it, pity emerges as the spectator's disposition to action towards suffering, motivated as it is by the moral claim each figure represents.

In this light, pity can be defined as a discursive accomplishment that proposes imaginary possibilities for action on suffering, either in the form of denunciation against the injustice of suffering, in the presence of a persecutor, or in

the form of care and philanthropic sentiment, in the presence of a benefactor – whereas the absence of both figures provides a third possibility of representation that turns away from action and renders the scene of suffering an object of aesthetic appreciation (Boltanski 1999: 46–48). Rather than the natural sentiment of human empathy, pity should therefore be seen as a sociological category constituted in meaning that seeks to articulate certain moral stances as universal and to bring into being hegemonic forms of sociality and collective identity – including national identity.

By the same token, suffering is not merely a phenomenological fact. It is primarily a conceptual device for identifying how the semiotic resources of the media invest the spectacle of suffering with certain normative discourses of what is legitimate and fair to feel and do *vis-à-vis* such spectacle. Suffering, in this account, works as a discursive principle that constitutes the spectator as a moral subject and organises the social relationships of spectatorship around communities of shared disposition to emotion and action (Chouliaraki 2006a).

In this chapter, I analyse a historical news broadcast on Greek television, namely the footage of the killing of a Greek-Cypriot by Turkish soldiers in the buffer zone of Cyprus (August 1996). The paradigmatic status of this broadcast stems from its unique imagery: the amateur footage on the Greek-Cypriot's killing by Turkish soldiers provides rare insight into how the spectacle of death mobilises pity in the service of nationalist discourse. It also stems from its topic: the broadcast deals with a 'crisis moment' in Greece's relations with Turkey, throwing into relief the construction of national identity, encompassing broadly Greek and Greek-Cypriot identities under the overarching schema of Hellenic nationhood (Herzfeld 2000: 5–36) in terms of a strong 'us'/'them' opposition.

I begin by situating the politics of pity within a conception of the public sphere as an Arendtian 'space of appearance', where national identity is viewed primarily as a function of aesthetic performance and emotional engagement (*The spectacle of death in the 'space of appearance'*), before moving to a Foucauldian discourse analytical approach that enables me to study the spectacle of death as productive of affective disposition and moral agency among media publics (*The analytics of mediation*). My discussion of the news broadcast addresses these two aspects of the text, in the sections *Aesthetic quality* and *Moral agency* respectively, before concluding with an assessment of the implications of the aestheticisation of death as a strategic practice of communicating the nation to the nation (*Mediation, witnessing and nationalist discourse*).

The Spectacle of Death in the 'Space of Appearance'

The value of operationalising a framework of pity in the study of the mediation of nationalism is that it enables us to foreground two central but largely ignored dimensions of the constitution of media publics as a national community: its aesthetic quality and its affective potential. As opposed to traditional views of the public sphere, which centre on rationalistic conceptions of communication

(Calhoun 1992: 1-51; Alexander and Jacobs 1998: 29; Barnett 2003: 33-53), the view I am adopting here is inspired by an Arendtian conception of the public as a 'space of appearance'³, where visual performance and emotion, rather than language and deliberation alone, play a central role in the production of national imagination (Villa 1999: 101; Silverstone 2007: 50).

Judith Butler makes use of the term the 'space of appearance' to tell us that the public sphere of television is about spectacle, a site of what is *seen* as well as *heard*, but also to emphasise the fact that this public sphere is about emotions as well as argument- it is about what is 'felt' as well as what is 'known'⁴:

To produce what will constitute the public sphere [...], it is necessary to control the way in which people see, how they hear, what they see. The constraints are not only on content- certain images of dead bodies in Iraq, for instance, are considered unacceptable for public visual consumption – but on what 'can' be heard, read, seen, felt and known. (Butler 2004: xx).

In this quote, the emphasis on spectacle and emotion as constitutive of visual public space is combined with a focus on practices of control. Breaking from conceptions of aesthetics as a-political and of emotion as the psychological interiority of a person, Butler sees the articulation between the two as an effect of power relations and the object of social regulation. In order to be acceptable for public visual consumption, spectacle and emotion on television need to be constrained and managed, in certain ways.

This regulation of emotion is particularly relevant in the management of the visibility of suffering and death in Western news, wherein at least two distinct economies of regulation are involved: an economy of 'taste and decency', which bans the spectacle of suffering from the screen responding to the public's aversion to atrocity, and an economy of 'display', whereby images of death are domesticated by the use of captions, photo-finish and montage that frame the meaning of depictions of atrocity (Campbell 2004: 70). As a consequence of the intersection of these economies of regulation, Campbell claims, the imagery of death is effectively excluded from the Western space of appearance, thereby 'restricting the possibility for an ethical politics exercising responsibility in the face of crimes against humanity' (2004: 54).

Nevertheless, I argue, these economies of regulation may be suspended when the representation of death is linked to national interests and the imagery of killing is strategically used to well up nationalist sentiment. Rather than protecting the spectator's sense of taste and decency, as the national codes of Western journalism normally dictate, this spectacle may now exceptionally take centre-stage in the form of a particular aesthetic trope, what Eisenman calls the 'pathos formula' (2007: 16), thereby introducing a new economy of regulation: the economy of 'witnessing'. This economy invests the spectacle of death with the force of authentic testimony and provides the footage with an extraordinary epistemological and moral force that leaves no space for alternative conceptions on the event (Ellis 2000; Peters 2001).

Without being explicitly political, the economy of witnessing manages to control what 'can' be said and seen in the public sphere in ways that effectively articulate 'the ideology of political consensus' in the symbolic figure of the dying hero (Hall et al. 1978/1997: 425). Political consensus, in the context of this study, is accomplished through a conception of Greece as a 'deep horizontal comradeship' (Anderson 1989: 6-7), whose principles of cohesion stem from, on the one hand, its memories of national martyrdom in a 'community of fate', and, on the other, its participation in the morally superior community of Western civility – thereby subsuming internal social antagonisms under the homogenising sentiments of heroic sacrifice and righteous indignation (for the 'community of fate' concept see Frosh and Wolfsfeld 2007: 119-129; Held 2000: 399-400).

The point of the analysis is, therefore, dual. On the one hand, the point is to demonstrate how the public sphere as a space of appearance capitalises on spectacle and emotion in order to build a consensual national identity; on the other hand, it is to destabilise the terms of the consensus and to problematise a conception of the nation as standing outside social processes, showing how its constitution is political *par excellence*, that is, as arising in certain institutions out of historically and culturally specific conditions of possibility.⁵

The Analytics of Mediation

To this end, I introduce the 'analytics of mediation'⁶. This is a framework for the study of television as a mechanism of representation that construes death and suffering within specific regimes of pity, that is within specific semantic fields where emotions and dispositions to action *vis-à-vis* the suffering others are made possible for the spectator.⁷

The analytics of mediation thus conceptualises the news footage of the Greek-Cypriot's killing as a discursive structure of address, which combines visual (camera work) and linguistic (voiceover) choices in order to invite a particular moral response on the part of the spectator.⁸ The assumption behind the analytics of mediation is that such choices over how suffering is portrayed, where, when and with whom the suffering is shown to occur always entail specific ethical dispositions, independently of our own evaluative judgement on these dispositions as undesirable or desirable (Sontag 2004). The value of the analytics of mediation, in this respect, lies in its capacity to re-describe the discursive constitution of the spectacle of death and, in so doing, to explicate the moral implications and political agendas that inform this constitution.

The spectacle of death under analysis refers to footage on the 22nd anniversary of the Turkish invasion in Cyprus (August 1996), where demonstrations and protests took place on the 'buffer' zone that separates the Southern from the Northern, occupied part of Cyprus. In the course of the demonstrations, which turned into riots, one Greek-Cypriot was beaten to death by Turkish paramilitary forces in the 'buffer' zone (August 11); another, Solomon Solomou, was shot dead as he was climbing the Turkish flag post, with the intention of

bringing down the Turkish flag (August 15). The broadcast under study (August 16) reports on international reactions to this second killing, and on political and diplomatic reactions to the victim's funeral. In the analysis, I concentrate on the opening part of the broadcast, i.e. the news-text reporting on international reactions to the killing, which most clearly throws into relief the politics of pity enacted in the whole text. The footage follows Solomon's last movements, as he broke away from the protesting Greek-Cypriot crowd and ran into the buffer zone, forbidden to civilians, starting to climb up the Turkish flag post.

My discussion of the footage of the killing is organised around two categories of the analytics of mediation: the *aesthetic quality* of the broadcast text, that is the visual-verbal narrative combination on screen, and the impact of this discursive combination on the forms of *moral agency* that the footage makes possible for the audiences of the broadcast.⁹ My argument is that the imagery of the shootings follows a pathos formula, which is crucial in articulating a particular regime of pity based on the visual sublimation of death and the denunciation of the killing, whilst the language of the broadcast together with the use of a documentary aesthetic provide an aura of objectivity by attributing denunciation to a range of international actors rather than to interested parties, Greek or Cypriot. This combination of pathos with objectivity gives rise to a particular public discourse, the discourse of testimony. Testimonial witnessing construes the incident as a moral cause and represents the Greek nation as a traumatised community, righteously indignant towards its 'eternal' Oriental enemy.

The consequence of this moral discourse of nationalism is that it excludes from the public sphere a historical understanding of the event in terms of its longer-term political consequences on the future of the divided island, in terms of reflexivity over the purposefulness of such acts of spontaneous resistance, beyond its symbolics of sacrifice, and in terms of diplomatic action towards scrutinising the legality of the Turkish bullet attacks.¹⁰

I begin my analysis by looking into the aesthetic properties of the broadcast text, that is key aspects of the moving image (point of view, editing and sound effects) and of the verbal text (cohesion and wording) and discuss how their combination creates regimes of sublime spectacularity and journalistic objectivity. In moving on to moral agency, I focus on the function of witnessing as a mode of viewing, which produces nationalist identity by proposing reflexive contemplation and righteous indignation as the two key forms of engagement with the spectacle of death. I conclude by illustrating the two political functions of the public space of appearance, namely the constitution of national community as a mythic community of fate and as a civil community of Western morality – both of which work to ultimately de-politicise the event of Solomon's killing.

Aesthetic Quality

The footage of the killing¹¹ is repeated twice during the news broadcast: first in slow motion and accompanied by requiem music, then accompanied by

voiceover. The same incident from the same camera and point of view is shown both times, yet the aesthetic function of each footage version is different. Whereas both versions act as vehicles of witnessing, each makes a different moral claim: to sublime martyrdom and righteous denunciation the former, to reasoned argument and objectivity, the latter.

Footage without voiceover: This footage is shown in slow motion, to the sound of a solemn requiem. Filmed in medium-range, it captures some of the background of the scene with the figure of a gunman standing in the balcony of a nearby building. As the victim, dressed in black and with a cigarette in his mouth, is hit by bullets, his body jerks back, his cigarette falls off and his grip of the flag-pole is loosened; he slides down, turns to the side and falls on the ground. As tens of demonstrators run towards him, the footage merges with an image of the Cyprus map in blue, placed at the centre of a set of target circles: 'Attila Killer' figures at the bottom of the map (Attila being the name of the Turkish military operation that invaded the Northern part of Cyprus in 1974).

Given that the public display of the moment of death, particularly the death of 'our own' kin (family or nation), is morally unacceptable and culturally sanctioned by the economy of decency, such display of death can only become legitimate under the condition that it becomes an object of aesthetic contemplation. In this footage, the process of aestheticisation occurs through visual/aural editing, which includes the slow motion, the requiem music and the map graphic plus the 'Attila Killer' logo. Such semiotic elements both singularise and collectivise the scene of death. Whereas slow motion and music work to singularise the scene by beautifying the dying man as a hero, the map graphic and logo work to collectivise the scene by introducing national memory and public action as responses to the event.

Slow motion and solemn music situate the footage within a particular aesthetic register, that of the *pathos formula*. Even though, historically, the pathos formula refers to a specific artistic tradition, whereby visual representation seeks to depict the dying body as something 'willingly alienated by the victim for the sake of pleasure and aggrandisement of the oppressor' (Eisenman 2007: 16), today the pathos formula reappears in the representational repertoire of war photojournalism as evidence of contemporary forms of martyrdom. By focusing on the singular figure of the dying man inviting his own death and by construing death as service to a higher cause, be this religious redemption or secular liberty, the pathos formula essentially *sublimates* suffering: it removes suffering from the order of lived experience, thereby protecting the spectator from the horror of death, and presents it as 'beautiful' suffering, thus allowing us to indulge on its aesthetic value from a position of safety (Chouliaraki 2007; 2006b).

Slow motion participates in turning the scene of death into aesthetic spectacle by magnifying every movement and amplifying every second of the act of dying. Similarly to da Vinci's instructions on war paintings, this form of editing is designed to evoke a sense of unflinching attention to the detail

of the gruesome act: 'Make...others in the death agony grinding their teeth, rolling their eyes with their fists clenched against their bodies, and their legs distorted' (quoted in Sontag 2003: 67). Indeed, in focusing on the slight jerk of the body, with eyes closing and cigarette falling off, accompanied by the gentle sliding down the pole, the footage foregrounds the moment of dying as the ultimate act of sacrifice.

This sense of intensity evoked by the magnification of the small ways in which Solomon's body surrenders to the lethal blow of the gunshot, is further combined with requiem music – thereby infusing the visuals with religious solemnity. Such combination of audio-visual features produces an ecstatic temporality¹² and an aura of grandeur that lifts the dying man from the dynamics of immediate action and recasts him in the eternal figure of the martyr. Solomon, in this filmic sequence, is not a victim, someone whose status derives from his suffering, but a dying hero, someone whose suffering endows him with a mythic status. For a fleeting moment, then, the operation of the footage is not to mobilise regimes of pity that blame the killings to the Turkish side or empathise with Solomon's family and fellow-people, but to celebrate his death as a heroic act for all to witness (Zelizer 2002a).¹³

Given the pressing political conflict surrounding the event of Solomon's killing, however, the sublimation of suffering, instrumental as it is in construing a heroic subjectivity, is not sustainable for long. As Boltanski puts it, 'the aesthetic topic rarely functions on its own. To produce its specific effect it must rapidly pass through other topics on which it briefly touches' (1999: 129).

The strategic shift towards a regime of denunciation of the killing occurs through another set of aesthetic interventions: the blue map graphic with a set of target circles and the 'Attila killer' logo. The map with target circles fuses with the footage at the moment when crowds of people are approaching the fallen man. Following the sublimation of the hero, this imagery introduces a discourse of historical memory, reminding the Greek audience of the 1974 military invasion of Northern Cyprus.

In contrast to the a-historical representation of the pathos formula, the graphic composition of the map and the script come to articulate an element of radical historicity, whereby the Turkish army are identified as perpetrators, in the 'Attila killer' logo, and Cyprus is synechdochically portrayed as a sufferer subject to attack, in the red shooting circles. This fusion of the present, in the footage of the protesters, with the past, in the overlapping graphics, does not only evoke the memory of national trauma¹⁴ but simultaneously construes this crowd as a public – a collectivity with the will to act in the name of the nation.¹⁵

By combining the singularity of martyrial death with a collectivity united in denunciation, the footage thus construes the nation as a moral community of action against the perpetrators of death.

Visual with voiceover: The second version of the footage is accompanied by the opening text of the broadcast that acts as voiceover to the imagery. The first sentence of the newsreader's text expands on the regime of denunciation introduced visually in the opening footage:

Into a rally of denunciation of the monstrosities of Attila was transformed the funeral of Solomon Solomou, who was assassinated in cold blood by the death brigades of Denktas. At the same time, in Brussels, the Irish President of the European Union was condemning the two assassinations of Greek-Cypriots by the occupation forces, calling them barbaric murders. Whereas in Washington, the press representative of State Department, Nicholas Burnes, used for the first time harsh language to condemn the assassinations and to castigate Tansu Chiller's statements...[translation keeps the syntactical pattern of the Greek language].

Whereas the first clause of the text is about the funeral-as-denunciation, the other two sentences are about reactions to the killing from the European Union (EU) and the United States State Department. These are introduced through spatio-temporal conjunctions that signify simultaneity in space and time: 'At the same time in Brussels . . .', 'Whereas in Washington . . .', and through wording that carries strong negative evaluations, the Irish President 'was condemning', whereas Nicholas Burnes 'used harsh language', 'condemned' and 'castigated' the Turkish Prime Minister's statements. Negative evaluations are further coded in the wordings of the text, which describe the killings as 'barbaric murders' or 'assassination' – and introduced in the first paragraph as 'monstrosities of Attila'.¹⁶

What we have here is a collocation of terms, a group of vocabulary items, which work together throughout to consolidate denunciation as the dominant discourse of the international community towards the event of the killing. In combination with the spatio-temporal indicators of simultaneity, this linguistic discourse of denunciation works *a)* to signify identity of opinion: funeral participants, Greek-Cypriots, the United States administration and the EU presidency all believe that the killing had to be condemned, and *b)* to stress an intensity of emotion which all three parties are sharing through the act of condemnation.

Identity of opinion and intensity of emotion appertains to a rhetoric that not only reaffirms the discourse of denunciation but further works as a strategy of objectification that provides an impartial basis for the articulation of denunciation. By attributing denunciation to a range of institutional actors, rather than just the Greeks, it is now the impartial authority of the trans-national community that speaks out against the killing.

A set of impartial norms of evaluation are thus presupposed in the discourse, whereby Greece and the rest of the world are seen to form a moral front against Turkey. Also implicit is an image of the Greek nation positioned in the international scene in coalition with its major forces and in opposition to Turkey, itself isolated and condemned. Turkey enters the discourse of denunciation diplomatically condemned and morally isolated – a position further articulated in the rhetorical contrast between the 'sanctity of human life' and the 'flag as a piece of cloth', in Nicholas Burnes' statement ('the protection of the flag cannot justify the incidents of the 15th of August, said Mr Burnes, who added

emphatically that human life and its sanctity are, in any case, more important than the protection of a piece of cloth').

The objectivity of the international verdict is also consolidated visually. In this version of the footage, the Turkish gunmen in the background are being circled, at the moment of the shooting, as if to disclose the identity of the 'assassins'. Rather than the pathos formula, this version of the footage enacts an aesthetics of raw documentary (Nichols 1991: xx). In capturing a moment of reality as-it-happens, the documentary sharply shifts the truth claim of the footage from showing 'beautiful suffering' to showing suffering as a historical fact. In this sense, visual editing functions here strategically to situate denunciation not only in the impartial voices of the international community but also in the voice of the camera as a 'mechanical witness': as a faithful record of reality that, unable as it is to lie or manipulate the facts, acts as impartial account of events (Peters 2001: 716).

This systematic displacement of moral evaluation onto external sources, political actors and photojournalists, manages to situate the broadcast in a frame of testimonial witnessing, which, in turn endows the denunciation of Solomon's killing with a strong claim to truth. The nationalist discourse of the broadcast arises out of this complex regime of pity that the witnessing of Solomon's death makes possible: the sublimation of the martyr in the name of a traumatised nation and a rationalised indignation in line with a Western morality that 'respects human life'.

Moral Agency

Witnessing is the central modality of agency in this broadcast.¹⁷ Its spectator watches the scene of the killing and is called to respond to it. How? The spectator can watch and feel – and feeling, in turn, tends towards contemplative introspection or indignant denunciation. It is the sublimation of Solomon's death that construes the footage as an object of aesthetic contemplation and it is the documentary objectivity of the footage that situates his killing in a discourse of indignant denunciation.

Whereas I have so far addressed this duality at the level of discourse, whereby witnessing is regarded as a semiotic accomplishment predicated on technologies of mediation such as language and the camera, it is now important to transpose this duality at the level of agency, whereby witnessing is regarded as simultaneously referring to two interrelated but distinct modes of viewing: being an eye-witness of the killing and bearing witness to the killing (Oliver 2004: 79-88). Being an eye-witness of the killing entails watching the event as it happens and engages with the objective depiction of historical truth; bearing witness entails watching a universal truth that transcends the fact of killing and engages with a traumatic moment that borders the unrepresentable.

Bearing witness is a modality of agency that rests on the simple act of watching without the anticipation of immediate response. Confronted with the

spectacle of dying on screen, the spectator is invited to enter into a relationship of unreciprocated acknowledgement of the horrific finality of this moment. Owing nothing to the victim, who is irreversibly confined within his destiny, the spectator's moral agency is oriented to simply studying the moment, 'take it into himself [sic] and get it to work like an operator so as to apprehend and display an internal evil' (Boltanski 1999: 132).

Often associated with the impossibility to describe or adequately respond to crimes against humanity, such as the Holocaust, this purely contemplative position has been criticised as being politically ineffective (Boltanski 1999). Nevertheless, bearing witness should in fact be seen as a politically productive form of moral agency, which contributes to the constitution of community and, in so doing, further provides the condition for other regimes of pity to be articulated in the public space of appearance. This productive capacity lies in the aesthetic form of the bearing witness function, the pathos formula. It lies, in particular, in the function of the pathos formula to re-inscribe the moment of dying into an artistic register, thereby stripping it of its denotative properties, that is the particularities of the spectacle in terms of what happened to whom by who, and by foregrounding instead its connotative dimension, that is the universal symbolism of heroic nationhood that the spectacle enacts.

The moral agency of bearing witness is, in this sense, already embedded in the structure of the footage without voiceover, insofar as this communicates not Solomon's killing by Turkish gunmen as such but the grandeur of his final fall, the heroic nature of his act, the eternal nature of evil and the collective martyrdom of the island of Cyprus. It is this structure of address, consisting of particular aesthetic choices of framing and editing, that performs this universal symbolism: it singularises the event of death as a symbol of individual heroism, by magnifying its detail and protracting its duration, and collectivises it as a symbol of our own 'community of fate', by evoking the nation as both a victim and a survivor.

If, as I have argued earlier, this process of aestheticisation makes it possible for footage of actually occurring death, such as Solomon's, to escape the regulative economies of the public sphere and to render legitimate a culturally indecent type of imagery, it is now important to acknowledge the capacity of the pathos formula to produce collective agency out of a traumatic spectacle.

Bearing witness may not be an immediately active form of agency, in the sense of initiating a response, but is instrumental in calling up a latent political disposition that recognises death and suffering as both the ultimate justification of heroic activity and as the authentic manifestation of the national psyche

The *eye-witness*, the second modality of agency articulated in the broadcast, moves beyond the contemplative mode to the active mode of denunciation. Confronted with the spectacle of dying on screen, the spectator is now invited to enter into a relationship of immediate response that is based, on the one hand, on indignation directed towards those seen to be responsible for the killing and, on the other, on a sober demand for justice based on an impartial evaluation of the event (Boltanski 1999: 66-67). The spectator's moral capacity

is thus called to tread a subtle balance between emotion, necessary to mobilise a collective act of accusation, and reason, necessary to substantiate the accusation in the public test of truth. The agency of the eye-witness, unlike that of bearing witness, brings together these two demands by engaging with the scene of dying as a historical reality that unfolds in front of our eyes and requires urgent investigation. It does so by combining the documentary aesthetic with a voiceover on international reactions to the killing.

The former, the documentary aesthetic, repeats the footage of the killing, this time foregrounding its indexical (rather than symbolic) quality, that is to say its quality to represent accurately the external world, and capitalises on it by using it as evidence that identifies the persecutors of the act – circling the gunmen on screen. This investigative element hints to the juridical dimension of the moral agency of the eye-witness as someone who is called to use objective evidence so as to serve the search for justice *vis-à-vis* the committed crime.

The latter, the voiceover, articulates the moral discourse of international politics. This discourse of western morality sets up a cultural contrast between the moral values of the West (here an alliance between Greece, EU and the United States) and the moral values of Turkey. Thus, Greece is positioned as the Westerner whereas Turkey is a cultural ‘alien’, an anthropological ‘other’ in this discourse.¹⁸ This is also a disciplinary discourse of western morality, because in addition to setting up a cultural opposition of moralities, it also has the power to evaluate these moralities, and stresses the difference between right and wrong, civilised and barbaric moral values.¹⁹

If the universal claim of a nation traumatised by the death of a martyr is the prototypical claim in the bearing witness form of agency, it is the universal claim of a superior morality, posing an urgent demand for juridical evaluation, that informs the agency of the eye-witness. The eye-witness enacts, in this sense, an explicitly political form of collective agency endowed with a strong sense of humanitarian morality and driven by the desire to restore justice in the name of the nation.

In sum, the broadcast has endowed its viewing public with moral agency to the extent that it has combined both dimensions of the act of witnessing, ‘the procedure of the courtroom...and...the death of the martyr’ (Peters 2001: 709), thereby enabling those spectators both to contemplate the moment of Solomon’s death as members of a mythical national community and to demand justice as members of an international community of civility.

Mediation, Witnessing and Nationalist Discourse

This duality in the moral agency available to viewing publics which, in turn, rests on the aesthetic quality of the broadcast, both beautifying death and documenting the persecutors, simultaneously presents us with two competing political functions of the space of appearance: ‘iconic spectacularity and a textuality of the legal and moral order of civil society’ (Landes 2001: 6).²⁰ The

dimension of *iconic spectacularity* enacts the political ritual of sublimation so as to constitute the nation as an imagined community of fate on the basis of its collective trauma: the bearing witness of the act of death as heroic sacrifice. The dimension of a *moral-legal textuality* enables the articulation of the moral superiority of civil society: the eye-witnessing of the killing as a barbarian act subject to international condemnation.

Two mechanisms are attached to this political function of iconic spectacularity: the mechanism of fatalisation, which exposes viewing publics to the spectacle of death in order to unite them around its traumatic effect, and the mechanism of working through, which simultaneously protects viewing publics from this spectacle and seeks to heal the trauma of witnessing (for the mechanism of fatalisation see Frosh and Wolsfeld 2007: 119-129; for the mechanism of working through see Ellis 2000: 74-89).

The *mechanism of fatalisation* involves the representation of connections between people, which are established not through civil relationships but by virtue of their shared existential situation – as communities linked by their common predicament of subjection to a fate they cannot control but have to endure, be these the Israeli experience of suicide bombers or the Greek memories of the Turkish invasion and bloodshed in Cyprus. The discursive performance of fatalisation is that of *metonymic embodiment*, where the image of dying Solomon fuses with the blue map of Cyprus in targeting circles, thereby mapping the individual body onto the body politics of the nation. The doubling of visual signifiers works metonymically insofar as one individual can be substituted for the (national) whole of which he is a part. Bearing witness here refers not only to the singular death of a martyr but also to the tragic fate of a national community that is threatened and victimised by its evil-doers, Attila Killer, as much as it is sublimated and heroicised.

If metonymic embodiment works to expose spectators to national trauma by evoking the memory of the 'Attila' invasion, the repetition of the footage functions, in contrast, in a therapeutic manner to work through the intense experience of bearing witness (Ellis 2001: 6). Relying on the possibility to manipulate technological imagery, repetition and editorial variation aim at reducing existential angst among audiences by representing the scene of dying both as a reality and as de-realised and remote filmic sequence: 'by isolating the event and repeating it, its content, its horror, evaporates. What we have before us is its form and rhythm. The event becomes aesthetic and the effect upon us unaesthetic' (Goodheart 1990: 360 quoted in Robins 1993: 461).

Whereas the repetition of the footage may indeed be privileging a voyeuristic mode of viewing, a more subtle *mechanism of working through* is in place in the broadcast, which, in alternating between a sublime and a documentary mode of representing death, does not simply fictionalise suffering but capitalises precisely on the productive tension between a fictional and a factual mode of witnessing, in order to link fatalisation with action, mythic community with civil society. The spectatorial public thus constituted is a public of reflexive contemplators *vis-à-vis* the aesthetic spectacle of death and simultaneously

public actors bound up by the moral imperative to denounce the fact of Solomon's death.

The second political function of the space of appearance, the *textuality of the legal and moral order of the public sphere*, refers to the ways in which the broadcast establishes the evaluative criteria of the event in accordance with the norms of trans-national civil society and renders Greece a natural member of this society. The textuality of this order is enacted through the linguistic text of the voiceover and consists of two discursive performances: the production of objectivity and the othering of the persecutor.

The *production of objectivity* involves, on the one hand, the systematic displacement of the moral evaluation of the killing onto external sources, particularly political actors, and, on the other hand, the use of the video as a form of 'juridical' evidence that proves who did the killing. These elements, I have argued, manage to situate the broadcast in a frame of testimonial witnessing, which, in turn endows the denunciation of Solomon's killing with a strong claim to impartial truth further strengthening the denunciatory force of the broadcast.

The *othering of the persecutor* takes place through a proliferation of oppositional meanings (van Dijk et al. 1997: 168-172) that defines the national self positively, by privileging a construal of Greece as a nation united around a just, moral cause against its 'constitutive other', Turkey (recall the use of terms such as 'barbaric murders', 'cold-blooded assassination', 'occupation forces', 'death brigades of Denktas'). This is a projection of Greece through a civic discourse of nationalism, a form of nationalism proper to western democracies 'at their best', which is opposed to an *imperialist* or *ethnic* discourse of nationalism – the latter defined as a hot surplus of nationalism that appeals to bloody loyalty under conditions of threat to the national unity (Billig 1995; Frosh and Wolsfeld 2007). It is this projection that again works to align Greece with the West, its cultural-moral values and political practices, and to single out Turkey as a cultural 'alien'.

Conclusion: Pity and the Moralisation of Politics

Witnessing the dying body, I argue in this chapter, can function as a powerful mechanism for the imagination of national community. The act of witnessing, in this sense, participates in the visual politics of mediation by throwing into relief a relatively neglected field of critical inquiry: the process by which the aestheticisation of suffering and death participates in the strategic distribution of political passions in the service of nationalist discourse (Landes 2001).

Focusing on television as a public space of appearance, I demonstrated how the spectacle of death escapes the regulative economies of decency and display and renders certain dispositions to feeling and action towards Solomon's death legitimate in the broadcast under study. The process of legitimisation, I showed, occurs through two distinct modes of viewing that the broadcast

makes available to its public: the bearing witness to the unspeakable fact of 'killing in cold blood', which construes the killing as an act of martyrdom, and eye-witnessing, which construes the killing as a juridical fact that raises a universal demand for justice.

Each, in turn, corresponds to a particular political function performed in and through television as a space of appearance, iconic spectacularity, which legitimises dispositions towards the event by evoking the grandeur of mythical figures such as the king or the national hero, and the legal-moral textuality of civil society, which participates in the process of legitimisation by referencing the moral norms of Western civility as the measure for evaluating Solomon's killing.

These two political functions seem to be giving rise to a seemingly contradictory construal of national identity: Greece appears to be, at once, a community of fate, bearing witness to the martyrdom of its ethnic counter-part, Cyprus, and a western civil society, founded on Enlightenment moral values of common humanity and respect for human life. I would argue however that, rather than contradictory, this construal should be seen as a direct consequence of the politics of pity enacted in the public space of television.

Pity, let us recall, provides a framework for the articulation of public action that rests on the act of witnessing the spectacle of suffering and the emotions ensuing from this spectacle. In the broadcast under study, the spectacle of Solomon's killing, construed in terms of sublime death and righteous indignation, organises the social relationships of the event around distinctly ethical rather than political categories, that is to say around the conflict of good versus evil, civility versus barbarism, Western order versus Attilean barbarism. Whereas both the sublimation of death and the righteousness of denunciation are legitimate and, in fact, necessary operations in the space of appearance (How else is it possible to broadcast death in Western media? What else to feel than anger in the face of wrong-doing?), they have a significant implication: in moralising the social relationships of the spectacle, they depoliticise the event (Mouffe 2005: 75 for the moralisation of politics).

This means that they stop short of throwing into relief, broadly, the political relationships that inform the long trajectory of the Cyprus conflict, and, particularly, the concrete diplomatic consequences of the incident under study for all interested parties.²¹ Rather than placing the events within an explanatory framework, that is to say in their specific historical and political context, the broadcast seeks to create a national mythology that supports a specific grand narrative of collective identity. Indeed, despite the proliferation of references to the impartial norms of trans-national civil society towards the killing, the voices of Western international actors do not ultimately serve to establish the claims and procedures of a specific political strategy, analysing the existing antagonisms in the field of Cyprus diplomacy or the short- and long-term implications of the act. Instead, cast as they are in the moralising language of civility vs. barbarism, they serve the purpose of confirming the moral superiority of the Western national self.

The nationalist discourse that emerges, as a result, does not point to a contradiction between civic and ethnic forms of nationalism but rather to the subtle and effective ways in which television's politics of pity works to subordinate the discursive logic of the former, Western civility, to the latter, with its emphasis on tragic martyrdom, showing how mythical national identity can and does work both *within* and *against* civil society-oriented conceptions of nationhood. This conclusion has implications for our understanding of the relationship between mediation and the public sphere. Although dominant views of the public sphere emphasise, what I have earlier referred to as, rationalistic conceptions of mediated communication oriented towards deliberative debate and explicitly political dispositions to action, this analysis clearly demonstrates the value of expanding our view of the public sphere to include the space of the visible and of aesthetic spectacle as a crucial space for the articulation of nationalistic discourse. This view of the public sphere as a space of appearance makes it possible to analyse the sublimation of suffering not as aesthetic but as political performance, par excellence, that renders suffering a discursive site with its own universal claims to objectivity and morality.

What I have sought to show in this chapter is that, given that human misfortune and death can be staged in different ways bearing not one 'truth' but upholding many, the critical task of the 'analytics of mediation' is to expose the very conditions of possibility upon which the truths of suffering rest and the ways in which they are strategically put to use in the service of nationalism.

To paraphrase Anderson (1989: 19), in the light of the 'modern darkness' that inevitably accompanies the rationalist secularism of our times, nationalism is best approached not by focusing on 'self-consciously held political ideologies' but with large cultural systems of images, emotions and primordial values that preceded it and out of which it came into being.

Notes

1. Berlant (2000: 33-48) on the culture of pain and the constitution of national subjectivities in US; Butler (2004) on mourning and trauma as cultural practices of national identity formation; Andén-Papadopoulos (2003: 29-104); Ahmed (2004) on the relationship between fear and trauma and collective identity; Zelizer (2002b) on how national trauma and victimhood articulates individual identity; Webb (2008: 337-353) on collective trauma and mythic national identity in the context of Australia.
2. For further studies on the link between the mediation of death and collective/national identity see Zelizer (2002a, b); Sumiala-Seppanen and Stocchetti (2007); Liebes and Kampf (2007); Frosh and Wolsfeld (2007); Forsh and Pinchevski (2008).
3. The idea of the public sphere as a space of appearance comes from Arendt (1958), where she emphasises the function of the ancient Greek polis as a spectacle, a site for virtuoso performance rather than simply argumentative talk (for discussions see Villa 1999: 128-154; Sennett 1974/1992: 3-27). See also Peters for a similar distinction of mediated public space as a space of 'world disclosure' rather than 'information exchange' (1999: 33-62); Butler for the formation of regimes of emotion and action in the mediated space of visibility (2004); Silverstone for the ethical dispositions towards distant others shaped in the mediapolis (2007).

4. For relevant notions of the public sphere see also Boltanski (1999: 1-19); Chartier (1999: 20-37).
5. It is important to establish this point, given that mainstream theory, including media theory, tends to take for granted the nation category, and to treat it as politically irrelevant (see Schlesinger 1991 for a critical discussion on discourses of 'the nation' in media and politics, also Billig 1995 and Jørgensen and Phillips 2001; Heer and Wodak 2008 on memory and national identity).
6. Aristotle, 'The Nicomachean Ethics' 1140a24-1140b12, 1144b33-1145a11 (transl. by A.K. Thompson, Harmondsworth: Penguin 1976). For the Foucauldian appropriation of the term 'analytics' see Flyvbjerg (1999); for the 'analytics of mediation' see Chouliaraki (2006a; 2006b).
7. Drawing on Aristotle's advice that our enquiries into social life should be driven by the practical consideration of what 'is good or bad for man', the 'analytics of mediation' focuses upon the ways in which particular news texts present the sufferer as a moral cause to the western spectator. This concrete engagement with particular rather than universal values, what Aristotle call 'phronesis' (prudence), grasps the question of ethics from the pragmatic perspective of praxis (Flyvbjerg 2001: 110-128; Ross 1923/1995: 31-49). This is the perspective that takes each particular case to be a unique enactment of ethical discourse that, even though it transcends the case, cannot exist outside the enactment of cases.
8. For the practice of mediation as a structure of address see Butler (2004), Chouliaraki (2006a).
9. The presupposition of this analytical focus is, evidently, that television in the mid-90ies operated along the lines of a 'mass broadcast' model, that is to say it used to act as a collective resource for the construction of 'national culture' by operating in a homogenous public space, where audiences share the same viewing routines, cultural values and social identity (Hartley 2003).
10. Only on July 1, 2008 did the European Court of Human Rights issue judgments in the two cases and in each found violations of Article 2 ECHR on the basis of testimony of UN Peacekeepers and video and photo materials. The Court considered that in none of the two cases the violence had been absolutely necessary and thus found a substantive violation of Article 2. In addition, for lack of any investigation into the circumstances of their deaths, a procedural violation of the same article was found as well. The applicants in the two cases were the families of the deceased.
11. A still picture can be seen in the appendix.
12. The term 'ecstatic' refers to a particular quality of temporality, characteristic of the mediated representation of certain, often extraordinary, events. Slow motion or the frozen frame are two of the editorial options used to insert the mediation of an event into the ecstatic mode (Chouliaraki 2006a; 2008). The term ecstatic, originating in Heidegger's philosophy of Dasein, seeks to capture a sense in which certain events break with our ordinary conception of time as a swift flow of 'now' moments and presents us with 'truly historic time': 'moments when a minute lasts a lifetime, or when a week seems to fly by in next to no time. This is what Heidegger calls "ecstatic temporality", or time taking place in its authentic moment of ek-sistence' (Barker 2002: 75).
13. As opposed to about-to-die images, where the spectacle of suffering rests on a temporality on 'contingency and impossibility', seeking to block negative emotion towards the impending death among media publics (Zelizer 2005: 49), the imagery of actually occurring death passes through alternate temporalities, appeals to the eternal temporality of the sublime and the historical temporality of protest, strategically mobilising, rather than suspending, negative emotion, in the form of indignant denunciation, for purposes of national consensus.
14. There is no space in this chapter to develop the mediation of national trauma (though see Zelizer 1998; Katz and Liebes 2007: 162; Frosh and Wolsfeld 2007: 119-129; Tenenboim-Weinblatt 2008: 495-513), but my use of it draws heavily on Alexander's definition: 'Cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways' (Alexander 2004: 1).

15. For the question of how media texts may participate in turning a group of spectators into a media public see Alexander and Jakobs (1998, 28-32); Seaton (2005: 102-132); Silverstone (2007: 43-55).
16. See Chouliaraki (2000: 293-314) for an analysis of the linguistic discourse of this broadcast in terms of the political potential for deliberative democracy it entails.
17. Even though all media representations can be seen as issuing forth the function of witnessing (Ellis 2001), the broadcast of a dying man requires a specific discussion of the act of witnessing as moral agency – one that, as we shall see, incorporates two distinct but interrelated functions: the bearing witness and eye-witnessing.
18. The question of Otherness enters the text through such expressions as: 'barbaric murders' (in anthropological terms, 'barbaric' is understood as a western concept which signifies the 'Other', i.e. culturally alien practices and values, e.g. Bhabha 1994) and *the opposition between flag as a piece of cloth and the sanctity of human life*, which points to a different polarity of moral values. It is further reinforced through linguistic choices emanating from a political discourse in the Greek field, such as 'monstrosities of Attila'. Attila draws simultaneously on the name of the military operation of invasion in Cyprus in 1974, and on the name of the leader of the Huns, a 'barbarian' himself, who threatened the integrity of the Roman empire, the 'civilised' world of the 4th century AD.
19. By virtue of the powerful position of the political agents which 'carry' this discourse, this disciplinary discourse of western morality is really a discourse of authority, which gives its powerful carriers the right to 'condemn', 'use a harsh language' and 'castigate' wrong morality.
20. Both these positions reflect and combine the discursive politics of the two main historical regimes of public visibility, what Landes refers to as the old regime, which echoes the celebration of the sanctified body of the king, and the new regime, whose public rules evoke the demand for rationalised civil deliberation. Whereas contemporary media are systematically regarded as (successful or unsuccessful) sites for the enactment of public deliberation, nevertheless ceremonial events, including Dayan & Katz (1993) media events and the more recent spectacles of terror (Dayan 2006), can also be seen as modern, secularised enactments of traditional forms of religious witnessing (Frosh and Pinchevski 2008). In this sense, rather than conceiving of mediation as breaking with older forms of public representation in the technological space of appearance, such as television, it is more useful to regard mediation as a process that fuses and re-articulates the political functions of these two different types of public visibility. Both, in turn, are relevant in the study of the imagination of community in the broadcast under study.
21. For a discussion of the implications of this type of broadcast on practices of deliberation and democratic judgement see Chouliaraki (2000: 292-314).

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Appendix

Transcript of News Broadcast

Just after the opening part, there is a video of the shooting and killing of Solomon Solomou, up on the flag post of the Turkish flag, on the 'buffer zone' of Cyprus.

Slow motion, solemn, requiem music. The video image merges with an image of the map of Cyprus in blue, placed at the centre of a set of shooting circles. 'Atilla Killers' appears at the bottom of the map.

Newsreader: Good evening.

Into a rally of denunciation of the *monstrosities of Attila* was transformed the funeral of Solomon Solomou, *who was assassinated in cold blood by the death brigades of Denktas*.

At the same time, in Brussels, the Irish president of the European Union was condemning the two assassinations of Greek-Cypriots by the occupation forces, calling them *barbaric murders*.

Whereas, in Washington, the press representative of the State Department, Nicholas Burnes, used harsh language for the first time since Sunday, in order to condemn the assassinations and to castigate Tansu Chiller's statements, who had claimed that she would break the arms of those daring to haul down the Turkish flag. *The protection of the flag cannot justify the incidents of the 15th of August, said Mr Burnes, adding emphatically that human life and its sanctity are, in any case, more important than the protection of a piece of cloth.*



Picture from ECHR Blog (The European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms). Entry published June 25, 2008: http://echrblog.blogspot.com/2008_06_01_archive.html. (accessed November 27, 2009)

Between Community and Commodity

Nationalism and Nation Branding

Göran Bolin & Per Ståhlberg

Nationalism as a political ideology is suffering badly from old age these days. The notion of a historically demarcated people, or *Volk*, who make up the core or essence of a nation and motivate it as a geo-political entity, is hardly convincing, and the form it often takes, its intolerance towards different others, seems quite unattractive to most people. The nation as an organisational principle, however, still seems to be enjoying vital health. For example, it has been pointed out that there have never been so many nation-states in the world as there are today (e.g. Jacobsson 2006), and new ones are still being added. As a case in point, Europe expanded by one state when Kosovo declared its independence in February 2008, after having been a part of Serbia – itself a new nation-state in post-Yugoslavian Europe. Furthermore, as Craig Calhoun (2007) has recently pointed out, it is difficult to think away the nation because democratic states depend on social solidarity and thus require some notion of ‘the people’ as active and coherent.

If the idea of the nation, then, is still valid, although the official rhetoric of nationalism is rather obscure, we must ask ourselves in which ways nations are constructed culturally and ideologically today. Clearly, the tendency to discuss the nation in principles worked out in the 19th and 20th centuries has its limits. Instead, we need to try to find models for understanding the rhetoric of the nation in relation to contemporary mediated discourses and strategies, often grounded in a neo-liberal cultural logic. This is also the main task of the following, where we look at two recent successful projects of nation branding: Estonia and India. Over the past decade, both these countries have made considerable efforts to establish themselves in the global economy with the help of refashioned national images. We will argue that in the era of neo-liberalism, ‘the nation’ is becoming something quite different from the imagined community of bygone days, and that nation branding has become a historically specific form of producing images of the nation.

Our main argument follows three lines. Firstly, we argue that nation-states are today increasingly acting in the same way as commercial enterprises do. Among the largest 100 economic entities in the world, it has been estimated that only

49 are nation-states.¹ Although these figures are highly controversial, the sheer fact that they have been calculated points to the willingness to equal national economy with corporate economy. As we will argue below, this willingness also opens for state administrations to perceive themselves as corporations, enter into new alliances with, for example, corporate actors, and adopt logics similar to corporate bodies. One such logic is the branding logic of advertising and PR, which takes its most explicit form in nation branding.

Secondly, and as a consequence of the first argument, the past decade has witnessed a shift in audience address in the efforts to construct nations. The traditional nationalistic rhetoric is directed towards a domestic audience, trying to unify and build social solidarity. The new rhetoric is, to the contrary, directed towards an international audience of investors, although the old nationalistic rhetoric can sometimes be used as a resource (for example in the address to foreign tourists).

Thirdly, and as a consequence of the above tendencies by which nation-states enter into alliances with corporate actors, we argue that there has been a change of temporality in the national rhetoric. If nationalism previously looked backwards to history in strategies of 'inventing tradition' (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), today nations are constructing themselves in the making, focussing on what is to become, on potentiality and on the future.

In the following we shall bring substance to these arguments, beginning by clarifying our concepts of nationalism, branding, nation branding, cultural technologies, etc. Secondly, we will theoretically discuss the rise of large-scale marketing and public relations strategies, and how these have evolved historically to the point where we are today, with nations acting like corporations. We will also indicate the specific areas in which this development has been as most revolutionary (as there are still areas where 'traditional' ways of describing the nation are prevalent). Thirdly, we will introduce our two empiric examples to illuminate these historical processes, based on our observations of Estonia and India. Both nations can be said to be involved in a 'de-colonising' process – Estonia from its colonial Soviet past, and India from its colonial British past. Although the countries share this colonial experience, there are also vast differences between them: India is one of the larger populations in the world (roughly one billion inhabitants), while Estonia could be considered one of the minor states when it comes to its population of 1.4 million. We will naturally observe these and other differences in order to extend our argument and show how processes of nation branding are becoming a dominant way of defining the nation. We will end the article with suggestions for further research informed by a re-thought concept of the nation.

From Building to Branding the Nation

Nationalism, that 'principle that holds that the political and national unit should be congruent' (Gellner 1983: 1), has always encompassed cultural qualities,

pointing towards those bonds that are the essence of the nation. In the 19th century, when many of today's older nation-states were born, cultural heritage was constructed as an expression of this essence. Indeed, the projects of nation building were looking backwards, to history, in strategies of 'inventing tradition' (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). Much of this essence was to be expressed in literature and other art forms, often in popular forms such as music (see e.g. Bohlman 2004), or in landscape painting (Adams and Robins 2000: 9). Many of the agents in this process were thus artists, but also intellectuals, and their efforts were directed towards a domestic audience.²

Culture, cultural practices and cultural expressions have thus been prominent ingredients in efforts to construct nations, and have been used as techniques for consolidating geo-political entities such as nation-states, at least since the Enlightenment. We can call these *cultural technologies*, as they are tools for the construction of, among other things, nation-states. Of course, cultural technologies can be anything from the basic communicative tools of language as such, over pen and paper to complex communicating institutions such as journalism, literature and the popular culture industries. However, what we are pointing to more specifically in this context are those communicative tools employed by the mass media, advertising and public relations (cf. Berland 1992).

What is characteristic of the cultural technologies as they were used in the late 18th and the 19th centuries is that they were aimed, to various degrees of purpose, at constructing 'imagined communities' (Anderson 1991) out of more or less heterogeneous groups, ethnicities, classes, etc. The main technologies used were the print media: newspapers and literature, but also art. Later, one can add film and radio (cf. Löfgren 1990). Today, the technological landscapes are more heterogeneous, and the range of cultural technologies accordingly wider.

In the beginning of the 20th century, the advertising industry started to grow.³ Advertising in those times meant advertising consumer goods, that is, material commodities that consumers should choose over competing products from other manufacturers. As Jean Baudrillard (1972/1981), among others, has observed, advertising came to produce signs that became increasingly autonomous from the commodities they were supposed to sell, and the brand that was initially the sign representing the quality of the producer took on qualities of its own. The brand itself became the commodity, rather than the original object the company set out to advertise for. With the rise of the tourism industry towards the end of the century, advertising expanded to include not only material goods for purchase, but also places. Thus developed 'destination branding' in the 1970s (Hanna and Rowley 2008: 63). The application of market technologies to promote cities, villages, regions in the 'global marketplace', is also a phenomenon that has attracted increased academic interest lately (Morgan et al. 2004b: 3, Roy 2007). Much of this research has focussed on the tourism industry, and tourist destinations (hence destination branding), with tourist resorts being analysed in terms of their attractiveness and ability to attract foreign (and domestic) tourists and visitors. This has lately expanded to become

'place branding', to include places other than tourist destinations such as cities and regions (Hanna and Rowley 2008).

It is not until the end of the last century, however, that the concept of *nation branding* appeared. Nation branding, then, is the phenomenon by which governments engage in self-conscious activities aimed at producing a certain image of the nation-state. One early example of a nation branding campaign was the 'Brand Estonia' campaign initiated in 2001 by the Estonian government in connection with the Eurovision Song Contest arrangement in Tallinn in May 2002, in which the British PR agency Interbrand was hired by the Estonian Government to create 'a clear strategy for the image management of Estonia internationally'.⁴ However, it is obvious that similar campaigns are initiated by many governments around the world, with similar objectives: 'Du bist Deutschland' in Germany is but one example. 'Cool Britannia', 'Brand Australia' (Brown et al. 2004) and 'Brand Singapore' (Ooi 2004) are other examples, as is 'Brand India'.

Nation branding has received some scholarly interest lately, most notably from economists and scholars in business administration. However, as has been observed by Sue Curry Jansen (2008) and Melissa Aronczyk (2008), very few of these studies have been conducted from critical perspectives. Many of those writing on the subject are also heavily involved in the practice of nation branding, most notably Simon Anholt and his Nation Brand Index (www.nationbrandindex.com; see also several examples in the edited collection by Morgan et al. 2004a).

Of course, it could be argued that nations have always engaged in branding activities, although the phenomenon has not always been labelled as such. Indeed, the World's Fairs of the 19th century can be considered to be such a branding activity, with the exhibitions functioning as promotional institutions for nation-states. At the World Fairs, nations tried to impress representatives from other nation-states with the most advanced technological inventions and the most refined cultural and artistic expressions of their time.⁵ Admittedly, the World's Fairs can be considered an early but more limited form of nation branding, as they merely displayed technical and artistic products, not populations such as the work force or consumers.

Nation branding can be distinguished from the related concept of 'public diplomacy'. The latter refers to the activities of a government engaged in promoting a certain image of its nation-state to be used as an instrument of power and influence in international *political* relations (Roy 2007: 571). Nation branding could very well be an asset to public diplomacy, but is directed primarily towards the global *market* rather than political actors. Joseph Nye's (2004) recent idea about 'soft power' could perhaps be regarded as a link between the two concepts. The Harvard political science professor is concerned with how the US should increase its global power without relying on military and economic muscle – 'hard power' in his terms. Soft power is the means to make others do what you want them to do without forcing them, a kind of hegemony in practical application. It involves the global spread of 'American values' and

a favourable image of the US, not least through commercial popular culture (see also Hannerz 2007).

Brand Estonia

As an independent and sovereign nation-state, Estonia has a very short history. Its first period of independence started in 1918 and lasted until 1940, when the country became occupied and was brought under Soviet rule. The second period started in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union (Piirimäe 1997). At all other points in history, the geographical area has been under the rule of foreign powers: Danes, Swedes, Germans, Russians, etc.⁶

But what are the popular stories that are told about Estonia? Are they not connected to events and relations born in history? Jan Ekecrantz (2004) has pointed to the fact that over the 20th century, two cultural ideas about Estonia have shown remarkable consistency, as represented in the Swedish press: that of the *Hansa* (a celebration of commerce across borders), and that of the *Backyard* (the 'dangerous conditions beyond the border'). These ideas have been prevalent irrespective of whether Estonia has been independent or under Soviet rule (Ekecrantz 2004: 52). Historically, it is possible to argue that these two ideas have their roots in different epochs, whereby the Hansa idea is the older one that constructs a geo-political space grounded in the commercial connections between cities along the cost of the Baltic Sea, whereas the East as a construction of the Western Other is of later date. As has been pointed out by Mikko Lagerspetz, the East-West divide is more recent, and 'the idea of Europe consisting of an Eastern and a Western part first became commonplace during the Enlightenment, when it replaced the previously prevalent division between the North and the South' (Lagerspetz 2003: 48). So, when Winston Churchill drew the line of the Iron Curtain from 'Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic' in his 1946 speech at Fulton, Missouri, and marked the start of the Cold War, he only confirmed a previous demarcation line that had been effective for nearly two hundred years (Wolff 1994: 1).

There is no doubt, however, that the East-West idea is the more common one today, not only in accounts originating from the West but also in attempts to argue for Estonia's 'return to the Western world' (Lauristin and Vihalemm 1997) after Soviet occupation. Samuel Huntington's (1996) well spread thesis on the clash of civilisations has often proven useful in the support of this argument, in order to show Estonia's affiliation with the West, rather than the Eastern civilisations, as he drew the line east of the Baltic States (Vihalemm 1997: 130-131).

However, at the turn of the Millennium, new images of Estonia started to appear, images that were far from the ones depicting the nation in grey-scale as an Eastern European poor cousin. From several sources, the story of Estonia was described in terms of success, and as a country that had 'recovered' remarkably well and quickly after the years of Soviet rule. In retrospect, former

Prime Minister Mart Laar (1992-1994 and 1999-2002) has described this by saying that after the collapse of the Soviet union, the country 'took advantage of a narrow window of opportunity to radically reform its economy' (Laar 2007: 1). The Index of Economic Freedom and *The Wall Street Journal* named Estonia one of the most 'free' economies in the world, *The Economist* appointed the country as a role model for EU application states, *Newsweek* wrote about its success story under the heading 'The Little Country That Could' (Laar 1996: 97), and several Swedish newspapers celebrated the entrepreneurial spirit of the Estonian people. The country was also reported on as being advanced when it came to the use of modern information and communications technologies (ICTs), especially mobile technology. It was also reported that 90 per cent of all banking transactions were conducted over the Internet in 2002, and that Swedish investors such as Ericsson and Telia were engaging in Estonia (e.g. *Dagens Nyheter* June 18, 2002). But it was not only in the economic and investment spheres that Estonia was pointed out as a forerunner. Estonia marked itself as advanced within political administration as well, as reported in the Swedish press: their parliament was described as the first paperless parliament in the world.

Estonia by Whom?

Who then are the actors in the production of images of Estonia? And in which fora are these images constructed? One of the more important constructors in this process is the Estonian Government, through their organ Enterprise Estonia, which coordinates the activities of the Estonian Tourist Board, the Estonian Technology Agency, the Trade Promotion Agency, and other governmental bodies. The aim of Enterprise Estonia is 'promoting the competitiveness of the Estonian entrepreneurial environment and Estonian businesses, thereby increasing prosperity'.⁷

Three weeks after Estonia won the Eurovision Song Contest (ESC) in Copenhagen, the Estonian government decided to launch a project to deal with the 'Estonian imago', aiming at:

...coordinating the creation of a common brand, developing and implementing a marketing strategy, joining the efforts and resources of business organisations and the state, and general communication. The identity and strategy of Estonian brand should be ready by Eurovision Song Contest in the Spring of 2002. (Enterprise Estonia press release, July 24, 2001, www.eas.ee/1045, accessed September 24, 2002)

Following this, Enterprise Estonia initiated the project Brand Estonia, hiring the British consultancy agency Interbrand. In November of the same year, the deal was closed between the government and Interbrand, and the research involving interviews with foreign key informants was initialised. In order to secure the support of the citizens of Estonia, a survey was also conducted with the aim of

mapping out public support for the spending of state finances on the development of an international brand image for Estonia. All in all, 61 per cent were in favour, although younger citizens were more positive than older ones.⁸

One might think that the Estonian success in the Eurovision Song Contest 2001 in Denmark came in handy for the Estonian government and for Enterprise Estonia, who then took advantage of the new situation and used it to promote the country to the world. However, already a year earlier, in November 2000, the Estonian government had submitted the 6th *Estonian Human Development Report* to the United Nations Development Program. Among chapters dealing with 'The Estonian Labour Market', 'The Changing Family in Estonia and Europe', 'Democracy and the European Union', could be found, in a section on Society and Culture, the chapters 'Estonian Folk Culture Entering the EU Cultural Landscape' and 'Estonia on the Eurovision Landscape' (*Estonian Human Development Report 2000*). The chapter on ESC contained, amid a history of the competition, a hierarchical cluster analysis of voting patterns, in order to assess the taste patterns of the participating nations. In the analysis it turns out that Estonia had been 'relatively successful', which is speculated to be due to either 'generous scores from [...] geographical-cultural neighbours', or the country's 'natural affiliation with Europe'. This tempts the author to pose the more fundamental question: 'Is it that Estonia is part and parcel of modern cultural Europe and possesses the skill to stand up and be noticed even before economic and political integration?' (p. 68). The conclusion of the analysis reads:

Thus the best tactical choice for success in the Eurovision song contest is not a simple orientation to the authentic West, but rather making oneself favourable to other regions. This means we are to offer western style songs to those who can not vote for the West due to historical or cultural considerations. This has worked well for Estonia to date, however the last song contest indicated that similar actors are emerging elsewhere (Latvia, Russia). This will open unexpected vistas for the newcomers of the 90's which may result in surprising victories. This is likely to accentuate, not mitigate, Europe's polarisation on this relatively neutral field, the Eurovision song contest. (*Estonian Human Development Report 2000*: 69)

Although one can read a mildly humorous tone in the statement, there is no doubt that there is also a serious strategy underlying it. And there is no doubt that the formula has indeed been adopted by Eastern European participants, to the baffled surprise of many Western European observers. But this surprise was also predicted in the report, as can be seen in its second-to-last sentence.

Where, then, was the message about Estonia communicated? Three important carriers of information about Estonia, whose impact is clearly visible in the mass media reporting from around the ESC final in Tallinn, were Estonian Air's in-flight magazine *In Time* (Spring 2002), *Tallinn Airport Magazine* (Spring 2002, with female Eurovision host Annely Peebo on the cover as a typically Estonian 'sunshine girl'), and *City Paper* (no. 58, May/June 2002). All three

papers contained articles on Estonia: its economy, history, etc. – often with fact sheets interfoliated with the articles. The opening of the first article, titled ‘Top 10 Misconceptions About Estonia’ in *City Paper* is indicative: ‘Welcome to the place you know as the tiny, obscure, humourless, boring, cold-hearted, sexless, provincial, impoverished wasteland called the ex-Soviet republic of Estonia... Expect that it’s not’ (pp. 7-10). The article was written by the Moscow correspondent for *The Economist*, Edward Lucas, and presents favourable facts about Estonia.

Another major platform for the dissemination of the Estonian message was of course the television show, the text itself. Between the performances came fairy tales built around famous folk tales like Little Red Riding Hood, all containing a message about Estonia (cf. Bengtsson 2002). There were also instructions for the various national commentators in the *Commentator’s notes* that were distributed, containing ‘the information we think you need’ for each of the 50-second narrative slots. Following is an extract of three of the twelve suggested information bits to accompany the Hansel and Gretel fairy tale introducing the Greek contribution under the slogan ‘Countless Internet Connections’:

- Estonia has the highest Internet to population ratio in Central and Eastern Europe and is also ahead of the majority of EU member states.
- 40% of Estonians consider themselves to be regular Internet users.
- 25% of households have a computer and 56% of them are connected to the Internet.

Two days before the final, national commentators were briefed on the fairy tales by the Estonian organisers. There was a compact unwillingness among them to submit to this arrangement, and in an analysis of five national broadcasts of the show, no-one accepted the pre-formulated offer. Estonia was rather ridiculed in the national commentaries, for example in the following quote from UK (in) famous commentator Terry Wogan (quoted from Ericson 2002: 56):

The Greek entry is next, song number 4, SAGAPO. Fairytale is Hansel und Gretel...but I shouldn’t need to tell you that...the cruel stepmother forcing her husband to abandon his children in the forest...you know...witch’s trap, imprisoned, told they will be eaten...(picture of animated owl)...by an owl... (picture of light in the dark)... Then a light! Aha! (picture of a cottage with legs) Yes, I see, cottage’s got legs... (laughter) More than you can say for the fairy-tale idea!...Michael Rakintzis is gonna be singing, with assembled pals. (Slogan: ‘Countless Internet connections’) Yes, I KNEW it would mean that!

Terry Wogan notes that nothing even remotely connected to Estonia or Estonianness is represented in the fairytale. We see from the quote that the fairytale Hansel and Gretel does not need any presentation, as it is supposedly known by all viewers. And to Wogan’s (and others’) amused surprise, the fairytale and slogan do not connect to the following song or anything else. And this

is ridiculed in the commentaries. However, it should also be acknowledged that these comments, although you can easily see the oppositional readings the commentaries give voice to, disappear with the temporal distance to the event, and are in this respect forgotten after a couple of months just as much as last year's winner is, whereas the impression relayed in the in-flight magazines lingers on.

Estonia for whom?

For whom are the images of contemporary Estonia produced? It is indeed easy to see who the primary targets of the Brand Estonia campaign were: foreign investors and tourists. However, to reach these groups, especially the investors who could not be expected to be first in line for a ticket to Saku Suurhall and the final, it was important to first convince the journalists. All in all, 1,500 journalists were accredited to the event, and they were strategically targeted by the Brand Estonia campaign (it is indicative that the party to mark the end of the campaign was held the night before the ESC final – the work was done, the international journalists were in place, and one could celebrate). As most of the journalists came to Tallinn by air, few could escape the in-flight magazines, and the *City Paper* was available at all hotels. It was thus quite easy to reach the target audience of this campaign. One could say that this is the 'two-step flow of communication' theorised by Lazarsfeld et al. (1948) put into practice: having opinion leaders (in this case journalists) relay information to the general public (in this case, EU investors and the general audience of possible tourists).

A secondary, unexpressed, target group that is not forefronted in the same way as are foreign investors and tourists is the domestic opinion, that is, the Estonian citizens, who needed to be convinced of the benefits of Estonia entering the EU. This is not so evident from the direct 'strategic messages', but one can suspect that a change in opinion was desired on the part of the government.

What, then, is the national identity that is on display for these target groups? A closer look at the report *Eesti Stiil* (Estonian style) (Enterprise Estonia 2002), one of the results of the Brand Estonia campaign, reveals some highlighted features in this 'brand identity'. The 'design elements', slogans, 'visual messages', colour palette, typeface and video clips semiotically point in specific directions, which are also occasionally anchored in specific goals expressed in the report, such as 'how much more fitting and motivating a worldwide understanding of it [i.e. Estonia] as a Nordic country' would be, instead of how 'limiting and potentially misleading a "Baltic" regional grouping' has been (Enterprise Estonia 2002: 51).

As a marker for the brand, the sign of its 'essence', stands the slogan 'positively transforming', indicating the changing nature of the country and its inhabitants. Naturally, this is also a sign of a willingness to adapt to outer demand from interested foreign parties. It is even claimed that it 'is in the nature of the Estonian people to look for positive change', thus anchoring the

slogan in a supposed national characteristic that ‘represents Estonia in a way that is forward-looking, sustainable and immediately relevant to the commercial objectives’ of the project (Enterprise Estonia 2002: 62).

This future-oriented slogan was accompanied by young men and women in a photo gallery that was widely distributed on CD-ROMs, on the web and in print material. The men, in business suits, gaze firmly into the camera and with self-assured postures; the women, with children, smile at the viewer. Other themes were modern (not post-modern) architecture, handicraft (ceramics), and natural scenes in a sort of equivalent to nationalistic landscape painting: epic scenes of the sea, misty morning forests, old peasants in ancient farmland milieus, etc. The ‘symbolic annihilation’ (Tuchman 1978) of people in the middle generations, those who were born during the Soviet occupation and presumably marked by Soviet ideology, is also striking. This is a part of history that is cleansed from these images, and is never mentioned as heritage or a historic influence. In pictures of the map of Estonia, the country opens up to the West, whereas the map is abruptly cut off towards Estonia’s eastern border to Russia (cf. Bolin 2006b: 82-84).

We have further analysed and exemplified these ‘commercial speech-acts’ in more detail elsewhere (Bolin 2006b), and shall therefore not take up more space with this here. Evidently, the printed information in the in-flight and tourist magazines was very effective and was uncritically reproduced in Swedish and other print media. The information that was supposed to be relayed by the television commentators was indeed not. And to be fair, there were also features in the press that were critical to the branding efforts of Estonia. So, how can we evaluate the campaign against that information? Why does the stereotypical positive image seemingly outlast the critical objections? We shall return to this question towards the end of our next example, Brand India.

Brand India

Until quite recently, some stories would have been almost compulsory for a Swedish reporter sent out on assignment to India, and some places would be more likely than others on his/her travel route. The main themes of the Indian ‘storyline’ (Hannerz 2004) were poverty, religion, caste, violence and rural life. The reporter would perhaps have written about beggars in Calcutta, Sadhus in Varanasi and life in some typical villages. But that was yesterday. Today, the stories are different. Journalists look for call centres in Bangalore, shopping malls in Gurgaon and enterprising spirit in places like Pune or Hyderabad. The storyline has certainly changed. By now, Swedish media consumers know very well that India is a country that has a great deal to do with globalisation and high-tech. We know that its economy is booming, its growing middle class is consuming and its youths are well educated.

The present image of India in Sweden is not unique. This is how the country is understood across the world these days. A country that not long ago was *the*

symbol of Third World poverty and traditionalism has suddenly gained a new reputation. If we follow the world through international news magazines, we are no longer surprised when 'The New Superpower' is the topic in ambitious cover stories, and the flow of books by scholars and journalists about 'the strange rise of India' seems to be endless (Das 2002, Kamdar 2007, Luce 2006, Nath 2008, Tharoor 2007). Admittedly, though, India frequently has to share this attention with China. Pundits claim that the rest of the world now has to prepare for a new era dominated by 'The Dragon and the Elephant' (Meredith 2007, Smith 2007, Winters and Yusuf 2007).

Having been away from India for several years, we wanted to have a refreshed look at the new Superpower. What did it look like, the booming India, full of the shining new office towers and shopping malls we have heard so much about in recent years? It was in early 2006, so 'The World's Fastest Growing Free Market Democracy' was really on the global agenda. In Davos, some weeks earlier, this slogan had been the main theme; Klaus Schwab, Swiss Chairman of the World Economic Forum, had been sporting a turban and free iPods with Bollywood hit songs had been distributed to all the delegates. And virtually all major international news magazines had featured the 'rising elephant' on their covers during the previous few months. State leaders and other dignities all seemed to have India on their travelling schedule. Swedish banks advertised their new 'India funds'. It was truly 'India everywhere'.

'Bangalore is already old, go and visit Hyderabad', said our Indian friends. 'That's the new Indian cybercity where Microsoft, Google, Dell and all the other multinational IT companies now are heading. Even George Bush is coming any day now', we were told.

On arrival, this indeed seemed a bit puzzling. There were certainly wide roads in Hyderabad, and quite a few shopping malls and new office buildings. But between these places, it was still a very recognisable cityscape of dilapidated buildings, potholed roads and dirty by-lanes. Fortunately, most markets still consisted of small shops and shacks that were not so posh and shiny. And very few people looked like software entrepreneurs. Definitely, this was not like Kansas or Kuala Lumpur – very far from. We felt nothing like *The New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman did, when, at the first tee of a Bangalore golf course, he was advised by his playing partner to '[a]im at either Microsoft or IBM' – and was suddenly struck by inspiration for his globalisation gospel, *The World is Flat* (Friedman 2005).

We should of course not neglect the argument that the new image of India is a well based, true reflection of reality (after all, President Bush was actually in India – spending four hours in Hyderabad – when we visited). The huge domestic market and the impressive rise of the Indian GNP since the early 1990's validate this claim. But, on the other hand, is it not strange to describe a country with the world's largest population under the poverty line as having a prosperous economy?²⁹ And, is a country that ranks 26th among leading exporters and 17th among importers truly a global superpower to reckon with – on par with China, which is indisputably among the top three importers and

exporters of the world (World Trade Organization 2007)? It might be fair to say that even though India has certainly changed in an economic sense, the transformation of its international image is even more astonishing. Brand India has surely been more successful than any Bangalore call centre has.

India for whom?

Broadly speaking, Brand India should be understood in contrast to not one but two earlier representations of India: the orientalist and the nationalist. The first is the view from afar of the exotic India, which covers both spirituality and poverty (Inden 1990); the second is the domestic idea of India as a historical community struggling heroically for its independence (Khilnani 1997). Neither of these representations is completely gone, of course, but they have surely been transformed by the new dominant image. Brand India, however, should not be confused with either orientalism or nationalism. It does not originate in literature (like orientalism) or politics (like nationalism) but was invented in the sphere of business.

Brand India comes, however, in two rather distinct forms. One is intended to market India as an international tourist destination, the other for promoting the country as an option for investment and trade. The former, 'destination branding', is the one most easily confused with either orientalism or nationalism, because it has borrowed a great deal from these imaginaries. It draws on the Taj Mahal, beautiful scenes, colourful markets, traditional clothing, elephants, camels and yoga exercises. But in contrast to orientalism, the tourist version of India is not completely a view from afar, and unlike nationalism it is not primarily a domestic concern; the construction of India as a tourist destination is produced both outside and within India in versions that are sometimes dissonant but are generally very similar (Bandyopadhyaya and Morais 2005). Since 2002, the Indian Ministry of Tourism has promoted India for international tourism in collaboration with the private sector in a very ambitious campaign called 'Incredible India'.¹⁰ This campaign is the first attempt to showcase India in a concerted manner in order to increase the previously very small inflow of foreign tourists – and hopefully to replace low-budget travellers with more money-spending holidaymakers. Personal enlightenment and cultural diversity have formed the prime focus of the campaign, which seems to have been quite successful (Bandyopadhyaya and Morais 2005).

The other form of Brand India, proper 'nation branding', is an image promoting India not for leisure but for business. It is more remarkable than destination branding because it lacks virtually all similarities to former ideas of what India stands for. A businessman does not look for 'incredible' places but rather for good opportunities to make money. Thus, mogul architecture, spirituality and exotic wildlife have a very limited place in this form of India branding. The main appeal of this image is made up of something rather unspectacular for the tourist's gaze: a growing middle class. There are plenty of people in India who are 'like us' and are therefore attractive as both skilled workers and eager

consumers: this is a place where stuff can be done, made and sold. That is the idea of this form of Brand India.

This is exactly what we read about India in newspapers across the world these days. Indians can make a great deal of goods and services, and incredibly cheap. There are millions of young, well-educated Indians who are able to write tricky software and answer the phone in accurate English. They can even manufacture complicated technology. The Tata Nano made headlines in early 2008. It will be the cheapest car in the world (1 lakh Indian rupees, or 2,500 USD) but completely up to date with the latest technology; 'eco-friendly, fuel efficient, meets all safety standards', according to media reports from the New Delhi Auto Expo.¹¹ And Indians buy a great deal of things too. One of the most repeated 'facts' about the new India in international media is the growing number of mobile phones sold every month (8 millions seems to be the recent figure). But watch out. These Indians are now even buying 'our' precious things, from steel companies (Arcelor) to car brands (Jaguar and Land Rover).

India by whom?

While the mass media are circulating the new image of India, they are not exclusively responsible for its production. The media build largely on imageries that other actors are constructing. International organisations like the World Bank and the World Trade Organization are important sources of the new idea of a rising India.¹² Reports about India from other states that are trying to understand what is going on in Asia also supply material for media coverage,¹³ particularly if the source comes from the United States and contains the assurance that the emergence of China and India by the year 2020 'will transform the geopolitical landscape, with impacts potentially as dramatic as those in the previous two centuries'.¹⁴ Banks and financial institutes with multinational presence also regularly produce economic reports and analyses of India's emergence in world economy, which feeds into media stories about the new superpower. Golman Sachs' 2003 BRIC report¹⁵ is among the most influential and widely referred sources regarding the expectation of a coming Indian superpower.

However, Brand India is also produced within India, by Indian mass media (in contemporary Bollywood films the hero might be a cosmopolitan, completely at home in New York as well as in New Delhi) and public intellectuals happy to dwell on the new glory of their country (Das 2002, Tharoor 2007, Nath 2008, Varma 2004). And Brand India is naturally promoted by the government and domestic industry. There are several powerful lobby organisations disseminating material about the Indian successes, one of the most influential being *India Brand Equity Foundation*, a public-private partnership between the Government of India (Ministry of Commerce and Industry) and the Confederation of Indian Industry. Its explicit aim is to run a branding campaign for India and effectively present the Indian business perspective to the global market. In its own words: 'Achievements. Successes. Growing

consuming class driving demand. Vibrant democracy. People who dare to dream. Indians and India have a story to tell'. (<http://www.ibef.org/aboutus.aspx>, accessed March 10, 2008).

A newspaper that wants to do the 'rising India story' or a business executive considering entering an 'emergent market' (Rajagopal 1999) will find a surplus of material on the homepage of this organisation. IBEF supplies material commissioned by the Indian government or industry. A main document, displayed prominently since 2003, was prepared by The Boston Consulting Group: *India's New Opportunity – 2020: 40 million new jobs: \$200 billion annual revenue*.¹⁶ The IBEF homepage also refers extensively to external sources such as economic reports and country profiles from investment banks or finance analysts, for example *Doing Business in India* from Ernst & Young.¹⁷ Of course, they supply links to major international magazines and newspapers that have already done stories on the 'next superpower'. *Newsweek*, *Business Week* and *The Economist* are among the foundation's favourite sources. There is also a news section on the homepage that reports on major business deals involving Indian companies and other kinds of positive India exposure in international and domestic media; headlines from March 2008 include 'Young Indians Happiest in the World', 'Four Indians among the top ten billionaires on the Forbes list' and 'India the 6th most popular nation in the US'.

IBEF also provides information packages, brochures, PowerPoint presentations, posters and films with the uniform message that India is 'The World's Fastest Growing Free Market Democracy'. It was of course IBEF who orchestrated the grand Indian spectacle at the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2006.¹⁸

Visually, the IBEF material looks very different from what you may see in the 'Incredible India' campaign from the Ministry of Tourism. The latter makes extensive use of bright colours – 'pure white, coffee brown, mustard yellow, mystic maroon' – curved ornaments and traditional designs; while IBEF sticks to a few restrained colours – mostly orange and green, the colours of the Indian flag – squares, rectangles and straight lines. The pictures show new cars, engines, manufacturing plants and shiny offices with neatly dressed staff. In contrast to the 'Incredible India' campaign, there are no attempts to create an impression of India as 'different'. Rather the opposite: India is fully interchangeable with other advanced places in a globalised world. It is only with great care that this cosmopolitan imagery is given a little dash of 'exotic India', in an occasional picture of a Rajasthan palace or a view of the Himalayas.

In all the PR material from IBEF, their main slogan is displayed prominently. No one can miss the message that India is the 'Fastest Growing Free Market Democracy'.¹⁹ The material is often structured thematically with the help of these five words. The promotional film 'India Now'²⁰ starts with a *tabla* beat and film sequences in which modern India (fast cars, a fashion show, Bollywood stars, a man jogging in a park) is mixed with a few scenes of recognisable 'Indian' settings (a crowded railway station, the Taj Mahal, a boy with a cricket bat). Then come the key words, illustrated by a flow of moving images of a modern nation on a speedy track:

FASTEST: over 8% GDP growth, rapid growth in infrastructure, redefining standards.

GROWING: growing aspirations, pervasive communication, largest knowledge workforce.

FREE: flourishing spirit of enterprise, open to competition.

MARKET: over 450 million middle class consumers and 30-40 million added every year, 'Best country to be investor in' *Newsweek*.

DEMOCRACY: largest democracy, independent judiciary, free press, continued trust in reforms.

'India Now' codifies the essence of an image of India that without doubt has been spread very successfully around the world. But this is not to say that 'superpower India' has no sceptics and that the old image of a poor and unequal country has been completely wiped out. If one looks carefully at the lengthier feature stories in news media, few foreign correspondents fail to mention that India is still the home of more poor people than any other country in the world, or that 70 per cent of Indians still live in small villages. Some journalists and writers are also eager to modify the country's image of success by pointing to 'another India': writing 'against the story line' (Hannerz 2007: 143-145) about crumbling roads, jammed airports and even cast inequalities or farmer suicides. But these descriptions are mostly narrated in a subordinate relation to the image of success and economic growth. Even alternative media reports have to relate explicitly to the main storyline, thereby retelling it, as we also saw in our Estonian example, in which several commentators in the media were highly sceptical but still had to relate to the dominant storyline.

Inside India, however, the success story has experienced some very hostile political reactions. In 2004, for example, the government in power lost the general election when trying to run a kind of Brand India campaign for domestic consumption. 'India Shining' was the slogan that backfired, reminding a majority of Indian voters that they were being left behind in the rising superpower. Furthermore, some domestic voices, critical to the superpower image, are also celebrities in the global justice movement, such as author Arundati Roy, environment activist Vandana Shiva and journalist P. Sainath. But, importantly, even though these people and their opinions are well known outside India, their presence in the domestic debate is relatively limited.

Themes and Variations in Nation Branding

Our examples of two branding campaigns were not chosen because Estonia and India represent similar kinds of states. Indeed, these two nation branding efforts have been driven by states that seem to have very little in common, historically as well as politically. Their geographical locations make a signifi-

cant difference. Estonia is branded primarily in the context of Europe, while India is branded on a global scale. The historical and political situations that contextualise these campaigns are therefore different. It is the demise of the Soviet Union and the integration of a new Europe that situate the present and future of Estonia, while India is branded in the context of a transformed global economy and the rise of Asia.

The difference in size and population is also huge. The whole population of Estonia would not even make it into the top ten of large Indian cities. No matter how successful Estonia would be, no one would talk about such a small state in terms of a superpower. A populous state like India may be attractive to investors because of its enormous consumption potential, whereas Estonia can merely attract tourists and sell its workforce.

The difference in size of these two states may also explain why Estonia has run an integrated branding campaign, directed at tourists and investors as well as a domestic audience. A large state like India, on the other hand, may diversify its branding intentions, running separate and very different campaigns for tourists and investors; as well as campaigns aimed at its own citizens orchestrated through completely different channels.

Nevertheless, the mechanisms of nation branding are the same irrespective of size and context. In this sense, nationalism and nation branding share a similar feature: they are both very flexible ideas that may work almost everywhere. The point in our comparative approach is that through their difference, these two examples of branding shed light on each other and on our general understanding of how 'the nation' is constructed in the contemporary world.

From Identity to Appearance

From academic discourse, for a few decades now we have been learning to understand the basic ideas of 'the nation' from studies on nationalism (Anderson 1991, Billig 1995, Gellner 1983, 1987, Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983, Kedourie 1993). These studies have looked at nationalism as cultural/political projects from the 18th century up to the most recent phase of nation building in the last decades of the 20th century. We know that 'the nation' is an elusive but cleverly constructed entity that belongs primarily, though not exclusively, to the sphere of politics. It is a cultural identity imagined for political consumption. The nation transforms social solidarity into political practice by building commonalities inwards and differences outwards. The building blocks of this imagination consist to a large degree of bits and pieces of tradition and history, more or less factual or invented. Those who give shape to the nation are, as we have learnt, politicians, intellectuals and artists. Finally, the nation is put to political use primarily within the very same community it defines.

The question is: Does this basic understanding of nationalism tell the complete story about how nations are imagined today?

The nation branding campaigns we describe in this article seem to be concerned with an entity that resembles the effort of nationalists to construct cultural/political communities. Sometimes nation branders even use the same tools and symbols, but it is not the same thing. On almost every point, the nation branding campaigns diverge from the typical nationalist projects.

First, nations are not branded for their usefulness in politics, but rather for their value on the market. Thus, even though nation branding has political significance, it is a phenomenon of economic logic, not of political ideology. Furthermore, political actors might very well promote and initiate nation branding, but they commission their campaigns to commercial consultancies, not to intellectuals and artists.

Second, the branded nation is, moreover, not primarily meant for domestic consumption, but rather to attract an external audience. The consultancies that create nation brands are not particularly interested in building social solidarity. Their aim is not to produce communities but rather commodities. Nationalists were obsessed with 'us', whereas the brand consultancies are more concerned with convincing 'the other'. The branded nation could of course also be useful in domestic political projects – just as nationalist imaginaries sometimes also appeared in front of external audiences at, for example, World Fairs. But this is a secondary use of nation branding, and a risky one, as the Indian example shows.

Third, a fundamental process of nationalism is to strive towards homogenisation inwards and differentiation outwards. Nation branding does not necessarily work the same way. As we have seen, neither Estonia nor India is particularly eager to appear in front of the rest of the world as particularly 'different'. Rather, they want to be 'like everyone else', or to be more precise 'like everyone else in the developed world'. Internal diversity is thus not a problem but an asset.

Fourth, if nationalism is passionately preoccupied with history and tradition, the projects of nation branding are somewhat haphazardly looking over their shoulder at the past. Instead, the temporal link concerns *the future*. The future is for nation branding what history is for nationalism. The building blocks of nation branding are potential opportunities; the past is often considered an embarrassment that is covered up, or at least not mentioned. The very point of both the Estonian and Indian branding campaigns is to eradicate previous images. Nation branding strives at the disjuncture of history. This is also the clue to how 'the nation' today relates to a neo-liberal cultural logic.

The Neo-liberal Nation

The problem with rethinking the nation is that the very concept is so closely associated with collective identity. Even those few scholars who have studied the phenomenon of nation branding explicitly, and have realised that it operates with a very different logic than nationalism does, have a hard time avoiding situating the branded nation within the broader frame of 'identity'.²¹

But nation branding does not have the issue of social solidarity as its primary object. In the first instance, the branded nation has to be convincing to 'others', not to those people who might identify with it. If a nation is crafted in order to build a community, it has to answer convincingly on three crucial questions: 'Who are we?', 'Where do we come from?' and 'Where are we going?' For nation branding, the two first questions are highly ephemeral, and only the last has significance. The nationalists used history to build social solidarity in the present in order to move safely towards an uncertain future. The branded nation does not seem to need history; it is the representations of the future that form the main force influencing the present.

One reason for this is that nation branding does not engage in community building. Already, this basic observation points at the thought that the logic behind nation branding has more to do with liberalism, as an ideology more informative on individual agency than on collective cohesion (Calhoun 2007: 151), than with nationalism. But the mode of temporality that signifies nation branding is also part of a more specific cultural logic of the present time. Richard Sennett (2006) calls it the culture of the new capitalism, but it is more often reflected on in terms of neo-liberalism (Harvey 2005). It is a political rationality associated with the restructuring of global political economy towards more privatisation, deregulation and marketisation. This is also the logic of inevitable progress and triumphal visions of the future (Gill 1995; Ong and Collier 2005: 17). Past experiences are abandoned and the present state of things short lived. It is potentiality that counts.

This is, one should acknowledge, similar to how the stock market and the world of corporate capitalism work. The market value of a company is not calculated from its performance in the past (those times are long gone), nor by its present profits, but rather by its potential to generate financial returns in the future. This is also the cultural logic behind nation branding, whereby nations are marketed in the same way as companies are: what they may have been in the past, or what they are today, is far less interesting than what they might become in terms of anticipated profit, or expanding consumer markets, tomorrow. This is also why one can find statistics that compare the economies of nations with that of corporations, as we hinted at in the beginning of this article. This is the true commodification of the idea of the nation.

An analogy to the relationship between advertising and branding can illustrate this. With the development of branding in the wake of intensified market competition, the brand has taken on qualities of its own. In today's era of immaterial commodity production, the worth of a brand is more important than the consumer products on offer. Brands like YouTube are valued in terms of the multitude of consumers they can offer (1.65 billion USD when sold to Google in 2006).²² The commodity sold was access to an estimated 20 million visitors each month. Like with YouTube, it could be argued that when nation-states brand themselves, what they are marketing is the access to a consumption force to be exploited by foreign capital. Nation branding, then, relates to nationalism similarly to how branding does to advertising.

Conclusions

If the nation today has become a concern for brand marketing in the world economy, does this mean that nationalism as a political idea is dead? No, we would certainly not make that claim. It would indeed be stretching our argument too far if we argued that the branded nation has replaced the political nation. There are several places in the world – not only recently created states, but also older ones – where nationalism is still a strong political force. However, and this is our main point, the ‘nationalists’ of today cannot articulate the nation outside the logic of neo-liberal capitalism. If yesterday’s nation builders were able to focus on building social solidarity, this is hardly possible today when the nation also has to be branded for global attraction (or consumption). In fact, the two logics of nationalism and nation branding exist simultaneously. The question is rather to what degree these two logics compete with or reinforce each other. In several ways, the political and commercial interests in the nation seem to converge. National integration and identity are basic to many efforts at economic development. And, as Calhoun (2007) argues, the nation-state is the only realistic provider of a foundation that secures the legal frameworks that can make possible re-regulations, to uphold intellectual property rights, patent rights and other frameworks for the market economy. Accordingly, the market would also agree with Calhoun that ‘[if] nationalism is over, we shall miss it’ (ibid.: 151).

But it should also be acknowledged that a nation is not branded with its citizens in mind. For anyone who insists that a certain degree of national integration and solidarity is crucial to democracy, it should be a disturbing fact that powerful images of nations are produced for the market and not for ‘the people’. In this article we have argued for a conceptual distinction between nationalism and nation branding. But what happens when the logics of nation branding and nationalism are blurred? As a topic for further research, we suggest that one further analyse the intersection of these two logics. Estonia and India are equally eager to construct images of the nation for domestic integration as well as global consumption. Increasingly, so are many other places, for example new states like Kosovo and Georgia (where President Mikheil Saakashvili is a particularly interesting actor in his well integrated nationalist and branding rhetoric). It is indeed a major task for future research to critically examine the effects produced in different national contexts by these intersecting logics.

Notes

1. ‘Of the worlds largest economic entities, 51 are now corporations and 49 are countries’. www.corporations.org/system/top100.html. (accessed April 15, 2008) Figures valid for the year 2000.
2. We are of course aware of our quite general painting of the processes of nationalism, and that we do not account for the vast differences between several kinds of nationalism and nation-building processes. For more nuanced portrayals of these, see, for example, Ernest Gellner’s (1997) short but elusive account in *Nationalism*.

3. An account from the US can be found in Budd et al. (1999: 6ff). Some Swedish examples from 1950s and onward can be found in Albinsson et al. (1964: 13).
4. 'Interbrand'. www.interbrand.com/portfolio_details.asp?portfolio=2089. (accessed March 31, 2008)
5. For a fuller account of the World's Fairs as 'cultural technologies of nation-states', see Bolin (2006a).
6. It is of course not possible to speak of influences of or occupations by nation-states for the oldest times, say around 1200, the century when the Danes arrived and constructed a citadel on Toompea, called 'Taani-linn', meaning 'Danish Citadel', which eventually became Tallinn (Piirimäa 1997: 45).
7. 'EAS Enterprise Estonia'. www.eas.ee. (accessed April 2, 2008)
8. www.eas.ee/1223. (accessed September 24, 2002)
9. A recent report from the World Bank (Developing Research Group 2008, WP 4703) estimates that 455 million Indians live under the poverty line of \$1.25 a day.
10. *Incredible India*. www.incredibleindia.org. (accessed March 10, 2008)
11. Chang (2008) 'Tata Nano: The World's Cheapest Car', *New York Times*, January 8, 2008. <http://wheels.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/01/10/tata-nano-the-worlds-cheapest-car/>. (accessed March 10, 2008)
12. Recent examples are the World Bank report no. 31267-IN (2005), *India and the Knowledge Economy: Leveraging Strengths*; Winters, Alon and Shahid Yusuf (eds). 2007 [commissioned by the World Bank].
13. An example from Sweden is 'India's Emergence as a Global R&D Center', Working paper R2007:012, Swedish Institute for Growth Policy Studies.
14. *Mapping the Global Future: Report of National Intelligence Council's 2020 Project*. <http://www.foia.cia.gov/2020/2020.pdf>. (accessed March 10, 2008)
15. BRIC stands for Brazil, Russia, India and China. According to Goldman Sachs, these countries taken together could become larger markets than the G7 countries within the next 50 years. *Goldman Sachs: BRICs*. www2.goldmansachs.com/ideas/brics/index.html. (accessed March 10, 2008)
16. All India Management Association and the Boston Consulting Group (2003) *India's New Opportunity-2020: 40 Million New Jobs: \$200 Billion Annual Revenue*. ibef.org/download/IndiaNewOpportunity.pdf. (accessed March, 10 2008)
17. Ernst & Young (2006) *Doing Business in India*. ibef.org/download/Final_DBI_2006.pdf. (accessed March 10, 2008)
18. As a resource base, run by powerful political and economical agents outside the West, it is an interesting phenomenon in connection to the reawakened debate about the global communication and information order. To what extent do lobby groups like IBEF function as gatekeepers, supplying international media organisations with credible material pointing convincingly in a desired direction? For a discussion of this matter, see *Global Media and Communication* 1(3): 2005.
19. A major point of this slogan is, of course, to distance oneself from China as an even faster growing free market – although it is not considered a Democracy.
20. *India Now*. http://ibef.org/videos/india_now.mpg. (accessed March 10, 2008)
21. Melissa Aronczyk (2007) uses 'identity strategies' in the title of her article about nation branding consultants, and Sue Curry Jansen (2008) is, in her very insightful account, publishing her article on 'designer nations' in the journal *Social Identities*, where the very context of the journal privileges the reader in the direction of identity categorisation no matter what the article argues.
22. www.msnbc.msn.com/id/15196982/. (accessed April 27, 2008)

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II. Nations and Empires Revisited

The Future is a Foreign Place

Topographies of Post-Communism, Nation and Media

Inka Salovaara-Moring

This chapter focuses on nation-building as part of media system development in post-Communist countries. After the collapse of Soviet Communism in the early 1990s, Central and Eastern European countries embarked on a programme to reconstruct their political and cultural nationhood. The region's development was unprecedented as systems of economy and national media were simultaneously crafted alongside a new sense of national community. The fabrication of nationhood had been dismissed as irrational, if not dangerous, during the Soviet era but it re-emerged through a newfound freedom of speech within modified cultural reproduction and evolving media systems. The story of an empire, the constellation of states that was submerged under a single identity for most of the twentieth century – the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics – was over. Consequently, new demands concerning media practices, possibilities for citizen participation, and the maintenance of national consent on political and economic issues were considered to be of greater importance than ever before.

However, in contrast to the hopes of many observers, 'New Europe' didn't beat a direct path towards a Western model. Instead, the complex interplay of such things as culture, emerging technology and free market economics meant that, in most cases, the new nation-states were forced to leapfrog steps in the Western trajectory and adjust themselves directly to the requirements of global realities. This created multiple conceptual dilemmas in analysis of media development, nation-building and the protection of small cultures in a global framework (Sükösd and Bajomi-Lazar 2003; Aumente et al. 1998; Smith et al. 1998). How did collective memory modify nation-building and media in these societies? How much did cynicism, mistrust and other legacies of the Soviet era define these evolving democratic systems? How did different generations of journalists see their role as part of social change?

The aim of this chapter is to explore nation-building through the reflections of Central Eastern European cultural elites. Nationhood is experienced through at least three different channels: as material practices, as representations, and through lived experience. Hence, nation-building takes place in the physical

surroundings of everyday life, in representative practices of nationhood, and in social imaginaries of people. In order to understand social change in general, and nation-building in particular, the dynamics of media as a part of cultural systems, people and their lived experiences are of salient importance. Through their eyes the formation of nation-building can be simultaneously captured in two processes: 'topographies of stolen time/space' is a process in which the actors organise the past by remembering Soviet times and re-assembling that legacy within the realities of Capitalism; and, 'topographies of the nation' describes the process in which the same actors adapt media systems to complex trans-national surroundings, and negotiate between new ideological regimes and Western ideals within their societies. These new national configurations look for the equilibrium between ideals and empirical reality within the evolving media systems; pondering upon which ideals can be preserved. Empirical examples are drawn from in-depth interviews with Central Eastern European journalists and intellectuals, as well as their writings.¹

Topographies of Stolen Time

For a long time Europe was symbol of something that was lost. Of course it was important to return to a lost mythical Europe. But nobody paid much attention to the fact that the Europe had changed during that time when we were under Soviet rule. It was not anymore that Europe where our artists were when they were in Paris (laughing). (Latvian media specialist in personal interview)

To summarise the experience of post-Communist countries during the 1990's, Estonia's former Prime Minister Mart Laar (2002: 78) stated, 'No one ever said that making the transition from Communist totalitarianism to democracy would be easy. No guidelines were marked out; no textbooks were available'. The situation after the collapse of the Soviet system definitely met the requirements of Durkheimian *anomie*: the lack of regulation, specifically of desires and passions, shattered value structures and the void of ideological content. As the sociologists Gil Eyal, Iván Szelenyi and Eleanor Townsley (1998: 6) described, post-Communist society comprised a unique social structure in which new forms of cultural capital became the main source of power and prestige in place of earlier forms of political capital overnight. Thus those who had been at the top of the social hierarchy under state-socialism only maintained their position if they were capable of 'trajectory adjustment'.

Capitalism itself was constructed within a region that lacked both a natural capitalist class and a tradition liberal democracy. Clearly, the bourgeoisie could not fulfil this role as they had in the West as they had long been removed by state-socialism. Whilst the intelligentsia had been in a prominent position in national reproduction during the Soviet times they were quickly augmented by new types of actors: managers, businessmen, technocrats, politicians and also a new generation of journalists. Hence, only the most flexible of actors

survived with their place in the new structures intact. However, as Romanian sociologist Vladimir Tismaneanu (1998) emphasised, those intellectuals who fought against Communism were not automatically democrats although they bore a great responsibility for shaping political discourse. All in all, the social structures of the new societies were fluid and had a strong affect on the development of nationhood and media.

Democratic consolidation in the region during the 1990s took place alongside the creation of a complex media market and dual media system. The construction of the new media landscape had to start almost from scratch with Central and Eastern European legislators passing the first generation of media laws in the early 1990s to establish democratic and free media systems. These laws were generally liberal in character, with memories of Socialist rule still clear and raw. In the new democracies there was particularly little sympathy for economic regulation, which led to the formation of a variety of systems that today belong to the most deregulated systems in the Western world. These Eastern European media systems were acting as 'media laboratories' that were forced to adjust to the overall development of the global open economy.

In most cases political and economic transformation was conducted through imitation rather than invention. Those systems that seem to have worked in the West were initially accepted because there was no time for extensive experimentation. This could come later but, in the meantime, the situation created a new layer of actors seeking their place in evolving social structures and practices. Journalists held an especially salient role in constructing new national communities and adjusting them to the larger socio-cultural frame (see Salovaara-Moring 2009a, 2009b). They saw the new external benchmarks as natural although national subordination in order to become part of the West was also recognised:

The West – has provided the conceptual space into which these countries then fitted themselves and, obviously, the elites have found it very easy to transpose themselves into these spaces because any country needs elites and therefore their opinions have been more or less organic part of development. They have...it's a bit like throwing or switching the heads – you just consider yourself European, you do everything that was required of you. (Estonian journalist in personal interview)

The willingness to comply to common European ideals was so widespread that social and political development were accelerated and many reforms took place in a very short period of time.

All those 10 years, we so much wanted to be part of Europe or part of NATO that we would do whatever we were told. It's a good thing that the West actually told us those things, I don't know where the country would have gone if they hadn't said 'clean up', 'fight corruption' and do that kind of thing but it created a certain type of mentality: you don't make trouble; you say "yes" and you do. (Latvian journalist in personal interview)

According to Hiebert (1998: 110) Central Eastern European journalists in the mid-1990s roughly fell into four categories: 1) unreformed Communist journalists inherited from an earlier era, 2) old Communist journalists who had been converted into entrepreneurs, often through buying newspapers, setting up television/radio channels/new journalists who were businessmen, 3) new journalists who were partisans and practiced advocacy journalism, taking part in the political struggles within their respective societies, and, 4) old/new journalists who adopted Western style objective and adversarial journalism. The last group of new journalists possessed new types of cultural capital (education and language skills) and an ideologically empty space within their mindset where the new economic requirements of media business found fertile soil. Suddenly, within the post-transition media there were different generations of journalists with different ideological backgrounds and aspirations working side by side.

Many older journalists were able to abandon Marxist-Leninist ideology relatively easily and there was continuity in the sense that many senior journalists took editorial and management positions in the newly privatised media. How these dynamics were actualised naturally depended on the country, political orientation and the medium in question. In general, as Ekiert and Hanson (2003: 27) observed, in much of the former Socialist world, cynicism towards the earlier era had become so widespread that Communism's 'true believers' were regarded as ridiculous after 1989. One thing that was common to most was that the former utopias (of Communism) were now interpreted as pathologies that had healed over. As a young Lithuanian journalist remarked, 'Many journalists from Soviet times already had spoiled thinking, damaged thinking, bad education but still understood many things (of the past)'. By this she simply implicated the older generation's approach to political rule that was a mixture of cynicism, compliance and yet ability to survive under the controlled conditions.

The ideological vacuum this rapid collapse left in its wake was not easily nor quickly filled by new value structures. General cynicism with regard to professions of ideological faith (by politicians or journalists) throughout the post-Communist world was one of the most distinctive legacies of the past during the first decade of transition. Older journalists often evoked their memories of terror and dissidence when they recalled the past. As Adam Michnik, a Polish dissident and an editor in chief of the Warsaw-based daily *Gazeta Wyborcza*, described the conditions of oppression.

I sometimes think it would be worthwhile to imagine an actual restoration of the communist system. The banging on the door at dawn. The declaration of martial law, the dissolution of parliament, the liquidation of political parties, the confiscation of newspapers, the censorship, closed borders, thousands imprisoned, trials and sentences. And over and over again on the radio, a speech by the Leader on the need for law, order, and discipline.² (Michnik 1996)

However, the marketisation of the media did not offer new ideological content either and this sometimes fostered nostalgia within the former intelligentsia as a Czech journalist noted:

It is a worldwide phenomenon that everything is becoming massive and commercial. Sometimes I dream about medieval times, when literature was only available for few people, as it was during communism. I had a great experience in my life, because until I was 25 years old, I had been working in Samizdat [unofficially published press and literature]. It was incredible to see people going to prison for writing books, which they bound manually. After twelve years [the formally forbidden books were very popular after 1989], literature is again returning to a small group of devoted followers. The greatest thing is that this ghetto is now international. It is still much better to be Americanised than Sovietised.

In many cases the abrupt political and economic change created ideological and cultural spaces where new ideas, fragments of old ideologies, actors from different generations and power structures were re-assembled in a complicated matrix. Consequently, in many cases, collective memories of the past served to consolidate this new socio-political structure. Therefore, it wasn't surprising that the younger generation of authors and journalists inherited those memories, even though they often didn't have subjective recollections of the oppression themselves. In this way they inherited the temporalities that were used in orienting to the new situation.

Yes. History was too... Hungarian history in the 20th Century is a horror story. Like me for example, my mother was an orphan because the rest of the family were killed. They were just killed. On my father's side, they were all, almost, interned. They were displaced within the country or they were sent to somewhere else where people were German speakers – it is a horrible history. At least nobody is sent to Siberia anymore, and we can live on beer or something. (Hungarian journalist in personal interview)

Whilst Central Eastern Europeans were trying to actively forget the past forty years they re-remembered their period as independent nation-states in the inter-war years. This created different types of understandings of common European histories and also required the recognition of the historical wrongdoings of the oppression (see also the chapter by Tamar Ashuri in this volume). When German sociologist Niklas Luhmann (2002) noted that memory's true function is not in remembering but also in forgetting, he didn't reflect on what could be the half-life of the past: when remembering can be replaced by forgetting. In Central Eastern Europe forgetting obviously had to be preceded by remembering.

We are very past rooted. We very often, we can't look forward if we haven't looked backwards. It's not only us – I think it's the whole of Eastern Europe.

You feel that you've been betrayed and that that hasn't been acknowledged properly because take a look at those debates last year; for the first time that I can remember in EU history, people speaking about Communism being as evil as Nazism. Still, you know, breaking their arms over each other – what was worse and how Europe has to commemorate that differs. I think it is very important for Europe to have collective memory. To accept that these new member states have a different history; that not everybody was liberated in 1945. (Latvian journalist in personal interview)

Topographies of Stolen Space

As nationhood always creates its own temporalities it is also very much a spatial everyday practice. Communism, with its internationalising flavour, was always ill at ease with the distinctive cultural and territorial characteristics of nations. What is a 'Nation'? Josef Stalin pondered in his essay on *Marxism and the National Question* (1913). In his drive to define a nation in analytical terms he asserted that 'a nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture' (Clemens 2001: 10). What was lacking in Stalin's definition was the effective formation of the collective self that binds nations together.

Lenin's strategy in dealing with nations rested on a number of assumptions, one being that class would, given sufficient time, invariably transcend nationhood. National consciousness was seen as a false consciousness but, under predetermined conditions of development, it would soon wane. Therefore, Lenin formulated a policy of 'national in form but political in content'. The essence of this formulation was that the language and culture of a particular nation were less significant than the class content of its life. Nation-building, however, was under the strict control of the Party.

According to Lenin, social communication had to be subordinated to higher ideological purposes. For him, the press was the sharpest weapon of the Party. During the Soviet era, media had a clear educational and propaganda function: the media solely represented a means of transmission for authoritative reality. National, regional, and local radio and television channels were directly controlled by the Communist Party and/or the State (Splichal 1994: 27). The State was the sole owner of the press and private newspapers were illegal. Censorship was conducted in major national newspapers through the central censorship office, *Glavlit*, established in the USSR in 1922.

Under Stalin attitudes towards nations were reversed: nationhood was seen a threat to centralised power and national cultures were forcibly suppressed. Although he used the most brutal measures, it proved impossible to un-invent the sense of nation that had grown in the interwar years in former Imperial Russian territories. Although the Russian nation was always predicated to be on a special mission as the 'elder brother' of the Soviet peoples and the 'van-

guard' of the world's proletariat, the end-state was socialist internationalism and not 'unity in diversity' as now envisaged by the European Union. This view of a Communist messianic mission was exported with local variations and customised manners to all the countries annexed by the Soviet Union (Davies 1997: 36-37).

Under Stalin and then Khrushchev, the status of 'Russianness' was elevated to the point in which it gave Soviet ideology a Russian national content. Russification meant, in many cases, a project whereby national identities were forced to merge with the identity of a 'new Soviet man' who was curiously Russian-speaking (Gerovitch 2007: 138).³

The overall reflection of the East European state of mind was that people felt under the constant surveillance of the Party, and one in which local cadres were used to execute orders from above and report on their neighbours. In the fragile security of their homes, people might risk a dangerous remark. However, what was suppressed and distorted was the open development of attitudes to public issues including the collective memories of nationhood. People tried to preserve their memories and national histories were passed down through families and circulated in *samizdat*, i.e. the underground press and literature. Yet, such secrecy was itself a distortion and when the organic way of building of communities, i.e. creating the collective self based on cultural characteristics, was banned it froze societies. The Polish intellectual Czeslaw Milosz (1980: 239) analysed the profile of fear in the Soviet Empire in his book *The Captive Mind*:

Fear is known as a cement of societies. In a liberal-capitalist economy fear of lack of money, fear of losing one's job, fear of slipping down one rung on a social ladder all spurred the individual to greater effort. But what exists in the Imperium is *naked* Fear. In a capitalist city with a population of one hundred thousand people, some ten thousand, let us say, may have been haunted by a fear of unemployment. Such fear appeared to them to be a personal situation, tragic in view of indifference and callousness of their environment. But if all one hundred thousand people live in fear, they give off a collective aura that hangs over a city like a heavy cloud. Gold alienates man from himself; naked fear, which has replaced capital, alienates him even more efficiently.

An ideologically defined dichotomy of public (The Party)/private (New Soviet Man) deterred people from constructing other competing forms of belonging. The private/public dichotomy is one of the basic divisions that defined both the role of media and the role of the state in the West, but it had different meanings in the East. The 'private' space, home was under surveillance and the 'public' sphere was under the absolute control of the Party. Ukrainian author Oksana Zabuzhko (2002: 37) pointedly asked:

What kind of privacy was acceptable in the Orwellian world where no home was a 'fortress,' and where, after 1991, when the KGB archives were opened,

those curious enough to care discovered in their files records of their most intimate conversations (bugging apartments was not as rare as one may think nowadays), and, emotionally most shocking, snapshots secretly made of them at home parties?

The 'public' media was also occupied by creating ideologically elevating content to strengthen political consciousness. Whilst Western public spheres are generally filled with national figures, celebrities, achievements and events that comprise the major part of media content, in the state-socialist media *New Soviet Man* was represented as fulfilling the same role. National characteristics were removed from the New Soviet Man because they represented progress, not a culturally located individual. Zabuzhko (2002: 39) continues:

It should be noted that the 'good guys' featured in the Soviet press. Their CVs had been meticulously checked beforehand for their ideological impeccability and they were rarely presented on their home base. Just like party officials, they were chosen to be the bearers of the same 'representative openness,' where the personality of the interviewed was the last thing that mattered (all things too individual, too characteristic, were intentionally omitted or obliterated during censorship). The 'good guys,' performing as Token Miner, Token Milkmaid, Token Pilot, even Token Mother (with the Order of Lenin on her breast) were chosen to exemplify the full set of moral virtues as standardized in the communist program.

Although there was strict censorship, resistance and cultural defence were part and parcel of daily practice, especially when journalists tested its limits, criticising the Party was strictly forbidden, as one Hungarian journalist described, 'It was one-party system, when it had to do with the Communist Party you said only positive things and when dealing with capitalist countries you said only bad things'.

In order to circumvent censorship and maintain national spirit, journalists learnt to write in-between the lines and pass coded messages to the readership. This 'camouflaged speak' required both the people to learn to decode the messages as well as journalists to convey the required meanings to the national public. As a part of the Soviet Era's camouflaged resistance it was often tinged with irony:

Well, once we made a documentary on Romania. The censors from the Embassy usually checked only the soundtrack. The voice-over was full of praise of the great Communist leaders, thriving industrial sites of great Communist cities and proud farmers with shiny tractors on the fields organised to produce abundant crop for the happy workers according to the five years' plan. The Embassy loved the soundtrack. On-screen story was a bit different. The louder the praise of the great leaders was, the shabbier the backyards, rusty sickles and hammers, and dodgy industrial sites that were shown. The programme was broadcasted in a prime-time slot and you could hear how the people

laughed. I became *persona non grata* in the eyes of the political cadre, probably still am in Romania. (Hungarian journalist in personal interview)

Irony and sarcasm were also strategies of separating different identity constructions: Soviet man and a true (national) self. Laughter and jokes at the expense of Communist governance were seen as 'tiny revolutions' (Salovaara-Moring 2009c). A whole genre of jokes grew-up about Radio Yerevan (an Armenian radio station) to which people turned to find answers to their everyday problems. Generally the jokes had a format of a question-answer but the answer was usually in the lines of 'in principle, yes' but the details of the response contradicted the affirmative answer:

Q: Is there a difference between Capitalism and Communism?

A: In principle, yes. In Capitalism, man exploits man. In Communism, it's the reverse.

Q: Is it true that there is freedom of speech in the Soviet Union the same as there is the in USA?

A: In principle, yes. In the USA, you can stand in front of the Washington Monument in Washington, DC, and yell, "Down with Reagan!" and you will not be punished. In the Soviet Union, you can stand in the Red Square in Moscow and yell, "Down with Reagan!" and you will not be punished.⁴

During the decades under the Soviet Era the basic line of media policy in these countries remained the same although some minor changes occurred. Sükosd (1990: 45) called these subtleties, labelling them 'steps from the totalitarian model to the model of tolerant repression'. This of course differed between the countries. Although strict restrictions were in place on the contents of the press in the Soviet period, high readership numbers were encouraged by the State heavily subsidising costs.

Civic society itself was already fairly well developed in most of the East and Central European countries when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1989. That was mainly due to 'soft' socialism, the loosened rule of Communism during 'perestroika' and developed media, but also the alternative media that had been supported by the intelligentsia during the Soviet time.

Topographies of a Nation: (R)evolutions of Journalism and the Public

According to Splichal (1994: 1) 'all genuine revolutions are fundamentally communication revolutions, or they are none at all. When communication is suppressed or if it requires self-censorship, the revolution as an extension of human rights has ended'. In the context of post-Communist countries the change in media systems was revolutionary. Journalistic 'official' mythology has it that the intellectual Davids of the dissident movement slew the Goliath

of Communism in 1989 with a few slingshots of truth and integrity. However, the picture was a much more complex one, and one that varied markedly across the region.

In the early 1990s, the most significant requirements of evolving civil societies had to do with the social sphere including a functioning 'public sphere,' with new practices of journalism that would support the consolidation of nationhood and democracy. That was a difficult task given the mistrust that people felt towards politicians and also, partly, towards media. Newly appointed governments often exerted direct political pressure on public or state media, and interfered with commercial media and the press. In addition, after decades of oppression, nationalist movements emerged.

In his book, *Fantasies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism and Myth in Post-Communist Societies* (1998) Vladimir Tismaneanu focused on the rise of nationalism and anti-liberal ideologies through the political psychology of post-Communism. His main hypothesis was that these societies are still in a liminal phase because traditional identities had fallen apart and new mythologies have just emerged to inspire unity in a despairingly fragmented body politic. As the authoritarian order collapsed, societies have tended to be atomised and deprived of a political centre able to articulate coherent visions of a common good.

In this situation, new discourses often arose about the supposed past glory of nations or the alleged sins of other peoples. 'Often focused on the past, the new mythologies are actually discourses about the present and especially the future of post-Communist societies' (ibid. p 15). This fragmentation took a different colouring depending on the generation. Core discourses of nationhood and nationalism were intertwined with the more materialistic and pragmatic aims of the younger generation.

I would say that Latvia is nationalistic. When it comes to nationality issues, independence issues, identity issues, we are nationalistic in that way but less and less. The younger generation does not care about nationality too much; the young generation care about lifestyle and money. As simple as that but I'm thinking... Latvia in that context... I think that we aren't probably nationalistic enough because of this wish to please, and wish to behave. We sometimes simply don't know what our interests are. This is also, of course, a matter of planning the nation – how you define what your [the nation's] interests are and try to make them. (Latvian journalist in personal interview)

The early 1990s witnessed a true commercial 'media boom' in these countries as new private newspapers, magazines, television channels, and radio stations proliferated daily with frantic speed. These media badly needed people, events and entertainment. Whilst Soviet journalism had mostly been impersonal and educational, its replacement acquired a new type of Western personality hunger. As Zabuzhko (2002: 40) describes, the first post-independence problems faced by the new post-Soviet media:

...was not so much a complete judicial and ethical chaos concerning privacy and its plausible intactness as a part of the human rights problem, but instead a deplorable lack of nationally recognized personalities to present to a national audience (to describe the situation roughly, who would care with whom you slept if no one cares who you are?).

Moreover, during the early 90s, fresh journalists started their career in the midst of a clash between Western values and local realities, when the old institutions were dismantled and new systems were just appearing. This new generation was unmarked by experience of the Soviet era and they often lacked exposure to older colleagues who could have taken up the mantle of role models. Western norms and professional codes were quickly accepted and harsh market conditions that required marketisation of content and entertainment as part of media output were regarded as normal.

Public service broadcasting (PSB) gives us a clear example of where Western ideals and the economic and ideological realities of the region clashed during the first decade. The 'media boom' created markets that subordinated the public values of journalism, turning it into a commodity and the public into consumers. Thus, the idea of serving the 'public' found the soil of the region particularly barren. Normative ideals of PSB were mostly imported from wealthy European countries with BBC-type of journalism, whereas these financially weak states could not provide as strong a financial base for their state-financed media. Although Western European countries suffered from the deteriorating financial base of their public service broadcasters, the ideology of serving the 'public' was, however, deeply engrained.

This is the problem for the new part of Europe. When we became acquainted with these public service broadcasting principles we haven't had before that any kind of media regulation and policy research. We haven't heard anything from public broadcasting as such and when gates then opened and we went to the first conferences – everything we heard sounded very natural to us. That is how the function of democratic media should be organised – serving people, maintaining culture and protecting national language. We, of course expected that our societies would accept immediately all these democratic values of serving public. It wasn't that easy. (Estonian media specialist in personal interview)

The interests of nation-building and the free market were often contradictory. In many cases, PSB companies were forced to finance their activities by selling advertising space because the level of subsidies granted by the states were insufficient. Commercial broadcasters raised the same questions as in Western Europe: What is the state-financed media needed for when private companies can do it cheaper? In theory PSB was good but in reality the enterprise was hard to actualise.

Most surprising has been how difficult it has been for politicians, people, people involved to understand these values at all. And in this regard it has been the same in these newcomers. Same difficulties have been faced everywhere. Still many people and politicians are claiming why we need PBS at all, why put all this money when private sector could do it all and even cheaper and how difficult it has been to find argument against that. (Estonian media specialist in personal interview)

There has always been a discussion about how public television should be financed. We are all the time short of money – big time. My opinion is that we should have licence fees, like BBC model. But then, they have the same debate in Estonia; it is a hard decision for politicians to introduce a new tax. (The head of news of Latvian Television in personal interview)

True, PSB was not a priority for policymakers within the region, so much so that legislators were prepared to violate their own commitments in order to ‘save’ money. In terms of nation-building the PSB dilemma was broader. The crucial aim of protecting the cultures and languages of small linguistic areas was essential in revitalising and protecting nationhood.

Interesting was that it was said that European media policy wasn’t taken fully into the consideration of the small countries with their national interest and protecting their national cultures. Different countries have used different options to protect their interests and regards. Latvia for example has very different policies and as a result from that you see very different media content, programming principles, different channels and orientations that finally lead to different media cultures. Latvians are very eager to protect their language; the stipulations and laws all focus on that. Estonians are very liberal and it finally led that some of the channels didn’t have much Estonian programs at all, news that is and the rest is foreign programming for just making money without any obligation to your own audience and your own national culture. (Estonian media specialist in personal interview)

Western-led transition ideals may have had a clear idea of what is ‘public’ and how this public should be ‘served’ – but in the new nation-states the idea of a nationalistic, undivided ‘public’ that would be educated and entertained through tax-payer’s money seemed to be hard to understand, never mind accept. A consequence of an inability to grasp the idea of what is a nation-based ‘public’ and how it should be served led to another major problem and adds an extra feature to the equation: that of ‘paid journalism’.

Television is making paid programmes because of the lack of public money. What that really means is that the producer is collecting money from those who want to be in a program and they are making a programme. Of course these kinds of programmes are damaging the image of Latvian TV. We are

paying for the channel and we don't know when these attitudes are starting to affect the newscasts. The problem is that public opinion is that journalism is bought in Latvia. (Latvian media specialist in personal interview)

There is always speculation about ownerships but the local money is strongly present. We talk about mafia and the owner of the oil company who owns the second biggest national daily. He has his own political and economic agenda that is harnessed to increase his wealth. He is a rich man and has a huge influence in society through his money. (Latvian civil servant in personal interview)

This type of surreptitious journalism in the post-Communist region – and elsewhere – can in part be explained by confusion in public and private morality. That is, we can speak about political corruption only if a society distinguishes between the public and private domain. In other words corruption requires some recognition of the difference between public role and private interest. Whether or not this distinction was made depended on each country's prevalent political thought as well as regime and cultural contexts.

Afterwards: Post-Utopian Place?

I still remember very clearly: May 1st, 2004, this wonderful country has joined EU which was a wish, I would say, for most of my friends, it was a wonderful sunny day and we sat in a café in the centre – beautiful place, wonderful quality food, wonderful coffee. That was actually a good thing we got from liberalism – good services! We sat there and it had a very French feeling – you sit there, you drink coffee, you smoke, speak with your friends, you chat about – telling things, you haven't seen each other for a week and one of them says: 'you know, I could sit like this for a week' and another one being very cynical said: 'No you can't, you have to run because now the competition gets tougher'. (Latvian journalist in personal interview)

Across Eastern Europe, the profound change experienced by the former Communist world was both abrupt and hugely complex as it impacted upon multiple strata (economic, political, cultural and social) simultaneously. The transition that took place within media and social communication was libertarian, national and free-marked oriented, directed both against an oppressive doctrinal orthodoxy and against a foreign imperial, arguably colonial, regime.

Nation-building was a common project that affected all other spheres of social and cultural life. In very concrete ways, nationhood was seen as a collective self, something that had been oppressed for a long time and could finally be realised. As a young Kosovan journalist put it, 'Nations are like human beings. If they live in a constant state of denial, never making peace with the past, they can make no progress and will have no future⁵'. However, the new economic regime was in

many ways in direct conflict with those aims through which national media could have constructed space to truly preserve languages and cultural heritage.

In many cases, post-Communism was described as an end of utopias, an end of history. However, what all ideologies, including new ones, have in common is a desire to represent their own utopia as an 'end of history,' as Mazower (1998) reminded us. A senior Hungarian journalist described succinctly the ambiance of post-Communism: 'There's a famous saying of, I think Václav Havel, who said "what is worse than communism itself is what comes afterwards" and we are afterwards – I think that we will be "afterwards" for twenty years'. Afterwards was a seemingly post-utopian place filled with hard work to consolidate and organise the new national entities.

When analysing post-Communist nation-building as part of the media system change, a nation can be easily understood as a spatial and temporal construction. The cultural geographies of a national entity as such are not 'out there' waiting to be analysed and documented; they are cultural, political and economic processes happening at different scales. In addition, nationhood is constructed in everyday communicative practices, representations and social imaginaries that are all intertwined. These processes develop at different speeds as part of social change, and meet different varieties of counter-forces causing inertia within the cultural systems like media.

Looking at the nation-building process in the table below, one can detect that there was a clear point of delineation in the Eastern European nation projects. Before the events of 1989 the nations were hibernating. This does not mean that the nationhood wouldn't have existed during the Soviet time. However, its material and, often, representational practices were hidden and forbidden. In the following table different dimensions of material, representative and imaginary aspects of communicating the nation are considered:

Material practices of communicating the nation in the interviews comprises different elements such as spatialities, temporalities, technologies, people, institutions, infrastructures, territories, legal provisions, ideas, ideologies, money, images, knowledge and value-systems. Moreover, when one of the elements is changing, it is changing all other elements in the systems. As material practices, media and social communication organise space and time by articulating spatial histories and temporal geographies in the everyday-life of the people.

Thus, the nation's resilience is based on the intimacy, routines and closeness of daily rhythms of the people. 'This reproduction of the nation most often happens in the mundane everyday life of the people. Multiplicity of temporalities and spatialities embedded in communication, experience, bodies and memory interpenetrate and modify the daily life of people making a nation as part of intimate space' (Edensor 2006: 525; see Adam 1995). When this is suppressed, the life of a national community is capsulated into the mind of the people as one form of utopia. Material practices are hidden and memories are ritualised, camouflaged and often romanticised.

Representations of the nation in the interviews refers to all symbolic forms of a nation that can be perceived. Representations of a nation are constructed

Table 1. Topographies of Communicating the Nation

Communicating nation	Before	After
Material practices of the nation (experience)	Silenced 'national histories', memories, strategies of <i>longue duree</i> ; fear and suspicion; accessibility and distanciation from material national practices. Social space of a nation taken over by State, administrative divisions of space; centralised governance; forms of social control (surveillance and policing), cautiousness, fear, suppression and silence.	Territorial narratives of the nation, clear territorial borders, mobility and 'Europeanisation,' 'New Europe'; changing elites, the gap between Soviet past and 'new' time; domination and control of own 'history'; freedom of expression, flows of information, people and ideas, national languages; national symbols (flags, anthems, festivities), official and unofficial networks of international communication.
Representations of the nation (perception)	Passive and active resistance against ideological standardisation (<i>samizdat</i> ; double-speak, irony, political jokes); cultural defence of national, local cultures, language; advocacy and partisanship, hidden commemorations; strategies of reviving social memories and re-remembering national master narratives; patriotism; power-geometry of the Party; corruption (political); Sovietship; mental maps of occupied space; monumentality and constructed spaces of ritual.	New heroes; new divides of public/private, symbols, monuments and commemorations; national news/popular culture with celebrities, national events; new systems of mapping national position, visual, semiotic and material representations (monuments, statues, commemorations), acting out historical injustice; nationalism as uniting ideology; places of popular spectacle and traditions (streets, squares, markets); iconography and branding the nation.
Nation as symbolically lived experiences (imagination)	Attraction/repulsion; distance/desire in terms of East-West divide; utopian plans; imaginary landscapes; mythologies of home; spaces of desire and remembrance: Unfamiliarity; spaces of fear; symbolic barriers: construction of 'tradition'; spaces of repression cultural defence against oppressor.	Personal space enlarged; clean break with the East; repulsion in terms of recent history; borderland identities; familiarity; hearth and home; open places; mobility, westernised ideas; European borders as part of inclusion/exclusion, regulative harmonisation.

within a '*scopic regime*', i.e. ways of seeing and knowing the world that appear consistent and complete within its own frame and 'natural' to their subscribers. Thus, the nation evolves in symbols that interact with people and other symbolic systems. The nation is a category of the interconnectedness of people with the help of this scopic regime. It is collective in nature and intrinsically acts through its cultural particularity and it always has structural and ideological levels. Social communication, media, education, architecture, planning, politics and linguistic rights are representative fields that are synchronised with the spatialities and temporalities of the nation within this system.

As a representational practice, sovereignty and an agency of nationhood can also be experienced as part of international politics. It becomes a collective self, something that takes the form of the human psyche in the minds of the people. As an Estonian journalist described the collective agency:

I very much like what Robert Cooper writes about our identity that shapes foreign policy. There is the saying that 'nations don't have any friends and no enemies – only interests'. This is wrong, I mean you can say so but once you start looking at how nations define their interests you discover many emotional things: love, frustration, bitterness. So really it's identity that shapes foreign policy. (Estonian journalist in personal interview)

Nations as lived experiences in the interviews refers to collective memory and also future projections of the nation. Through them the nation is often unconsciously experienced as primordial and naturalised in everyday life but it will always have a very specific genealogy. This affective bonding is highly resistant to ideological standardisation and may also explain the resilient nature of ethnic nations in general: they are networks of memory, affects, hopes and future projections that are used as part of organising national community as well as individual identities in the specific spatial and economic settings. Thus, the resilience of the nation lies in its ontological nature. The nation is a complex category that changes over time and space. The spatial and temporal ontology of the nation is always in 'becoming' rather than in 'being'. It is a process, a trajectory that actualises itself through myriad symbolic, material emotional and territorial palimpsests. Hence, the interesting question is not how nations are imagined or invented but the practices through which these bonds are reproduced in time and space.

Post-Communist cultural politics of stolen time and space was the process in which the actors organised the past by remembering Communist times and re-assembled that legacy within the new realities of Capitalism. Past was used as a social force that helped people to orientate to and plan future projection. It was constructed at a material, representational and symbolic level. Nation-building itself, where the topographies of nations were sought, was a process in which the same actors were adapting media systems, practices of journalism and to complex trans-national surroundings by negotiating between new ideological regimes and 'Western' ideals within their societies. These new national configurations looked for equilibrium between ideals and empirical reality within the evolving media systems, pondering upon which ideals could be preserved. Communicating the nation as part of these processes was a 'spatio-temporal practice' because it aimed to produce the 'same' cultural time and space for the people. Through communication, cultures generate particular ways of doing things, particular forms of expressions, ways of resolving problems and ensuring their cultural production.

The nation is often first constructed as an object of (nationalist) discourse before it becomes reality. However, this doesn't make it any less real, as most

social facts are discursive formations. Thus one could argue that in studying nations one should aim to seek to recover the thoughts, desires and meanings of actors that then give a sense of national self. This shouldn't, however, collapse its understanding into those same motivations in a way that social relations forever escaping the intentions of their creators. In this way, the construction of nations is a sensuous swirl of contingency and determination in time and space. To rephrase Leo Tolstoy, 'all happy nations resemble one another, each unhappy nation is unhappy in its own way'. In this changing world where the frames of collective bonding are rare, the nation seems to retain its lure of ontological security.

Notes

1. This chapter is based on the research project 'Beyond East and West. Media Geographies of New Europe (2007-2009 funded by Academy of Finland) and its interview material that consists of more than seventy interviews of Central Eastern European journalists, media specialists and regulators from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Georgia.
2. Former dissident Adam Michnik has been the editor in chief of the Warsaw-based daily *Gazeta Wyborcza* – which, with a circulation of over half a million, is one of the most popular newspapers in Poland. Michnik's essay 'The Velvet Restoration' was first published in *Gazeta Wyborcza* after the September 1993 electoral victory of a coalition of two former communist parties, the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and the Polish Peasant Party (PSL). The SLD and the PSL formed a left-wing government headed by the PSL's Waldemar Pawlak.
3. The new Soviet Man was postulated by the Communist Party as a representation of the character of emerging citizen of the new Soviet Union from the culturally, ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse peoples of Imperial Russia. It was a harmonic combination of rich spirituality, moral purity and physical perfection: selfless, well-educated, healthy and enthusiastic in spreading the socialist revolution. Adherence to Marxism-Leninism, and individual behaviour consistent with that philosophy's prescriptions, were among the crucial traits expected of the New Soviet man.
4. http://www.armeniapedia.org/index.php?title=Radio_Yerevan_Jokes (accessed March 12, 2009)
5. By Ilijana Bajo Law February 15, 2008, 'No more placebos', *Transitions Online*.

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Imperial Glory is Back?

Retelling the Russian National Narrative by Representation and Communication

Ivan Zassoursky

Prelude: The 'Internationalist Delirium'

The age of globalisation has ushered in many challenges, not least of which has been the collapse of the USSR in the nineties and the subsequent emergence of fifteen new states. This new territory was at once linked to the world at large through a strange mix of interconnections; including those of power and finance, science, trade and information as well as traditional interpersonal relations. It was the beginning of a slow but steady reconstruction process, in which parts of the former Soviet Union and its military block reinvented themselves. This was particularly true of the media, which had to factually report on the construction of a nation, of one kind or another, and function successfully in any given environment.

In particular, it is interesting to consider if that which preceded the great shake-up and lasted for half a decade thereafter was in fact an idealist, romantic infatuation with the principles of democracy, the open market and free trade; possibly provoked and propelled by the imagery of late consumer society. The American Way of Life was carried into the former The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in the Trojan horse of VHS videotapes in a stream of movies by Hollywood majors as well as the artists' pick of films. In a sort of dreamy globalist delusion driven by a powerful delirium, the first wave of a truly independent Russian media played its part by presiding over this attempt to build a democratic society. It was a society that was eventually crushed by economic hardships caused as much by mismanagement as by the exposure of the state-controlled economy to the realities of marketing-based management and fierce competition from global players on their way to expanding their sales out of recession. Ironically, global cigarette makers might have been the first to recognise the emergence of a new national narrative but more time was needed before widespread acceptance of Russia's imperial past could take place. This new national narrative comprised elements of Soviet past, but was more biased towards imperial glory. National pride became the weapon of last

resort for politicians like Vladimir Zhirinovsky and Yury Luzhkov, and marketing tricks of first resort to tobacco majors that relaunched a local cigarette brand 'Java' by adding gold to the colour of the packet, American blend to the taste and a victory in space to the television advertisement.

In fact, a phase of *internationalism*, that is to say an enthusiastic embrace of the world, is a typical reaction to the establishment of a new social system. It was as much a feature of communist ideals at the beginning of twentieth century, expressed through slogans such as 'Workers of the world, unite!', as with capitalist ones. If in the first case it became frozen as part of dogma and repeated as the official motto of most Soviet daily newspapers well into the eighties, in later case it didn't last very long.

Russian National Identity: Imperial Glory is Back?

The emergence of a new Russian national identity was not an unexpected phenomenon. However, it was one inspired more by necessity and elements from previous identity construction projects than by a true search of any kind. Moreover, the demise of the Soviet Union was not an expected development in Russia and many may still regard it as a negative side-effect of the 1991 *coup d'état*. Russia, as it stood in the centre of the Soviet empire, though a large country itself, took pride in the grand scope of territory it controlled. Every Empire suffers from reduction, and then ceases to be an Empire at all. A Russian could tell you that the Soviet Union fell as a victim of the fight for power between Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin. Indeed, this fight occurred almost immediately after the majority of Soviet voters had indicated their support for the Union (but muscovites were just too tired of it all). The initiative of three republican leaders, Boris Yeltsin of Russia, Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine and Stanislau Shushkevich of Belorussia, who signed an alternative community into being, remain the target of angry speeches and hate articles in the patriotic press.¹ While liberals claimed it a necessity at best, only radical democrats in Russia and power elites in every other republic supported it.

Although regretting the loss of Empire was at the time considered to be a nonconformist stance, today it is the mainstream cry in the Russian national media. This is notable in all television stations, the majority of which are run by state-owned and affiliated companies, and major radio stations.² Key state ceremonies, such as inaugurations, are arranged and performed in the style of Eisenstein but with a Hollywood twist – with a camera flying over the Kremlin promenade. As the idealism of the nineties subsided and, perhaps, realism turned to bitterness, there came a need for a new beginning, which included a longing for past grandeurs. It was a movement conveniently suited to the task of nation building. Empire proved the least controversial of all nationalist imagery and the reality of those times had been forgotten in Russian culture (which in reality can be argued to be no less simple and diverse than, say,

the American one, but rather than a melting pot, it is more like a frozen one). This reached the audience through films and books as a pure ideal that was unburdened by uncomfortable memories. The idealist Russia of liberty was consumed in the lawless gangster jungle of the nineties as hyperinflation erased the savings of the middle classes in less than a decade to establish a desire for stability and prosperity on any terms.

The first truly democratically elected leader, Boris Yeltsin, presided over a nation that was trying to rebuild itself while, simultaneously coping with a property grab, inherited debt and a lack of functioning institutions aside from the media and the central bank. The experiment in democracy was judged, therefore, by its results – the rule of lawlessness. The war in Chechnya, first stalled in truce and later won at great cost, was the media event that propelled Vladimir Putin to power based on his image as a fearless war leader and mighty prime minister. It is only natural, therefore, that ‘the Russian dream’ eventually settled, not on the pursuit of individualist liberties or a consumer society, nor idealism, but into a collectivist ego of the nation, losing oneself in its glory, while expecting prosperity rather than liberty as the reward.

The new Russian identity emerged as a by-product of political campaigning. As mentioned earlier, it grew from the ideas of maverick politicians such as Moscow mayor, Yuri Luzhkov, and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. Cultural counter-elites, like the radical Eduard Limonov and Alexander Prokhanov, gave it added impetus but it was the author Boris Akunin and movie maker Sergey Mikhalkov who really breathed life into it. In Akunin’s very popular fictional detective series the lead character, Erast Fandorin, is a Russian Sherlock Holmes figure working for the government in a magically inviting late nineteenth century setting. Meanwhile, proud of his claimed aristocratic lineage, Mikhalkov produced a series of films set against a glamorous interpretation of Imperial Russia.

However, the national narrative also transformed itself into the Nasty, or Nationalist Story, which was widely utilised in order to elect political leaders without much discussion. Clearly, while democratic rule, discussion and consensus are based on communication, identity is a representation, a simulacrum, or a projection. In this crucial opposition, *communication* is what allows society to face any obstacle with open eyes, and overcome any weakness, although it may take time to arrive at the solution and there is no guarantee: indeed, it is the uncertain outcome of communication as a reality-constructing process that propels people into action and gives life to deliberation. *Representation*, on the contrary, is creating reality by making it adhere to some ideas or images; replacing joint effort of reality-construction with a propaganda push that helps people submit to a version of reality not of their making and thus makes society blind to what there truly is, but eager for fairy tails, hymns and flags.

One of the greatest discoveries of politicians, sociologists and journalists at the beginning of the twentieth century was that the larger the crowd, the easier it is to influence it. Needless to say, with nations it is the same: you need an identity to fill the vacuum, and once you have a truly appealing ideal, people flock to the cause. Cultural memory helps to choose a suitable cause, an ideal

suited to the majority, and the rest is the work of television: where news can become drama. In his magnum opus *Constructing the political spectacle* (which is essentially a *representation*, but with some *communication* built in), Murray Edelman (1988) elaborates the way drama shapes perception, or vice versa, as Edelman was essentially suggesting a structuralist way to deal with phenomena. According to Edelman, the public is looking for a leader, who has to appear bold and fearless, and is always hungry for enemies and challenges. One can suppose that the less you know about the leader you have to elect, or the reasons why you should support them, the more you may end up knowing about their enemies, or wars to be won – even if only at a symbolical level.

In the 1996 presidential campaign, the principal motif underlying the ‘virtual reality’ of the elections was the search for a solution to major challenges. In the 2000 campaign, by contrast, the leitmotif was the forming of a consensus between the elites and the masses around the image of *Great Russia* with all its component elements, including military action as well as diplomatic conflicts, and of distinct images of ‘foreign’ (ethnic) and domestic (political) enemies – the necessary components for the nation-building effort. In constructing such enemies and the narrative plots that define their place in history, people are manifestly defining themselves and establishing their place in history; the self-definition lends passion to the whole transaction.

A New Beginning for the National Narrative: The Putin Years

Boris Yeltsin’s resignation was, arguably, the most momentous event in the history of election campaigns in Russia so far. In announcing his resignation on New Year’s Eve, December 31, 2000, and letting a tear fall as he asked Russians to forgive him for his failure to achieve the results he had promised, in many ways, Yeltsin predetermined the outcome of the campaign. In the process of which it demoralised a political elite, which had been anticipating a full-blown season of juicy intrigues as Putin clashed with his rival, Yevgeny Primakov, at the end of 1999.

Following the traditional strategy of penetrating the mass consciousness, political leaders discovered once again the huge significance of rituals and celebrations as a means of political communication. The process of a ‘resignation-appointment’ killed two birds with one stone. First and foremost, the presentation of Vladimir Putin in his new capacity took place in front of the largest possible viewing audience. New Year is not the only celebration in the calendar of new Russia that has survived from Soviet times, but it is the most important Russian holiday by far. This is a celebration with ritual television shows and family dinners.

All day, politicians and stars of every calibre congratulate one another on television; appearing in a precise hierarchy of importance and influence. The closer the speech to the New Year, the more people watch it, the more pres-

tigious it is, and the higher the standing of the speaker. The last words are said by the leader a few minutes before the year's end, a speech by the President of the Russian Federation is transmitted. This is watched by many, if not all the people, as it is shown simultaneously on all the main channels.

According to data from the television monitoring organisation NISPI, on just one major channel (ORT), the President's New Year greeting was the most popular television programme of December 1999; attracting 1,851,000 viewers in Moscow alone and other muscovites may have watched it on other channels. The same top-10 rating of the most popular political broadcasts during December also included transmissions of the President's greeting on the other television channels: RTR and NTV. These reached 885,000 and 797,000 viewers, respectively. This gives a total of 3,533,000 viewers in Moscow alone – a record for 1999, especially since the figures, in the author's view, may be a bit low. This speech also served as an occasion for Russia to appoint a new president and to hold an informal inauguration ceremony. Moreover, after recording his New Year's greeting to Russians, Putin travelled to Chechnya to celebrate the holiday with the armed forces. The symbology was obvious, since the sacred drama of bidding farewell to the old year and seeing in the new had been replaced by the ritual of a transfer of power.

In this, properly speaking, also lay the second, symbolic meaning of the combination. The New Year was not only the major holiday, but also the most ancient festival of the Russian calendar, dating back to pre-Christian times. The New Year was an agrarian celebration and, until the seventeenth century, was observed in September. It was Peter the Great, seeking to bring Russia into line with Europe, who shifted the celebration to the end of December but this did not alter the importance of the festival.

The sacramental significance of New Year's Day and its subtext of ritual, is death and revival: nature dies, in order to be born anew. In primitive societies, the festival involves the ritual death of a god or a king, and a rebirth. Testifying to the power of this metaphor is the fact that the drama of Christ unfolds in a similar scenario.

Mircea Eliade views the closely related theme of the end/beginning of history through the prism of the relationship between the sacred-mythical time of the creation of the world and of great ancestors (*in illo tempore*) on the one hand, and profane time on the other. In his study *The Myth of the Eternal Return* (1971), he describes the theme of a return to the beginning of creation, implicit in the rite of the celebration of the New Year, as central to mythological consciousness, basing his conclusion on numerous examples of such rituals, which he finds in one form or another in all mythological – that is, oral – cultures.

Since the cosmos and humanity are renewed constantly and in all possible ways, the past is annihilated, sicknesses and misdeeds are expelled, and so forth. The formal side of the ritual varies, but the essence remains unchanged. Everything is directed toward a single goal: doing away with past time, ban-

ishing history, so as constantly, through the repetition of a cosmological act, to return *in illo tempore*. (Eliade 1971: 126)

The theme of cleansing has a special significance for the New Year festival and in various tribes, this theme takes on different ritual forms. 'Almost everywhere, the banishing of demons, illnesses, or sins coincides or coincided with a particular temporal boundary – such as the celebration of the New Year'. On the other hand, in many cultures, the New Year's rite also coincides with the rite of initiation and with the closely related ceremony of enthronement.

For the aborigines of the island of Fiji, the creation occurs every time when a new leader comes to power; this concept, in more or less analogous formulations, has been preserved in other regions as well. Almost everywhere, the new rule is perceived as the rebirth of the history of the people, or even of history in general. With each ruler, however insignificant he might be, a new era begins. (Eliade 1971: 128)

Putin's New Year speech as acting president was the culmination of the beginning of the New National Story – a premature, but nevertheless extremely dramatic prologue to the whole issue of presidential elections in Russia. On this occasion, it seemed, someone inside the system was effective enough to recode the rite of the transformation of time into a rite of the transformation of power, at the same time demoralising the, very active, opposition and working effectively on the deep strata of mass consciousness.

Compared with this profound legitimisation of the regime, recorded as the largest media event on the National record, the election appeared by contrast as something predictable and insignificant but technically important issue. So indeed it became, and soon other elections followed suit. As related by Lyudmila Resnyanskaya, the heads of public relations agencies admitted in private conversation that the basic method was to 'saw away' at the mass consciousness by paying for his name to be mentioned in print under any context. It was enough for the regime to display its complete presence, and for Putin to figure constantly in news reports, in order to signify the inevitability, the predestination, of the outcome of the election campaign. In a well planned and orchestrated media campaign, acting President Putin appeared in a series of populist stories, such as riding a tractor or aboard a submarine, leaving commentators with little time to react to changes on the information scene. Like the Western press during the wars in the Persian Gulf and the Balkans, the Russian press passively followed the information lead provided by the government rather than evaluating what was happening or placing it in a wider context and not taking any special pains to do so. In fact, as media people since Hearst have known all too well, it makes better business to take sides in a war, and a statesman can add that taking sides in other people's wars is much cheaper than launching your own.

Responding to hope for a strong regime, the Kremlin made a show of the most impressive capabilities it had at its disposal. Indeed, what regime could be

stronger than one resting on subconscious-historical strata of popular memory and rituals with profound roots in everyday life? Only one which is rooted in popular cultural memory, be it holy scripture, or a popular television series. For a newcomer to the political scene it is important to fit into a set of expectations to be understood, while doing something original to be differentiated. Putin had it all and was also very lucky in many ways, particularly through his secret service experience in Germany, to resemble a fictional character out of spy series.

The New Leader:

From Standartenführer von Stirlitz to Peter the Great

In advancing a new politician to the centre of the political stage, political forces always face a problem with 'recognition' of the new image. During the first months of Putin's prime ministership, the theme of countless press articles in Russia and abroad was 'Who are you, Mister Putin?' Writers played a game of trying to piece together a consistent image based on the impression that the freshly minted prime minister created with his statements and actions. Seeking to position the heir in the political field, journalists constructed an image in relation to a fixed system of coordinates in which the central roles were played by the Chechen war, 'economic reforms' or rather his attitude to business and businessmen, and the candidate's personal history. Putin had a taste for national-patriotic ideology, but his economic programme, the preparation of which was one of the main media events staged during his nomination and subsequent campaign, showed that in formulating his economic policies the prime minister was inclined to rest on the liberals. These may well have always dreamt of someone more imposing and eager to deal with popular discontent while 'unpopular measures' were taken that might lead to public disturbances, as people were not ready for democracy.

On the level of mass consciousness, however, political discourse and the problematic constructed by the mass media do not mean a great deal. The recognition issue is best solved through a system of culture codes, which are at the disposal of the audience, and through comparison with the images of other public personas, both living and dead. A favourable political image is always a multilayered construct in which various 'prompts' for mass consciousness are present on a symbolic level. Putin's history as a spy was doubly advantageous for him. This was first because Putin, who had in fact been a replacement for Primakov, former intelligence chief, but came as a rival, was strangely enough perceived as his heir. Second, Putin embodied the image – very important for the Russian television audience – of Standartenführer von Stirlitz.

The latter is one of the central characters in Soviet grassroots mythology. Created by the writer Julian Semenov, this image was brought to life by one of the most popular actors of the Soviet epoch, Vyacheslav Tikhonov, in the television serial *Seventeen Moments in Spring*. During the first showing of the series in the early 1970s, city streets would empty whilst it was being broadcast.

The action of the series unfolds during the last year of the Second World War. Working in German counterintelligence, von Stirlitz, who is really Colonel Maxim Isayev and a Soviet agent, drives the German nuclear programme *Weapon of Vengeance* into a dead end using his sharp mind and unbending will. He forces a breakdown in peace talks between Nazi Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, engages in intellectual games with the commanders of the Schutzstaffel (SS) and Martin Bormann himself, punishes traitors, and sacrifices his family happiness for the good of the Soviet Union. Tortured by the desire to return home and be reunited with his wife, von Stirlitz subordinates his feelings to his duty, becoming a monument to late Soviet classicism.

It is not surprising that the German press was the most hostile in its reaction to Putin. On the front pages of newspapers and magazines, photographs of Yeltsin's heir, together with headlines, inevitably evoked associations with fascism. The headline of one of the articles asked: 'Would you buy a used car from this man?' The image of the Soviet spy von Stirlitz, like that of Prime Minister Putin, was not made for the German audience.

The significance of von Stirlitz for the mass consciousness in Russia is comparable to the image of James Bond. The latter, as we know, embodies a successful businessman/naval officer who is living a jet-set lifestyle and is not too concerned about the moral aspects of what he does – a sort of avenging angel in human form, and no stranger to human weakness. Both Bond and von Stirlitz often have to contend with alien-like forces and protect the world from destruction by diabolical powers. In this sense, Bond is a brother to Superman, Batman, and similar icons of twentieth century mass culture. Their family is large, and its roots extend so deeply into history that tracing the nuances in the transformation that such images undergo according to the context in which they appear and the culture which has recorded them in its history deserves to be the subject of separate genealogical research. All that will be noted here is that such distant relatives of the superheroes as Achilles, Hercules, Kukhulin, and others appear in the most ancient of known literary sources.

Like Bond, von Stirlitz penetrated deep into popular memory, but unlike Agent 007, he also became a character in the creative life of the population. Along with the heroes of other military and revolutionary films, some television series heroes such as Sherlock Holmes, and Soviet leaders imbued with a powerful propagandist inspiration like Chapayev and Petka, Lenin and Brezhnev and von Stirlitz became the hero of innumerable jokes and stories. Selections of the new adventures of von Stirlitz appeared in *samizdat* (the underground press) of the late eighties and were among the first Internet content to be put on the Web. The spy hero was one of the most recognizable images of the Brezhnev era. Indeed, it was Primakov's closeness to this era that the public found so impressive about him. If anyone missed the connection between Putin, who served in Germany, and von Stirlitz, articles in the press reminded them of the resemblance and helped create the association. Interestingly, the Stirlitz saga has become one of the two war movies to be converted into colour and shown on the eve of Victory Day in May 2009 – but by this time

it may be stated clearly that the famous Vladimir Putin has become so much more than that.

In fact, the image of Putin had various connotations and parameters of 'recognition' – among film heroes, military leaders, and political figures of the past. As a rule, the instilling of various images and features in political systems proceeds gradually. Sometimes the images are frozen in statues that function as a sort of monumental propaganda such as the huge memorial to Peter the Great erected by Yuri Luzhkov on the banks of the Moscow River opposite the rebuilt Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. Both monuments remained one of the most discussed and (in Peter's case – the monument was also erected by Luzhkov's millionaire artist and developer, Tseretely) despised monuments in the city to this day, which may have helped to take attention away from the corrupt construction boom that, incidentally, made mayor's wife a Forbes billionaire – a true victory of representation over reality.

Monumental propaganda has a symbolical meaning that is communicated through time – in a way it, ironically, predestined the events of 1999 when Luzhkov's Moscow team was badly beaten by Putin's St. Petersburg team at the polls. While, at other times, the images, as successful devices are borrowed from other political players. Politicians, as a rule, encourage some associations and try to expunge others. Peter the Great was one of the cruellest and most despotic emperors in Russian history and yet one of the most enlightened. His image symbolises the power of the state, including the state as opposed to civil society, the greatness of Russia and the overtly messianic ambitions of a political leader but with a strain leaning towards European art, organisation, bad habits and technology, and the enduring grandeur of his accomplishments, such as the city of St. Petersburg, the homeland of the new Russian elite.

What was it that struck French analysts most about Vladimir Putin? Not the unexpected leap into the presidential armchair, not the black belt in judo, and not even the New Year's visit to the army in Chechnya. What really surprised them was the portrait hanging in Putin's office: a portrait of Peter the Great. It may be that Putin's origins in St. Petersburg influenced this choice, or it may be that this portrait represents a certain hint, such as argued by an observer for the Parisian newspaper *Le Monde*, reminding readers that Peter the Great defended his country from the Swedish threat and completely transformed its appearance, albeit paying for this with the lives of almost a third of Russia's inhabitants.

The city of St. Petersburg, where Putin, and Dmitry Medvedev began their life's journey, is not simply an essential link between Peter the Great and the new president: the city is also a symbol in its own right. It *represents* Russia on the Baltic shore. Whilst its residents have always considered it to be Russia's cultural capital, St. Petersburg is also an entirely planned city, constructed on a marsh at the command of reformers headed by a young tsar. Its straight avenues intersect at geometrically precise angles and it is incontestably a city constructed in the grand style, mostly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: the epoch of the rise of the Russian Empire. Moscow, decorated by Stalinist

construction, embellished with the coronets of its hills and the necklace of its boulevards, Garden ring and, eventually, monumental subway, has also taken on a style – at times just as magnificent and just as austere, but less insistent, losing itself in the winding, hilly streets, and little alleyways (many now lost as the business centres are squeezed in). Architecture expresses the relationships of power just like any other medium and in St. Petersburg it does so more graphically than anywhere else. In Moscow there is more chaos, more life but from the very beginning, in St. Petersburg there has been more order, more authority – authority of a special kind, the despotic authority of an idea that Russia had to have a window to Europe: a capital on the Baltic Sea.

Founded on the basis of the tyranny of an idea, St. Petersburg was so uncomfortable that it would scarcely have survived had the Tsar not transferred the capital from Moscow to the new city he had created, making the ultimate choice for *representation* over *communication*. In St. Petersburg one is at times stunned, in the first instance, by the fact that the city is alive at all, so cold, windy, flood-prone and humid, but by its very existence it expresses the triumph of will over nature, of action over inertia, possessing an elegance of rococo court settlement and enduring heroic charm.

As the revolution in 1917 started in St. Petersburg, so a new team of politicians and bureaucrats from this city were imported into Moscow by Vladimir Putin and, after eight years of Putin, Russia is again in the hands of a St. Petersburg man, Dmitry Medvedev, another student of Anatoly Sobchak: the charismatic and learned liberal senator and professor of law at St. Petersburg University. This was not a revolution or a breakthrough: his election to the top position was a continuation of Putin's own *blitzkrieg*. However, this next election happened in a different country, transformed by the years of Putin's rule, and the changing world, where Russia had done a lot to regain its grandeur. Moreover, it has a new identity, put in place by sports, films and television, and certainly wars – every single one of those, from Chechnya and Yugoslavia to Georgia (Abkhazia and South-Ossetia, to be precise) – and what is even more important, their coverage in media and blogs. It all helps to bring forward the image of a victorious Nation, even Imperial Glory.

The Role of Television and Cinema in New Identity Construction

The better part of the nineties was spent by old-time *representation*-addicted intellectuals in whining on the loss of a National Identity. It is hard to re-enact the mood of those days, but apparently many knowledge workers felt lost when faced with the uncertainties of the dynamic and *communicative* Yeltsin era. What they wanted, however, was more than certainty: they wanted a nationwide effort of some sort and funds to unleash their stalled creativity in the art of mass manipulation by art and media. The development of cinema in Soviet Russia was linked to politics with both Sergei Eisenstein and Dziga

Vertov serving the state propaganda machine. So it should come as no surprise that this art was instrumental in re-creating the lost image of Great Russia. The list of films responsible for that is rather long, starting from formidable *Brat* ('Brother') and *Brat-2*, produced before and after the enthronement of Vladimir Putin in Moscow. It would be false to say that those films were financed by the Kremlin. In fact both were cult movies of their era, and had huge commercial success – and if the first film was somewhat close to the National Story in the mood, the latter one was Nationalist in every frame and sold well.

Brat features a former conscript soldier, Danila, and, through his hitman older brother, his decent into organised crime in St. Petersburg against a backdrop of social deprivation with drug abuse, homelessness, domestic violence, rape, murder, betrayal and retribution. The film ends with Danila on snow covered road hitching a ride to Moscow.

Brat is a magical dark fairytale that has all the features listed by Vladimir Propp (1928) in his classic *Morphology of the Folk Tale*, but some lines are twisted and some elements appear only in the second part of the series, *Brat-2*:

- The villain – struggles against the hero.
- The donor – prepares the hero or gives the hero some magical object.
- The (magical) helper – helps the hero in the quest.
- The princess and her father – gives the task to the hero, identifies the false hero, marries the hero, often sought for during the narrative. Propp noted that functionally, the princess and the father cannot be clearly distinguished.
- The dispatcher – character who makes the lack known and sends the hero off.
- The hero or victim/seeker hero – reacts to the donor, weds the princess.
- False hero/anti-hero/usurper – takes credit for the hero's actions or tries to marry the princess.

The hero of these films, Danila Bagrov, was played by an actor, who in dying young has become a sort of a Russian James Dean. He brought the qualities of steadfastness, strength and truth but is also seen to be true to specific things: the archaic cult of the family remains just that even when it boasts almost Christian forgiveness, and Danila's leaning towards music and people is a side story, not the plot. However, as the prominent Russian blogger Alex Exler notes in his cinema catalogue, although boyish, Bagrov is a hardened soldier without high morals, used to death. In short, he is cool, but very simple. He hates Jews and 'blacks' – people from Caucasus such as the ones he used to fight during the war. In the second part of the series he avenges his former commander against an American villain. The story spreads from the United States to Moscow, exposing capitalism red in tooth and claw in the familiar setting of organised crime, betrayal, vengeance and retribution.

What Danila inspired, unleashed – or showed – was a return of cinema and the rise of nationalist vogue – the Nationalist Story. What was seen before as a marginal part of the electorate became mainstream. In the 1999 election, a political start-up, Rodina (Motherhood), made huge headway at the polls and brought Dmitry Rogozin to almost McCarthy-esque stature but instead of communists he focused on illegal immigrants. Nationalism was eagerly included into the mainstream of political life, but Rogozin's party was marginalised after showing a 'remove the dirt from the streets' television advertisement in the next campaign against a backdrop of open racial tension (Rogozin is now the Russian Ambassador to NATO). Whatever remained of the party was later integrated into another start-up led by Senate chair Sergey Mironov ('Fair Russia' – *Spravedlivaya Rossiya*). By radicalising nationalist sentiment, Rogozin, who was meant to cannibalise the meek Communist party, was heading straight into a frontal collision with the state-sponsored political parties, 'United Russia' and 'Just Russia', all based on a milder version of nationalism, the first of which was now presided over by Vladimir Putin, the Prime Minister. It was not only Rogozin – enthusiasts of race and nationalism are common on the streets (as well as their antagonists, the *antifa* – internationalist activists with fists). It must have been the side effect of the Chechen war, where the collision in the nineties was almost purely ethnic, or residual racism, but radical nationalism and fascism now are growing stronger in Russia.

There were explosions in Moscow and elsewhere, with several murders of Tajik workers by small radical groups; often by young white males locked into a misplaced hatred. In the provincial cities, those who suffer are generally African and Chinese foreign students as well as people of Asian appearance. This is, undoubtedly, the side-effect of an overtly nationalist rhetoric, the hard stance in politics and a necessary effect of the Nationalist Story that helps to build spectators into a loyal crowd of supporters, or *representation*. Over time, the list of enemies and conflicts just multiplied and, unlike in the Yeltsin years, each challenge was met swiftly and in style, with prevailing force verging on overreaction. In the artificial mediated politicking of Russia, this nationalism is unavoidable. With professor's son Dmitri Medvedev as President, some intellectuals looked for a 'thaw' and more gentleness, but as Vladimir Putin himself mused, 'Medvedev is just as nationalist as me, in the good sense'.

Indeed, as the nineties propaganda machine's wheels turned in a complex set of arrangements with media barons and sophisticated techniques amidst a fairly open public sphere, the beginning of the twenty first century marked a return to older methods of media control. The free-to-air major television channels are now mostly controlled by the state (1st Channel, Russia, Kultura, Sport) or affiliated companies, such as *Gazprom* (Gazprom media runs NTV, TNT etc.). Russia is very stretched-out, and free-to-air TV is by far the best and only way to engage most of the Russian television audience. If the nineties saw the rise of guerrilla media events, at the beginning of twenty first century, power was consolidated around the Kremlin. Media events grew larger and more predictable until the final triumph of Putin's second inauguration, which

was shot as a Hollywood battle epic, and Medvedev's first inauguration, an even larger event, followed closely by victory day celebrations including reinstated military parades. In other words, we see the return of ritual and ceremony that beam across the simple message of a reinstated superpower bathing in its own glory. Now Vladimir Putin is no longer associated with an old television series or Peter the Great, or even Stirlitz, he is THE hero in the new National Narrative. Whilst as president, his close friend Dmitry Medvedev already commands stature thanks to Saakashvili's recklessness giving him the opportunity to intervene with Russian troops, but this has not become so widely accepted yet. Moreover, this does not look like a temporary arrangement, as for the while most Russians seemed satisfied. That is, before the crisis came, oil prices collapsed, state revenues fell, companies and industries started to fire and some state regulation (like increased custom duties on cars) caused mass protests. The collapse of prosperity marks a moment of truth for *representation* and ushers in a new reality which has to be more interactive. So far the Russian model, like some web-based services, can be made interactive by paying a sum, like bribing someone. When there is less money around the authorities are keen to spend their funds wisely and waste less. However, it remains to be seen, whether the fight with corruption will last and what will be the outcome of it – closing down the last feedback channel for non-state actors, or a more efficient and open state machine.

Big Time: Filming the National Story

The National narrative has also been prepared by a series of historical and war movies, starting from Sergey Michalkov's epic of Tsar Alexander III, *The barber of Siberia* (1999), ending with the more recent *9th Company*, *a glorious saga of Afghan war*, which went on to win Best Feature Film from Russian cinema academy and the Golden Eagle award. The film was released in September 2005 and became a Russian box office hit, generating \$25.555.809 million at the box office.³

Although the film was set in Afghanistan its leitmotif was not linked to a 'support our allies' slogan – in fact, in Russia, the recent Afghan war is seen as a karmic redemption for the US, the long-time ally of the *mujahidin*. Some commentators argued that it represented an apology for the recent Chechen war and, in general, a Russian view of the war of civilisations. The impact of those films, much like the success of Boris Akunin's stylised detective series, was to bring back the polished image of Russian Empire from Tsarist times to late Soviet history, and repackage it so that it can again be a source of pride – and a platform for the new Russian identity (also available in film form as *Councillor of state* et al.). The central argument of this chapter has been that identity in modern and, perhaps, in every other age, is built on top of existing traditions, a variety of signs, words, symbols, metaphors and meanings that

are repackaged for the moment out of the common cultural memory by the cultural/media industry of the day – as it did in Russia in the nineties. The new identity emerges as a mixed-up mosaic, built on top of the strongest achievements of creative genius, cultural and education industry. These all programme the development of national identity, but sometimes it takes a generation or two for the programme to run depending on the culture code a society may carry with it. The work of cultural industry is to tie up recent developments with the remnants of culture and cultivate correct associations.

However, in this respect it is interesting to note that the use of cinema can be both blatant and tactical in its purpose, as was the case with *Den Vyborov* (Elections day, 2007), a hilarious comedy that incidentally serves to show why regional governor's elections had to be abolished. It is a play where a group of adventurous radio performers from *Kak by radio* on the orders of business owner (*oligarch*) move out to fight the governor elections in one of the Volga regions – and win the elections by their own wits and with the help of the girlfriend of their business owner, who emerges to run the criminal network. After winning the elections, they realise they have mistakenly won in the wrong region, so they have to move on and fight again. The last words of this award-winning successful movie, though, are not funny: it is a highly patriotic statement that claims 'Governor elections have been cancelled in 2004' and that no one was hurt while filming this movie, presuming that people did get hurt when there were elections. These elections were abolished and made way for a more complex system of appointments by president (with a nod from local *duma*), and a system of seven mega-regions overseen by directly appointed presidential place-men. The change helped to curb the tension among regions that wanted more say in the Federation, yet it clearly stripped voters of the right to elect their governor – after the latest reforms the candidacy will be offered to the party that won the local elections but may still be replaced by the President. In any case, thanks to the film *Elections day* and corruption scandals concerning elected officials, it is not clear whether Russians really want governorship elections. It is also not clear who wins more from these elections, as they often act as protection for Moscow from undue angst from the populace.

The rise of Russian cinema is a huge phenomenon. It has been fuelled by investment into the aging Soviet-time cinema theatres and by the opening of many more multiplexes that lure viewers with the offering of Cola and popcorn. The budgets for Russian films are now in the millions of dollars, and box office collections can be in tens of millions of dollars, which has made the cinema industry a perfect investment for major television channels, especially 1st Channel. Television was just as important as cinema, maybe even more so – because it was the thrust of television advertisements that pulled the viewers into the new cinema theatres, and those same teasers often helped to spread the main message of a given movie on the visual 'Esperanto' of television advertisements.

The 1st Channel, the largest by coverage, budget and advertising revenue in Russia, is nothing more than a post Boris Berezovsky ORT.⁴ ORT (and 1st

Channel) has been controlled by the state with its fifty one per cent holding, since its creation in 1995. It originally served as the key vehicle in Yeltsin's close run 1996 presidential campaign. No matter why and what happened to the ownership of the channel since then, its political clout and use as an instrument of propaganda, once restored, never lost its importance. It was Boris Berezovsky who accomplished the restoration of editorial control over the channel with campaign management being outsourced to him until the end of 1999. However, even as Berezovsky sold his stake and moved on to political exile in UK, the function of the channel was constant. Only control became direct, without the risk of another partisan intermediary who might put his own interests ahead of those of the state/party. Yet, it would be unfair to claim that Boris Berezovsky was unique – he only facilitated the broadcaster's return to the propaganda model, which ruled its creation and programming ever since it beamed its first signal across the Union in the Soviet times.

The charismatic director of the channel, Konstantin Ernst, who started his managerial career as producer general of the ORT in 1995, first appeared on television in the highly popular *Vzglyad* shown at the end of eighties, but made his debut through a programme on films, *Matador* (1991-1995). Always willing to branch out from television into the movies, he made his first attempts as early as 1988 with the musical *Radio Silence* and in 1989 with the short film *Homo Duplex*. As a talented producer, Ernst made quite a mark on the new Russian identity, realising his unfulfilled ambitions in cinema to stage three hugely successful musicals, *Starye pesni o glavnom* ("old songs on the most important") based on Soviet-era hits and visuals. Airing this hugely popular musical on New Year's Eve three years in a row was perhaps the most efficient way to frame a processed pop-cultural heritage as identity-construction material.

The first film made under the auspices of 1st Channel as the successor to ORT was *Nochnoy dozor* (*Night watch*, 2004). Based on the book of sci-fi celebrity writer Sergey Lukjanenko, it is a very interesting and well-made film set in Moscow about the never ending conflict between the forces of good and evil featuring abhumans (vampires, werewolves, changelings etc) and 'Others' who have the capacity to see and interact with these immortals and potentially ascend to immortality themselves. The film made over \$16 million at the Russian and CIS box office, and \$28 million more abroad, also becoming one of the first new Russian films to be distributed worldwide by Twentieth Century Fox. The sequel – *Dnevnoy dozor* (*Day watch*, 2006) grossed a total of \$36 million. In one of the scenes in the sequel, the main hero, Anton Gorodetsky, can be seen to appear in the Russian subway on a poster of *9th Company*. This was interpreted as the desire to gross more at the box office, and this gain did materialise. In all it grossed more in Russia than *The Lord of the Rings*.

Nochnoy dozor and *Dnevnoy dozor* are not overtly political movies as they are both set in the strange world of magic. Unlike the book upon which the films are based in which Others can remain neutral, in the film these things are simpler: if you are Other, then you have to choose, Dark or Light, there

is no other way. This is a very Soviet assumption – that you have to choose sides instead of minding your own business. However, what is even more striking in this mythical world is that the evil could never be eradicated: the world was safe as long as there was a truce, and vampires had their prey on a prescription basis. Some commentators, like Boris Kagarlitsky, have often mentioned that Russia is a ‘corporativist’ state, almost medieval in the way it is structured with all sorts of informal guilds staying intact in spite of so much cosmetic change. It is perhaps too much to argue that this need to choose is an ontological necessity that has been endlessly promoted to become a sort of side effect for any national electorate campaign. Indeed, that it has become the lever through which the whole nation was eventually mobilised to gain cohesion under the symbol of Great Russia. War and sport act as triggers for the chain reaction that amplifies, and releases it. Yet it would not be so preposterous to suggest that the films mentioned above (*Brat* and *Brat2*, *Nochnoy dozor* and *Dnevnoy dozor*, *9th Company* etc.) have helped to restore the movie industry to high levels of both profit and influence, and, moreover, that they sometimes form part of the propaganda machine, such as was the case with *Election Day*. However, this does not mean that *communication* cannot happen this way, too. As the political sector was closed down, it was compensated by the revival of the public sphere on the Internet and the morphing of culture into politics, that is, the place for discussion.

There is a growing gap between the voter banks held hostage by television and web users, as well as an emerging gap between the perceived calamity of hostage voters and their true behaviour. Whatever is coming, it looks like change – but what kind of change?

The New Russian Identity, or Future Turns in the National Story

In short, the ideology industry, so strongly detested in the nineties, has come back with full force to take over the management of the symbolic field in mass media. What it portrays is a future-oriented *Project Russia*, described in an anonymous bestselling book by that name, and mentioned on billboards and in the press in a carefully orchestrated sideshow of unity of those in power that was needed to hand the presidency over to Dmitry Medvedev. It is not an official doctrine, but a mystery portrayed by professionals: journalists, politicians and the like. The official doctrine is a plan of Russian development up to 2020, but the two do correspond or correlate.

Project Russia is (or used to be) part of the official doctrine, set out by an increasingly effective governmental propaganda machine. The other pieces of this mega-project were National Programmes and projects like ‘Electronic Russia’, affordable housing etc. Indeed, Dmitry Medvedev’s first governmental appointment was as Vice Prime Minister for Development and Execution of the National Programmes. This gave him the proper background when he was

running for President. The anonymous *Project Russia* signalled a presence of collective force set firmly in control, and as the candidate was endorsed by Vladimir Putin and presented against the grand scope of National Programmes, his personal qualities somehow lost their importance as he was clearly immersed in the 'cloud of power', was part of it and, thus, of this collective force, a confident voice behind the United Russia party, Medvedev and Putin.

The imaginary collective power behind a National Project, as *Project Russia*, was the same Imperial might repackaged. As usual, the first to see the emergence of this social trend were writers such as Pavel Krusanov from Saint Petersburg. Historically, he was the first to present this reality sketch in his *Fallen Angel*, a gloomy yet incredibly powerful vision of Imperial but archaic Russia, a dark fantasy of the rise to power of an ambitious emperor in Russian lands placed in the future not so far away. This book ends apocalyptically, when the emperor, while losing the war, decides to set free into the world the horrible *Gekata Dogs* that 'makes his general's teeth crush in their mouths' as they listen in disbelief to his decision.

Another story of heroic might gone wrong was presented by the classic writer Vladimir Sorokin. His book *Oprichnik's Day* is a one-day long saga about a member of Imperial Guard, who is seen ritually burning the house and wasting the household of a befallen official, before heading to a witch to settle a love affair for the Queen. He then goes onto the border to deal with Chinese cargo trucks but returns to Moscow too late and sees a failure of provocative actions against a bard too insolent to protest against the Queen's lust.

Russia is also extremely archaic in its social order. Yet it is a dark fantasy innovated archaic, a sort of Russian cyberpunk without a cyber dimension, just the everyday life of Russians in a restored Empire. There is not the space here to explore this further, it has been explicitly drawn in another recent anti-utopia *Sakbarny Kreml* (meaning the Sugar Kremlin – both the castle repainted white and the white sugar models of Kremlin towers and walls, the one truly successful product except raw materials provided in the state-controlled industry) – a set of novels on life in *Oprichnik's Day* times where Russia is poor and haunted, but proud, and with its own ways.

As noted earlier by critics, this National Story remains one-sided, in a way, as the issue of the audience's reception of the political spectacle is almost completely omitted. To check this against reality we can use sociology or popular opinion-setting shows, even the most phoney, just for the sheer scale of their audience in terms of programming. One television show, explicitly called *Name of Russia*, had a vote for the Best Russian ever. Among the contenders were Peter the Great, Dostoevsky, Pushkin, Ivan Grozny, Alexander Pushkin, Dmitry Mendeleev, Stalin, Lenin and Catherine the Great. It is incredible, but the television claims that in votes Alexander Nevsky, the Grand Prince that defeated the Teutonic Knights in the legendary battle on a frozen lake, was selected by over half a million Russians, followed by Petr Stolypin, a Prime Minister that almost reformed Russia in the early twentieth century only to be killed by the terrorists, followed by Joseph Stalin in the

third place, who was both Georgian and a terrorist, but still received more votes than Alexander Pushkin, the great Russian poet and writer that almost single-handedly created the Russian language.⁵ Tragically killed in a duel, he was also considered to be authentic universally, but came the fourth. After that came Peter the Great, Lenin, Dostoevsky, Suvorov, and then the great scientist, Mendeleev.

The results of this poll are not to be treated seriously, as it was not precise: everyone could vote for everyone and there were a total of 2,888,523 votes in the final round of December 2008. However, as some commentators put it, maybe it is even more interesting if the result was rigged, as it shows the official view of history and the importance ascribed to it by television: the military caste still rules Russia, as it made Russia what it is by staging the eastward expansion (up to California and Alaska, eventually) and now heads North, to the Arctic. Some even see the same land grab logic at work in the way Russia has put a claim upon the *nano* industry by appointing Anatoly Chubais, the legendary privatisation guru and electrical monopoly chairman, to lead the effort supported by substantial funds. 'Nano world' here becomes the new territory, prompting the logical reaction to new lands: taking control of them all.

Moreover, there was another rating in this show, determined by experts, in which Alexander Nevsky shared first place with Alexander Pushkin, followed by Suvorov and Stolypin. Here the victorious warrior prince, hailed for the unification of the North-Eastern provinces and victory over heavily armed Lithuanian, Polish and German knights, in the experts' eyes, shares the throne with the most eloquent poet to speak the language. There is certain logic to that: experts are specialists, and specialists are made by reading, hence the value they place on the written Russian language, reinvented by Pushkin.

The whole construct of the political spectacle is *representational*, framed by the traditional mass media (newspapers, television, radio), but as such these days it is checked and kept in balance by communication as it is practiced in Russian blogs and even off-line. In a curious twist, Medvedev is an Internet fan and has claimed on the record that freedom of speech should be developed to open new avenues for discussion. He himself posts on a video blog and enjoys thousands of comments. Both he and Vladimir Putin resort to talking on television, though, when they have to say something really important, making television news a sort of ritual propaganda ballet.

The National Story would never be complete without Religion, the Orthodox Church, as personified by Alexy II, who sadly passed away. Russia has recently witnessed the recovery of Orthodox Church and now enjoys a sort of New Age that has led to the rise of radical nationalist sects that link Russians to Arians and India in a perfect flight of myth. In fact, Russia came to witness the great blossoming of all sorts of interests and denominations, all of them of great merit and interest, but too complex to be explained in a paragraph except for the effects their belief has upon them. For example, one of the so-called "old believers" sects is so afraid of digital technologies that they do not have passports and refuse to carry any form of identity with numbers in it, as

they believe that proliferation of such control would mark the beginning of the end of the world that they see is near. Neither do they watch television, read books accept perhaps handwritten copies of sacred Orthodox texts, as they are believed to be uncorrupted by a State that in reality was clearly behind the first baptizing effort in Kiev 1000 AD. However, these sorts of violent efforts are passed now as persuasion has emerged to supplement it and events became media event eventually to serve that purpose.

There is, however, a new urgency to the question of where the National Story will go next, as in dire times a choice has to be made. Either *representation* has to be adapted to the new realities of economic crisis to include some reality checks and *communication*, or it has to seek totality, and then *communication* will stay as it is now, with public sphere displaced in the Live journal community, cultural web sites and other private venues. However, the opposition of *representation-communication* is now charged with a tremendous tension that also looks like a generation gap between those who still watch television and those who already don't. The Internet generation is interactive in the same way as when the youth was unsettled by television before, and forces the power to adapt to *communicational* techniques at least when it has to come to terms with it. There is also a loose band of liberal politicians that are beginning to cause more trouble now that they choose to fight in any election in which they can stand. What is clear, however, is that the *representation* will have to be reloaded at some point, but then it is unfortunate that liberals are still so weak in Russian politics: unlike the nineties, although a move into this direction is what power would probably like to do, but cannot afford anymore, as it has already created a country of spectators that want some common cause, like winning, or staging the Olympics.

A new generation of Russians still has to grow to offer those in power a larger base to move on away from the nationalist cause, and Imperial Glory remains perhaps the crowd attractor and pleaser. However, strategically, Russia is set to position itself away from China and this means that there will be space for the new generation of media users and technologies to grow. If in spite of the dire crisis, Russia is quiet, then that is quite nice for breeding long-term change. One is left to wonder, however, whether increased enthusiasm from the administration will not crush the emerging engine of growth: the culture and internet industry. As usual, there are contradictory signs: a draft law on internet and/or a number of moves on the market could help evaporate the magic mood that still lingers over the new media industry. However, the new social networks are already entrenched with a leader, *Vkontakte.ru*, scoring more hits a day than *Yandex*, a local search giant that is here larger than *Google*. Communication shaped reality for the new generation within the carefully orchestrated dense representation field. The whole set invites subcultures, and these are emerging fast, promising more street art and media-activism in years to come.

Notes

1. Such as leftist and nationalist party papers like *Den*, *Zavtra*, *Russky poryadok*, *Limonka* and *Pravda*.
2. Such as *Russky Radio*, and most FM stations except *Echo Moskvy*.
3. [http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/9_пота_\(фильм\)#cite_note-BoxOffice-4](http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/9_пота_(фильм)#cite_note-BoxOffice-4). (accessed March, 2009)
4. Boris Berezovsky sold forty nine per cent of his shares in ORT for \$150 M but he is now suing Russia, Roman Abramovich and Vladimir Putin in London for pressuring him to do so (more on Russian media history in Zassoursky 2004 et al.).
5. Indeed his fairy tales are believed by some occult sect members to provide the ultimate knowledge of different worlds.

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Holy Trinity: Nation Pentagon, Screen¹

Toby Miller

Watch a 12-year-old take evasive action and score multiple hits while playing *Space Invaders* and you will appreciate the skills of tomorrow's pilot. (Ronald Reagan, Disney EPCOT Center, 1983, quoted in Turse 2008: 129)

It felt like I was in a big video game. It didn't even faze me, shooting back. It was just natural instinct. *Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!* ... I couldn't believe I was seeing this. It was like *Halo*. It didn't even seem real, but it was real. (Anonymous veteran of the Iraq War and the computer games *Full Spectrum Warrior* and *Halo 2*, quoted in Turse 2008: 137)

This chapter examines the close relationship between the screen industries, nationalism, and government in the United States of America. Despite much-vaunted claims that US culture is uniquely independent of state support and direction, I'll show that the government's violent and destructive nationalism relies on a compliant and even willing partner in the culture industries, which in turn have drawn on massive public subvention for decades. Following some brief theoretical discussion, I consider in turn the links between the US state and cinema, current-affairs television, and electronic games, focusing on propagandistic elements that develop and index nationalism.

Far from the nation disappearing with globalised commerce, hyper-nationalism and a semi-secret state presence are integral to the US media and crucial to its empire. The media are implicated with overseas projects of the sovereign-state at the levels of finance, ideology, and personnel. In this sense, the assumption underpinning much contemporary punditry – that sovereign-states and nations are declining as the global media erode national specificity – simply does not apply. In the US, it is a category mistake, for two reasons. First, the post-Cold War II, post-11th September 2001 United States is 'a new hybrid political creature, at once the leading and most sovereignty-oriented territorial state and the nonterritorial overlord of the world' (Falk 2004: 22), intent on 'displacing a domestic security problem on foreign turf' (Shapiro 2007: 298). And second, as both Althusser and Durkheim might have said (from very different political

perspectives) the distinction between state and civil society is a dubious one, especially given the productive interpenetration of public and private throughout the last century of US military propaganda (Andersen 2006). And globalisation often means more and more entertainment outlets for militant US nationalism as much as footloose finance and manufacturing capital.

Even before the current conjuncture, when Adorno and Horkheimer (1977) landed here to escape the Nazis, they were shocked to find that Germany's totalitarian statism was matched by Yanqui media capitalism in its intensity, industrialisation, and monism, if not its genocidal bigotry. Since that time, many progressive critics have been filled with pessimism by this seeming unity of business, media, and government. These concerns perhaps reach their apogee in the propaganda model, which discerns strong ties between market investment, public policy, and media content (Herman 2003). The model has been accused of underestimating the relative autonomy of democratic urges from state apparatuses and populist media from elite preoccupations, and the arms-length independence and social esteem of public-service broadcasting (Sparks 2007). But it is more than a scholarly theory: the propaganda model has become part of popular culture itself, appealing to activists and many neutral observers (Hackett 2006). This is the grand irony of a thesis that has been derided for failing to account for the productive nature of audience activity – that it is popular with so many, very active, audiences! This chapter owes much to such groundbreaking work, even as it is informed by post-structural theoretical concerns and the warp and woof of material history.

In contemporary US international relations, the media are deemed to represent 'soft power' in partnership with the 'hard power' of force and economics (Nye 2002-03). Nevertheless, their public-policy significance waxes and wanes. Republicans nearly put an end to official propaganda when they took control of Congress in the mid-1990s, dramatically diminishing funding and staffing as part of their dislike of artists and intellectuals and in response to the end of Sovietism; but Cold War II was soon followed by 11th September 2001. The newly modish term 'public diplomacy' suddenly appealed to the Federal government, as it answered the plaintive cry 'Why do they hate us?' with 'Why you should love us'. The White House Office of Global Communications and a Policy Coordinating Committee on Strategic Communications were created to build trust of the US overseas, stress common interests and ideologies, and influence elites. By 2003, the State Department's cultural budget was up to US\$600 million (Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy to the Department of State 2005). The new public diplomacy is supposed to transcend the material impact of US foreign policy and corporate expropriation by fostering communication at a civil-society level, directly linking citizens across borders to 'influence opinions and mobilise foreign publics' by 'engaging, informing, and influencing key international audiences' (Council on Foreign Relations 2003: 15; Gilboa 1998; Brown 2004). The idea is to work in the interest of the US government, but avoid that connotation. Initiatives are underway across a wide array of governmental bodies: the State Department, the US Agency for

International Development, the Broadcasting Board of Governors, the Pentagon, and the Open Source Center (Government Accountability Office 2007). By 2008, the Bush Administration was remobilising Cold-War style cultural tactics. It even returned to a doctrine of deterrence – not the rational-actor model of mutually-assured destruction that warned the Soviets of what a nuclear attack would mean, but rather a counter-discourse to radical Islamism across the internet that stressed the negative consequences of non-state violence. This was deterrence birthed in asymmetry (Der Derian 2005: 26) – minus the grudging respect accorded to rivalrous state actors, but plus the religionist's perverse fascination with fellow fanatics.

Beyond these official policies, the intimate interpenetration of nation, state, and capital via the culture industries is perhaps best expressed in the anecdote with which Ed Halter begins his journalistic history of computer games – the moment in 2003 when Los Angeles was occupied by US Special Forces. Just two months after their ill-starred imperialist venture in Iraq had begun, these troops invaded LA's Convention Center as part of Electronic Entertainment Exposition, the annual showcase of video games. Their mission was to promote *America's Army*, an electronic game designed to recruit young people to the military via simulated first-person shooting. The game included notes to parents that stressed the importance of substituting 'virtual experiences for vicarious insights' (Halter 2006: viii-ix) – an exciting euphemism for 'cyber-boot camp' (Lenoir 2003: 175).

The Special Forces were enacting a marketing triumph in LA rather than a military one, by symbolising a malignant amalgam of state violence and commercial entertainment. For the culture industries have become part of perpetual virtual war because of the way they mix hyper-masculinist action-adventure ideology, supinely celebratory military news coverage, and complicit new media (Deck 2004). Their method is at once collective – we are the United States and we're here to intimidate and destroy – and individual, thanks to the immersive interpellation of narrative film, current affairs, and gaming. They are crucial components of the necessarily ongoing, incomplete project of constructing the power of the nation as natural, a project undertaken through the diurnal and the cinematic, the banal and the spectacular (Puri 2004).

James Der Derian argues that the US conducts international affairs through 'a technostrategic triad of surveillance, terror, and speed' (1992: viii). The former ideological bifurcation of capitalism versus socialism and the US versus the USSR has been substituted by pan-capitalist regional blocs and a single superpower. Communications, electronics, radar, telemetry, and photography are endowed with enormous representational authority as military strategy is moulded and enhanced by cultural technologies that appear to render warfare virtual, given the use of simulation, and the low numbers of battlefield fatalities sustained by the US compared to other armies that it engages (Der Derian 1992: 4, 21, 31). In the 1991 Gulf War, the US lost just 270 soldiers, many to friendly fire, while no NATO troops died in Kosovo. The 2001 invasion of Afghanistan saw one official US combatant killed by the opposition. The engagement with the other has become less intimate: rather than flying bombardiers who are exposed to

the elements, satellites perched in the sky now guide bombs, under the distant control of 'shadowy specialists' who use pixels for surveillance and disembodied execution (Deck 2004). This is the post-industrialisation of conflict, with desktops displacing divisions (Shapiro 2007: 303). At the same time, the claim that virtual technologies make war safer and more virtual is problematic. During the first Gulf War, it was asserted that US Patriot missiles destroyed all of Iraq's Scud missiles. Independent reviews diminished that proportion to one out of ten. And the impact on non-combatants is grotesque. A century ago, eight US soldiers were killed for every civilian in war, now that ratio is reversed (Der Derian 2005: 26). So how does this virtuality serve to obscure the truth?

In his 1954 testimony before an anti-leftist hearing held by the US Atomic Energy Commission, the noted physicist J Robert Oppenheimer, who led the group that had developed the atomic bomb, and which ironically included many progressives like himself who were soon removed from office, talked about the instrumental rationality that animated the people who created this awesome technology. Once these scientists saw that it was feasible, the bomb's impact diminished in intellectual and emotional significance. They had been overtaken by the 'technically sweet' quality of the technology (United States Atomic Energy Commission 1954: 81). This 'technically sweet' element is part of the love of new technology, the drive for innovation, early adoption, and the mix of the sublime – the awesome, the ineffable, the uncontrollable, the powerful – with the beautiful – the approachable, the attractive, the pliant, the soothing. It makes the horror of war very distant, with casualties a blip on a screen – collateral media damage in a virtual game played by high-level strategists (Der Derian 2003: 37, 39, 41, 44). Beginning as a reflection of reality, the military sign is transformed into a perversion of reality. A representation of the truth is displaced by false information. Then these two delineable phases of truth and lies become indistinct. Underlying reality is lost. The sign comes to refer to itself, with no residual need of correspondence to the real, which it is transforming (Baudrillard 1988: 10-11, 29, 170). Using simulated systems of weaponry to win both physical and ideological battles, the US has sought to secure borders, exercise suzerainty, and rattle resistance to financial globalisation through what has become 'the only game in town' – virtual war as a model, a story, and an ideology (Der Derian 2003: 39; Turse 2008: 126). Simulation and dissimulation have become one, under the sign of the nation. Ideologically, this process disobeys the binary of private and public, because it leaks wilfully between capital and state, with material self-interest and delusional policy cloaked in a newly-installed epic binary, of good against evil (Andersen 2006: 5).

Cinema

Cinema may well be the model for the propagandistic simulation of US culture and nationalism. The government has a long history of direct participation in production and control (Hearon 1938). The notorious racist epic, *Birth of a Na-*

tion (Griffith 1915), was given official military support by order of the Secretary of War and endorsed by the President, while the so-called Western genre is a triumphalist enactment of racialisation and genocide (Shapiro 2004). From the moment the US entered the First World War, theatres across the country saw speakers and movies that purported to testify to German atrocities, while films imported from the Central Powers were banned across the US (Turse 2008: 104; Andersen 2006: 7). Immediately afterwards, the Department of the Interior recruited the industry to the 'Americanisation' of immigrants, screening Hollywood movies on ships bringing migrants (Walsh 1997: 10; Hays 1927: 50). Paramount-Famous-Lasky studio executive Sidney R Kent soon referred to cinema as 'silent propaganda' (1927: 208). As a *quid pro quo*, Hollywood lobbyists of the 1920s and '30s treated the US Departments of State and Commerce as 'message boys': the State Department undertook market research and shared business intelligence, while the Commerce Department pressured other countries to permit cinema free access and favourable terms of trade. In the 1940s, the US opened an Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA) to gain solidarity from Latin Americans for World War II. Its most visible programme was the Motion Picture Division, headed by John Hay Whitney, recent co-producer of *Gone with the Wind* (Victor Fleming 1939) and future secret agent and front man for the CIA's news service, Forum World Features (Stonor Saunders 1999: 311-312). The Office had at least one Hollywood film reshot because it showed Mexican children shoeless in the street, and was responsible for getting Hollywood to distribute *Simón Bolívar* (Miguel Contreras Torres 1942) and make *Saludos Amigos* (Norman Ferguson and Wilfred Jackson 1943) and *The Three Caballeros* (Norman Ferguson 1944). Some production costs were borne by the OCIAA in exchange for free prints being distributed in US embassies and consulates across Latin America. Whitney even accompanied Walt Disney and Donald Duck to Rio de Janeiro (Powdermaker 1950: 71; Kahn 1981: 145).

During the invasion of Europe in 1944 and 1945, the military closed Axis films, shuttered the industry, and insisted on the release of US movies, and the *quid pro quo* for the subsequent Marshall Plan was the abolition of customs restrictions, amongst which were limits on film imports (Trumpbour 2002: 63, 3-4, 62, 98; Pauwels and Loisen 2003: 293). In the case of Japan, the occupation immediately changed the face of cinema. When theatres reopened after the US dropped its atomic bombs, all films and posters with war themes were gone. Previously-censored Hollywood texts dominated screens. The occupying troops established an Information Dissemination Section in their Psychological Warfare Branch to imbue the local population with guilt and 'teach American values' through Hollywood (High 2003: 503-504).

The film industry's peak association at this time referred to itself as 'the little State Department,' so isomorphic were its methods and ideology with US policy and politics. This was also the era when the industry's self-censoring Production Code appended to its bizarre litany of sexual and narcotic prohibitions and requirements two items requested by the 'other' State Department: selling the

American way of life around the world, and avoiding negative representations of any 'foreign country with which we have cordial relations' (Powdermaker 1950: 36). Meanwhile, with the Cold War underway, the CIA's Psychological Warfare Workshop employed future Watergate criminal E. Howard Hunt, who clandestinely funded the rights purchase and production of George Orwell's anti-Soviet novels *Animal Farm* (Joy Batchelor and John Halas 1954) and *1984* (Michael Anderson 1956) (Cohen 2003). Producer Walter Wanger trumpeted the meshing of 'Donald Duck and Diplomacy' as 'a Marshall Plan for ideas ... a veritable celluloid Athens,' concluding that the state needed Hollywood 'more than ... the H bomb' (1950: 444, 446). Industry head Eric Johnston, fresh from his prior post as Secretary of Commerce, saw himself dispatching 'messengers from a free country.' Harry Truman agreed, referring to movies as 'ambassadors of goodwill' during his Presidency (quoted in Johnston 1950; also see Hozic 2001: 77). The United States Information Service spread its lending library of films across the globe as part of Cold-War expansion. John F. Kennedy instructed the Service to use film and television to propagandise, and his Administration funded 226 film centres in 106 countries, equipped with 7,541 projectors (Lazarsfeld 1950: xi; Legislative Research Service 1964: 9, 19). The title of a Congressional Legislative Research Service 1964 report made the point bluntly: *The U.S. Ideological Effort: Government Agencies and Programs*. That impulse has been renewed. Four decades later, union officials soberly intoned that 'although the Cold War is no longer a reason to protect cultural identity, today U.S.-produced pictures are still a conduit through which our values, such as democracy and freedom, are promoted' (Ulrich and Simmers 2001: 365).

Then there is the Defence Department. Since World War II, the Pentagon has provided technology, soldiers, and settings to motion pictures and television in return for a jealously-guarded right to veto assistance to stories that offend its sensibilities (Robb 2004). Today's hybrid of SiliWood (Silicon Valley and Hollywood) blends Northern Californian technology, Hollywood methods, and military funding. The interactivity underpinning this hybrid has evolved through the articulation since the mid-1980s of Southern and Northern California semiconductor and computer manufacture and systems and software development (a massively military-inflected and -supported industry until after Cold War II) to Hollywood screen content, as disused aircraft-production hangars became entertainment sites. The links are as much about technology, personnel, and collaboration on ancillary projects as they are about story lines. Stephen Spielberg is a recipient of the Pentagon's Medal for Distinguished Public Service; Silicon Graphics feverishly designs material for use by the empire in both its military and cultural aspects; and virtual-reality research veers between soldierly and audience applications, much of it subsidised by the Federal Technology Reinvestment Project and Advanced Technology Program. This has further submerged killing machines from serious public scrutiny. Instead, they surface superficially as Hollywood props (Directors Guild of America 2000; Hozic 2001: 140-141, 148-151).

Simplistic textual reflectionism, which argues that the US screen industries are free of state pressure and immune to nationalistic propaganda because cowboy-style heroes have not proliferated since 2001 as message-boys of imperialism (Douthat 2008) misses the point. The industry sprang into step with the state after 11th September 2001, consulting on possible attacks and forming a 'White House-Hollywood Committee' to ensure coordination between the nations we bomb and the messages we export. Then there were the spies: the very week before the 2001 attacks on the US, the *New York Times* previewed the coming autumn television drama schedule with the headline 'Hardest-Working Actor of the Season: The C.I.A.' (Bernstein 2001; also see Cohen 2001) because three prime-time shows were made under the aegis of the Agency. And with NASA struggling to renovate its image, who better to invite to lunch than Hollywood producers, so they would script new texts featuring it as a benign, exciting entity? In the process, the profound contradictions between pursuing profit and violence versus civility get washed away, their instrumentalism erased in favour of dramatic re-enchantment as a supposedly higher moral purpose expressed in nation and valour (Behnke 2006).

This tendency was most clearly-expressed in the shape of *24*, a program that began in the fateful fall of 2001, and still screens around the world: in 2009, one hundred million people watched it across 236 channels. The show's creator, Joel Surnow, boasts of being a 'rightwing nut job' (quoted in Aitkenhead 2009), and *24* has featured cameos by his ideological *confrères* in politics (John McCain) and the news media (Laura Ingraham and Larry Elder). It was endorsed by intellectual lackeys of the Bush regime such as the *ur*-disgraced-academic John Woo, who wrote legal justifications for inhumane brutality (Lithwick 2008). The Heritage Foundation, a reactionary, coin-operated think tank, held a press conference in 2006 in celebration of the series that featured Michael Chertoff, then the Secretary of Homeland Security, and extremist talk-radio host Rush Limbaugh, who announced that Vice-President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld were fans of the programme. *24* clearly endorses torture as a means of extracting information from terrorists, which has been a major ideological and policy distinction between US political parties since 2001. For some critics, it represents '*la suma de los miedos americanos*' [the sum of American fears] (Miklos 2008: 79). John Downing has termed *24* '*the most extended televisual reflection to date on the implications of 9/11*' and an egregious argument in favour of the 'need' for immediate and illegal action in the 'public interest' (2007: 62). It's fine for the hero, Jack Bauer, 'a man never at a loss for something to do with an electrode,' to deny medical assistance to a terrorist whom he has wounded, shoot another's wife in the leg, then threaten a second shot to the knee unless her husband confides in him; and fine for the US President to subject a Cabinet member to electric shocks to interrogate him (Downing 2007: 72, 77; Lithwick 2008) as Bauer endlessly intones 'Whatever it takes'. Thank heavens for Stella Artois' Godardian spoof.²

Television

In this context, it comes as no surprise that nationalistic militarism also colours the way that US television covers news and current affairs, where the private media are in step with more formal, state-based propaganda. Consider the coverage of civilian casualties in imperialist conflicts since 2001. Lawrence Eagleburger, a former Secretary of State, who was called in to comment by CNN after the attacks on the US, said: 'There is only one way to begin to deal with people like this, and that is you have to kill some of them even if they are not immediately directly involved', while Republican-Party house intellectual Anne Coulter called on the government to identify the nations where terrorists lived, 'invade their countries, kill their leaders and convert them to Christianity' (*National Review* Online, October 13, 2001). Coulter was also the author of the notorious rebuke on television to a disabled Vietnam veteran that 'People like you caused us to lose that war'. She proceeded to propose that the right 'physically intimidate liberals, by making them realise that they can be killed too', and informed Fox News watchers and magazine readers that liberals desire 'lots of 9/11s' and 'Arabs lie' (quoted in Alterman 2003: 3-5). Coulter's reward for such hyperbolic ignorance was frequent appearances on NBC, CNN, MSNBC, ABC, and HBO, *inter alia* (Alterman 2003: 5; FAIR 2005).

When the assault commenced, desperate Afghans in refugee camps were filmed by the BBC, which then sold the footage on to ABC. But the soundtrack to the two broadcast versions gave them incompatible meanings:

British media presented the camps as consisting of refugees from U. S. bombing who said that fear of the daily bombing attacks had driven them out of the city, whereas U. S. media presented the camps as containing refugees from Taliban oppression and the dangers of civil war. (Kellner 2003: 125)

CNN instructed presenters to mention 11th September each time Afghan suffering was discussed, and Walter Isaacson, the network's President, decreed that it was 'perverse to focus too much on the casualties or hardship' (quoted in Kellner 2003: 107, 66).

As the 2003 Iraq invasion loomed, Rupert Murdoch said 'there is going to be collateral damage ... if you really want to be brutal about it, better we get it done now' (quoted in Pilger 2003). The human impact of the invasion was dismissed by Public Broadcasting Service *News Hour* Executive Producer Lester Crystal as not 'central at the moment' (quoted in Sharkey 2003). Fox News Managing Editor Brit Hume said that civilian casualties may not belong on television, as they are 'historically, by definition, a part of war'. In the fortnight prior to the invasion, none of the three major commercial networks examined the humanitarian impact of such an action. Human Rights Watch's briefing paper and a UN Undersecretary-General's warning on the topic lay uncovered (FAIR 2003a). By contrast, the Qatar-owned TV news network Al Jazeera, for example, dedicated only a third of its stories to war footage, emphasizing hu-

man distress over electronic effectiveness, vernacular reportage rather than patriotic euphemism. But thousands of civilian Afghan and Iraqi deaths reported by it and South Asian, South-East Asian, Western European, and other Middle Eastern news services went essentially unrecorded here (Lewis et al. 2004: 14; Rich 2003; Jasperson and El-Kikhia 2003: 119, 126-127; Herold 2001; Flanders 2001; Kellner 2004: 334; della Cava 2003; Greenberg 2003).

US viewers were treated to a carnival of *matériel* that oscillated between glorifying and denying death, privileging the 'technically sweet'. 38 per cent of CNN's coverage of the bombardment emphasised technology, while 62 per cent focused on military activity, without referring to history or politics. Civilian suffering took second place to military manoeuvres and odes. This fetishisation of the 'technically sweet' subordinated critical expertise. More than half the US television-studio guests talking about the impending action in Iraq in 2003 were superannuated white-male pundits (FAIR 2003b), 'ex-military men, terrorism experts, and Middle Eastern policy analysts who know none of the relevant languages, may never have seen any part of the Middle East, and are too poorly educated to be expert at anything' (Said 2003). During the war, news effectively diminished the dominant discourse to instrumental rationality and state propaganda. Of 319 people giving 'analysis' on ABC, CBS, and NBC in October 2003, 76 per cent were current or previous officials. Of the civilians, 79 per cent were Republican-Party mavens. And all in all, 81 per cent of sources were Yanquis (Whiten 2004; Rendall and Butterworth 2004; Grand Rapids Institute for Information Democracy 2005). The *New York Times* refers to these has-been and never-were interviewees like this: '[p]art experts and part reporters, they're marketing tools, as well' (Jensen 2003). But their virtually universal links to arms-trading were rarely divulged, and never discussed as relevant. Retired Lieutenant General Barry McCaffrey, employed in this capacity by NBC News, points to the *cadre's* 'lifetime of experience and objectivity'. In his case, this involved membership of the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq, a lobby group dedicated to influencing the media, and the boards of three munitions companies that make ordnance he had praised on MSNBC. Even amongst the thoroughly ideologised US public, 36 per cent believed the media over-emphasised the opinions of these retirees (Roy 2004; Benaim *at al.* 2003; Pew Research Center for the People & the Press 2004: 15).³ Perhaps the most relevant factor is that General Electric, which then owned MSNBC and NBC, is one of the largest defence contractors in the world. It receives billions of dollars from the Pentagon each year. Disney (which owns ABC) is also a beneficiary of *largesse* from the Department of Defense (Turse 2008: 3).

In addition to these complex domestic imbrications of the private and public sectors, the US government attempts to limit the expression of alternative positions on world television. To hide the carnage of its 2001 invasion, the Pentagon bought exclusive rights to satellite photos of Afghanistan (Solomon 2001; Magder 2003: 38). And the Associated Press Managing Editors sent an open letter of protest to the Pentagon, noting that 'journalists have been harassed,

have had their lives endangered and have had digital camera disks, videotape and other equipment confiscated' by the US military (APME 2003).

Consider the treatment of Al Jazeera. The US State Department tried to disrupt the network by applying pressure to Qatar's Emir Sheikh Hamid bin Khalifa al-Thani, and the channel's Washington correspondent was 'detained' *en route* to a US-Russia summit in November 2001 (International Federation of Journalists 2001: 20; Hafez 2001; el-Nawawy and Gher 2003; Miladi 2003: 159). The network was assaulted by US munitions in Afghanistan in 2001 (where it was the sole broadcast news outlet in Kabul) and Iraq in 2003, and subject to then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's denunciation of it as 'Iraqi propaganda' and the Bush regime's ignorant and insulting moniker: 'All Osama All the Time.' During the US occupation of Iraq, Al Jazeera workers have been subject to violent assaults by US soldiers, culminating in murders. Rear Admiral Craig Quigley, US deputy assistant defence secretary for public affairs, justified the attack on the network's Kabul operations with the claim that Al Qaeda interests were being aided by activities going on there. Quigley's nutty proof was that Al Jazeera was using a satellite uplink and was in contact with Taliban officials – pretty normal activities for a news service (Miller 2007).

In direct opposition to Al Jazeera, the US Government selected Grace Digital Media to run an Arabic-language satellite television news service into post-invasion Iraq. A fundamentalist Christian company, Grace described itself as 'dedicated to transmitting the evidence of God's presence in the world today' via 'secular news, along with aggressive proclamations that will 'change the news' to reflect the Kingdom of God' (quoted in Mokhiber and Weissman 2003). The firm fell apart in controversial circumstances, swallowed up by God TV.

Many observers of US media coverage of the Afghan and Iraq wars argue that 'we got our media back' after the chaos wrought on the US Gulf Coast by Hurricane Katrina in 2005 – that the catastrophe marked a recognition by the mainstream press corps that the Administration was mendacious and incompetent, having sacrificed objective technocracy at the font of post-secular enchantment. That may be so – but the real test will come the next time the US is invading somewhere, and pretextual alibis are scant and spurious. The omens remain poor. For at this moment of putative rediscovery of truth and reason, the media continue to deliver falsehoods that have a huge impact on the public. In early 2008, CBS conducted a high-profile interview with the man who had been a US military interrogator of Saddam Hussein prior to the fallen dictator's execution. The segment was predicated on Hussein's alleged failure to admit that there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq prior to the 2003 invasion, which was explained as a puzzling error that had led to war. But Hussein had been interviewed on that very network five years earlier, days before the struggle began, assuring viewers that there were no such weapons! Quite clearly, CBS was seeking to give the US government a free pass after the event, rewriting its own archival history. And on the issue of Iraqis killed in the war, the valid statistical work done by top epidemiologists continues to be suppressed across television news and current affairs. Hundreds of thousands

of Iraqis have died, according to these estimates. But as at February 2007, in the eyes of the credulous US public, the Iraqi casualty figure was below 10,000 (Roberts et al. 2004; FAIR 2008; McElwee 2008).

Games

In addition to punditry, the Iraq war offered other money-making opportunities to superannuated veterans of imperialistic nationalism. Visitors to the Fox News site on May 31, 2004 encountered a 'grey zone'. On one side of the page, a US soldier in battle gear prowled the streets of Baghdad. On the other, a *Terror Handbook* promised to facilitate 'Understanding and facing the threat to America' under the banner: 'WAR ON TERROR sponsored by KUMA WAR' (a major gaming company). The *Kuma: War* game includes online missions entitled 'Fallujah: Operation al Fajr', 'Battle in Sadr City', and 'Uday and Qusay's Last Stand'. Its legitimacy and realism are underwritten by the fact that the firm is run by retired military officers, and used as a recruiting tool by their former colleagues. Both sides benefit from the company's website, which invites soldiers to pen their battlefield experiences – a neat way of getting intellectual property *gratis* in the name of the nation (Deck 2004; Power 2007: 272; Turse 2008: 137). The site boasts that:

Kuma War is a series of playable recreations of real events in the War on Terror. Nearly 100 playable missions bring our soldiers' heroic stories to life, and you can get them all right now, for free. Stop watching the news and get in the game!

Once again, a 'technically sweet' appeal fetishises *matériel* (Andersen 2006: 296).

Many critics have expressed shock that US journalists embedded with the US military for the Iraq invasion said the experience was 'like a video game' (quoted in Power 2007: 271). They shouldn't have been so taken aback, because gaming has been crucial to war and *vice versa* since the late 19th century, when the US Naval War College Game simulated Prussian and French field tactics. Such methods gained popularity after remarkable success in predicting Japanese strategy in the Pacific from 1942. By the late '50s, computers were utilised to theorise and play them (Der Derian 2003: 38-39). Game theory in 1960s and '70s political science and warcraft sought to scientise the study and practice of crisis decision-making, founded on a rational-actor model of maximising utility that was reapplied to the conduct of states, soldiers, and diplomats to construct nuclear-war prospects and counters. Then, with the decline of Keynesianism, game theory's ideal-typical monadic subject came to dominate economics and political science more generally. Utility maximisation even overtook parts of Marxism, which had tended to favour collective rather than selfish models of choice. Games were in, everywhere you looked. That notion of individuals

out for themselves remains in vogue, restimulated through electronic games (which were invented for the US military by defence contractors). The Pentagon worked with Atari in the 1980s to develop *Battlezone*, an arcade game, for use as a flight simulator for fighter pilots, at the same time as it established a gaming centre within the National Defense University (Power 2007: 276). In the early 1990s, the end of Cold War II wrought economic havoc on many corporations involved in the US defence industry. They turned to the games industry as a natural supplement to their principal customer, the military. Today's new geopolitical crisis sees these firms (Quantum 3-D, Martin Marietta, and so on) conducting half their games business with the private market and half with the Pentagon (Hall 2006).

The US military, that mismanaged, misdirected, but masterful behemoth that underpins globalisation, calculates that it needs 80,000 recruits a year to maintain world dominance. The military-diplomatic-fiscal disasters of the 2001-2007 period jeopardised the steady supply of new troops, imperilling the army's stature as the nation's premier employer of 17-24 year-old workers. At the same time as neophytes were hard to attract to the military due to the perils of war, recruits to militaristic game design stepped forward – nationalistic designers volunteered their services. Their mission, which they appeared to accept with alacrity, was to interpellate the country's youth by situating their bodies and minds to fire the same weapons and face the same issues as on the battlefield. TV commercials depicted soldiers directly addressing gamers, urging them to show their manliness by volunteering for the real thing and serving abroad to secure US power (Verklin and Kanner 2007; 'New Wargames' 2007; Thompson 2004; Power 2007: 282).

Players of the commercial game *Doom II* can download *Marine Doom*, a Marine-Corps modification of the original that was developed after the Corps commandant issued a directive that games would improve tactics. And Sony's *U.S. Navy Seals* website links directly to the Corps' own page. For the scholarly advocates of corporate culture who proliferate in game studies, this doesn't appear to be a problem: 'games serve the national interest by entertaining consumer-citizens and creating a consumer-based demand for military technology' that is unrelated to actual violence (Hall 2006; Power 2007: 277). *America's Army* is variously said to be 'primarily a ludological construct' (Nieborg 2004), or to stimulate a vibrant counter-public sphere in which veterans dispute the *bona fides* of non-military players. It is allegedly a contested site where what began as a recruitment device has transmogrified into 'a place where civilians and service folk ... discuss the serious experience of real-life war' (Jenkins 2006: 214-215).

This sanguine outlook has its own material history in the sordid links of research schools, cybertarians, and the military. In 1996, the National Academy of Sciences held a workshop for academia, Hollywood, and the Pentagon on simulation and games. The next year, the National Research Council announced a collaborative research agenda in popular culture and militarism. It convened meetings to streamline such cooperation, from special effects to

training simulations, from immersive technologies to simulated networks (Le-noir 2003: 190; Macedonia 2002). Since that time, untold numbers of academic journals and institutes on games have become closely tied to the Pentagon. They generate research designed to test and augment the recruiting and training potential of games to ideologise, hire, and instruct the population. The Center for Computational Analysis of Social and Organizational Systems at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh promulgates studies underwritten by the Office of Naval Research and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). DARPA is blissfully happy to use its US\$2 billion annual budget to examine how social networking uncovers 'top America's Army players' distinct behaviours, the optimum size of an America's Army team, the importance of fire volume toward opponent, the recommendable communication structure and content, and the contribution of the unity among team members' (Carley et al. 2005). And it refers to Orlando as 'Team Orlando' because the city houses Disney's research-and-development 'imagineers'; the University of Central Florida's Institute for Simulation and Training; Lockheed Martin, the nation's biggest military contractor; and the Pentagon's Institute for Simulation and Training.

In Los Angeles, the University of Southern California's Institute for Creative Technologies (ICT) was set up as a means of articulating scholars, film and television producers, and game designers. It was formally opened by the Secretary of the Army and the head of the Motion Picture Association of America, and started with US\$45 million of the military's budget in 1998, a figure that was doubled in its 2004 renewal. ICT uses military money and Hollywood muscle to test out homicidal technologies and narrative scenarios – under the aegis of faculty from film, engineering, and communications (Deck 2004; Silver and Marwick 2006: 50; Turse 2008: 120). Companies such as Pandemic (part-owned by that high-corporate moralist, Bono) invest. ICT also collaborates on major motion pictures, for instance *Spider-Man 2* (Sam Raimi 2004), and its workspace was thought up by the set designer for the *Star Trek* franchise. ICT produces Pentagon recruitment tools such as *Full Spectrum Warrior* that double as 'training devices for military operations in urban terrain': what's good for the Xbox is good for the combat simulator. The utility of these innovations continues in combat. The Pentagon is aware that off-duty soldiers play games. The idea is to invade their supposed leisure time, weaning them from skater games and towards what are essentially training manuals. It even boasts that *Full Spectrum Warrior* was the 'game that captured Saddam', because the men who dug Hussein out had been trained with it. And electronic games have become crucial tools because fewer and fewer nations now allow the US to play live war games on their terrain (Burston 2003; Stockwell and Muir 2003; Andersen 2007; Turse 2008: 122, 119; Harmon 2003; Kundnani 2004).

Conclusion

Let's return to where we began – *America's Army* – and its story. The Naval Postgraduate School's Modelling, Virtual Environments and Simulation Academic Program had developed a game called *Operation Starfighter*, based on the film *The Last Starfighter* (Nick Castle 1984). The next step, *America's Army*, was farmed out for participation by George Lucas's companies, *inter alia*. It was launched with due symbolism on the 4th of July 2002 – dually symbolic, in that Independence Day doubles as a key date in the film industry's summer roll-out of features. The military had to bring additional servers into play to handle 400,000 downloads of the game that first day. *Gamespot PC Reviews* awarded it a high textual rating, and was equally impressed by the 'business model'. Five years after its release, it was one of the ten most-played games on line. As of February 2008, *America's Army* had nine million registered users. Civilian developers regularly refreshed it by consulting with veterans and participating in physical wargames. Paratexts provided additional forms of promotional renewal. *Americasarmy.com/community* takes full advantage of the usual array of cybertarian fantasies about the new media as civil society, across the gamut of community fora, internet chat, fan sites, and virtual competition. And the game is formally commodified through privatisation – bought by Ubisoft to be repurposed for games consoles, arcades, and cell phones, and turned into figurines by the allegedly edgy independent company Radioactive Clown. Tournaments are convened, replete with hundreds of thousands of dollars' prize money, along with smaller events at military recruiting sites. With over forty million downloads, and web sites by the thousand, its message has travelled far and wide – an excellent return on the initial public investment of US\$19 million and US\$5 million annually for updates. Studies of young people who have positive attitudes to the US military indicate that 30 per cent of them formed that view through playing the game – a game that sports a Teen rating; a game that forbids role reversal via modifications, preventing players from experiencing the pain of the other; a game that is officially ranked first among the Army's recruiting tools ('AA:SF' 2008; Power 2007: 279-280; Ture 2008: 117-118, 123-124, 157; Lenoir 2003: 175; Gaudiosi 2005; Nieborg 2004; Turse 2008: 118, 157; Craig 2006; Shachtman 2002; Thompson 2004). The invasion of Los Angeles by Special Forces in 2003 had worked – and it was an invasion by capitalism as much as nationalism. Meanwhile, virtual blowback was underway, with Al Qaeda reportedly learning tactics by playing these games and developing counters of their own (Power 2007: 283) and the artist Joseph DeLappe creating counter-texts on-line by typing the details of dead soldiers into the game under the moniker 'dead-in-Iraq'.⁴

But perhaps the unholy Trinity of media, Pentagon, and screen was unwittingly stimulating opponents. One thing was certain: its techniques of nationalism, from secreted state subvention to immense immersive interpellation, would continue for some time in the service of 'the disappearance of the body, the

aestheticising of violence, [and] the sanitisation of war' (Der Derian 2005: 30). Critics must bear in mind the way that war, profits, and economic restructuring are all too often obscured by the complex, multi-point nature of corporate, military, and entertainment interests and funds, working in the mutual interest of *raison Hollywood* and *raison d'état* under the brutal sign of 'violent cartographies' (Shapiro 2007: 293). Virtual or otherwise, that record of death, disablement, and destruction must be catalogued and criticised.

Notes

1. Thanks to the editors for their encouraging and stimulating feedback.
2. See <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2009/mar/23/stella-artois-nouvelle-vague>.
3. This is no surprise, given the cohort's laughable predictions about the Shi'a rising against the Ba'th, resistance from the Special Republican Guard and security agencies, and the deployment of gas and other mass-destruction weaponry by the Iraqi military. The list of failed assessments goes on and on, in keeping with the errors many such pundits had made in the 1980s (when they welcomed the Iraqi regime as an ally).
4. See <http://www.unr.edu/art/DELAPPE/DeLappe%20Main%20Page/DeLappe%20Online%20MAIN.html>.

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Vox Americana
*Why the Media Forget,
and Why it is Important to Remember¹*

Andrew Calabrese

If this were a dictatorship, it would be a heck of a lot easier, just so long as I'm the dictator. (President-elect George W. Bush, December 18, 2000)

Once the philosophical foundation of democracy has collapsed, the statement that dictatorship is bad is rationally valid only for those who are not its beneficiaries, and there is no theoretical obstacle to the transformation of this statement into its opposite. (Max Horkheimer, 1947)

The United States has been at war in Iraq since the time of the first invasion, the Gulf War of 1990-1991, a conflict that was justified by then-president George H.W. Bush (Bush senior) to Americans as an effort to contain the brutal dictatorship of Saddam Hussein and prevent him from taking over the country of Kuwait. Despite obvious US strategic interests in sustaining, if not gaining greater control of and access to, one of the largest national oil fields in the world (Kuwait's), the popular justification for the launch of the Gulf War was to protect a freedom-loving and democratic nation. Although the question of imperial conquest was never raised to the status of a central debate, the apparent civilising rationale for imperialism – the 'white man's burden' – was in plain sight and made widely palatable. Once the occupying forces were routed, the war shifted to Iraqi soil. After the war was officially declared over, there followed many years of US-led control over Iraqi airspace, trade sanctions, and other efforts to limit Hussein's expansionist ambitions and his efforts to develop nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and the capacity to deliver them across great distances. During the subsequent era of the Clinton administration (1993-2001), the policy of containment continued, although the situation in Iraq was considered by many, particularly the 'neoconservatives', as urgent unfinished business. Even before the terrorist attacks on US soil on 11th September 2001, the 'neocons' had gone on record not only advocating that the United States invade Iraq and remove Saddam Hussein from power, but they also reasoned that the only thing that could bring popular support to such an adventure would be if 'another Pearl Harbour' were to occur. The 9/11 attacks constituted just such an event (Calabrese 2005).

Contrary to the findings of UN weapons inspectors that Saddam Hussein had no active weapons programmes, the US justifications for going into Iraq in 2003 rested primarily on the rationale that Hussein had active chemical, biological and nuclear weapons development programmes, and that he appeared to have, or was close to having, the capacity to deliver them by airborne means, even to the United States. Numerous high-ranking officials in the administration of George W. Bush, especially Vice-President Dick Cheney, made deliberate and concerted efforts to use the media institutions of the United States to deliver the message that Saddam Hussein was behind the 9/11 attacks. Despite the fact that the evidence marshalled to support these claims was highly suspect, and despite the overwhelming international and considerable domestic resistance to a US invasion, the political will to actively investigate and question these assertions by the major media outlets of the United States was conspicuously and devastatingly absent. While exercising appallingly low journalistic standards, whether by design or by default, the major US media were decidedly biased in favour of war.

As in 1990, just before the 2003 invasion, a nationalist fever ran rampant in the United States, with Iraq serving as a concrete target in a vaguely articulated 'war on terror'. The US Congress, the major newspaper, magazine and television media, and the majority of the American people, were sold on supporting such a war. This new kind of war – which was justified not only on the basis of public manipulation, but through what is now widely accepted to have been public deception, and which was launched with an unspecified enemy and no clearly defined end state – has been a major cause of growing international and domestic criticism towards the global economic, political and military leadership of the United States. This new war also led to new policies and politics within the United States, giving rise to concerns about the rapid concentration of executive power, the weakening of the national legislature, and the erosion of basic human rights. In the process, a new kind of 'American exceptionalism' ripened: the national disease of ever-widening exception to the rule of law (Gross 2006; Scheuerman 2002, 2006).² This applies not only to increasing measures that erode civil rights domestically, but also to the pursuit of imperialist aspirations with respect to the unilateral disregard of international law, under the Bush administration. This development in particular has led to increasing worry about the slippage towards fascist tendencies in the United States, manifested by such practices as invoking a terrifying internal and external enemy, the creation of a gulag, the setting up of an internal surveillance system, engagement in arbitrary detention and release, targeting key individuals (artists, civil servants, academics) with threats of job loss, equation of dissent with treason, intimidating and controlling the press, and suspending the rule of law (Wolf 2007a; see also Wolf 2007b).

On the heels of the spectacular expansion of private power and concentration of private wealth through the economic policies of preceding administrations (Reagan, Bush senior, Clinton), the administration of George W. Bush (Bush junior) sought to consolidate that wealth through, among other things, permanent

tax cuts for the wealthiest US citizens. Such policies have been characterised as an outgrowth of a utopian theoretical and political project (neoliberalism) to justify the organisation of the state and of international capitalism in such a way as to increase and consolidate the class power of economic elites (Harvey 2005). Of course, such a project requires not only the winning of the consent of the governed. So fraught with theoretical and political contradictions, the liberal fiction of the 'invisible hand' of the marketplace fails on its own to provide for the necessary stability and legitimacy of property relations and markets, and so the awkward, but necessary complement to neoliberalism has been the heavy hand of neoconservatism. To be sure, as it has been demonstrated, the two ideologies clash on moral grounds, especially with respect to conflicting ideas about individual rights versus collective obligation, but they are ideally suited in their anti-democratic, anti-egalitarian tendencies. With respect to global economic policy, neoconservatives offer a military vision that orchestrates by force the neoliberal fantasies about self-regulating markets (Harvey 2005; see also Brown 2006).

Since the period from 2003, when the Iraq war was waged, to the time of this writing (when the war has not yet ended), the major media have admitted to their own failures as instruments of public deception, and many journalists have succeeded in distinguishing themselves as effective voices of dissent. However, as major capitalist enterprises, large media conglomerates have vested interests in maintaining favourable relations with the government that holds the power to regulate them, and to enhance or impede their opportunities for the further accumulation of wealth. These institutions reside at the centre, not the periphery, of American plutocracy. Moreover as media institutions become increasingly concentrated, the reciprocal relationship between political power and media power poses a toxic threat to democratic principles and the American public sphere, which was evident at the time of the first US invasion of Iraq (Calabrese and Burke 1992).

What I examine in the remainder of this essay are the implications of the failures of the major media to (a) honestly recognise themselves as non-neutral political actors, and (b) to accept greater responsibility for tacit and manifest support of the disastrous US military adventure in Iraq. This analysis offers a critical perspective on one aspect of the media's role in particular: the value of remembering. I suggest below that neither the government nor the major media institutions of the United States will control or prevent efforts to construct and preserve the memory of the Iraq war. Historical memory through popular records, truth and reconciliation commissions, individual testimony, and other sources that do not fall under official or authoritative control, cannot be obliterated. Jerome Bourdon notes that media research has shown little interest in such questions as how television shapes popular memory, and moreover that the political symbolism of official or authoritative accounts of history often do not coincide with popular understandings of events (Bourdon 1992, 2003).³ Not surprisingly, as Bourdon's work and that of others in the growing field of 'memory studies' illustrates, media play a profoundly important role in the

popular understanding of history.⁴ I suggest below not only that media are an important means of remembering events of great political significance, but that media studies is a vital means of remembering the significant role that media institutions play in the shaping of politics.

In October 2006, the British medical journal, *The Lancet*, reported an estimate by an American and Iraqi team of physicians and epidemiologists of the Iraqi death toll since the 2003 military invasion of US-led coalition forces. According to the study, based on mortality rates from prior to the invasion, approximately 655,000 more Iraqis died 'as a consequence of the war', than would have died if the invasion had not occurred. The primary cause of the deaths has been violence, mainly gunfire and car bombings (Horton 2006). Beyond the significantly increased mortality rate, the humanitarian issues for the living are also profound, including severe limits in the availability of essential services, including electricity, fuel, safe drinking water, transportation systems, adequate medical facilities and schools. This devastating trauma will likely be remembered by Iraqis for many generations to come, and the United States may very well be judged more harshly than will the brutal regime of Saddam Hussein. Since the invasion, citizens of Iraq and neighbouring countries have become increasingly radicalised by a war that most of the world's population has considered unnecessary and unjust. As a result of what were represented as efforts to achieve greater security for the United States, US citizens now have increased reason to fear the violent actions of extremists (Mazzetti 2006). In the best hopes of those Americans who supported the invasion, the US government was not only acting pre-emptively in the name of self-defence, but it also was on what U.S. leaders cast as a noble and welcome mission to replace tyranny with democracy (Stout 2006). But if we are to make sense of the fact that Americans indicate repeatedly in polls that the US occupation of Iraq is the number one issue facing the country, and if we consider the dismal approval ratings the President and Vice-President received in the final years of the Bush administration, we can see that all but a loyal core of US citizens now believes or supports the narrative that was offered by Bush.

Will history be kind to the Bush administration? Will the invasion and US occupation of Iraq be understood as acts of self defence? Of benevolence? Will the civil war that resulted be viewed as a minor hiccup on the glorious road to global democracy? How will the world remember this period of US history? What will be the dominant narratives, and the counter-narratives, that are told within the United States and abroad about this war? And what role can/do/will the US media play in the telling of those stories? Perhaps it is too soon to tell, although the signs are not encouraging, and it is clear that the majority of US politicians now seek to distance themselves from the path Bush chose. But many in Congress did endorse that choice at the time when it mattered most. President Barack Obama's Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton, was among the US Senators who voted to authorise the decision to go to war. Today, Clinton, like numerous other politicians who wish to distance themselves from the President, replies to questions about her earlier choice

by saying, 'If I knew then what I know now we would not have gone to war' (Webb 2007). What exactly did she *not* know? That the stories about weapons of mass destruction, which were discredited by UN weapons inspectors and other experts at the time, were based on unverified and fraudulent claims? That no evidence existed to support the Vice-President's frequent assertions of a connection between Saddam Hussein's regime and the 11th September 2001 attacks on the United States? That the lack of any clear plan for post-invasion Iraq would probably result in a quagmire and risk claiming the lives of thousands of US soldiers? Whether or not they admit it, politicians with ambitions to be re-elected or reach higher office have little choice but to act with one eye on the polls, and that sometimes causes them to choose strange bedfellows. At best, the politicians who now wish to distance themselves from their previous alignment with Bush on Iraq should truthfully admit they were cowed into silence, fearful of losing credibility by having their patriotism called into question if they should voice doubt about the reasoning of an administration that had its sights on Iraq long before 9/11. A less generous assessment would see their choice for war simply as a matter of politically cynical calculation. In times of war, the concept of 'patriotism' becomes a bludgeon to force silence and compliance, and few US leaders were willing to risk feeling the political blows of being labelled unpatriotic.

Of course, having chosen war, the government needed to first legitimate its decision, because modern leaders rise and fall in the court of public opinion. The Bush administration did a superlative job of steering the population toward widespread assent, while it also silenced critics with the help of the media. Following the suicide bombings on US targets on 11th September 2001, the subsequent war mobilisations – first in Afghanistan and then in Iraq – left no room for public dissent. This was especially problematic in the far more controversial decision to invade Iraq. In the name of patriotism, US media were uncritical in reporting on the justifications for war that were offered by the Bush administration prior to the invasion of Iraq. Moreover, during the build up to the Iraq war, US media neglected and trivialised the newsworthy subject of opposition widespread and active at home and around the world. In that period, the dominant US media fully embraced the role of faithful stenographer with amnesia, but with a bias toward war. According to the media watch organisation, Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR), during a three-week period just after the first day of bombing in Iraq (March 20, 2003), of the 1,617 on-camera sources interviewed on major television networks for stories about Iraq, 64 per cent of those who appeared on *ABC*, *CBS*, *NBC*, *CNN*, *Fox* and *PBS*, and 71 per cent of all US sources, supported the war. Only 10 per cent of all sources interviewed, and 3 per cent of US citizens interviewed, opposed the war, a finding that contrasts with polls from that period that revealed 27 per cent of US citizens opposed the war (Rendall and Broughel 2003; see also Calabrese 2005).

Much of the government's project to sell the war in Iraq was undertaken in the public eye, not covertly. The administration managed to persuade the majority of journalists, editors, publishers and producers of the most widely

consumed US news sources that Saddam Hussein had nuclear, chemical and biological weapons he would soon use against the American population. When Secretary of State Colin Powell spoke before the Security Council of the United Nations on the eve of war, he presented a case that left no doubt in the minds of many prominent journalists that Hussein had the technological capacity and the will to rain weapons of mass destruction on US soil. Powell's multimedia presentation was a shock-and-awe tale, based on revelations from Iraqi 'defectors', about unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) that could spray lethal chemicals from the air above major population centres, of mobile biological weapons laboratories in the desert of Iraq, and of an operational nuclear weapons programme that had the United States in its cross-hairs. Powell also echoed familiar but unsubstantiated allusions to a link between Iraq and al Qaeda. In the wake of the trauma of 9/11, the US population was fertile ground for Powell's narrative. The question was not whether such horrific events were possible at the hands of terrorists. Rather, it was whether there was any particular reason to conclude that Iraq was the source of such a threat. By all credible subsequent accounts, Iraq did not in fact pose such a threat, and there was no compelling evidence at the time of the ramp-up to war that suggested otherwise. Instead, the case for war was a very flimsy case, but it was one that was presented with great force.

The story of Powell's role in selling the war is a pathetic one. As one of the most trusted figures in the US government, his credibility was based on a reputation for integrity, which proved at that moment to be a valuable asset to the Bush administration. Powell has been widely recognised as the quintessential 'good soldier', who did what was asked of him by his commander-in-chief. He staked his reputation on what he appears to have convinced himself was reliable evidence. To the Security Council, he stated, 'My colleagues, every statement I make today is backed up by sources, solid sources. These are not assertions. What we're giving you are facts and conclusions based on solid intelligence' (Powell 2003). Not long after, as the story unravelled and numerous fraudulent claims about WMDs were exposed publicly, Powell's reputation suffered significantly. When asked by journalists if he thought he should publicly apologise for his central role in leading the United States to war on the basis of false information, Powell replied 'It's not [just] me getting had. I'm not the only one who was using that intelligence...they all stood up in the Senate. The president stood up on this material. Tony Blair stood up on this material...The whole global intelligence community bears responsibility' (Powell 2006, as quoted in DeYoung 2006). Powell's defence was reasonable. There was plenty of blame to go around, and he was but one member of a vast network dedicated to spinning a case for war. When interviewed during the final days of his presidency, George Bush made it clear that he wishes to have history show not that an unjust and unnecessary war was justified and waged on the basis of manipulation and deceit, but rather that it was the incompetence of the 'intelligence community' that was the root of the problem. 'The biggest regret of all of the presidency has to have been the intelligence

failure in Iraq' (Bush 2008). Implicit in his remark is the acknowledgement that the war should not have been waged.

But is it only the intelligence community that bears responsibility? After all, this 'evidence' of Iraq's WMD program and al Qaeda connections was produced for public consumption. The court of public opinion was vital to this effort, and the media were the means by which that audience could be reached. If there is blame to go around for misleading the politicians and the public into supporting the President's call to arms, the record shows that the media must share in it (Calabrese 2005). This has been acknowledged by major newspapers, to some degree half heartedly and with a perfunctory tone, but nevertheless there has been admission that the misplaced priority on scooping competition led to greater emphasis on getting the story first, rather than getting it right (Iraq in Review 2003; Kurtz 2004; Mooney 2004; Okrent 2003; The Times and Iraq 2004). Leading journalists, the most prominent among them being Judith Miller of the *New York Times*, relied heavily on anonymous sources, namely, Iraqi 'defectors' (notably, Ahmad Chalabi, who rose meteorically after the invasion to become Iraq's Oil Minister). These defectors, identified with the 'Iraqi National Congress', an organisation established by a public relations firm and funded by the US government, were the central voices in the news 'echo chamber'. It was into the echo chamber that the neoconservatives selectively leaked and declassified information intended to persuade national elites and the public at large that an Iraqi threat was imminent and a war justified, and it was there that shady 'defectors' bounced unverified WMD claims back and forth between the media and the administration (McCollam 2004). In this way, journalists could hear a claim from a defector, and then dutifully (presumably with a clear conscience) 'verify' the claim by checking if it was 'true' by asking a member of the administration to whom the defector also would have been speaking. On the Sunday morning television news talk shows, administration officials could establish the credibility of their claims about the Iraqi acquisition of aluminium tubes that purportedly were to make centrifuges for uranium enrichment, mobile biological weapons labs, and other claims for which no evidence has been shown, while claiming corroboration with ostensibly independent newspaper reports of the same. Did the journalist know that the informant also had access to the administration? How did elite journalists reach that status and position without being able to find out or at least suspect such things?

On the subject of her shoddy reporting about weapons of mass destruction, Judith Miller stated, 'W.M.D. – I got it totally wrong.... The analysts, the experts and the journalists who covered them – we were all wrong. If your sources are wrong, you are wrong. I did the best job that I could' (Judith Miller, quoted in Van Natta Jr., D., Liptak, A., Levy, C. and Scott, J. 2005). The implication by Miller is that she could not have known, and therefore should not be blamed, for her extensive and highly influential reporting about WMDs that was based on bad information, provided by individuals who had a demonstrably clear partisan interest in leading the United States to war. Rather than accept responsibility for showing poor judgment in her choice and use of sources, Miller absolved

herself of responsibility by blaming her sources after the fact. Craig Pyes, a colleague who collaborated with Miller in a prize-winning series about Osama bin Laden, wrote about Miller, 'I do not trust her work, her judgment, or her conduct', stating that 'her actions threaten the integrity of the enterprise, and of everyone who works with her'. He further stated that Miller took 'dictation from government sources' (Pyes, quoted in McCollam, 2004). According to Stephen Engelberg, a former *New York Times* editor who worked with Miller on a story about Saddam Hussein's purported renovation of chemical and nuclear production facilities, because of the dubious nature of Miller's sources, Engelberg and Miller were scrupulous about adding caveats, acknowledging the vested interests of the Iraqi National Congress (INC), from which the information came. The operating principle in going forward with the stories was that the reader should take caution (McCollam 2004). But then Bush administration officials (who also were in the INC loop) would take such a story, strip it of the caveats and present the claims with certainty on the Sunday morning talk show circuit, noting that the *New York Times* had 'independently' revealed the same findings. Soon after, other news shows would run with the White House version, minus the caveats, removing the story even further from the realm of doubt. Viewers would watch and listen, many persuaded that a fair and balanced report such as this left no choice but to unquestioningly support the urgent call to arms. At this remove, one must question the wisdom and ethical judgement of the *New York Times* for running the story in the first place. The story of Judith Miller is noteworthy, especially given the central role she played in misleading the American public. Although a clear case has been made that it would be unfair to single her out, since there are numerous other opportunistic and sloppy reporters and editors who have blood on their hands, the remorseless Miller deserves special scrutiny (McCollam 2004). The misleading coverage by Miller and others helped the administration in its efforts to foment public fear, silence opposition, and coerce weak-willed and ambitious members of Congress to abandon judgement and write a blank check for war.

In February 2007, a conference of academics, journalists and experts was held in Amsterdam on the theme of the 'weaponisation of the media'. The purpose of the conference was to explore the role media play as 'political actors' that often hold responsibility for inciting violence, and even for goading a nation to war. Not surprisingly, military forces view media in this way, which explains why the United States bombed Al Jazeera offices in Afghanistan and Iraq, why radio was used to incite Hutu listeners to kill Tutsis, and why the editor of a Nazi-era German newspaper was tried, convicted and executed in Nuremberg for 'incitement to murder and extermination' of Jews. These may be extreme cases, but is it safe to say that US media are not immune to playing the role of a political actor? It would appear not, as American journalists are also citizens with political convictions. This does not mean we should become cynical about the role journalists can or should play in fostering national dialogues, but it does remind us to consider the foundations of professional ethics for journalists. In the modern world, news media are essential weapons in a political arsenal,

and no leader set for war fails to recognise this. Nor should journalists fail to recognise it. Like Colin Powell, Judith Miller and other journalists who knowingly relied on sources with motivations to lie cannot escape blame simply because others were equally responsible for misleading the country into war. Like Powell, Miller used her high status and her influence to make a case for a war that few now consider to have been justified. She and the editors who ran her stories made a formidable weapon of mass destruction.

In August 2006, a resolution protesting against the Bush administration's anti-press policies was passed by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC). Among the issues the text highlights are the shameful behaviour of the Bush administration in how it responded to press requests for information, its 'massive reclassification of documents', its "policy of not allowing photographs of coffins of soldiers killed in Iraq to be released", its 'use of propaganda, including video news releases', and its use of the courts 'to pressure journalists to give up their sources'. The resolution was sent to members of the Bush administration, media educators, and the general news media. In all, the statement is valuable and worthwhile. But by implication, it sets the media up as victims of an administration that was hostile to open discourse and the truth. The depiction is accurate, but it generates a one-sided viewpoint about the media's uneasy relationship with the government. In the case of the coverage of the run-up to the Iraq war, it would be more accurate to view the media not as victim, but both as perpetrator of public deception and accomplice in causing great loss of human life.

In one of the popular textbooks on media ethics, the authors advocate ethical principles 'that call for disregarding material furnished by potential news sources who want to manipulate mass media content for their own purposes' (Gordon and Kittross 1999: 104). In the case of the journalists, editors and producers who became stenographers to the government and the Iraqi National Congress, the consequences of their breach of this ethical standard were profound. Given the shameful behaviour of the media in the run-up to war, the incentive to forget this breach is strong. Since the media responsible for this inexcusable failure have no incentive to remember, it is up to others to preserve the memory, both to provide accurate accounts of the history of the Iraq war, and as a vital lesson in the professional ethics of journalism. Media researchers in particular have a unique responsibility to document the history of this catastrophic failure, and to provide a public reminder about a relationship between media and government that should not be repeated.

In 1941, Henry Luce, owner of the *Time* publishing empire, famously published an editorial in *Life* magazine, hailing the dawn of 'the American century'. After the American failure in Vietnam, and following years in which many had proclaimed the twilight of US global economic, political and military hegemony, in the late 1990s, an obscure neoconservative think tank, the Project for the New American Century (PNAC), was founded with the self-appointed aim 'to promote American global leadership'. PNAC's aims were pursued first in the form of policy advocacy, and later by having several of its leading members

become key figures within the Bush administration.⁵ PNAC's hawkish approach to foreign policy, and its unapologetically imperial aspirations, have seemed in some ways like a desperate lashing out at a world that has turned its attention and resources towards new centres of global power. Whether a re-assertion of US domination is either advisable or possible has been called into question, both domestically and around the world. Assuming that there is a reasonable basis for such doubt, this leaves open the question of whether the United States can demonstrate the capacity to settle for anything less, despite the prospect of gaining the benefits of peaceful coexistence in and cooperation with the international community (Zakaria 2008). As to how past imperial ambitions of the United States will be remembered, much is dependent on how sincerely and effectively the transition to an era of greater humility and cooperation is navigated. The role of the US media will not be inconsequential to that transition. It is a role that will be worthy of scrutiny, and of remembering.

Notes

1. We are grateful to SAGE Publications for permission to reproduce copyright material: Calabrese, Andrew (2007) 'Historical memory, media studies and journalism ethics', *Global Media and Communication* 3(3), 363-370.
2. William E. Scheurman (1994) has provided a detailed analysis of the philosophical foundations used in justifying exception to the rule of law, particularly in the work of conservative legal philosopher, Carl Schmitt, whom Scheurman describes as 'not only Weimar Germany's premier right-wing authoritarian political thinker but an active Nazi after 1933 and an important theoretician of many facets of fascist law' (p. 7). See also Giorgio Agamben's (2005) *State of Exception*.
3. For an excellent general discussion of the relevance of memory studies to media studies, see Barbie Zelizer's (1995) 'Reading the Past Against the Grain: The Shape of Memory Studies'.
4. Two journals that illustrate the growing critical mass within memory studies are *History and Memory* (published by Indiana University Press) and *Memory Studies* (published by Sage). Both illustrate the importance of media as means of obtaining, preserving and generating popular memory.
5. For a more thorough examination of PNAC's pivotal intellectual and strategic role in launching the US war in Iraq, see Calabrese's (2005) 'Casus Belli'.

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III. National Selves and Others

The National vs. the Global

Producing National History in a Global Television Era

Tamar Ashuri

It is widely believed that processes of globalisation which came about in the last twenty years are changing the forms, dynamics, scope and scale of social relationships, thus challenging the most significant container of modern societies – the nation-state. There is no doubt that communication technologies, consumption practices, and media institutions which are fundamental to social interactions themselves play a key role in such processes; national and local finance and trade depend on telecommunication infrastructure and information networks; national and international politics draw upon global news and information; and modern cultures (local, national and global) are constructed by, and reflected in global media outlets. However, the large body of work which explores the impact and affects of communication media on processes of globalisation is dominated by a common (and restraining) assumption, namely that globalisation is marked by processes of de-territorialisation which transcend or destabilise the territorial boundaries of the modern nation-state (e.g. Hall 1991; Appadurai 1996; Castells 2000). This line of reasoning, which refers mainly to the *spatial* dimension, often assumes that ‘the global’ encompasses ‘the national’. Therefore, its adherents inevitably conclude that globalisation is, ipso facto, informed by cultural, economic and political processes that are transforming the national into the ‘post-national’ (King 1991; Appadurai 1996; Urry 2000). By focusing on ‘territory’ or ‘place’, this approach disregards the growing cultural, political and economic irrelevancy of physical location in the global era. A fundamental aspect (and effect) of globalisation is lost – the interplay between the global and the national, an interplay which occurs at no specific locality.

What is required hereby is an alternative line of inquiry, one which encompasses the complex interaction between the global and the national. One needs in particular to shift the terms and focus of the discussion regarding globalisation from the question of if and how modern nations decline and even fade away through processes of globalisation to the question of how the nations themselves are being produced and re-produced in an era of globalisation (Sassen 2000, Beck 2002).

In what follows I aim to address such questions by examining a specific sector within the media industry, namely the television area. The television industry will provide a kind of a focusing lens for the study of the economical, and the cultural interplay between the national and the global, an interplay which does not occur in, or is determined by, the geographical borders of the nation-state.

Television and Globalisation

Over the past quarter-century, many industries have undergone a profound change, towards globalisation and multinational structures. This widely observed trend has come hand-in-hand with increased competitiveness, increased mobility of both labour and capital, enhanced flexibility in many production technologies, funds flowing swiftly (virtually instantaneously) among financial markets, and low-cost communication channels emerging and forcing individuals and businesses into using a small number of languages as their vehicles of communication. In several industries, today's players are but a few multinational giants, while in other cases, industries often rely on multinational supply networks for their inputs of goods and services.

The extent to which all this has been true in the *television* industry has been the subject of extensive study in recent years. There is no doubt about movements towards globalisation having occurred in this sector but, unlike in other cultural industries, the extent of this being at the expense of the local and national sectors of broadcasting is still very much under debate, with various scholars offering different assessments of the relative prominence of the global vs. the national in the world's total output of television products (e.g. Thussu 2000, Chalaby 2004). We have certainly not seen a handful of mega-corporations taking hold of the bulk of the world's television production. On the other hand, international outsourcing and use of inputs imported from far and wide – the other characteristic of globalisation – is known to be extremely prevalent.

In what follows I review briefly (and quite schematically) the range of studies which examined the role television plays in promoting and resisting processes of globalisation. I group them into three research strands – television production, television outlets (text) and television consumption – showing the ways in which all three, in their discussion of the television-globalisation nexus, are predicated on the *geographical* borders of the nation-state as their ontological ground.

The dominant research on television and globalisation has concerned itself with the impact of processes of globalisation on the nature and characteristics of *television texts*. Scholars who subscribe to this line of investigation argue that processes of globalisation have led to standardised products with national attributes gradually withering away. They argue more specifically that products made in small countries (read: outside the USA) are marketed with some sort of American angle by invoking America's values, symbols, landscapes,

or lifestyle. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, these theorists demonstrate how social values metamorphose, shed the characteristics of the nation and take on an American veneer (e.g. Hall 1991; Avraham and First 2003). These scholars, however, in their discussion on television globalisation, take for granted the geographical borders of the nation-state (the US or 'small countries') which becomes their key unit of analysis.

That same fundamental conception characterises the *reception studies* strand. Following Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model of communication (1980), a large body of qualitative research has emerged, highlighting the need to explore audiences' interaction with television products. Much of this work situates the viewers as agents rather than passive receptors of television messages (e.g. Morley 1980; Ang 1996; Livingstone 1998). In the wake of processes of globalisation, many critics have directed their attention to the manner in which television texts are being consumed and perceived by audiences in different countries. Liebes and Katz's (1990) work on the reception of *Dallas* in Israel, and Daniel Miller's study on the reception of *The Young and the Restless* in Trinidad (Miller 1992), have shown that the impact which television messages have on individuals depends crucially on reception contexts and on the resources which audience recipients bring to bear in the reception process. In recent years others have extended this sort of research to different regions of the world (e.g. Madianou 2005; Georgiou 2006). Such studies of audience's reception of televised texts concentrate on the role of viewers in accepting or resisting processes of globalisation, but they too rely on the territory of the nation-state as their conceptual yardstick; they explore the reception processes of audience who belong to a specific national community and in most cases situated within the borders of a specific sovereign nation-state.

Theorists in the third group study the nature and the characteristics of *television production sites*, i.e. the television institutions (channel operators and production companies). Most of the studies in this area have revolved around the question; who are the players dominating the television landscape? (e.g. Herman and McChesney 1997; Thussu 2000; Chalaby 2002). The globalisation approach seeks to confirm the contention that the world is becoming Westernised (mostly Americanised) simply by pointing to the large number of Western/American corporations operating on a global scale, to the sheer number of countries in which they operate, and by documenting the large amounts of products being exported to foreign markets (e.g. Herman and McChesney 1997). Interestingly, the 'nation upfront' stand relies on the same types of data for a contrary argument. Quantitative data is displayed showing that more culture products are being produced in local markets for local use than those being imported over the global market (e.g. Lee 2000; Elasmár 2003). However, these two very different perspectives share a similar point of departure; they relied on the geopolitical borders of the sovereign nation-state as the most significant element. For these critics the main characteristic of global television is the penetration of television output produced by players from a specific nation-state (usually the USA) into the 'container' of other (less 'developed') nations.

In this chapter I attempt to wider the conceptual field within which the three research strands reviewed here think about globalisation. I aim, more specifically, to present a conceptual space within which the modernist geography of the 'nation' (and hence on globalisation) is not taken for granted. The space to be studied is international co-productions for the making of television programmes. This site, I shall argue constitute a venue for communication; communication that provides connection despite *physical* (national) separation (Silverstone 2007). Indeed I shall show that the collaborators of international co-productions who are geographically (and culturally) distant from one another 'negotiate' these distances, thus forming the complex interplay between the global and the national.

Trans-national Collaborations for Television Production?

The emergence in the last two decades of new technologies and liberalised regulation regimes has prompted a significant expansion of television channels (e.g. Chalaby and Segell 1999; Doyle 2002). While the liberal licensing of new channels (domestic and trans-national) has generally been regarded as a positive development, providing viewers with greater choice and permitted the airing of a more diverse range of political and cultural views thought to be of considerable value in a democratic society (Shew 1992; Albarran 1996), it has for any particular television network, prompted intensifying competition which has meant smaller television audiences (Shew 1992; Wieten et al. 2000; Doyle 2002). Demand for television viewing is known to be relatively inelastic, in the sense that an increase in channels leads to a less than proportionate increase in total viewer hours. Smaller audiences are likely to reduce a commercial channel's ability to finance its programming, whether through advertising revenue or through subscriber payments. Nor are publicly funded channels necessarily immune to the financial impact of declining audiences, since the inclination of public officials to commit public funds may not be independent of expected viewer demand (Born and Prosser 2001). In addition to reducing revenues, this increased competition among channel operators also drives up program costs, by increasing the standards of programming. For any given programme produced, the channel operator ends up having to pay more than would have been the case previously (Chalaby and Segell 1999). In these new circumstances television producers are forced to re-think the issue of funding their programmes. In order to (partly) solve this problem they find themselves collaborating with other producers who (usually) operate in different countries. i.e. in different television markets.

There are basically three major forms of collaboration for the making of television programmes, namely, (a) acquisition (b) pre-sale; and (c) co-productions (see Shew 1992).

'Acquisition' is an arrangement in which a broadcaster buys the right to broadcast a programme that has been produced by another broadcaster or

by an independent producer operating in its own domestic market. For the buyer this is the cheapest mode of programme generation, making it possible to avoid the cost of the actual production. For the producers, on the other hand, relying on acquisition prospects is a risky and expensive funding strategy, since they alone must absorb, at least initially, the whole cost incurred in the production.

The second mode is 'pre-sale'. This term is used to describe a situation in which a channel operator, or an independent production company, produces a programme with the intention of selling broadcast rights in foreign markets. This mode is thus, in a sense, the 'reverse' of the first mode, 'acquisition'. The sale of broadcast rights reduces the net cost borne by the programme's original producer, while at the same time providing the buyers of the rights with relatively inexpensive programming. In this manner, the cost of producing the programme can be distributed over several television audiences, at different geographical locations. When a channel operator buys a programme from an independent production company much the same occurs. Indeed, the operator may pay the independent company the full cost of production in exchange for the rights to sell the program in foreign markets, in addition to broadcasting it on the buyer's own channel. Alternatively, the amount paid by the channel operator may be less than the full cost, in which case the producer retains the rights to sale in foreign markets.

The third type of alliance, 'international co-production', which stands at the heart of this study is a device often used to spread the costs of programme production. Here two or more broadcasters (often channel operators) agree *jointly* to produce a programme and to share in its prospective proceeds. Each partner has the right to screen the co-production in its own geographic market. Each partner provides support, whether monetary or in kind, and has a say in production decisions (Shew 1992; Hoskins et al. 1997). Zvi Dor-Ner, an executive producer of WGBH Boston points to some significant characteristics of this mode of production:

The main thing is that you have another set of ideas, another set of concerns to begin with. You have to take into account here that there are people who pay for the product. Often it is enriching its worthwhile, you learn something new.... Often it's just a pain in the ass. You have to take into account opinions that you might consider unimportant, not intelligent, nationalistic, biased, not relevant.... (Zvi Dor-Ner, Interview, August 2001)

This observation is reinforced by Björn Arvas, a commissioning editor of SVT 1, Sweden:

If we, Sweden put more money into it [a co-produced documentary] what we can do by putting the money, we can be part of the structure and decision process of the film (Björn Arvas, Interview, November 2001)

It is quite clear from these remarks that when engaging in international co-productions, television practitioners who are geographically and culturally distant from one another have to 'negotiate' these distances, and constantly to challenge the complex relations between the global and the national. International co-productions therefore offer a useful venue for examining such relationship. In this chapter I shall focus on the television documentary, titled *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs* co-produced by three television networks BBC2, WGBH Boston (PBS) and MBC. In order to make this documentary programme possible, three funding sources had to be secured, with each funding source given the right to use the produced footage to construct its own version of the final product. Each funding source took full advantage of this purchased privilege, and the completed series thus exists in three distinct versions, British (BBC2), American (PBS) and Middle-Eastern (MBC). Given the splitting of the final product into several 'national/cultural' versions, the Arab-Israeli conflict becomes translated into 'reality' being presented differently in the three versions of the nation/culture broadcast programmes.

The branching out of the co-produced television programme into several versions reveals an interesting economic dynamic: despite the fact that the decision to co-produce the documentary stemmed from the need to lower the costs of production, its creators incurred additional costs by producing multiple national versions.

In the following pages I shall consider this apparent paradox and foreground the tension between the two conflicting elements at work: economic interests and cultural constraints. Although the television programme was co-produced by broadcasters from different countries, I shall argue that the project was launched to reflect and transmit unique national narratives. To substantiate this claim, I have scrutinised the *production process* of this documentary, focusing on the processes which have led to the co-production agreement. Looking at such processes I shall exhibit the manner in which each of the three national/cultural broadcasters established editorial control over the end product, thus endowing a national 'flavour' to a seemingly a-national product.

Co-producing the Television Documentary *The Fifty Year War: Israel and the Arabs*

The series *The Fifty Year War* was the brainchild of Michel Jackson, the former controller of BBC2. Jackson picked 'Brian Lapping Associates', a London-based independent production company, to produce the programme (Lapping in Bregman and El-Tahri 1998). Eddie Mirzoeff, the BBC's executive producer, explained why the film was commissioned:

[The Arab-Israeli conflict] had an effect on the region and therefore on the whole world. It triggers so many things... [not least amongst them associations with] the Holy Land. People got involved [with the land] from child-

hood; the name resonates.... [I]t's so emblematic of so many other conflicts because there was an internal feeling of unfairness. [Britain] discovered the Holocaust and so many refugees that we have to make up for it in some way, and also people go there on holidays. There are all kinds of reasons. [Israel is] a democracy which attracted students to go and work in kibbutzim in the fifties and sixties. It has always been a centre of attraction. (Interview with Eddie Mirzoeff, February 2003)

At the interview's outset, Mirzoeff declared that the Arab-Israeli conflict 'has an effect on the region and therefore on the whole world. It triggers so many things... The Holy Land. People got involved [with the land] from childhood; the name resonates. [I]t's so emblematic of so many other conflicts...'

In his capacity as producer, Mirzoeff was stressing the relevance of the Arab-Israeli conflict to a world-wide market. From his standpoint, it is an archetypal struggle – 'emblematic of so many conflicts' – because it is awash with the universal religious overtones of 'the Holy Land'. However, Mirzoeff's use of the word 'we' in his description of the project's relevance to a 'global' audience is an eye opener: 'We discovered the Holocaust....' While on the face of things this British producer appears to be promoting the story of an emblematic conflict in a region that is sacred to many the world over, he quickly and discreetly moves on to the story of Britain ('we'), 'our nation'. With the word 'we', Eddie Mirzoeff identified himself as a member of this community, which he subsequently called 'my' nation. This transition is significant. Given his authoritative and lofty position as executive producer at the BBC, Mirzoeff the interpreter almost succeeds in concealing Mirzoeff the active participant in the documentary and spokesperson for a national entity. However, once the producer and the UK are proclaimed to constitute a 'we', it is clear that 'identity mechanisms' (visceral feelings of unfairness and the need to compensate for the past) were about to come into play at all levels of the production process. It is precisely because Mirzoeff sees his own (British) involvement as unambiguous and is confident of his own clarity of vision that he was willing to step forward and commit himself to this project. When pressed on the issue of why the film *The Fifty Year War* was suitable and significant for the BBC's audience, Mirzoeff responded in the following manner:

We [Britain] were very active during the Mandate and in [the] Suez [Crisis] and the guilt feeling about Suez goes on as well. There has always been a feeling that we have a relationship with the Middle East – Laurence of Arabia, all that sort of stuff. [In Britain], there has been a degree of passionate support at one time strongly for Israel at another time, more recently, for the Palestinians. So it is not exactly like East Timor where... there is no involvement at all. (Interview with Mirzoeff, February 2003)

What clearly emerges from Mirzoeff's comments is the fact that the decision to commission a film about the Arab-Israeli conflict rested in no small measure on

what the BBC viewed to be British sensibilities ('the guilt feeling about Suez') and shared memories ('We were very active during the Mandate') that pertain to the conflict. The producer's statement is reminiscent of what historian Ernest Renan ([1882/1996: 52] called the nation's 'rich legacy of memories'. Mirzoeff was more interested in reproducing his nations' memories – the events his national community remembers in the present – than documenting the 'history' of the Arab-Israel conflict, namely exploring what actually happened.

By invoking the term 'we' (a term that is differential from the outset), Mirzoeff emphasised the relevance of this topic to the BBC's primary target audience – broadly speaking, the British citizenry – with whom he totally aligns himself. In the very next sentence the producer suddenly 'found' himself back in the world of Laurence of Arabia, a striking relapse into the arms of 'Orientalism'. By that point, Mirzoeff was more than ready to speak of 'passionate support', which he unabashedly admitted to have shifted from Israel to the Palestinians. Finally, Mirzoeff unhesitatingly admitted that the British 'we' have no interest in East-Timor. In light of the above, it is quite obvious that the British producer is rather comfortable with expressing his sense of national belonging and identification.

Once the BBC agreed to commission the project, Brian Lapping (the series' executive producer) and Norma Percy (its producer) negotiated the overall structure of the series with Mirzoeff, the BBC's representative. The latter was charged with facilitating the work of Brian Lapping Associates (the independent production company), while monitoring the BBC's investment. Paul Hamann head of documentaries at the BBC explained the rationale for appointing an 'in-house' executive producer: '[Eddie Mirzoeff] was closely involved because with such an expensive exercise we were anxious to get it right' (cited in Fry, 1997). Mirzoeff also discussed his role:

The BBC nominates an executive producer, so that you get the best product from the independent production company. Making sure that it is accurate and responsible, but also that it tells a good story that makes the best use of resources, the best use of narrative – that it is the best programme you can get. My role was to represent the BBC and bring out what I thought was the best way of making this programme for our viewers. (Interview with Mirzoeff, February 2003).

As such, the appointment of an in-house executive producer for the series was also part of the effort to suit the programme to the tastes of the BBC's specific viewership, its *British* audience. In Mirzoeff's estimation, even Brian Lapping Associates, a London-based production company, could not be counted on to cater to the specific sensibilities of the BBC's natural audience: 'This series, like a lot of their work, is financed by other members (networks) as well as the BBC. They are trying to keep everybody happy' (interview with Mirzoeff, February 2003).

Once again, Mirzoeff's displayed his awareness of the existing tension between the global and the national. The producer's underlying assumption was that his target audience is well-defined (British) and thus differs from those of

'other' nations. As the BBC's executive producer, he essentially perceived himself as the agent, and a full-fledged member, of a specific national community (British), whose responsibility was to serve his collective by representing its national modes of reception, decoding and interpretation.

Initiating a Co-production

The budget for *The Fifty Year War* was approximately US \$400,000-\$500,000 for each of the series six episodes, for a projected total of up to \$3,000,000. Eddie Mirzoeff spoke about the reasons the BBC was willing to undertake such an expensive project:

98 per cent of the BBC are interested in ratings, but there is a tiny element still that says that when we can produce things of a very very high intellectual quality it does us no harm at all vis-à-vis policy makers, politicians, [and the] people who decide the license fee and so on. So if you look at the BBC's handbook, it always points to a few, very high quality projects, and everything that Norma [Norma Percy of Brian Lapping Associates] does, gets there. (Interview with Mirzoeff, February 2003).

Nevertheless, the BBC was reluctant to commission such an upscale project on its own and forced the independent production company to recruit foreign broadcasters to get on board and help defray some of the costs:

The BBC wants high quality programmes, but it does not want to pay that much for them.... and if Brian Lapping [the independent production company] can not find the rest [of the money, the documentary series] won't happen. And that is what happened in this case. I was present in an extremely unpleasant discussion where my bosses refused to give Brian a bit more money and told him go and find it somewhere else. (Interview with Mirzoeff, February 2003)

Mirzoeff's description of the budgetary constraints highlights the tension between two conflicting forces, which have considerable impact on the decisions of the contemporary television executive: the need to render quality service to his or her specific national audience on the hand; and the need to cut back on production expenditures on the other. Therefore, a joint venture with foreign broadcasters, whereby each party would produce a version for its specific audience, appeared to be a utile strategy for resolving this dilemma. It enabled the BBC to obtain a 'quality' project that was specifically designed for its British viewers, while sharing the production costs with international partners.

The BBC eventually agreed to fund half the budget. Brian Lapping Associates was thus forced to come up with a film proposal that catered to the needs of several different foreign broadcasters. Norma Percy, the series producer, said

that the proposal consisted of the following selling points: Firstly, Palestine, or the Land of Israel, possesses powerful religious associations that would help the film attract Christian viewers in various countries. Secondly, the Western media continues to provide extensive coverage of the political dispute between the Jews and Arabs, so that Western audiences are familiar with the topic. Finally, the film is basically about human suffering, which evokes emotions that are shared by all (interview with Percy, May 2002).

After formulating a rough draft of proposal, Percy and Lapping asked Sue Temple, an expert at financing multi-party international projects, to 'pitch' the series outside the UK. 'Brian [Lapping] thinks of projects', Temple explained, 'and will ask me if they have international potential. Then we start working on them immediately. Brian will handle the discussions with UK broadcasters, while I approach the broadcasters overseas' (interview with Sue Temple, January 2003).

Temple's first move was to pitch the proposal in the US, a key market in which Lapping Associates has repeatedly managed to attract co-production partners. Insofar as the new project was concerned, the US market was thought to be promising from both an economic and cultural standpoint. It is the richest and most active market in the world and also shares quite a few significant cultural characteristics with the British market (Norma Percy, Interview May 2002).

Temple turned to major American network, WGBH Boston (PBS), whose executive producer, Zvi Dor-Ner, accepted the proposal, and proceeded to sign a financial agreement with Brian Lapping Associates. Dor-Ner discussed his reasons for teaming up with the BBC:

We thought that the timing was right for a comprehensive story about the Arab-Israeli conflict. We were delighted that the BBC took the initiative because it meant that we didn't have to. It also meant that the budget would be substantial.... The promise was that the series would be produced according to a realistic standard and approach to history that is similar to our own... So it was a good opportunity to do something important for a smaller price. (Interview with Zvi Dor-Ner, August 2001)

Like Eddie Mirzoeff, his counterpart at the BBC, Dor-Ner recognised the economic advantages of a co-production and also believed that the Arab-Israeli conflict was a promising topic:

Conflicts, any conflict, are an interesting subject. Conflicts make for dramatic material. The Arab-Israeli conflict especially fits the bill because it's in the centre of the history and experience of Western civilisation. It echoes tremendously. It starts with the Bible and Christianity and the relationship between Jews and Western cultures. It includes the Holocaust and the Jews' present-day relationship with the Arab world. What's more, it was in the focus of the Cold War. Each one of the superpowers was affiliated with one side. It was an important conflict, central to the current history of the world. (Interview with Dor-Ner, August 2001)

On the face of things, the American producer, like his British collaborator, professed to be attracted to a 'universal' drama, which evokes emotions shared by all: 'Conflicts, any conflict, are an interesting subject. Conflicts make for dramatic material'. However, Dor-Ner wasted no time in broaching the topic of the American historical experience: 'It was the focus of the Cold War. Each one of the superpowers was affiliated with one side'. Once again the clear distinction between the global and the national comes to the fore. Although the American producer did not explicitly say so, he was indeed targeting a specific national audience, with shared 'well defined' historical experiences and a 'rich legacy of memories' (Renan 1882/1996). The memories of the United States' role in the Cold War, to which Dor-Ner was referring, were delineating the national self [USA] from the foreign [UK], alien, the Other.

While summarising the importance of the Arab-Israeli conflict to Western culture in general ('It starts with the Bible and Christianity and the relationship between Jews and Western cultures'), Dor-Ner made sure to emphasise its relevance to his network's specific target audience (Americans). He even pointed to a single ethnic minority within the national collective: 'I think there is a special interest to America in this conflict. There is a large Jewish population. Very large and very influential in America. America has been profoundly involved in the conflict in various ways.... It deals with it on a daily basis' (interview with Dor-Ner, August 2001).

It is quite evident that Dor-Ner (like his British partner) sees himself as an active agent, a spokesman for a specific national community. He assumes that his audience is tangibly different than 'others', for not only does this collective have 'a *special* interest' (my italics) in the subject of the film, but requires its own shared symbolic frameworks to represent that conflict. Both Dor-Ner and Mirzoeff's perception of their role as national agents thus offers lucid insights on the interplay between the 'national' and the 'global'.

It is apparent from these preliminary statements that the main incentive behind both executives' decision to enter this international co-production was to pool resources in order to save on production costs. This is consistent with earlier findings on international alliances between broadcast networks (e.g. Hoskins et al. 1997; Doyle 2002). That said, it was indeed striking how both Mirzoeff and Dor-Ner voiced such firm opinions on cultural and identity-related issues so early in the process.

Building on these observations, the next section will examine the specific manner in which the financial collaboration between the two broadcasters manifested itself in the contract of this co-produced documentary.

The Agreement

As per the contracts that were signed between Brian Lapping Associates and the two television networks¹, the BBC agreed to provide for half of the budget. In return, it received complete editorial control over the product, to include the

right to select the production location (London) and final say over the following topics: the script, the archival footage, the list of interviewees and shooting locations (interview with Eddie Mirzoeff, February 2003). Eddie Mirzoeff, the BBC's in-house executive producer of the series, thus had unlimited access to cutting rooms and final say over the finished product. Insisting on these rights was crucial from Mirzoeff's standpoint:

This series [...] is financed by other members as well as the BBC. [Brian Lapping Associates] are trying to keep everybody happy. They are juggling a lot of balls in the air. As far as the BBC is concerned.... we are not interested in that. We care about the programme that we are broadcasting and so we need to be sure that this is the best programme we can get and that the independent production company is doing everything that we would have done ourselves or more. (Interview with Mirzoeff, February 2003)

This statement reveals a crucial issue concerning the interplay between the global and the national. Mirzoeff made it clear that he and the television network he represents are not interested in the concerns of the 'others', the participating partners in this co-production: '*We care about the programme that we are broadcasting*' (my italics). In other words, his primary objective was to ensure to it that the programme is appropriate for the BBC's well-defined audience, the British citizenry. Time and again, Mirzoeff assumes the role of a 'spokesperson' for a national community and describes the BBC as having no interest in 'others' or their views of the Arab-Israeli struggle. Mirzoeff harboured no desire 'to keep everybody happy'; he is interested in the construction of a particular (British) interpretation of the past.

Zvi Dor-Ner committed WGBH Boston to a 25 per cent share of the budget. In return for his station's investment, he also insisted on having full editorial control over the final product and was granted exclusive broadcast rights in North America. On February 14, 1996, a summary of the agreement (signed by Peter S. McGhee, WGBH Boston's Vice President of National Programming) was sent to Brian Lapping, the independent producer. The contract reads as follows:

This is to confirm my offer to participate as a co-producer in the 50 Years War on the following terms:

WGBH will pay Brian Lapping Associates \$50,000 to support preproduction research and development of the series, and will pay at least \$150,000 per episode for not more than six episodes in exchange for the following rights:

- a. the right to see treatments, rough cuts, and fine cuts and to have our comments and suggestions given appropriate weight in the subsequent work on the films.
- b. the right to one weeks editing time (including editor and editing equipment) per episode to make such changes as may be required for the American version.

- c. North American broadcast rights to 6 plays in four years, including one year off-air re-recorded rights
- d. North American audio visual and home video rights.

This legal document reflects the strong bond between the broadcasters and the nation-state they operate in. WGBH Boston made it abundantly clear that it considers itself a North American network dedicated to serving a distinct national community (the Americans), which is substantially different from other national communities, such as the British. 'We are trying to work at a very high standard' Dor-Ner noted, in explaining the rationale behind WGBH's insistence on the rights enumerated in the contract. 'We work with anybody who can meet these standards...but we do not hand over to [Brian Lapping and the BBC], or anyone else, the responsibility for our air (interview with Dor-Ner, December 1999).

What is striking in this statement is his use of the term 'air': 'we do not hand over... the responsibility for *our* air' (my italics). The term 'air' dates back to the early days of the television industry, when the main carriers were the air-waves. 'Air' was and still is a national resource, and its owner is, by definition, the nation-state. While engaging in a decidedly contemporary international television co-production, Dor-Ner still evoked the 'old' symbiosis between the nation-state and 'its' television industry. This sort of linkage unabashedly calls for the construction of cultural products that promote nation-specific narratives of the past.

To sum up, both broadcasters' remarks on the commissioning process indicate that even at this early stage, both of them were fully cognisant of the conflicting interests likely to surface in a co-production aimed at two distinct national audiences. As Dor-Ner noted:

We have very different audiences and very different histories.... Great Britain was a colonial power in the Middle East. It has a history of first level involvement. It has attitudes which were drawn from very close encounters, and so on. It has a need to explain itself and justify itself in many ways. America has a very different, extremely anti-colonial history, but substantial interests. (Interview with Dor-Ner, August 2001)

Alternatively, Eddie Mirzoeff of the BBC emphasised the American angle: 'America has a very large involvement and very strong and passionate Jewish presence in New York and so on, and it is absolutely not affective here [in the UK]' (interview with Mirzoeff, February 2003).

Notwithstanding the obstacles along the way, the two executives agreed to have the independent production company (Brian Lapping Associates) produce one master film for both television networks (BBC and WGBH Boston). However, each channel operator was entitled to participate, on an ongoing basis, in the *decision-making process* and to use the produced footage – that is the master film – to construct its own version of the programme.

In the beginning of this chapter I noted that this type of arrangement can only be achieved through the co-production mode, as opposed to *cheaper* modes of international collaboration, like the acquisition. In other words, the co-production is the only strategy that affords partners from different countries editorial control in return for their financial contribution. The opinions thus far expressed by Dor-Ner and Mirzoeff make it obvious that even though the primary motivation for the co-production was the need to lower the cost of production, the two broadcasters (BBC and WGBH Boston) were willing to incur additional costs for the sake of retaining editorial control over the film produced by Brian Lapping Associates and re-editing a 'national' version out of the master. Their willingness to incur these costs did not stem exclusively from the need to respond to consumer demands. By insisting on participating in the decision-making process and editing a national version, and thereby reaffirming the need for a national narrative, these producers were essentially resisting the forces of globalisation.

Pitching Continues

Even after signing their respective co-production agreements, the parties still had to find a way to come up with the final 25 per cent of the budget. With this in mind, the international distributor, Sue Temple, was dispatched to search for partnerships in other markets. Temple was confident that a documentary film about the Middle East would recoup its investment (interview with Sue Temple, January 2003), and her optimism proved to be well-warranted. MBC, an Arabic commercial satellite television network (represented by OR Media, a London-based Saudi production company), agreed to fund 12 per cent of the enterprise. However, unlike the BBC and WGBH Boston, which received full editorial control at all stages of production in return for substantial investments, MBC's rights were limited to adapting the BBC's master film into an Arabic version. Christine Garabedian, the producer of the MBC version, explained the network's decision to join the project:

[MBC] got a documentary series which they know they would have never been able to make anywhere in the Arab world. The fact that it was made by Brian Lapping in London, by producers who are also historians, gave it, in a sense, a lot more weight, a lot more power. The fact that they were hearing for the first time an Israeli voice [also constituted a big plus].... because so much of Arab culture is simply about propaganda. There is no such thing as democratic journalistic culture in the Arab world. Many things are suppressed, many things aren't talked about, so what justifies this kind of project is precisely the dialectic between an Arab voice and an Israeli voice which aren't shouting at each other... (Interview with Christine Garabedian, July 2002)

In contrast to her British and American colleagues who emphasised the economic motivation behind this co-production, Garabedian highlighted its cultural and political advantages. She realised that this mode of production could potentially serve as a meeting point for national/cultural communities possessing disparate political agendas and views of the world ('[so] much of Arab culture is simply about propaganda' or 'There is no such thing as democratic journalistic culture in the Arab world'.) In other words, Garabedian viewed this transnational collaboration as an opportunity to juxtapose competing narratives and challenge established approaches. At this stage, there was no indication that she perceived a global outlook as in any way constituting an impediment to the maintenance of a national core of allegiance and identification, which was certainly one of her objectives. Furthermore, unlike her British and American collaborators, the Arab producer did not feel entirely comfortable with current domestic (in this case Arab) discourse: 'Many things are suppressed, many things aren't talked about'. From Garabedian's perspective, an international co-production is a means – a more cosmopolitan, culturally open model – for challenging the more restrictive 'inward-looking' narratives (and practices) that she identifies in her culture as 'simply... propaganda'.

Nevertheless, Garabedian expressed certain drawbacks: 'It's very British. [Brian Lapping Associates] is operating in a traditional documentary filmmaking [environment] which is very rooted in the British tradition..... [Consequently,] there were various things in the script which we felt needed changing. What we tried to do is to somehow make it more neutral, more historical (interview with Christine Garabedian, July 2002).

The MBC producer was thus also fully aware of the cultural obstacles involved in the proposed collaboration. The need to offer a historical narrative suitable for her specific (Arab) audience was a key factor in her decision to enter this type of co-production. Furthermore, another significant aspect regarding the issue of national vs. global perception of televised representation emerges in this short excerpt. In criticising the biased 'British' script and expressing the need to make it 'more neutral, more historical', Garabedian clamoured for an objective and scientific historical research. In the quest for a 'more neutral, more historical' documentary, Garabedian (and later Dor-Ner and Mirzoeff) was saying: that what 'we' (the nation/culture) consider to be 'our' neutral history is really our nation's story on who we are.

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, I endeavoured to bolster the argument that all three co-producers insisted on reproducing the familiar narratives of their specific national/cultural communities, albeit within framework of a seemingly global television product. Examining the early stages of the production it became quite clear that from the project's very inception, each of the three national/cultural producers has fought to convey to the independent producers in no uncertain terms the cardi-

nal elements of the narrative of the Arab-Israeli conflict from the standpoint of their respective national audiences, for the purpose of ensuring that the 'story' would accord with his or her target audience's national perspective, common knowledge and shared memory. It is worth noting that none of the producers even entertained the notion that their target audience might be willing or able to deign a cultural product that, while affirming a singular national self-identity, might also elude to the fact that other cultures may interpret history differently. The concept of heterogeneity within one's own target audience, of manifold national viewpoints, is wholly ignored in favour of a clearly formulated, selective appropriation of (an imagined) unique national/cultural historical knowledge and trumpeting their nation's 'rich legacy of memories' (Renan 1882/1996: 52).

Note

1. The BBC and WGBH Boston each signed separate contracts with Brian Lapping Associates.

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Interviewees

- Björn Arvas, commissioning editor, SVT 1, Sweden
- Christine Garabedian, producer, OR Media (for MBC), London, UK
- Eddie Mirzoeff, executive producer, BBC, UK
- Norma Percy, series producer, Brian Lapping Associates, London, UK
- Sue Temple, independent producer, London, UK
- Zvi Dor-Ner, executive producer, WGBH Boston, USA

National Television News of the World

Challenges and Consequences

Kristina Riegert

At the end of the first decade of the 21st century, it is worth reflecting over the ways that television news reports events outside of national borders and what that says about television as an institution, about globalisation generally, as well as the consequences this has for our ability to understand various Others. In what follows I discuss the development of the academic debate on media globalisation, placing television news as a paradox in that debate due to its particular combination of transnational and national production processes. Broadly speaking, it should be said that international (or 'foreign') news, as seen on national television, will be shown to be quite a rigid genre where people and events continue to be viewed mainly through national prisms.

As will be elaborated below, a number of studies over the past two decades support the notion that international events are framed by the news media according to dominant national political, economic and cultural discourses about the world outside the nation. At the same time, especially in cases of distant crises or 'forgotten wars', international news stories tend to exhibit generic characteristics of the kind found in hegemonic Anglo-American news sources and media culture. Does this mean that our only choice is between national versions of international events that reflect our own cultural interests and an international generic one, where foreign events, conflicts and natural disasters, stripped of their specific contexts, all start to look alike? In a way, yes, since the main conclusion is that there is little to demonstrate that media globalisation has reshaped national news agendas in mainstream media. This despite globalisation's impact in terms of concentration of ownership and in the form of changing formats in different media. Possibly, the increasing accessibility of transnational news sources and the self-reflexivity of journalists in the wake of commercialisation could, it is argued, make an impact on mainstream news agendas. In addition, the increasing influence of regional forces on certain issues means that in some cases, news coverage may reflect a supranational regional (cultural) view. In a world where individuals are increasingly turning to the Internet which caters to individual tastes and needs, this bodes ill for national television news' ability to continue to appeal to mass audiences.

The Evolution of the Media Globalisation Debate

The dichotomy in the media globalisation literature of the 1990s between those claiming the spread of Anglo-American cultural imperialism on the one hand, and those maintaining the persistence of national media cultures, or the diversity of audiences' uses of media continues to reassert itself in different forms today. In part, this un-productive state of affairs seems due to the fact that the protagonists concentrate on different aspects of globalisation (cf. Biltereyst 2002). The focus of the cultural imperialists tends to be on political economy such as cross-border trade indicators used to exemplify the uneven North-South flow of media products, the increasing concentration of media ownership, or the commodification and homogenisation of culture in the Western image (Schiller 1969; Herman and McChesney 1997). Others questioned mainly the last-named consequences of globalisation, due to the existence of different national news content of the same events (Chin-Chuan Lee et. al. 2000; Cohen et. al. 1996; Wallis and Baran 1990; Riegert 1998), the resilience of national media structures and forms of collective identity (Hallin and Mancini 2004; Curran and Park 2000; Morris and Waisbord, 2001), or indeed the cultural hybridity it produces (Kraidy 2005).

The debate about media homogenisation or diversity seemed to wane when some scholars said it was not an 'either-or', but a 'both-and' situation. The recognition of Anglo-American dominance in ownership of transnational industries and flows of media products does not preclude variances in regional, national and local media cultures, or varying audience negotiations with foreign media products.¹ Even if it were for no other reason than economics, major Western media conglomerates apparently realised that they had to localise their products in order to sell to different regional or local markets (Thussu 2007).

More recent globalisation research has emphasised the significance of regional media structures with multinational markets and translocal media – whether they be transnational Arab news channels, Chinese, Indian and Brazilian regional giants, or Turkish satellite channels – as counter-flows reflecting diversity, hybridity and the significance of non-Western media cultures (Chalaby 2005; Straubhaar 2007; Thussu 2007; Sinclair, Jacka and Cunningham 1996). The regional media power houses represent significant exports in their respective markets, multinational areas linked by geography, language and culture which dwarf the small, elitist bi- and trilingual audiences of transnational channels like CNN, Deutsche Welle, Euronews, BBC World, and Al Jazeera English. These markets are geographic and cultural across national boundaries, or they are satellite news channels that link members of the diaspora with each other and with the mother country through their common language. Furthermore, some regional media are very successful at exporting certain genres outside familiar cultural spheres, such as Bollywood films in Africa, Indian soap operas in Afghanistan or *telenovelas* in Eastern Europe and Russia.

In this sea of media products there are, however, only a few channels and media genres that garner large audiences transnationally across cultural and/or

linguistic boundaries. Joseph Straubhaar, who bases his work on over twenty years of research in South and Central America, says that certain media and genres 'globalise' well, such as music and film (and, one might add, 'images', or reality TV formats). As for television, 'national cultures, national markets supported by national governments, and national television networks still dominate the television viewing reality of most audiences'. (Straubhaar 2007: 7) Unique therefore, in the genre of transnational television news, are the Arabic channels, Al Jazeera and its competitors, which have the benefit of Arabic as a common language and reach large audiences.

Degrees and Type of Globalization

One problem with much of the older literature on globalisation is not only its macro-theoretical orientation and lack of empirical studies, but the fact that media are often dealt with as one phenomenon instead of different types of media and numerous genres (Hafez 2007). At the very least, it is a shame to treat all developing regions similarly since they obviously have very different cultures, histories and developmental models.² To empirically examine media globalisation and the various hybrids created by this process, surely comparative studies of two or more countries, regions, sub-cultures could yield interesting theoretical insights, whether the focus is on media industries, media texts or reception. Secondly, the globalisation literature that argues for a weakening of state power or a homogenisation of media products is either mistaken or must sharpen its empirical focus. Terhi Rantanen (2005) argues instead that homogenisation is actually most easily seen within nations rather than between them, in the ways the media have been flagging 'banal nationalism' to various and sundry citizens for the last seven decades. She also points to two readily observable phenomena: 1) globalisation can and does contribute to increasing nationalism (cf. post-1991 Russia and China), but also that 2) new local and regional identities are being created, which eschew national identities of dominant societal groups. As Rantanen demonstrates with her own case study of four generations of three families, certain generations, certain media and certain genres are more transnational (those born in the 1980s), just as other generations and other media by their means of distribution and possibilities of reception remain more local or national (newspapers or radio). She argues against Roland Robertson's notion of the dominant trend being a 'complex combination of global and local', saying that the process is mainly between global products and processes penetrating national markets and national actors attempting to globalise their products (ibid: 100).

Still, it is important not to overstate the case for this increasing media-driven globalisation: we cannot lose sight of who uses transnational media products, in which languages and why. These are not minor issues when arguing for an emerging transnational mediated sphere. Kai Hafez (2007: 9-25) has forcefully argued that globalisation is a 'myth', due to the inability of theorists to supply

enough empirical data on 1) the degree of cross-border connectivity: technological reach is not at all the same as user reach; linguistic and cultural competence plays a role in cross-border connectivity. Despite the increase in Internet use, cross-border communication is still dwarfed by local or national Internet use, not to mention the continuing profound digital divide between North and South, 2) The amount of 'system change' resulting from globalisation is seldom specified. How do the receiving cultures of cross-border content evolve due to the increasing amount of communication? How can we tell if a country is a) adopting Western culture, b) developing hybrid cultures, or c) revitalising traditional cultures? How does one differentiate between hybridity borne of globalisation and the normal development of societies using external influences to develop new forms of self-steered 'modernisation'? (2007: 14) Furthermore, Hafez argues, 3) few theorists take into account that different societal sectors are differentially represented in the media, some are totally outside the media, and that cross-border communication impacts upon local systems unequally in news, entertainment, and personal communication. While Hafez is polemic, he rightly points to the need for more focused empirical studies and for perhaps a better overview of these to become available in order for international communication to develop beyond the aforementioned debates. A significant body of work that should be integrated better into globalisation literature is research on diasporic media and their audiences' transnational media use.³

So it appears that while communications technology changes our physical, social and ideational time/space relationships, the global has not displaced the local (or the national) and de-territorialisation does not free us from the importance of geography (Tomlinson 1999). For its part, the state has shown little sign of withering away despite the increasing difficulties it has in living up to citizen's expectations in a complex interdependent environment. Jan Ekecrantz (2005) suggested we think of these developments as coalescing in a dual world system consisting of complex and overlapping networks, one world system rooted in nation-based historical memory and territoriality, the other transcending and challenging existing power structures and territorial control. This dualism can also be seen in Hjarvard's (2001: 23-24) conceptualisation of a global public sphere and its difference from the national 'ditto'. Firstly, a global public sphere should not be conceived as an extension of its national counterparts since a global public sphere cannot claim the same type of universality as a public forum for deliberation. Furthermore, unlike their national media counterparts, the transnational media industries have not developed within the confining ties of national, political institutions. Indeed, the transnational media industries are capitalistic money-making enterprises, and these are helping to re-shape national news structures, which despite increasing de-regulation and commercialisation, are still tied to national political culture. More generally, scholars have made the point that while financial and economic processes are increasingly transcending and undermining the nation-state, the representation of politics and citizenship still remain within the remit of nation-states. So, the transnational communicative process should be seen as supplementing existing

national public spheres which *themselves* are transformed by interaction with the former. In other words, part of this space is the increase in transnational connections within national frameworks.

While the transnational media (here think of the Internet which combines narrowcasting with broadcasting, an interactive individualised medium) clearly 'differentiate' audiences, they also help to establish new or at least different types of networks, and therefore foster interconnectedness and awareness of global issues. This is why transnational networks can come together in big news events, like the run-up to the invasion of Iraq 2003, when governments, NGOs, expert networks, and single issue movements align into protest demonstrations all over the world, these feed into and are fed by the Internet, national and transnational broadcast media of different kinds to create a 'global resonance chamber' which are taken to be an expression of a transnational public opinion. Lance Bennett (2003) has even argued that new digital technologies alter notions of citizenship, fostering a transnational political activism concerning human rights, environmental and labour issues, and corporate social responsibility, leaving national institutions and politicians to form a centrist sphere where they vie over issues of jobs, taxes and education.

So, media globalisation means in this sense the overlapping transnational and national networks which are distinct in character and influence each other. The national media compared to a myriad of transnational networks and process has more intimate ties to national political and societal institutions. That said, the national media is clearly changing under the influence of the multi-discursive and fast-changing nature of transnational media, as well as by the economic logic (think of the global influence of CNN's breaking news and live formats for national publics and the Internet) that is driving media expansion.

The Paradox of International News

Although the electronic media, television in particular, have been central to the globalisation debate, television news is in fact a paradox. While it is often considered a driving force in global consciousness, messengers about a world that lies beyond our direct experience, it has also traditionally cultivated a sense of national identity and unity, reinforcing notions of 'us' already in the existing nation-state, and differentiating 'us' from both 'our friends' and 'our enemies' in other parts of the world (Riegert 2004). Indeed, as is often noted, 'foreign' news coverage is a genre where national identity becomes most manifest, where a government's actions become synonymous with the nation, acting and reacting to events and issues on an international stage. Nevertheless, international news stories as seen in national television news programmes are also heavily influenced by the structures, norms and practices of an international news culture.

This international news culture can be said to exist insofar as it describes a news infrastructure including international news agencies and regional news

exchange unions, similarities in the bureaucratic structures of Western journalists' news organisations, and some common journalistic norms and working methods (such as the objectivity ideal and heavy dependency on official sources). Indeed, the news genre itself: its timeliness, its recurrence, its neutrality and facticity, its narrative technique are international in character and thus recognisable to audiences all over the world (cf. McQuail 1994).

The transnational news infrastructure has often been described as dominated by a handful Anglo-Saxon news agencies which are the origins of a large percentage of what gets reported as news. So varying majorities of stories in national and local television news are either supplied by, or have their origins in international news agencies such as *APTV* and *Reuters* or regional news exchanges.⁴ Even what Paterson calls e-journalism on the Internet exhibits a heavy dependence on a limited news diet supplied by the major news agencies (Paterson 2001). This contributes to the domination of Anglo-American news values and the cultivation of common journalistic norms and routines among national or local news organisations.⁵ While these basic tendencies continue to apply to a large extent, this infrastructure is currently undergoing transformation.

Boyd-Barrett and Rantanen (2004) argue that the rise of transnational satellite news channels, the increasing commodification of information and the concentration of ownership threaten a 'public sphere' of 'knowledge and dialogue about global, regional and national issues' established and circulated by the national and international news agencies.

This is because the agencies generally serve a large number of clientele which differ in philosophy, technology, market ambition, wealth, geographical location and so on. In many countries it is they alone that have the resources and the motivation to sustain a nationwide, if not regional or global, structure of news-gathering, and it is often they alone that can best claim 'inclusiveness' in terms of national coverage, so that one may say of them that they are the international backbone, or at least a significant contributor to such a backbone, which public debate takes for granted and on which it is based. (2004: 42-43)

This conclusion is somewhat surprising in light of the fact that the international news agencies have long been on the receiving end of media imperialist theorists' criticism for a business model that has viewed news as a commodity rather than a public service. In the event, they argue that national news agencies are rapidly losing their former media markets, thanks to the Internet and chain ownership, and that there are only two of previously four international news agencies of any import.

As we noted at the outset, the expansion of satellite and cable broadcasting channels since the late 1980s has been enormous. In particular, it is the CNN rolling news format that appears to have caught on and a plethora of 24-hour news channels have become available in regions all over the world. In the Arab World alone there are at least five channels claiming to present a pan-

Arab perspective on world events: Al Jazeera (also Al Jazeera English), Abu Dhabi TV, Al Arabiya, Al-Manar, and Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC). Furthermore, every self-respecting regional power seems to now have started an English-language rolling news channel to challenge the claims of CNN or BBC World as world-wide distributors of news (i.e. South Asia World, France24, China's CCTV, and Russia Today). The question is how long these channels can survive – some of them are government owned, others are commercial but are not profitable, it remains to be seen whether they will make a dent in the Anglo-American dominance of wholesale news supply.

As far as international news coverage is concerned, another paradox is that the developments associated with media globalisation (communication technologies, deregulation and economic pressures) have made it more, and not less, difficult for news organisations to deliver in-depth, quality information about what happens in the world. Most in the news industry have felt its effects in the form of drastically reduced overseas correspondent networks. Typical for many news organisations today is the use of a combination of rewritten news agency material, free-lance journalists and 'parachuting' correspondents, who fly off to different hot spots at a moment's notice. US broadcasters, in particular complain that in place of editorial concerns, accounts and budget restrictions now determine what foreign events correspondents will cover.⁶ Although these trends are more visible in the US, the public service organisations in many European countries have also come under heavy commercial pressure as a result of deregulation and commercialisation.

Despite the budget cuts and reduced numbers of staff, the amount of time news organisations are expected to be on air has increased with the competition for news in 'real time'. Investing in knowledgeable specialist correspondents could check this trend, but news organisations do not make this a priority (Löfgren 2000). It is ironic that while governments, business leaders and other special interests have become more media-savvy in their efforts to dominate media messages, news institutions are diminishing their ability to penetrate and analyse these special interests (Riegert and Johansson 2005).

Domesticating International News

Numerous comparative studies of news in different countries and media have found that – in spite of the Anglo-Saxon notions of objectivity and news routines which promote a heavy reliance on news agency and news exchange sources – these very sources can be used to create news stories that 'domesticate' international events by putting them into national political or cultural frameworks of understanding (Chin-Chuan Lee et. al. 2000; Cohen et. al. 1996, Gurevitch et. al. 1991; Riegert 1998). Claes de Vreese (2001) found that television coverage of the introduction of the Euro in different countries used similar 'generic' themes, but that there were significant issue-specific national spins in European news programmes. Patrick Rössler (2004: 289) summarises a seven-

nation comparative study of a number of television news programmes from the US and six European nations saying that despite rather similar visual formats, significantly different issues and actors made it highly unlikely that television news can contribute to 'an integrated transnational public'.

Hans Henrik Holm's (2001) newsroom study of foreign news attempts to locate just where the 'effects of globalisation' are the greatest. He finds that these are indeed greatest in terms of how de-regulation, increasing competition, and technological change have impacted the Danish newsroom's 'media structures and policy'. These changes have also affected the editorial structure to the extent that speciality correspondents are disappearing as the foreign desk is in many instances integrated with other desks and editors, while younger journalists are cross-trained to cover different tasks including foreign news. In terms of journalistic norms and the choice of foreign news, however, little has changed as far as content is concerned. The electronic media (television and radio) still give most of their news priority to 'traditional' international news stories, as opposed to 'non-traditional' foreign news stories such as life style, human interest stories, environmental and human rights stories. Although there are some indications that this is changing (especially for the press), Holm concludes that editorial choice of international news stories still reflects 'classical news criteria' to a large extent (2001: 121-122).

So, despite the dependency on international sources for both texts and images, increased de-regulation, commercialisation and competition, these very same sources can and often have been 'domesticated' to comply with national frameworks of understanding. Even with the cost consciousness of today's news organisations, foreign correspondents are still sent to 'witness' international events and report back to audiences in their own languages. However, in light of Holm's study and media globalisation we must ask ourselves, why – despite these changes in transnational news infrastructure, and increased pressures on international news reporting – do these news narratives seem so incredibly resistant to change?

National News Values

Most journalists and media researchers would say that the newsworthiness of a given television news story depends on the geographic, cultural and political proximity of the event to the audience in question, on judgements of how 'important' and 'relevant' the story is, on how fresh the information is, the quality of the pictures, exclusivity as well as what other stories are competing to get into the evening's 'mix'. This means that the same foreign news story is often given differing attention, space and resources in the television news programmes of different countries (van Ginneken 1998). Since the world's crises seldom come alone, journalists must choose sometimes between several crises and wars. Attention to certain crises and not others tells us how newsrooms judge the importance of these crises for 'our nation's' interests (Roosvall 2005). Major

international crises also tend to dominate the headlines of both the national press and television regarding attention and space, despite television's much heralded dependence on 'good pictures', greater immediacy, and the more limited geographic circulation of the press (Riegert 1998).

National variations in attention applied to other types of international news stories than conflicts in the late 1990s as well. Riegert (2008) compared Swedish, Danish and British public service news coverage about Europe during the same week, and found that despite a certain convergence in terms of big stories, the attention and framing of these stories and consequently the image of Europe and the European Union differed according to the national priorities of the reporting country. Other larger empirical studies have shown that the depiction of Europe or the EU in different countries takes as its point of departure the domestic political and economic consequences for the reporting country. Thus, for example, a common picture of the EU is one in which negotiations are 'squabbles', the bureaucracy is devastating, and the reporting country has the moral high ground (cf. Hellman 2006; de Vreese, 2001; Robertson 2000a; Roberston 2000b; Robertson 2001).

The reporting nation can often be said to play a larger role for what type of foreign news national television audiences find out about than the type of medium, its circulation or its characteristics. Lacking satellite channels or Internet, where you live largely determines the news menu you are offered about the world outside.

Foreign Policy Tradition and National Journalist Cultures in News of International Events

Regarding the television news we have of the world around us, the foreign policy tradition of the reporting country – NATO membership, the history and status of the country and the relationship to those involved in an event – plays a role in how events are framed. For example, in the aforementioned comparison of the television coverage of four foreign conflicts in which neither country was directly involved, Riegert (1998) found that Swedish television news was more critical of the aggressor country than British television news. This, in part, was the result of media attention on the effects of the hostilities on civilians and to civilians on the ground who were critical of the wars. In several of those cases, Swedish television news gave the conflicts a 'regional context', highlighting background and consequences that were negative for the aggressor. Finally, Swedish audiences were treated to diplomatic efforts to galvanise the UN and the OSCE into conflict resolution. In contrast, British audiences were offered close-ups of embattled American soldiers as well as happy and relieved civilians (in the US invasions of Grenada and Panama). The military strategies of the aggressors were described in greater detail and solutions to the conflict and negotiations depended more on how the Great Powers decided to solve it than on international organisations.

The fact that the BBC was less critical of the aggressors in these conflicts is perhaps related to Britain's more pragmatic approach to conflict resolution (i.e. it would be nice to bring in the UN, but lacking that, we'll work with 'coalitions of the willing'), to its special relationship with the US, Mrs. Thatcher's 'constructive working relationship' with Premier Gorbachev, or its relationship to Israel at that time. It also mattered that Sweden considered the UN 'a cornerstone' of its foreign policy, that international law was considered key for the defence of the rights of small states, and that it gave diplomatic support for the separatist aspirations of the Baltic states from the Soviet Union. In both implicit and explicit ways, the British and Swedish governments' support to or condemnation of these conflicts become sources and angles for each news programme.

Another explanation given by journalists for the Swedish interest in civilians is the need to provide another angle than the press conferences and speeches of world leaders supplied by international news bureaus. Several studies have shown variances in Western journalist cultures regarding conceptions of objectivity and in what role journalists should have vis-à-vis audiences. Briefly, the Anglo-Saxon objectivity ideal is seen by Continental journalists more as interpreting, investigating and evaluating the news instead of simply disseminating news quickly and impartially (Donsbach and Klett 1993; Donsbach 1995; Köcher 1986). Melin-Higgens' (1996: 128-131) analysis of a representative sample of Swedish journalists places them in between the Anglo-Saxon and the Continental journalist ideals, since they are more active than the former, but more interested in retaining neutrality than the latter. In a clear reference to Köcher's notions of British and German journalists as 'bloodhounds and missionaries', she describes Swedish journalists as pedagogues and bloodhounds.

Have these tendencies changed over time or do they change with the involvement of troops in a conflict? Almost a decade later, similar tendencies were found in a comparison of British, Norwegian and Swedish television and press coverage of the NATO bombing of the former Yugoslavia in 1999. Again, the Swedish media were most critical of the NATO bombing, followed by the Norwegian media whereas the British media were least critical of NATO. The Swedish media focused on the risks of NATO strategy for civilians and that the conflict may spread. The Norwegian media, as NATO members participating in the bombing, were first supportive of the military strategy, but gradually became more critical due to the effects of the bombing on civilians, to the international law aspects of the conflict and to the fact that the bombing didn't seem to be working. The British media also become more critical over time, but in the end, described the 'intervention' as successful. It should be noted that both the Norwegian and the British media, involved militarily, were also more dependent on NATO sources than the Swedish media were (Nohrstedt, Höijer, and Ottosen 2002; Riegert 2003).

Nonetheless, there is evidence of homogeneity among these three European media regarding the question of who was 'evil' and who was 'good' in the reporting of the war in Kosovo. The Good were without a doubt the Kosovar Albanian population who were seen to be the only ones who deserved sympa-

thy, while Evil was personified by President Milosevic himself. In other words, it is in the images of NATO and NATO's military strategy that the differences stand out. The pattern that can be read from these different studies are that the closer a conflict is – geographically, politically, and culturally – and the more engaged the foreign policy elite is, the more attention and resources are given to the story, and the more the image of events are seen through national prisms where foreign policy and specific journalist cultures shape the coverage.

More evidence needs to be gathered as to whether these tendencies in international news coverage are stable over time, especially in light of globalisation and regionalisation. Maria Hellman's (2006) comparison of French and British television news coverage in the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s revealed only minor differences between the time periods despite the impact of globalisation. She found that differing journalist cultures and political cultures meant that television news programmes of daily events (not conflicts) maintained and reaffirmed national community, despite increasing commercialisation and fragmentation.

Ekecrantz's (2004) study of news coverage on Estonia in the Swedish press during a twelve-month period (2001-2002) reveals 'striking and unexpected similarities' with a sample of Swedish feature stories from the 1920s. In both time periods, Sweden was helping Estonia to become more 'western' at the same time as Sweden wanted to fend off unwanted 'eastern' problems connected to socio-economic deprivation (Ekecrantz 2004: 43, 60-61). While these findings are not based on systematic comparative analysis of the two time periods, they do suggest that Swedish press reflect a surprisingly stale view of Estonia, not as a distant country, but as one that used to be part of Sweden. Ekecrantz concludes by describing possible reasons for the stability in news coverage over time such as there being 'a fixed, very narrow, and very stable repertoire of descriptive, discursive techniques when reporting from abroad', that the journalists draw on cultural myths in contemporary society as they tell their news stories and that the media institutions are rooted in the nation-state which results in a coverage in which state-centric views of the external world dominate. (Ekecrantz 2004: 62; see also Billig 1995)

These studies mainly confirm the reproductive processes of the prevailing political culture and the foreign policy traditions in the news media at particular moments in time. However, during the 1990s two important changes have affected state-media relations, the European nation-states are increasingly tied into regional processes of integration (such as the European Union) while journalism is becoming increasingly commodified, deregulated and subject to global economic pressures. These together could increase the likelihood of an emerging transnational journalism or at least a regional journalism. Indeed, Riegert (2004) found that despite some national differences, there were some striking similarities in Swedish and Danish television coverage of the Baltic states and Poland over a six year period 1995-2000. What the Scandinavian television viewer had in common with other Western orientalist narratives was that the transitions of the Baltic states and Poland are depicted as Eastern 'backwardness': i.e. these countries are 'modernizing'. moving from dangerous, outdated,

barbaric systems and technologies into safety-conscious, civilised modernity (cf. Ekecrantz 2002). While the economic transitions which were depicted as 'successful' in terms of the adaptation of their economies to EU demands, there was also what could be called a Nordic view, a down-side, described as 'brutal capitalism', which produced social consequences such as greater poverty and unemployment. The social consequences of 'brutal capitalism' was the explanation provided for the return of the former Communist parties to power in Poland, Estonia and Lithuania during the six-year period under study. On the basis of this project, it is impossible to be sure that the 'brutal capitalism' explanation with its focus on the plight of the elderly, the farmers, and the newly unemployed reflected a Nordic regional journalistic discourse based in 'third way' welfare states, or whether these explanations were also found in the international media.⁷ There does appear to be an emerging regional policy perspective based on Danish and Swedish involvement in regional cooperation, development projects, and active support of the rapid entry of the Baltic states into the EU. Clearly, however, more studies are needed to see if there are more emergent regional news narratives as opposed to the international media's more generalised Western discourse. In particular, few studies have compared news depictions over time and they have therefore not been able to answer questions pertaining to the relative stability of the news coverage in reference to changes and stability in foreign policy or security orientation. Another question is why the coverage of a less newsworthy region like the Baltic states and Poland exhibits more regionalised news coverage, than the more newsworthy European Union or stories about 'Western' Europe which more clearly reflect national media prisms.

The Consequences of National News Images

It may be understandable that the images presented in the news are connected to foreign policy interests and national journalist cultures, and that political and cultural proximity is a relevant yardstick for news stories in a world where thousands of events happen every day. But what are the consequences of the 'domestication' of international events? One is that the public for television news must be satisfied with scanty international coverage of those parts of the world that the political, economic and cultural elites are not interested in. Distant events – the Tibetan uprising against the Chinese authorities, an earthquake in Central America, the disastrous famine and ongoing conflict in Sudan, the conflict in Somalia – are generic news discourses in the television news of many European countries, because lack of interest means lack of media resources deployed to make sense of the event. It often takes the involvement of the likes of the US, UK, Russia, China or Israel to galvanise the engagement of foreign correspondents in many European newsrooms.

Secondly, a consequence of a lack of national interest is that the news stories that do get on mainstream television news are more dependent on

international news sources, which, as we noted previously, are dominated by American and British news corporations (which are not free of their own national prisms).⁸ This means that the aforementioned generic aspects of foreign news play a greater role with their familiar storylines of: attacks by x left 300 dead in x country, y country held an election, and there was an earthquake with millions killed in z. Whatever their particularities and historical contexts, reporting like this makes different types of events similar since they will be pigeon-holed according to predetermined media frames of reference. Take, for example, Western news coverage of Africa in terms of a 'dark Continent' where savagery and tribalism, ancient ethnic violence and extreme poverty must periodically be alleviated by Western aid and intervention (Carruthers 2004: 155-169, for a literature overview). While many of these ethnic and moral stereotypes are simply wrong:

/.../ journalists are often wont to attribute their eagerness to establish clear-cut points of identification for sympathy and targets for blame to a deficiency in viewers' ability to grasp complexity, or a deficit in public patience... Circumstances not being obligingly simple but attention-spans being so truncated, journalists must necessarily reach for stock characterizations. (Carruthers, 2004: 166)

Thirdly, the dependency on international news sources for remote conflicts is also more likely to reflect the increasing commercialism already prevalent in that sphere. The hardening competition between channels has had the effect of increasing the entertainment and human interest factors in news programmes (Thussu 2003). While these two aspects each deserve their own separate volume, I mean for the sake of brevity, what media scholars refer to as the packaging of armed conflicts as neat, sanitised, little narratives with easily identifiable 'tag-lines' reminiscent of made-for-TV movies, where the roots and consequences of conflicts are glossed over. The human interest factor in war coverage is more complicated and has to do with the increasing tendency of journalists to show 'the true face of war'. During the 1990s, 'humanitarian interventions' and civil wars became more dominant theatres of conflict, with the result that the suffering of civilian populations is more central to news coverage than before. But superficial twenty-second sound-bites of suffering making it seem an inevitable consequence of circumstances in the developing world, rather than something that can be stopped.⁹

Fourthly, one consequence of different national perspectives of international news is that varying causes and consequences act as hindrances to the formation of transnational opinion about a phenomenon, which limits the influence of democracy on matters of global import. The absence of knowledge about ethnic conflicts or impending wars before they become 'serious problems' is one of the most prominent obstacles to effective preventive measures against conflict.

Finally, and this is obvious, when one thinks of the Yugoslavian successor wars and Rwanda during the 1990s, national filters of international events can

be downright dangerous when the country you happen to be living in is in a bilateral dispute with another country. The importance of mobilising the support of the international media for the US war on terrorism was not lost on the US administration in the aftermath of September 11. Initially, the attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center were shocking enough to provide President Bush with overwhelming Western media support for an attack on Afghanistan. (The considerable Arab reservations about this war went unreported in much of the mainstream media.) However, when the hunt for internal and external Evil Ones ended up back with Saddam Hussein along with renewed accusations of the possession of weapons of mass destruction and connections to international terrorism some European governments began questioning what was seen as unilateral US action.

One reason for the failure of US propaganda seems to be that different European countries interpreted events according to historical, political and cultural contingencies; splitting European and international support for the war. Despite the patriotic support of the American media, and some of the British media, many other European media were suspicious of the US war against Saddam Hussein (Hafez 2007: 46-51; Nohrstedt and Ottosen 2006). Indeed, in a speech before the war was over, the former Director General of the BBC, Greg Dyke insisted that his organisation was able to retain a critical perspective on the war, and that the BBC's 'impartiality' and 'fairness' had enhanced its reputation (Timms 2003). Dyke criticised the American media for their 'unquestioning' coverage of the Iraq War. Not all Americans, he said, were satisfied with the patriotic reporting of Rupert Murdoch's Fox News and the radio conglomerate Clear Channel. A 28 percentage increase in hits on the BBC website from the US demonstrated that 'fair and impartial' news was a sound policy in the new multi-channel environment. This demonstrates the potential of the Internet as a purveyor of alternative views when there is dissatisfaction with the mainstream national media.

It was, in fact, during the invasion of Iraq in 2003 that the aforementioned crack in the dominance of Anglo-American news supply in the transnational mediated space began to fragment along ideological and cultural lines. Elsewhere, I have described it as a battle of credibility between the Anglo-American transnational news channels and the pan-Arab news channels as to who was most credible in bringing audiences the 'true' face of the war (Riegert and Johansson 2005). There it was argued that the transnational Arab satellite channels, with their awareness of Arab opinion, their advantage of being on the ground and armed with Western journalistic norms, signified a qualitative broadening of transnational 'micro' public spheres at a time when the credibility of Western news organisations was undermined. Al Jazeera's defence of its coverage as balanced, independent from government, transparent, timely, and newsworthy (relevant to Arabic audiences) reminds us that journalistic methods and ideals are no guarantee of 'truth', but can vary according to the environment and media landscape. Journalists, decision-makers and audiences are confronted with a fundamental contradiction in journalism: between independence and

patriotism, and between impartiality and loyalty to audiences in this new culturally relativistic broadcasting landscape with its multiplicity of what Ingrid Volkmer (2001) calls 'micro' public spheres.

This is significant in that the new culturally relativistic broadcasting landscape has made manifest the increasing self-reflexivity of journalists about previously taken for granted Anglo-American notions of objectivity. This doesn't mean that Western journalists are abandoning notions of accuracy and balance but that journalistic ideals are being questioned (especially as increasing commercialism brings forward new types of 'news-you-can-use' news stories). Indeed, the journalism of attachment – "a journalism that cares as much as it knows" – as the adage goes, is part of a resurgent interest in journalistic discussions of ethics and part of an increased journalistic self-reflexivity in the wake of changes in the transnational media space (Tumber and Prentoulis 2003; Chouliaraki 2006; Silverstone 2007).

It should be noted, however, that these 'micro' public spheres of transnational news channels providing us with competing views of the world Al Jazeera and Fox News claim to give us balance, while showing us not simply competing views of the world, but different realities. This means that elites and well-educated people may have more choice, but they don't have a common transnational media sphere, rather a fragmentation along political or religious lines, micro-public spheres whose realities never meet. Even if the mass of audiences prefer news perspectives consonant with their cultural and social values, other (younger) audiences are utilising the possibilities of the new global media environment. We have yet to see whether mainstream national television news will utilise the possibilities of the changing digital media environment to broaden its source dependency, but for those audiences who do have the knowledge, the time and the money to compare, there are greater possibilities for audiences to balance different national or transnational perspectives against each other. The question is: will mainstream national television news continue to squeeze out the same stories with less foreign correspondents, reinforcing national perspectives on the world, or will they take onboard the new media, new news sources, notions of ethics and morality, and regional perspectives in their reporting about the surrounding world? And, how in the latter case, would such a journalism look?

Notes

1. Although there are some, like Jeremy Tunstall who, instead of attempting revise his earlier view that 'the media are American' rather uses the evidence of strong regional markets to talk of a decline in US dominance in his new book *The Media were American*, released in 2007.
2. For example, the ruling class culture of Latin America are 'Western' and 'Christian' in origin, unlike their African and Asian counterparts, but they share many problems with other parts of the developing world.
3. Joseph Straubhaar (2007), Hafez (2007), McMillan, (2007) are exceptions to this. See also Robins and Aksoy (2005) or Aksoy and Robins (2002).

4. Gurevitch, Levy and Roeh (1991: 203) compared EVN satellite feeds with what appeared on the main evening news in four different European countries almost twenty years ago. Despite national variations, all were dependent on EVN for roughly half of their foreign stories on a given evening. It is not clear whether they have decreased in importance since then, with the rise of satellite news channels. European Broadcasting Union which sponsors the EVN feeds has been most successful exchange, but here are a number of other news exchange unions between broadcasting organisations. See the World Broadcasting Unions homepage for a list of them all. See <http://www.nabanet.com/wbuarea/about/about.asp>.
5. Van Dijk (1988: 32) analysed 130 newspapers from 90 different countries and found that there is 'a shared global concept of foreign news', and these similarities may be due to 'the influence of a globally shared or imposed set of news production routines and values that derive from the cultural and economic monopoly of the Western international news agencies'.
6. The author's personal interviews with 12 CBS foreign news workers in 2000 confirmed this. See also Underwood (1993) or the three journalist surveys during the last ten years by The Pew Centre for the People and the Press. <http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?PageID=1270>. (accessed August 25, 2009).
7. A cursory review of BBC World's coverage of the Polish and Estonian elections of 1995 suggests that this indeed is a specifically Scandinavian interpretation of the electoral politics of these countries.
8. See, for example, Nohrstedt and Ottosen (2000).
9. See Lilie Chouliaraki (2006) who argues that news narratives are crucial for positioning viewers to engage with distant suffering in very specific ways.

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Image-Nation

The National, the Cultural and the Global in Foreign News Slide-shows

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We live in times of contradiction. On the one hand, different parts of the world are increasingly connected, constituting trajectories of globalisation, which are often understood as universalistic and/or cosmopolitan (Hannerz 1990; 2006). On the other hand (new) nationalisms flourish, in both banal (Billig 1995) and extreme costumes, constituting trajectories of particularism, understood in national terms. In these times of mass mediation, migration and globalisation, Arjun Appadurai (1996: 16) argues that cultural differences tend to take the form of *culturalism*. Culturalism, put simply, is 'identity politics mobilised at the level of the nation-state' (Appadurai 1996: 15). Culturalistic movements are however often *counter-national*, thereby forming both interdependence and conflict between the nation and the cultural. Old distinctions between foreigners and nationals have hence become quite complex, or even pointless in this age of flows and networks (see Beck 2006: 27; Baumann 2000). The genre of foreign news, however, basically captures events that have taken place somewhere else than in the home nation of the reporting medium, but not, by definition, what has happened within the national borders 'at home' (Roosvall 2005; Riegert 2008; Volkmer 2002). Thus, a clear and quite simple distinction between 'foreigners and nationals' appears to be made already in the structuring of the content within the genre. The genre of foreign news is fundamentally rooted in a nation based paradigm, but is also allegedly cosmopolitan in its production practices since its beginnings and even more so in its technology use of today. This tension within the genre, and the clash between its use of the nation as an organising principle and (ideas about) a changing and increasingly connected and possibly trans-nationalising world, comprises an enthralling and challenging arena for research on conceptualisations of the nation and how it is related to culture and globalisation today. The strong truth claims (Ekecrantz and Olsson 1994; Allan 1999) of the news genre in general, and the writing of history that is continuously going on there (Roosvall 2005), moreover underlines the importance of such conceptualisations within the foreign news genre; a genre that basically aims to explain the world (Askew 2002).

This chapter revolves around intersections of nation, culture and globalisation and explores to what degrees these features are drawn upon and assigned significance in year review picture paragraphs in the genre of foreign news. The empirical focus is on a sub-genre called: '24 hours in pictures' (*The Guardian*), 'Eye on the World' (*The Washington Post*), or 'Nyhetsdygnet i bilder' ('24 hours news in pictures', the Swedish daily *Svenska Dagbladet*) and it is explored as it appears in the web editions of these newspapers. The sub-genre is constituted by slide-shows, with multiple picture paragraphs from around the world flashing by. Although the sub-genre allegedly aims to capture the everyday (Roosvall 2005: 187-188), the pictures are as a rule spectacular, colourful and/or aesthetic. They seem to focus on what can be described as a popular notion of culture; often detectable in a mix of mainly ethnicity, religion and gender; and are subsequently – by the ratio of the genre – related to nationhood.

Originating from international news and/or picture agencies, the picture paragraphs in the slide-shows appear in a battlefield of tensions between space- and place related dimensions; they are firmly situated and located at certain places, by datelines and other signifiers, and they relate to extension, limitation and dynamics of space in diverse ways.¹ The picture paragraphs are for instance within the genre categorised by *nation*, usually originate from *international* agencies, are circulated *globally* and are subsequently reproduced and consumed as *national* media output. *International* and *trans-national*² aspects are as we shall see moreover present in the picture/text content, creating a tension on yet another level in relation to the *nation*-governed genre.

The theoretical relationship between the nation and the international is rather uncomplicated. The international simply has to do with two or more nations. The international has always presupposed the national, and vice versa (see also Beck 2006: 28). A nation is recognisable only by not being another nation, which, according to Eric Hobsbawm (1998: 2) makes it by definition not global, and which also by definition makes it meaningful only in international contexts.³ Even the trans-national somewhat paradoxically presupposes the national. It is linguistically and conceptually impossible to talk about trans-national aspects without referring to the national: the nation concept is incorporated in the very term. The global, however, does not per se presuppose the national, but is instead sometimes described as de-nationalisation (Sassen 1991).

The aim of this study is to de-construct relationships between the nation, culture and globalisation in the explicit writing of history that takes place in year review picture paragraph slide-shows. What is a nation in the setting of the foreign news genre, and of an increasingly connected world, today, and how does it relate to culture and globalisation? How is it used in the shaping of national and cosmopolitan memories (Ashuri 2007) in the year review slide-shows? More precisely, how is the world of 2007 remembered in the reviews published in early 2008? How is it visualised and linguistically described in a genre with obvious cosmological ambitions (see also Roosvall 2009)? Is there a message about 'world culture' (Jameson 1998), and how does it relate to the nexus nation-culture-globalisation?

The following sections will discuss the relations between nation-culture, globalisation-culture and finally globalisation-cosmopolitanisation-nation, before moving on to a short discussion on approaches to texts and pictures, and subsequently analysis and discussion of findings.

Nation and Culture

What is a nation? The question will partly be an empirical one here, but we still need a starting point. When Ernest Renan addressed the question in 1882 he identified the nation as kept together by an intricate weave of geography, history, a wish for future commonality and, not least, solidarity (Renan 1882/1990). In later works Benedict Anderson (1983) and others have underlined the socially and symbolically constructed character of the nation, most famously signalled by the phrase 'imagined community' (Anderson *ibid.*; see also Frosh and Wolfsfeld 2007). The nation has to be imagined into being. In this study the focus is on how it is imagined into being primarily in images; an 'image-nation' of sorts is thus at work here. An important feature of nationhood is how it is being written (Bhabha 1990b), which is here understood as a coincidentally linguistic and visual practice. When the nation is written it is concurrently being performed. Multimodal narrations (see Chouliaraki 2006) of the nation are hence both material and symbolic, in an insoluble amalgam. A focus on the nation as written stresses the 'cultural construction of nationness as a form of social and textual affiliation' (Bhabha 1990a: 292) and the solidarity, the wish of the nation of which Renan (1882/1990) speaks, is with Bhabha (1990a: 310) understood as a *will* to nationhood. History and memory are crucial cornerstones in nationhood (Hobsbawm 1996) and homogenised in the will to nationhood they may consolidate contemporary consent. History and memory are moreover crucial cornerstones also in year-reviews, i.e. the material that is studied here.

What is culture, then? Immediately boomeranging back to the nation, culture is, according to Ernest Gellner (1983: 37-38) 'the distinctive style of conduct and communication of a given community', and 'a necessary shared medium of the nation'. Focusing more specifically on culture as a concept, it can be understood as something that does not only stress certain material, linguistic and territorial attributes of a group, but also the awareness of these attributes and the naturalisation of them, which is crucial for the fixation of group identities (Appadurai 1996: 13). Eschewing culture as a noun, Appadurai (1996) opts to use the adjectival form cultural, with which most of the threatening essentialisation and thingification of the noun form can be side-stepped; he ends up using the term *culturalism*. Culturalism has appeared as the main explanation of differences in the contemporary world, according to Appadurai (*ibid.* 16) and as stated in the beginning of this chapter, it can be understood as identity politics on the level of the nation state. Thus, we are back to the nation again.

If culture, then, framed as culturalism, has been launched as a major explanation of differences today, what might the alternatives be? I offer two suggestions. One is a structural-political explanation, which does not focus on identities, but more broadly and generally on political systems and structures. The other is an individual agent-based explanation, which again does not focus on *identities* of acting individuals – and certainly not on group identities – but on the willing or deliberate *actions* of individuals as causes of problems, or grounds for success.

Framing the culture-nation relation from the national point of view, debates about national belonging in the European Union (EU) have for a while focused mostly on Muslims within the community/communities. Questions about national identity are hence closely connected to what Philip Schlesinger (2007: 419) calls 'religio-cultural identities'. Europeanisation is indeed a boundary-defining process as well as a trans-nationalising one, as Schlesinger (2007: 424) notes. Under conditions of multiculturalism all citizens' boundaries are thus hardly defined by national public spaces (Schlesinger 2007: 418) and the potential of the media in contesting or transgressing national boundaries in these times can hardly be overestimated. Media that transgress national borders can however most of the time be defined as national themselves (see Sparks 2007a), thus constituting an international rather than a cosmopolitan or global market. Nevertheless, they may in the end be defined as taking part in and constituting cosmopolitanisation, where the role of the nation is still acknowledged within/among globalising trends (Beck 2006), or rather the other way around, where globalising trends are recognised within the nation-state system.

Globalisation and Culture

Globalisation as a phenomenon is often taken for granted, both when it comes to its advent, lately, and when it comes to its meaning. Several more critical approaches are however possible. Globalisation can be understood as something that always has existed, thus its importance is recognised, but not as new (Jameson 1998: 54; Pietersee 2006). A related approach acknowledges a strong connection between globalisation and the market, but may include the idea that the world networks of our day are new only in degree, not in character, whereas yet another related take on the subject 'posits some new or third multinational state of capitalism of which globalisation is an intrinsic feature...' (Jameson 1998: 54). A more extreme standpoint would be that globalisation does not exist. There are still nation-states and 'nothing is new under the sun' (ibid., see also Sparks 2007a). To be able to verify or falsify these understandings of the degrees of the existence of globalisation, longitudinal studies would be required, and we would also have to agree on what globalisation is.

Globalisation must first of all be understood as a relation. It is often described as having to do with connectivity (Rantanen 2005; Robertson 1992). Terhi Rantanen (2005) suggests a definition of globalisation that explicitly in-

cludes a reference to the media; something that most definitions have lacked, although the important role of the media has generally been implied in the wider discussions. Rantanen writes: 'globalisation is a process in which worldwide economic, political, cultural and social relations have become increasingly *mediated* across time and space' (2005: 8, italics added). Jameson (1998: 55), in turn stresses the other part of the joint media and communication field in baptising globalisation as a 'communicational concept'. I will use Rantanen's definition, with Jameson's addition of communication, as a starting-point in this chapter. With this definition longitudinal studies would indeed still be required in order to be able to establish whether something should be identified as globalisation or not, since the wording 'increasing' implies a process. This study is not empirically longitudinal. Hence, what I shall discuss is not to what extent globalisation exists over all, or when globalisation may have entered the world stage, but rather if things appear as *globalised*, and, as shall be discussed in the next section, whether the outlooks on the world used in the material can be identified as national or cosmopolitan.

The term globalisation, as in increasing worldwide connectivity, communication and mediation, needs to be broken down into different dimensions or aspects where common divisions distinguish between economic, political, cultural, technological and/or social globalisation (Crofts-Wiley 2004; Rantanen 2005; Thörn 2004). In this chapter about content in and structure of foreign news I focus on cultural and technological aspects of globalisation and to what extent the cultural and technological features of my research material should be recognised as really globalised and not only nation-building/-branding on an international scene.

In the concept of cultural globalisation it is presupposed not only that diverse cultures will be increasingly connected over time, but also that this connection will bring them closer together, *culturally*. One (quite paradoxical) way of attaining this can of course be identified as cultural imperialism, where one culture is colonised by another, to a large degree against that first cultures will (Jameson 1998: 58; Sparks 2007b). In an ideal type of cultural globalisation, however, connectivity is supposed to undermine or transcend alleged relations between geography and identity (Thörn 2004: 43-45). Such contested relations tend to come out in the form of stereotypes and/or cultural racism (Roosvall 2005: 314-319; Jonsson 2001: 88). Cultural globalisation should work against these stereotypical ideas about links between geographical place and the identities of the inhabitants. Cultural globalisation should bring people together not mainly, as with technological globalisation, by providing channels for contact, but rather on a mental and compassionate level (see also Chouliaraki 2006; Silverstone 2007). Cultural globalisation, in Thörn's (2004: 43-45) terms, should supposedly make us all cosmopolitans in mind, whether we travel or not. Technological globalisation provides the tools for this development. With the advent of newspapers on the web, for instance, accessibility of content, whether it has been produced in national, international or even trans-national contexts, is only dependent on internet access. The reach is possibly everywhere on the

planet, even though factual means naturally limit access in many areas, and even more so for certain groups with exceptionally limited resources. Nevertheless, the reach goes far beyond the reach of pre-internet newspapers and also far beyond cable and satellite television.⁴ Language is, of course, still a problem for global reach. The English language newspapers have an advantage here, but they still do not have global reach; rather, more of an international or trans-national one in parts of the world and in parts of the strata of different societies. Regarding pictures, the story is a bit different. As Oliver Hahn (2008: 191) puts it, 'pictures travel, discourses do not'. Simultaneously the use of pictures in foreign news and other genres has increased (Roosvall 2005; Frosch 2003). The possible reach is wide for the news/picture agency pictures that constitute the genre. News pictures are accessible for national, international and trans-national newspapers, potentially everywhere. They can be, and are circulated widely.⁵ Jameson (1998: 56) brings these aspects together in stating that 'the positioning of an enlargement of communicational nets has secretly been transformed into some kind of message about a world culture'. What is this message in my material? And is it, as Jameson also argues a fact that the communicational development today no longer is a development characterised by enlightenment, but by new technologies alone?

Globalisation, Cosmopolitanisation and the Nation

As Rantanen writes, 'globalisation challenges the traditional ways of thinking about nationalism, which are based on the idea that people who live in a given geographical territory share a national identity, that they feel that they belong to the same nation' (Rantanen 2005: 82). Since we still have nation-states in the world we must however consider the role of the nation when we are dealing with globalisation and explore for instance how traditional ways of thinking are challenged and how these challenges are met. Globalisation as such does not presuppose, and is not dependent upon, the national. Evidence for both globalisation and the nation as ruling principles in the world of media and communication can however be found (Appadurai 1996; Schlesinger 2007; Sparks 2007a; 2007b; Hafez 2007). Thus we need to analyse and conceptualise the relation between globalisation and the nation. One way of doing this is to use the concept of cosmopolitanisation. Beck (2006: 31) identifies two main outlooks on the world in this respect. They are overlapping in time, but one was more dominating formerly and one is gaining ground today. The old established outlook is a national one, which in all its features is determined by national borders. This outlook excludes as a phenomenon the newer cosmopolitan one, whereas the newer cosmopolitan outlook, in contrast to popular conceptualisations of globalisation, actually includes the national one. The cosmopolitan outlook can be characterised by an experience of crisis in world society, an awareness of interdependence which is a result of global risks and ultimately transgresses borders between us and them, between national and

international. It can also be characterised by a curiosity concerning differences of cultures. Furthermore the cosmopolitan outlook comes, according to Beck, with a cosmopolitan empathy and perspective-taking; with the realisation of how impossible it is to live in a world society and the subsequent urge to redraw old boundaries. It also includes the *mélange* principle, meaning that local, national, ethnic, religious and cosmopolitan cultures and traditions intersect (Beck 2006: 7). '[T]he cosmopolitan outlook means that, in a world of global crises and dangers produced by civilisation, the old differentiations between internal and external, national and international, us and them, lose their validity and a new cosmopolitan realism becomes essential to survival' (Beck 2006: 14). Beck distinguishes however between a cosmopolitan outlook and cosmopolitanisation in that cosmopolitanisation equals latent, passive or unconscious cosmopolitanism. This latent form shapes reality as side effects of global trade or global threats. An individual, without wishing it, and often without consciously knowing it, becomes part of 'foreign' cultures and global interdependencies (Beck 2006: 19).

Focusing on the relation between more global and more local dimensions, and specifically on national ones, Beck concludes that 'cosmopolitanism without provincialism is empty, provincialism without cosmopolitanism is blind' (Beck 2006: 7). To talk about *just* the nation and for instance use *just* nations as units in an analysis would be insufficient. There is too much evidence of both multiculturalism within nations and globalising trends that transcend nations and are related to culture, class, gender, or interests and preferences.⁶ To just focus on non-nation-governed trends would at the same time make the argument hollow, as Beck stresses. This is specifically the case in the presumed front-line of globalisation, that is the world of media and communication (see Rantanen 2006), where so much is still determined by nations and nation-states (Sparks 2007a; Schlesinger 2007).

In connection to this, Tamar Ashuri (2007) talks about the simultaneous writing and reproduction of both a cosmopolitan collective memory and a national collective memory in stories about not only nations but about the world today. The cosmopolitan collective memory is most closely connected to the history of Others and the national collective memory to the legitimisation of 'one's own' history; the history of the home nation. These different forms of memories should not be seen as exclusive alternatives but rather as complementing each other in a relation that could be illustrated as a continuum. It is also important to note that a cosmopolitan memory, can be constituted by mainly national, or at least international (see Beck 2006: 157) outlooks. Cosmopolitan memory and cosmopolitan outlooks should thus not be confused.

The concept of cosmopolitanism has been criticised lately (see for example Schlesinger 2007), among other things due to its dependency on means for travelling. It has been described as a label that is relevant only for privileged people. Cosmopolitanisation, however, as the banal form of cosmopolitanism, does not necessarily include travelling, but instead a cosmopolitanisation of things we eat, things we watch, things we do, things we wear etc., and is used to illustrate how

our everyday lives are affected by events from outside the nation we live in (Beck 2006: 41). World risk society related events are perhaps the most invasive of such events, but they are not the only ones. Non-state terrorism is a related and very specific feature that appears as somewhat of a contradiction as it is repeatedly connected to rogue states, while the non-state aspects are constantly stressed. Moreover, non-state terrorism is generally fought in state-against-state warfare (Beck 2006: 40). Nevertheless, even cosmopolitanisation and the cosmopolitan outlook have been criticised, for instance for being utopian. 'The cosmopolitan alternative is tempting, given the huge destructiveness of the dark side of nationalism in Europe during the 20th century and continuing ethno-national struggles in the 21st. But acts of will cannot abolish the continuing significance of the nation', writes Schlesinger (2007: 415). The continuing significance of the nation is prominent indeed, and attention certainly needs to be brought to the issue. However, the continuing significance of the nation should not make us abolish an openness towards cosmopolitan alternatives, or even 'wishful thinking about cosmopolitanism' (as Schlesinger, 2007: 413, identifies it). Without an openness towards alternatives and even wishful thinking, how would deliberate change away from 'the dark side of nationalism' be possible?

Let's go back now to the ethymological origin of the word cosmopolis, a world society, where the second part of the word is derived from the Greek *polis* – city state. The polis, as it was constructed in ancient Greece can be identified as *uncosmopolitan*, in the sense that the concern of the *polites* was for their compatriots, and possibly others who dwelled in the same polis (Kleingeld and Brown 2006). It was, however, not *anti-cosmopolitan*, i.e. not actively excluding foreigners from any ethical considerations and not actively targeting foreigners for mistreatment, something that instead should be recognised as belonging to the discourse on barbarians raised by panhellenism (Kleingeld and Brown 2006). Thus, in the identification of outlooks in the material we may distinguish not only between a cosmopolitan and a national one, but also discern whether the national outlook comes out as anti-cosmopolitan or just uncosmopolitan, and furthermore to what extent the national outlook is an *international* one (Beck 2006: 157-158).

Approaches to Imagetexts

Methodologically, this study is situated at the intersection of the language-based approaches of critical linguistics and discourse analysis, and the visually based approaches of social semiotics and visual studies. The text-based part deals with lexical and syntactical choices concerning naming and representation of action/passivity on the linguistic level (van Leeuwen 1995; Fowler 1991). The image-based part deals with both in-text symbols and extra-textual socio-political contextualisations (Becker 2000; Kress and van Leeuwen 1996). On an over-all level texts and pictures are viewed as constituting a multimodality (Chouliaraki 2006), and discourses of cosmopolitanism versus the nation

ratio – cosmopolitan and national outlooks – will be disclosed, and historical context aligned (Fairclough 1995; Wodak 2001). Historisation is here mainly related to colonialism/post-colonialism (McClintock 1995; Loomba 1998) and to global, international and national political power relations (such as the cold war, conflicts with Western interests in the Middle East etc.). I strive to dodge the pitfalls of methodological nationalism (Beck 2006: 24, see also Rantanen's chapter in this book) through not taking foreigner/native identities as connected to nations for granted, but rather work along nation-globalisation as a continuum, with specific attention brought to the role of culture within the examined representations. Methods that take a presupposed difference between foreigner and native as a point of departure are unrealistic today (Beck 2006: 26, 157; Beck-Gernsheim 2004: 106 in Beck 2006). The possibility of both/and, rather than either/or categories is recognised in this study (Beck 2006: 26), even though the genre of foreign news may through empirical results be concluded to practice methodological nationalism itself, and the actual use of foreigner/native distinctions *in the examined genre* has to be taken into consideration.

The meaning and significance of the nation, in relation to the global, may naturally vary with different contexts. I will study the meaning and significance of the nation, in relation to global aspects, in foreign news and more specifically in the sub genre of picture paragraph slide shows in newspapers' web editions. The main material in this study is comprised by picture year reviews, published in the early days of the New Year in 2008. Picture year reviews from the British newspaper *The Guardian*⁷, the US newspaper *The Washington Post*⁸ and the Swedish newspaper *Svenska Dagbladet*⁹ are used, not mainly as representatives of different nations, but to provide material from diverse, but media and communication-wise closely connected parts of the world.¹⁰ Similar approaches in these newspapers will thus be focused on as much as contrasting ones, even though differences that might be related to different nations will still be taken into consideration in this study of a mainly nationally determined genre and how it appears in major national news media.

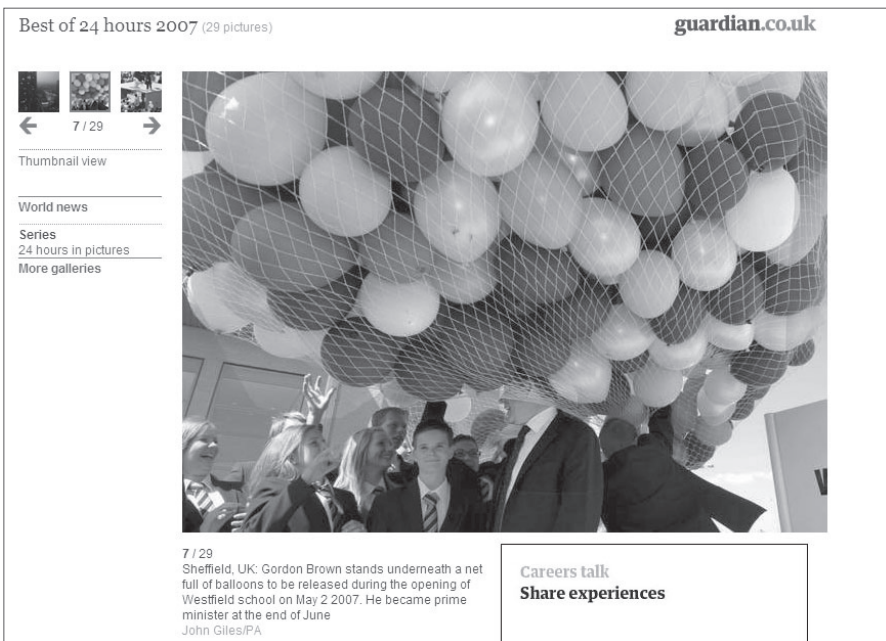
Slide-showing the World:

National Culture, Globalised Aspects and (Non)Agency

In their year-in-picture specials *The Washington Post* included 38 picture paragraphs, *The Guardian* 29, and *Svenska Dagbladet* 26. The represented events (or non-events) span from the assassination of Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan, to natural disasters, the discovery of new stars in space, elections, national/cultural celebrations, and the suffering of animals in different contexts. Despite the difference in motives, the pictures do however usually have an aesthetical quality in common; they seem to have been chosen not mainly due to traditional news values (although the murder of Benazir Bhutto in late 2007 and similar events have made their way into the material), but due to them being 'good pictures', that is they are colourful or in other senses striking pictures.



Picture 12 from Washington Post's Eye on the World: 2007 review. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/world/>. (accessed January 10, 2008)



Picture 7 from Guardian's Best of 24 hours 2007 (from the series 24 hours in pictures). <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world>. (accessed January 10, 2008)

Explicitly national terms are only absent in texts about the US in the US-based newspaper, and about Sweden in the Swedish-based newspaper. In the US newspaper the only picture paragraph where the nation is not flagged is a picture from California. Most of the picture paragraphs illustrating events in

Sweden in the Swedish newspaper have a similar approach. *The Guardian*, however, signals nation even in relation to pictures of the UK, and the nation is overall prominent in all the studied newspapers.

Although the genre almost exclusively covers other nations than the home nation of the reporting medium, the year-in-picture specials included as noted above some pictures of the home nations of the newspapers. In what might have been an urge to cover the most signifying events of the year of 2007 in the world, events in the home nations could not be excluded, it appears. In *The Washington Post* three of the 38 picture paragraphs were about events in the US. In *The Guardian* three of the 29 picture paragraphs were about the UK. In *Svenska Dagbladet* as many as nine of the 26 picture paragraphs dealt with events in Sweden.

Only four items out of the 93 picture paragraphs of *The Washington Post's*, *The Guardian's* and *Svenska Dagbladet's* year in picture-specials can be characterised as including or referring to global or trans-national aspects on an explicit level. Two captions talk about *global* warming, one mentions an *African* immigrant¹¹, and yet another one talks about *West*-friendly protests. All four items are simultaneously also steered by the nation concept and understood in national terms.

The four picture paragraphs with partly global or trans-national aspirations are all about negative events. 'Global warming' occurs in imageries of dry spells in China and Australia. The aforementioned 'African immigrant' is newly arrived in Tenerife, Spain, and the motif is an extreme close-up of this anonymous man's deeply desolate face and the short story accompanying the picture is about a group of 115 immigrants who were intercepted by Civil Guard Maritime Rescue patrol boats as they tried to reach land on a very small boat. The pictured man looks apathetic and has tears in his eyes. The picture paragraph about protests against the 'West-friendly' government of Lebanon shows two soldiers in arms standing in front of a pile of car tyres that someone has set on fire. All these picture paragraphs that contain allegedly global and/or trans-national aspects are mainly from, or are about people from, formerly colonised parts of the world; about 'oriental' or Southern parts of the world. Rapprochement, as a significant part of globalisation, and especially the cultural aspects of globalisation, seems in these cases to be one-directional, that is from East/South to North/West, therefore conjoining with significant traits of orientalism (Said 1978/1995) and colonial ideologies alike. The negative angles of the stories from South/East are thus conjoined with intrinsic features of orientalist and colonial practices and ideas. The 'global'/transnational picture paragraphs form a cosmopolitan outlook that is indeed, as Beck (2006: 21-22) describes it, one of risk and threat.

Maybe it is a lack of such a perceived global threat that prevents the examined newspapers to represent global or trans-national aspects of the monks' famous protests in Burma in autumn 2007. All three newspapers have chosen pictures of the monks' protests in their year in picture specials, but none of them posits the protests in a global or even international context. This is

somewhat surprising since a substantial symbolic global gathering had taken place around the protests. People in many parts of the world wore red shirts to express their support. The media reports at the time included concurrent representations of these global protests and global signs of compassion for the monks, on the one hand, and a focus on the nation and not the least *the nation-state* of Burma on the other. In the year-in-picture-reviews the global or international aspects have however as noted disappeared. The event is instead remembered as national. In the cosmopolitan collective memory (Ashuri 2007) the protests are remembered as nation-specific; not anti-cosmopolitan, since the texts do not contain 'othering' aspects, but unc cosmopolitan.

Among the total of 93 picture paragraphs that have been examined only 17 focus solely on persons as individuals, stating their name, and thus assigning them a role as important people, as opposed to the 58 picture paragraphs that display people without acknowledging their individuality by recognising them by name. In 17 picture paragraphs there are both explicitly named and nameless people present. In an additional category, containing 9 picture paragraphs, there are no people present, but instead for instance buildings, cars or animals. In the picture paragraphs from the Swedish newspaper, *Svenska Dagbladet*, the majority of the captions about Sweden (eight out of twelve) display individuals with names. All picture paragraphs from *The Guardian* that are about events in the UK (three) display people as individuals with names. *The Washington Post's* stories about the US (three) do not however contain people displayed as individuals, but show nameless people and, in one case, cars. In *The Washington Post* and *The Guardian* the number of pictures about the home nation is very small, but it is noteworthy that in *The Washington Post* there seems to have been a focus on what has been reported as huge events world wide even in the coverage of the home nation, whereas in *The Guardian* and *Svenska Dagbladet* the focus in the homeland pictures is on more local events zooming in on certain politicians and other prominent nationals. In the setting of the genre, with its typical naming of nations as places, these local events can be read as national events. In *The Washington Post* picture paragraphs from the US are thus treated more like any picture paragraphs in the genre, while *The Guardian* and *Svenska Dagbladet* depart to a certain extent from the genre ratio in their focus on domestic events, and in accordance with this drift away from the genre's general display of anonymous people rather than individuals represented with names. Overall in the year reviews, people appear more often as anonymous examples of the state of their country and/or region, than as individuals who are interesting as agents and/or per se. In this respect they work in the same way as the non-human features representing different nations in the year in picture slide-shows, as for instance cars representing the US, an ancient statue representing Greece, nature representing Australia (see also Roosvall 2005: 184 on the typicality of this matter), and a cloud of dust representing Sudan (see Roosvall 2009). This use of symbols of culture and nature rather than official symbols of a nation-state to represent a nation in the news can be seen as examples of

the evocation of national-cultural narratives, which are dominating within the genre. The risk society discourse thus exists only within the larger paradigm of the national-cultural narratives.

Moreover, 29 of the 93 picture paragraphs, that is almost one third of them, evoke *official* national symbols in some way. Some of these symbols are classic, like flags, flag-colours and visualised language (texts displayed in pictures). Others are more temporary like leaders of the nations, princes, uniforms and money.¹² All three newspapers evoke national symbols, and the extent to which they do this does not vary much.

History is also brought to the fore in some picture paragraphs, but more so in the captions than in the pictures. In this case, *the Washington Post* relates to history and reports from memorial ceremonies to a larger extent than *the Guardian* and *Svenska Dagbladet*. There are for instance picture paragraphs from a ceremony for the abolition of slavery in France, a celebration of Revolution Day in Cuba, a tribute concert on the 10th anniversary of Princess Diana's death in the UK. The relative lack of explicit historicisation can be connected to the scantiness on the textual level. There is very little text, so it is not surprising that context – historical and other – is scarce. When history is played on, it is generally in the form of celebrations of certain nationally significant events, such as the aforementioned anniversaries. Historicisation does however also take place on a more general level where it permeates the slide-shows, since they write the visual world history of 2007, in early 2008.

Different Explanations of Difference and Non-Agency on Multiple Levels

Regarding what explanations of differences in the world that can be found in the sub genre – cultural(istic), structural-political or individual – it has to be concluded first of all that there are not really many explicit explanations of anything in these insular pictures with very little text. The pictures do however accumulate meaning from and in relation to each other (Hall 1997), as they are organised in a chain in the slide-shows. In *The Washington Post*, for instance, the slide-show starts with a picture of Benazir Bhutto captured in a crowd in Pakistan, followed by a large mass of monks demonstrating in Burma, a son who mourns his dead father in Iraq, ruins of a house in Iraq, young men waving guns (security volunteers) in Iraq, and Afghan men who dance in a desert in Afghanistan. All these crowded/sad pictures of a seemingly disorganised Middle Eastern/Asian world are succeeded by three pictures from the UK that all stand out as apparently organised in comparison: British soldiers return to the UK from captivity in the Persian Gulf and march in a straight line at the airport, Gordon Brown with 'wife Sarah' waves happily to the public in a close-up, and Princes Harry and William appear on stage with microphones at a tribute concert to their mother Princess Diana 10 years after her death. After this the focus shifts back to the East with a crowded protest in the Philippines and three pictures of

destruction in the Middle East. With a picture of an ancient statue in Greece (in the context of forest fires) we are then back to the West again. And on it goes, in a geo-culturally stereotypical way, even though a few pictures of natural disasters and mourning in the West complicates the pattern somewhat. By this coherence of shifting in geography and shifting in motives, the pictures gain meaning from each other and constitute together an over-all picture of the world.

In the conjoined meaning of the picture paragraph slide-shows – this constituted history of the world of 2007 – cultural explanations of similarities and differences between different parts of the world are implicated, through use of the above mentioned symbols, and they are moreover culturalistic in the sense that they turn into identity politics (Fraser 2000; Woodward 1997); that is identity politics performed not by the agents or representatives of certain groups, but by the media. This can be seen for instance in the aforementioned use of people as (anonymous) examples of their nation and/or culture, in the interplay between pictures and datelines/captions. Structural aspects, in turn, are rarely present in this material, but to the extent that they do appear they seem to correspond to the general attitude of foreign news where structure is discussed/implicit mainly when it comes to communist systems (and not capitalist ones, which are instead naturalised, see Roosvall 2005). Zooming in on the matter of different explanations of difference, we will now look closer at the 38 picture paragraphs from *The WP*. In the slide-show of *The Washington Post*, structure/political system is for instance implied in picture paragraphs from Cuba, again in the reference to Revolution Day; in Venezuela, in a picture of Hugo Chavez after an electoral loss concerning a proposed change in the constitution of the country that would have allowed Chavez to run for office indefinitely; and in a picture of demonstrations outside the Georgian embassy in Moscow, Russia, referring to the former Soviet state and naming the demonstrators 'pro-Kremlin demonstrators'. All these pictures connect to ideas about dogmatism through the display of masses and flags in Cuba, demonstrators with gas masks in Russia, and Chavez (dressed in red) flailing copies of the constitution in Venezuela.

To a certain extent structural-political explanations of the states of affairs are also implied in a picture from Pakistan, where the text discusses the return of Benazir Bhutto to the country, and in a picture from Australia, where the shift from conservative to labour party power results in Australia signing the Kyoto protocol and also withdrawing Australian combat troops from Iraq. Australia is the only Western country to appear in relation to structural-political implications among the 38 picture paragraphs from *the Washington Post*. Otherwise we find that communist or Middle Eastern nations are the ones explained by structure/system. In additional *WP* picture paragraphs from Turkey, Palestine, and to a certain extent Israel, structural-political explanations are indicated, but the references to Islam, and religious aspects of the reported conflicts, in the end connects more strongly to the religio-cultural nexus of explanations. In a number of other picture paragraphs, where structural explanations certainly could have been alluded to, such as the ones of conflicts in Sudan (twice),

economic crisis is Zimbabwe, suicide attacks in Iraq etc., there are no explanations of the states of affairs at all. And in others, such as a picture following elections in Guatemala, the focus ends up on individual politicians without stating their political affiliation.

Explanations that build on active and deliberate actions of persons or groups of persons are naturally most visible in picture paragraphs where individual people with names appear, that is, most prominently, in picture paragraphs from the home nations of the UK and Swedish newspapers. The actor position is generally connected to power, whereas the patient position, the role of a participant as passive and as the object of or prone to other people's actions, is connected to lack of power (van Leeuwen 1995; Fowler 1991). In this sense, the home nations of the Swedish and UK newspapers are empowered through the relative over-representation of named actors in the genre-wise atypical picture paragraphs about domestic events. In the material overall, action is however backgrounded. When it does appear, it is often connected to individuals of the political or celebrity elite. The representation of action that does appear in the texts moreover, due to the briefness of the texts, often stands out as unmotivated, unexplained, and de-contextualised. Agency is therefore in the end not only connected to elite persons, most often from elite nations, like in the cases of the UK and Sweden, but is also generally masked and mystified.

When it comes to the production and distribution of the picture paragraphs, a lot of the displayed pictures originate from the same large international news and picture agencies like AP, Reuters, AFP and Getty. AP is the most frequent contributor in all three newspapers, Reuters and Getty contributed extensively to *the Washington Post*, whereas AFP dominates more in *the Guardian* together with diverse other sources. In *Svenska Dagbladet* a significant amount of the pictures are assigned to specific photographers rather than to news/picture agencies. In all those cases the picture paragraphs are about the home nation of the newspaper. None of the picture paragraphs about other nations in the Swedish newspaper were assigned to specific photographers. Hence, the journalistic discourse is not only personalised more on the representational level when the home nation of the reporting medium is concerned, but also on the production level, where individual journalists/photographers get credit for home-nation reporting. This is not unexpected, but it points to something important in the constitution of the sub-genre in general, namely a dominating de-individualisation on multiple levels, resulting in a world where agency is hidden at the expense of aestheticised images of mostly problematic events understood on a national-cultural level. This results in a view of the world where the aestheticised differences that are displayed become naturalised and largely disconnected from possibilities for change. Pictures of disaster and despair, of bombed buildings, refugee camps, mourning and suffering, thereby to a large extent become de-politicised. Instead, differences in the world become connected to culture and nation, in the culturalistic (non)explanations that remain. Concurrently, the history writing ambitions of the year review slide-shows underline the alleged authority and authenticity of news pictures

(Sturken and Cartwright 2001) and of this world view, further supported by the general truth claims that accompany the news genre overall (Ekecrantz and Olsson 1994; Allan 1999).

National and Cosmopolitan Outlooks: The Constitution of World Culture

In the agency-deprived world of foreign news slide-shows, presented in aestheticised images of mostly problematic events understood on a national-cultural level, how do national and cosmopolitan outlooks interact? To start with, foreign news is cosmopolitan in the sense that it, so to speak, travels between cities and nations in different parts of the world, it is however not only connected to the nation-state, but also to the nation as an idea (see Frosh and Wolfsfeld 2007). Foreign news contains conceptualisations of the whole world – the globe – which are still very much steered by the national perspective. It thus connects to and stresses the national presence within the cosmopolitan outlook that Beck points to. Cosmopolitanisation, cosmopolitanism from within, does not stand out in this material. The outlook is more often national and unc cosmopolitan. It is not explicitly barbarian in how people are pictured, but there are possibilities of interpretations of others as barbarians, since there is a general lack of contexts and information that combined with pictures of disasters or stereotypical cultural expressions invites an imperialist gaze on ‘the barbarians’. The division of genres also in itself borders on this gaze. The division of events in the homeland and events in the rest of the world into different genres, with different perspectives (see Roosvall 2005) implies that people of other nations should be treated differently – discursively – and that the same ethics do not apply to the imagery of people of other nations (see also Silverstone 2007).

Foreign news as a genre practices methodological nationalism. It views the nation-state – and similar constructions, like federal states, one might add – as ‘a self-evident point of departure’ (Beck 2006: 33¹³). Genres say something about how we conceptualise, categorise and understand things in our societies. The existence of the genre of foreign (/world/international) news displays nation-based thinking; thinking that may come out both as connected to the nation-state (as in reporting from elections in staple foreign news articles) and as connected to the nation as an idea, as an imagined community. The latter is evident in the slide-shows that have been examined in this chapter, but can also be found in more traditional articles and reportages (see Roosvall 2005). The slide-shows reveal a cultural and visual geography that is connected to the nation; that is to the nation as an idea and not to the nation-state as political roof (cf. Schlesinger and Foret 2006), even though politicians may at times be featured in the pictures and texts.

How and in which contexts does the will to nationhood more precisely come out in the slide-shows and how is it possibly also counter-posed by other

tendencies? Can it for instance be described as though the nation is featured within a globalisation paradigm? Not primarily, at least not in the material studied here, and even in foreign news, generally, globalised aspects are rather featured within a nation-governed paradigm (see also Volkmer 2002). Counter-posing trans-nationalism, 'the nation-state principle functions as a legitimisation for global inequalities' and subsequently conceals such inequalities (Beck 2006: 38). It 'rescues' us – national citizens – from responsibility for malpractices and states of despair in other parts of the world. This attitude is normalised and stabilised by the nation-centred perspective itself, and connects moreover to the above discussion of the imperialist gaze on 'the barbarians', since it displays not only an uninterested attitude towards foreigners, as the unc cosmopolitan take on the subject, but advocates, through discursive practice, an anti-cosmopolitan division between the home state and the rest .

The concept of world risk society challenges the nation-state principle in a way that new technological possibilities for communication do not necessarily do. In a discussion on technological aspects of globalisation, pinpointing the 'enlargement of communicational nets', Jameson (1998: 56) identifies how this enlargement has been transformed ('secretly') into a message about a new world culture. So intertwined are the technological and cultural aspects here that they presuppose each other. The technological opportunities do however not automatically bring about cultural globalisation, in the sense of the questioning of alleged relationships between geography and identity. A new world culture is not necessarily a non-stereotypical one, not necessarily a rapproaching one. You may know things about people, or rather think that you know things about people and still keep them at a distance: maybe exactly *because* of the things you think you know. The opportunities of technological globalisation can in fact be used to demarcate difference, to divide, to exoticise. Think only of 19th century anthropology and the way connectivity and the new access to documentary means such as film and cameras was related to exoticism, and even used to demonise (see for example Eriksen and Nielsen 2004: 9). Nothing in technological globalisation guarantees connectivity in any other sense than the strictly technological one. But we may still be utopian. Recognition of cosmopolitanisation, even in banal forms, such as what food you eat, may subsequently bring about cultural globalisation in the form that is understood as disconnection between (stereotypical) identity and geography, in the relation between distant places. One should not forget, however, that globalisation is certainly not an area which is unaffected by power relations. 'National inequalities may be globally rather than nationally determined' (Beck 2006: 39). This challenging relation can be addressed with a power aware cosmopolitan outlook, not with a national one.

Politicisation and political action are needed as solutions in world risk society, writes Beck (2006: 23). Politicisation and political action are however backgrounded in the studied material, in the sense that political action is represented as unexplained when it occasionally does appear in demonstrations and the like. Simultaneously it is not represented at all in other cases where

what appears instead is general turmoil. The material thus paints a geo-cultural picture, strongly connected to places, and most notably nations, and thereby naturalises states of affairs. 'In world risk society what is at stake at all levels is accordingly the compulsive pretence of control over the uncontrollable, whether in politics, law, science, the economy or everyday life' (Beck 2006: 22). In the foreign news slide-shows, control is mainly performed by visibility, by issues appearing as paradoxically easy to grasp and as one-dimensional, like when 'Afghan men dance before a meeting of tribal elders in Chabaron, eastern Afghanistan...'. The Middle East is otherwise almost exclusively associated with war and violence¹⁴, the US equals, for instance, cars, there are dry spells in Australia etc. The world is thus, despite the violence and the world risk society discourse – expressed in both terrorism and climate versions – a surprisingly predictable place.

Conclusions

The imagery of an in parts dangerous, but nevertheless predictable, world, can be seen as constituting a message about world culture of the kind that Jameson (1998: 56) claims is a result of 'the positioning of an enlargement of communicational nets'. World culture seems in the slide-shows to be easy to grasp, to be one-dimensional and related to risk, but nevertheless – or just because of that – controlled. Communicational development today seems, moreover, as Jameson (1998: 55) also argues, no longer to be a development characterised by enlightenment, but by new technologies alone. The pictures that constitute the main part of the picture paragraphs appear to come from an inexhaustible source. The global spread of them can be seen as a sign of our times in itself. Pictures are flooding public space (Frosh 2003). Enlightenment is, however, not a mandatory feature in or product of this dissemination; it is hardly present at all in the scant and context lacking reports from different parts of the world. The displayed pictures, and their texts, are more defined by number and surface qualities like disposition, colour and other aesthetic aspects, than by features like information and the enhancement of knowledge. The information present can rather be connected to exactly the technologically determined simple message about world culture that has been discussed here. Consequently, *knowledge* is in the end created, not enlightenment, but knowledge connected to stereotypes. An anthropology of sorts emerges; a knowledge of people in the world and how they differ, most notably through national-cultural belonging. What is recognised as global/trans-national in the studied sub-genre is in the end climate change, migration and war: all negative processes as they have been framed here, and all processes that connect to Beck's definition of world risk society related events and processes.

The implied explanations of differences in the world that were found in the studied material were mostly cultural and moreover culturalistic in the sense

that they turn into identity politics the media way, as shown in how the picture paragraphs relate to each other. Structural explanations were rarely implied, but occurred most explicitly in picture paragraphs from Cuba, Venezuela and Russia/Georgia, in the latter case through references to the Soviet Union, i.e. the structure that was used as an explanation was largely a communist one. Individual explanations, in turn, were most visible in picture paragraphs where individual people with names appear, that is, most prominently, in picture paragraphs from the home nations of the UK and Swedish newspapers. This indicates that different explanations tend to be used for different parts of the world, while the contemporary world history is being written in the year review slide-shows, composing a cosmopolitan memory, a memory of the rest of the world, that is a demarcated and demarcating memory, and connects to the alleged relationships between geography and identity that is supposed to be contested through cultural globalisation.

What is, in the end, a nation in the sub-genre of foreign news slide-shows, and in the writing of contemporary history that takes place in year reviews? A nation is closely and uncritically connected to culture, it turns out. Culture here becomes national culture and other cultures as well as other differences are most often backgrounded or ignored. A nation is furthermore in the material easily illustrated by mostly anonymous representatives of its people and/or other symbols like old statues, cars, money, flags, ceremonies etc. Far away nations appear however to be more determined by culture than more closely situated nations, to the home nations of the reporting media, that is. Closer nations, and even more so the home nations of *Svenska Dagbladet* and *The Guardian* are less signified by symbols and anonymous persons or masses, but more by individuals like politicians and (other) celebrities. Culture is generally not evoked in these cases. What a nation is, then, in the end depends on the geopolitical context. The nation-state, and structural-political explanations are evoked for certain parts of the world, whereas the nation as an idea is consistently connected through a national-cultural narrative. Representations of nations moreover relate not only to culture, but also to globalisation in a way that is captured by the term cosmopolitanisation – not to be mistaken as the equivalent to cosmopolitanism – which promotes and categorises by nations. The nation is crucial in foreign news, even when it enters the stage as ‘world news’, imaging and imagining the world of 2007 into being in early 2008. The state of the nation as an organising idea is complex today, but not so much in foreign news. Even when the term ‘foreign’ is eschewed by headings like ‘world news’ or ‘the world in pictures’, the world is understood in terms of nations, and traces of globalised events and processes are generally fitted into the ratio of the international, that is into a nation-based ratio.

Notes

1. For a further discussion on situatedness, locatedness and space, see Salovaara-Moring 2004, for instance p 31, 35-36.
2. The difference between the terms 'international' and 'trans-national' is not always clear. In *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* 'international' is defined as 'of, relating to, or affecting two or more nations' while 'trans-national' is defined as 'extending or going beyond national boundaries', so in general the international aims at relations between nations, whereas trans-national aims at something which is not dependent upon nations, although not on a 'lower' level within a nation, but on a 'broader' level, so to speak outside and extending national borders. Trans-national corporations are given as examples of how the term 'trans-national' should be understood. In the major Swedish encyclopedia *Nationalencyklopedin*, 'trans-national' is in accordance with *Merriam-Webster's* corporal example explained as something 'that conducts (economic) activity/enterprise in several countries' (my translation). This explanation thus also connects to *Merriam-Webster's* definition of the term 'international' in how it focuses on something that occurs in several countries. www.merriam-webster.com, www.ne.se. (accessed May 13, 2008) The terms globalisation and nation will be discussed in more detail in the following sections of the chapter.
3. Compare also to Thomas Hylland Eriksen (1993: 47) on how ethnicity is a fundamentally relational concept. In mono-ethnic environments, ethnicity does not really exist.
4. On the other hand the possibility of addressing held together general publics is severely challenged due to among other things media consumption patterns among young people who, as Schlesinger (2007: 423) points out, are not steered so much by national borders or mainstream media overall in their consumption.
5. There are of course strong economic factors at play in this circulation. I will however not in this chapter focus on aspects of economic globalisation, even though it is an intrinsic feature of globalisation processes (for a further discussion see Anu Kantola's chapter in this book). Instead, the focus will, as already mentioned, be on technological and cultural aspects.
6. In talking about preferences it is however necessary to remember that not all people in all parts of the world can afford to be steered by interests and preferences.
7. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world>. (accessed January 10, 2008)
8. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/world/>. (accessed January 10, 2008)
9. <http://www.svd.se/nyheter/utrikes/bildspecial/>. (accessed January 10, 2008)
10. The choice of these newspapers is mainly based on the fact that they are well established, with a relatively high penetration, operating in the capital areas of their home nations, and most importantly include picture paragraph slide-shows on a regular basis. The political leaning of these newspapers varies a bit, but this presumed difference will not be focused here (and what is perceived as leftist/rightist in one context may well be perceived otherwise in other surroundings) as the study is not constituted as a comparative study, but as an examination of the appearance of the discussed sub-genre over all in Western newspapers.
11. Africa is mentioned in an additional picture paragraph, but only in naming a national park in the Democratic Republic of Congo as the oldest one in Africa, thus it is only situating the national in a wider geographical context.
12. A famous football-player from a national team could perhaps also be considered a national symbol, but was not included in the number stated.
13. Beck refers here to a conversation with Daniel Levy.
14. In addition to the picture painted in *the WP*, *the Guardian* captures violence, turmoil and military motives in six of its seven picture paragraphs from the Middle East. *Svenska Dagbladet* that has relatively few non-Swedish pictures is left out of this part of the discussion.

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The Disciplined Imaginary

The Nation Rejuvenated for the Global Condition

Anu Kantola

Somewhat paradoxically, nationalism has become perhaps the most international of all political ideas. Nationalism has been capable of transcending political, economic, cultural or religious barriers and boundaries, and has been manifested in a variety of societies. This flexibility of nationalism is examined here in the context of contemporary economic globalisation. The aim is to analyse how the nation is configured under the contemporary conditions of economic globalisation.

It has been argued that what we are currently witnessing is not the disappearance of nationalism, but rather a rewriting of the nation. Due to its flexibility, nationalism remains as a central narrative for collective identities. Nations are reformulated and imagined anew, and these processes are conditioned by the power constellations of the global age.

The imaginary work of nation-making takes place even in the most globalised of media, international financial journalism. Most of the work on media and nationalism has emphasised the role of the national media. The aim here is to look at the transnational media as mediator between the state and globalisation. How do the international or transnational media develop governmentalities that embody the political configuration of the nation for the global condition.

The aim here is to look at how international financial journalism works as an intermediating interface between the global economy and the nation-state. As globalisation proceeds, there is a need for intermediating institutions and structures which mediate the political imperatives of the global age to the societal level. Consequently the international media works as an intermediary of economic globalisation, as a public site where the political imperatives of economic globalisation meet the politics and poetics of nationalism, i.e. the national politics of the nation-state as well as the narratives of nationalism.

Empirically this chapter draws from a case study of Finland narrated in the *Financial Times* (*FT*). I will examine how Finland as an 'imagined community' is narrated in the *FT* from 2001 to 2006. The *FT* recycles the 19th and 20th century narratives of Finnish nationalism and combines them with the imaginary of the competition state entailing the governmentalities and political imperatives

of the global economy. Thus the nation appears to be an ongoing imaginary process within the conditions of economic globalisation. Rather than a fading thing from the past or a stable, rigid and purified myth, the nation appears as a massive meat grinder capable of mincing and processing almost anything into the form of national narrative.

This imaginary reinvention of the nation is conditioned by the power constellations taking shape under the conditions of economic globalisation. Finland as a nation becomes imagined as a model case of the techno-utopias linked with the global regime and its governmentalities. At the same time, nationalism is also an ideology of power; capable of rendering societies as governable entities and functioning as a political framework for disciplinary governmentalities as new forms of globally organised power and expertise work through the nation-state.

The Financial Media as an Interface of Globalisation

The narratives of nationalism often appear as something pure and fixed: as a narrative of the nation, a seemingly eternal project of national ethos drawing from a 'common' ethnic genius (e.g. Appadurai 2006: 3). However, it would be a mistake to understand nationalism only as a solid and stable narration. As Graig Calhoun has noted, nationalism is a rhetoric that has become enormously widespread and powerful in the modern world. It has been used equally for civil wars and ethnic repression as well as for people's empowerment, citizenship and heroic patriotism (Calhoun 1995: 233). The nation has been 'found', 'discovered', 'built up' and 'fought for' in a variety of ways in different ages and on all continents.

The success and pertinence of nationalism has to do with its flexibility. National imaginaries are powerful due to their ability to incorporate a variety of elements into them successfully. Consequently, the national imaginaries of the nation are not as purified as they often claim to be. Rather they are bastards claiming to the firstborns: behind their solemn façades national imaginaries are often unholy mixtures of a variety of ingredients.

Contemporary economic globalisation has been regarded as a threat to the nation-state as the increased fluidity of capital, technologies, goods and services has made internationalised flexible industrial production systems and global financial markets possible (e.g. Strange 1996; Habermas 1999). However, it can be argued that nationalism and economic globalisation are not mutually exclusive, nor have they ever been. For instance, the late 19th century, a period of economic globalisation, imperialism and colonialism, produced intense nationalism and nostalgia (see also Britta Timm Knudsen in this book). National symbols and ceremonies such as the Royal Jubilee, Bastille Day, the Olympic Games, the Cup Final as well as the Tour de France were invented in this period (Featherstone 1993: 178). In a similar vein, it can be suggested that today the global economy and nation-state have not become mutually exclusive. Glo-

balisation entails a negotiation where the interests of internationalised capital, firms and investors are fitted to the nation-state and the state is reformulated rather than exterminated. At the same time, the nation as a political narrative is reimagined (Cameron and Palan 2004). As Saskia Sassen (2006: 232) argues, the state emerges as one of the key sites for developing and instituting the conditionalities of corporate economic globalisation. Sassen is critical of the accounts which see the national and the global as separate logics and institutions existing in spite of each other. Rather, the nation-state appears as a site which mediates the political imperatives of economic globalisation to national politics. In order to understand contemporary globalisation one should analyse the intermediating processes: find sites where the nation-state is questioned and faced with the challenges posed by globalisation.

This view can be considered in the context of the media as well. The national media, the print media in particular, has had a central role in the construction of national imaginaries (e.g. Anderson 1991; Roosvall 2005; Madianou 2005). Under the current conditions of globalisation it is, however, not only the national media that contributes to the imaginary work of nation making. Economic globalisation works by establishing intermediating sites or interfaces between the global economy and the state, which launch a new organising logic for the state as it faces international action and collaboration. Globalisation, in this case economic globalisation in particular, is challenging the politics of the nation-state. Thus interfaces emerge where the new imperatives for the nation-states are presented, negotiated and formulated. The old frames of national politics are challenged and new formulations for politics are negotiated.

International financial journalism in particular makes an interesting case as it actively reports on and assesses nation-states and national policies (Madrack 2000; Callender and Kouzmin 2002; Starr 2004; Thrift 2005: 37-39; Kantola 2006b; Durham 2007). It forms well-respected public sites where the nation-states are assessed in a variety of ways. And, at the same time, nation-states are given suggestions: through the financial journalism they obtain ideas and imperatives concerning the ways the nation should be organised and developed.

The notion of the media as an interface between globalisation and the nation-state brings out also another element in the working of the media, namely the exercise of power. As Benedict Anderson (1991), Arjun Appadurai (1996) and Charles Taylor (2004) have pointed out, in modern societies communities are too massive to meet face-to-face in a given place, but rather are held together by a common social imaginary. The nation does not take a single form in time and space, but always comes into being by reflecting the prevailing interests and powers at work (Cameron and Palan 2004: 66). This seems to be the case in the age of globalisation as well. Göran Bolin and Per Ståhlberg demonstrate in their chapter in this book a somewhat similar point. Using the case studies of Estonia and India they demonstrate how the projects of nation-making are carefully orchestrated in order to reconfigure the nation for the global condition, and how this process is conditioned by the logics of power involved. Here, similar processes are studied with a different focus: namely the nation-making

processes in the globalised financial media. Thus I will look at the *Financial Times* and its' reporting on Finland from 2001 to 2006. The focus is on the logics of power involved. Using Michel Foucault's (2007) analytics of governmentality I will examine how the media constructs normative hierarchies which work as governmentalities and rationalities of power.

The case of Finland demonstrates very well how the nation and national narratives have been transformed by economic globalisation. The Finnish economy has undergone a deep structural change and internationalised rapidly; hence Finland has been envisioned as a model nation under the conditions of global economy (e.g. Castells and Himanen 2002). Thus Finland represents a paradigmatic case of how national imaginaries are reworked under the conditions of economic globalisation.

The *FT* has a long history as a facilitator of economic globalisation.¹ It is a widely read international paper among the elites and thus a relevant part of their communication networks (Kantola 2006b; Durham 2007; Davis 2007: 78-80). Therefore the *FT* can be seen as an interface in globalisation: a working site where the political imperatives of globalisation meet the nation-state as national communities are reported on and interpreted.

The imagined community of Finland was alive and kicking on the pages of the *FT* in this century's early years. From 2001 to 2006 some 1680 *FT* pieces mention Finland of which approximately 200 have Finland as the main topic.² As the story of Finland unfolds piece by piece it is clear that there is a variety of nationalisms at work in the *FT* pieces. The articles range from dry accounts of Finnish politics and Finland's role in the European Union (the EU) to exotic travel features, from interviews with corporate leaders and prime ministers to personal profiles of orchestra conductors and singers, and from political jokes to such eccentricities as the world wife-carrying championships.

The empirical analysis of the material has been done as a narrative textual analysis reading all the material through and by analysing and classifying the main national narrative themes that appear in the material. The pieces of the *FT* have thus been analysed as narratives of nationalism (Rosenthal 1997). Emphasis has been on the narrative themes that have been applied to tell the story of Finland as well as on the 'point of the story' or 'moral of the story' ('sensmoral' in Swedish) of the news (Czarniawska 1997: 25): what is the moral of the news and narratives presented in them. First, what is presented and valued as good, normal and acceptable in Finland? And second, what is valued in negative terms as for instance old-fashioned, strange or dubious in Finland. In particular the analysis has paid special attention to how the news are working in the extratextual context (Lehtonen 2000: 118-122) of the historical meta-narratives of Finnish nationalism. The news is seen in the context of national narration: how the old existing themes of national narratives are repeated, or alternatively, altered when compared with the existing narratives of Finnish nationalism. The analysis presented here shows the main narratives that emerge in the material and concentrates on the most typical ways of narrating Finland. At the same time the analysis shows the ways nationalism is

employed in order to reconfigure Finland for the conditions of economic globalisation. Finland as an imagined national community has been in the making since the 19th century and has a strong tradition of nationalism.³ This tradition is reformulated on the pages of the *FT* in ways which clearly reflect the political imperatives of early 21st century economic globalisation. Finland is written anew. The present analysis is thus directed towards showing in particular how financial journalism fashions a national imaginary conditioned by the power constellations of the global economy.

The Disciplined Nation

The main national narrative employed in the *FT* pieces on Finland can be characterised as a narrative of a highly modern high-tech competition state. Since the 1990s, the state has been seen to have evolved into a competition state (Cerny 1990; Jessop 2002; Cameron and Palan 2004; Kantola 2006a), one which tries to appear as an appealing place for investments by lowering taxes, cutting down the public sector and by providing cheap, flexible and skilful labour as well as alluring industrial sites or parks. When these ideas have been put into use in politics a political imaginary of the competition state has developed, i.e. a number of political narratives geared around the notion of the competition state and following its logic.

The imaginary of the competition state is worked out in the *FT* particularly in the good news from Finland. There are an abundance of *FT* pieces celebrating Finnish successes. Finland is described as the success story of a small nation making its way to the top of the world. Finland as 'a small nation on the edge of the Arctic region' has been 'opening up and fostering competition'. In the *FT* coverage Finland is presented as a model country, a competitive high-tech fantasy for the global age:

Finland's position at the top of the World Economic Forum's global competitiveness rankings for the third consecutive year is the result of tireless efforts by a small and remote country to turn its apparently modest resources to its advantage. Heavily dependent on foreign trade, the nation of 5m people has had to react quickly to changes in its international environment, resulting in a highly competitive economy.⁴

This 'small and remote' country has been able to take heroic steps through tireless efforts as a unified nation: 'the people' have reacted in unison. Finland is also used as a model for other countries. Finnish budgetary rigour and balanced budget in public finances are well reported and used as examples for other EU countries. The high-tech success of Finland, its research and development activities, IT sector, and the Finnish education system are all applauded. Finland is also depicted as a model nation for nuclear energy as the country has continued to expand this sector.

This imaginary of the competition state is an early 21st century version of modern nationalism. In the 20th century the narratives of nationalism and modernisation worked together in asserting that states were progressing from 'traditional' states to distinctly 'modern' ones (Latman 2000: 14-15, 212-213). In the late 20th century this narrative developed into a narrative of the competition state dependent on the state's capacity to develop new technologies and innovations (Jessop 2002: 126-139; Kantola 2006a). The national imaginary of the competition state has been evoked in times of global trade and economic expansion. Notably the case of Spain in the 16th century was the first example of a competition state. As the country first grew rich and then was abruptly impoverished, it became a subject of reflection for 'chroniclers, historians, politicians and economists for dozens and dozens of years' thus becoming 'the classic example around which the analysis of *raison d'Etat* developed' (Foucault 2007: 292-293). Late 20th century globalisation has conceived its own model states. Many countries, for instance the 'Asian Tigers' (Ong 2006: 97-118), the 'Celtic Tiger' of Ireland as well as Chile (Cárcamo-Huechante 2006) have been dubbed as 'models' or 'success stories' for other countries. Finland, too – 'the most competitive country in the world', 'the Finnish model' – has been pointed out as a model for other countries (e.g. Castells and Himanen 2002; Hämäläinen and Heiskala 2007; Giddens 2007: 57-58).

The imaginary of the competition state is a project of modernity and technological progress, a new version of the modern nation-state. At the same time it is also a disciplinary project. The nation is a political idea that has often evolved into a project of political discipline by reconfiguring political imperatives for the nation-state. The idea of a singular national *ethnos* has been naturalised through the rhetoric of war and sacrifice as well as uniform educational and linguistic discipline (Appadurai 2006: 4). Similarly the model of the competition state is not only a political utopia and ideology but also a model to be followed. Thus the *FT* journalism does not only celebrate the competitive nations, but also posed a host of disciplinary imperatives for the nation-state. In the *FT* coverage of Finland the imaginary of the competition state entails strong imperatives: structural reforms of the public sector, budget discipline and low inflation, good governance with no corruption and economic competitiveness.

Also notable in the *FT* coverage are the numerable indicators giving precise rankings for countries. Besides being 'the world's most competitive country', Finland is for instance 'the easiest market to trade with', 'the country with the world's greatest medium-term growth potential', 'tops the list of E-work', and a 'world leader in internet banking'. While techniques of assessment, indicators, scorebooks, comparative statistics and indexes contribute to the rewriting of national imaginaries, these indicators can also be understood in terms of power: as political rationalities imposed on states. Foucault's concept of governmentality understands modern power as the power to define, classify, order and discipline. Power works through producing governmentalities, symbolic orders with their particular criteria of truth, hierarchies of relevancy and modes of addressing collective agency and the subjects within

them (Foucault 2007). The analytics of governmentality have paid attention especially to the techniques of governance: the rationalisations which render populations, activities, institutions or organisations governable. In particular, the theories of national economy opened up a new space of governance characterised by its particular rationality, problems and aims. Specific techniques and statistics of assessment were developed in order to assess the state of the national economy and these techniques were utilised when defining the acts of governance. Thus the globalised economy is also developing its own governmentalities: rationalities suggesting how the nation-state should be run. In the case of the competition state, nations are involved in a race of betterment under the conditions of globalisation and the model countries come to represent the core of the new imperatives as they are presented as examples for other countries. And even if the indicators should show that the nation is doing well, there is always a journalist with a project of criticism. Despite Finland topping the World Economic Forum's global competitiveness index the *FT* finds that there is still a lot to do:

Finland, with 9 per cent unemployment, frets about many things: its inflexible nationwide pay bargaining system; the wobbly performance of Nokia, its dominant company; competition from low-cost Estonia (which comes a creditable 20th); a fast-ageing population; a likely productivity slowdown in the technology sector. Finland's economy will grow by close to 3 per cent this year but the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development says it must improve competition, reduce early retirement and reform pensions if living standards are not to stagnate.⁵

Despite its good ratings, this nation-state may not rest. There is always malice in wonderland. This national narrative of the nation-state in conditions of a globalised economy confirms the political order of a competition state and echoes the 'state of exception' typical for national narratives in the global condition (Ong 2006). In terms of national narratives, the state of exception seems like a new version of the old patriotic narrative of a state in jeopardy in wartime conditions. Consequently the narrative of the nation is not a story of liberation. Independence and freedom have given way to disciplined life, which perhaps best reminds one of the patriotic discipline required from the people in war time and the nation becomes reimagined in a disciplined way, which clearly reflects the political imperatives of economic globalisation.

The Romance of Our Times

While the modernist narrative of nationalism is very much alive in the narratives of the competition state, there appears also a romantic side to the nation. Modern nationalism has been highly technical with its national statistics, national efficiency and productivity projects, and so on (Scott 1998). Yet at

the same time nationalism has also had a deeply emotional side, nationalism being “a battery which evokes feelings for compatriots, landscapes and heroes and charges up the emotional bonds between people” (Featherstone 1993). These nationalisms are not mutually exclusive. In fact, emotional nationalism, the romantic yearning for the lost home, has often been evoked in times of harsh and rapid modernisation (Gellner 1998; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). Romantic nationalism seems to fill in the affective gaps left by rapid modernisation and rationalisation.

Romantic nationalism is quite apparent as the *FT* reports on Finland. Finnish nationalism itself is historically most clearly a version of the 19th century central European romantic nationalism, which consisted of the standard elements of the nationalism of its age: the discovery of the vernacular language and literature, and the idealisation of the people and the landscape through painting and music (Jussila 2007). All these layers of national romanticism are present in the *FT* coverage. Finland is discovered in romantic terms as a nation of musical ecstasy, melancholy, spontaneity, unspoiled landscapes and nature as well as a land of exotic and enigmatic people. The Finnish landscape, a central element in 19th century romanticism is ‘discovered’ in remote villages and on the snowy hills of Lapland.

Interestingly however, the national romance also gains new meanings under the conditions of economic globalisation. The most notable new way of writing the national romance is geared around the story of Nokia, a Finnish mobile phone manufacturing firm, which is posed in national frames in a variety of ways. Nokia’s exceptional success story has been well recorded (e.g. Steinbock 2001, Giddens 2007: 57-58). Accordingly, in many *FT* pieces Nokia, ‘the world’s biggest mobile phone manufacturer and one of the most valuable global brands’, is mentioned, reported and regarded as the most central element of the Finnish success story. Finland, ‘sometimes dubbed as Nokialand’, is seen as heavily dependent on the company, and the national sense of well-being parallels the company’s prospects. The patriotic narratives of nationalism are rewritten with Nokia. In the 20th century the Second World War and especially the Winter War in 1939 became a founding myth of Finnish patriotism through the tale of a small country fighting the enemy – a myth relatively common to small central European countries (Schöpflin 2000, 90-94). This patriotic narrative is recycled in the form of the saga of Nokia:

Fifteen years ago, most people outside the Nordic region could perhaps have come up with two thoughts about Finland. First, that it was cold, and second that it had a nervous relationship with the Soviet Union. We all know something about Finland today: it is the home of mobile phone manufacturer, Nokia, one of the most intriguing companies in the world, an organisation that has succeeded where far better-established competitors such as Philips, Motorola and Ericsson have stumbled. And it did so in a country with no resources but trees and people.⁶

It is no longer the little Finland fighting, as the slogan from the Second World War summed up the Finnish national image; instead it is Nokia that has gained the central position in the myth of national struggle. With Nokia Finland is on a journey from Eastern and agrarian origins, from a land of 'trees and people', to becoming an advanced modern state.

This journey is also clearly demonstrated in the personage of Nokia leaders. National narratives typically involve a list of national heroes, who personify the nation. Thus a new set of heroes emerges. The leaders of Nokia are depicted in positive terms as heroes with humble origins: for example, Jorma Ollila 'who is, of course, a Finn' and comes 'from a small town in the thickly forested Finnish hinterland',⁷ Sari Baldauf, a female Nokia executive 'from the working class town of Kotka, 50km from the Russian border'⁸. Or as an interview of Olli-Pekka Kallasvuo, the CEO of Nokia, explains his character through his birth place Lavia: 'Lavia is a small village in a region of south-west Finland that has just 6.3 inhabitants per square kilometre. One of these isolated residents was the young Olli-Pekka Kallasvuo, chief executive of Nokia, who grew up there'⁹ The story goes on waking up the nature for Kallasvuo:

Those who have dismissed Mr Kallasvuo as a dull number-cruncher might cast an eye back to Lavia, which – as is common in Finland – has its own official fish. It is the lamprey, described as visibly unimpressive, indistinct and jawless. But it has a toothed, funnel-like mouth that delves into the flesh of other fish to suck out their blood.

Nokia leaders embody the transformation of the whole society. Under the modest appearance lies a hard and ruthless fighter, who breeds in the waters of the native land, yet is able to succeed in the hard conditions of the globalised world. As old narratives of Finnish nationalism are geared around patriotic wars, Nokia provides a version of patriotic narrative by offering a saga of a small country conquering the world, of low-key yet extraordinary heroes fighting for Finland. Nokia in itself provides the new object of the narrative, the narrative of a life and journey in common. For instance, birdwatching is presented as a new 'national sport' and is linked with Nokia:

Twitchers Union, where hardcore Finnish birdwatchers gather, has developed a text-messaging system to alert members when a rare species is discovered. This is perhaps no surprise given that Finland is the birthplace of Nokia. 'Ninety per cent of all Finns own mobile phones, the highest mobile phone density in Europe, so communication is not a problem,' says Asikainen.

Thus the story of Nokia becomes the main way of rejuvenating the old national frames in a new form. Nokia is used to explain the new nation creatively combining the old romantic imaginary of national unspoiled nature with the messenger of modern times, the mobile phone.

The Past is a Journey to the West

Another notable element in the rewriting of Finland in the *FT* is the way Finnish history is depicted as a journey of modernisation and in particular a journey from East to West. Westernisation has been a typical part of modern nationalism: nations become modern as they adopt the western models of life (Latman 2000: 14). The *FT* echoes this theme in many ways.

As the *FT* covers Finland it often places the country in the narrative of westernisation. By the early years of the 21st century, Finland is often depicted in the *FT* as a standard western country participating in the political life of the EU. What is recalled from the past are the main historical events that sustain the narrative of the Finnish journey from East to West. The relations with Russia are depicted in negative terms recalling for instance the Finnish-Soviet winter war in 1939 and the long border with Russia. This selective narration of westernisation is embodied, for instance, in Paavo Lipponen, the pro-European Finnish prime-minister. Lipponen is presented in favourable terms as a national leader who has roots deep in the north, 'born in Lapland', among the ordinary people, 'the son of a forestry officer and a healthcare worker', yet having capabilities to lead his people to the West as his roots are firmly in western European soil:

Paavo Lipponen, the Finnish prime minister, has developed a passion for history. He is particularly interested in Finland's battle to prevent Soviet occupation during the second world war. But he has also traced his own genealogy as far back as the 8th century. 'The most important foreign roots are in Sweden and Germany, but even Britain is included,' he says. It would have been ironic if his origins had mainly been in Russia and the east. Mr Lipponen has proved an ardent champion of Finnish integration into Europe, a shift from the country's cold war days in the shadow of the Soviet Union that was cemented when it joined the euro as a founding member in 1999.¹⁰

Lipponen appears as a classical hero capable of transcending boundaries and leading his people into the new age. The rewriting of Finnish history takes place through his personage. In particular, EU membership in 1995 becomes a keyhole through which the past is peeped: Finland's history becomes a history of westernisation hampered only by the eastern past.

Memory making is an important part of national imaginaries (Gillis 2004). Histories have been written anew to fit the power dynamics and political projects of each age. As Paul Connerton (1989: 1-5) pointed out, the construction of a collective memory is linked with the hierarchy of power as the past is used to legitimate a present social order. Thus the eastern past is seen as a time of shadows and the western roots of Finns are invented (see also Ekecrantz 2002). The truth finally comes out: the Russians were never really liked and therefore Finland is eager to join the West no matter what it takes.

The shadow of the eastern past is also often evoked when the Finnish journey to modernity is assessed and discussed. Things that seem to make Finland modern are greeted with enthusiasm even to the point where the country is presented as a model society to other countries. Yet at the same time, the public memory is constantly haunted with doubts: whether the country really can make its way, whether the good news has just been an illusion. And, whether the 'real' Finland still exists, hidden behind the facades of modernity the exotic and archaic still remain to be discovered. As in a feature on saunas where the Finnish transformation from the cold war onwards is described as something simple and naked, stripping away the layers of a developed society:

There is nothing more Finnish than the sauna; it is estimated that in a nation of just over 5m people there are around 2m saunas. A mixture of ritual, hygiene and social bonding means the sauna remains a central point in a rapidly changing society. It is in these hot, steaming, wooden rooms that families bathe together, corporate leaders make their deals, and where key political strategy is hammered out. Improbable as it may seem, it was in a sauna at the height of the cold war that Finland's legendary President Urho Kekkonen entertained Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev. The nakedness and simplicity of the occasion strip away rank and, while in other countries possession or access to a sauna is seen as a status symbol, here it is a right.

Yet, as the story goes on, it is adjusted with Nokia:

Yet even in Finland the pace of modern life and the globalisation of culture means the sauna's position no longer stands unchallenged. Corporate giants such as Nokia may still have their saunas but, as one Finnish businessman points out, deals are increasingly made on the golf course.

Finally the limit of modernity is set firm by a concluding sentence:

Yet there are clear limits to the society's modernity. In the sauna, Finland's other great contribution to the world – the mobile telephone – is banned.¹¹

Thus, rather than telling a story of modernisation or an antimodern Finland, the *FT* pieces clearly bring out the question of modernisation. Finland is still on its way to modernity. And the journey continues. Yes, Finland has been moving to the West and has modernised, yet there are still clear traits of the antimodern, the original, pure life. So the national journey to western modernisation still goes on and remains unfinished, the Finns are consequently given the role of 'professional savages' (Poignant 2004), the antipode of the modernity: aboriginals in the western imagination.

Making up the Nokianation

The case study of Finland suggests that it would be a mistake to think of nationalism as a thing of the past in the present conditions of high-modern globalisation. To the contrary, nationalism seems to provide an important narrative frame in the global economy. The imaginary of the competition state, the prevailing notion of a state in the era of globalisation, is a national one.

This is well demonstrated in the case of Finland as there emerges a high-tech narrative of Finland as a model country in the global economy. The fantasy of the high-tech competition state provides the central model for the state after the fall of the Berlin Wall (Gaonkar 2002). It is a nationalistic utopia geared around the nation in rivalry with the other nations. The idealisation of a model state also entails an element of power: the imposition of global governmentalities over states. New forms of globally organised power and expertise work through the nation-state and reconfigure it, appearing within the 'skin' of existing nation-states (Appadurai 2002: 24). The narration of the nation helps to mediate the imperatives of economic globalisation to the level of political action as a variety of indicators suggest what is expected from the state under the conditions of economic globalisation.

In particular, globalisation proceeds by posing ideal models: the model states such as Finland with their respective qualities. These models act as ideal focal points where the political imperatives and governmentalities of the global economy are fitted into the national framework. The imaginary of the 21st century competition state is highly modernist and technocratic: it places technology at the core of the society be it information technologies or nuclear reactors. This highly modern version of the nation-state is, however, only half the story. At the same time nationalism is also a romantic project. The ongoing success of the national romance in modernity can be explained by the narrative capabilities of nationalism. Nationalism transforms abstract spaces into concrete places. As modernity has a tendency to use abstract notions and to bypass local histories, nationalism fills the affective gaps left by it. Nationalism as a narrative has the ability to render otherwise incomprehensible social situations meaningful, and to construct them as to make it possible to act purposefully with them (Geertz 1973: 232). In particular, nationalism as a narrative renders politics meaningful under the conditions of globalisation: it helps to construct political communities and devise means to act on them. Nationalism works by enlivening and recreating the old myths in the conditions of harsh and rational modernisation. The new national imaginary borrows and employs the old national myths. As Mircea Eliade (1992: 34-42) reminds us, myths have a cyclical nature, the old stories emerge later in remodelled version. Thus the *FT* is employing the old patriotic romance of Finland fighting for its existence replacing the winter war struggle with the heroic saga of Nokia. Mobile phones and CEOs are fitted into the narratives of patriotism. A new form and folklore of national romance emerges in the narrative of Nokialand.

This rejuvenation of the nation also entails the rewriting of history. As the *FT* reports on the Finnish past, there emerges a narrative of a nation on its way from an agrarian and eastern past to contemporary high modernity and the West. The past is arranged as to explain the Finnish journey as a linear development from the shadows of the East to the enlightenment of the West. Moreover, there is also a constant danger of falling back to the old ways, to the exotic and strange, to the eastern and northern as the stories discuss and question whether Finland has really become modern and western and has left its eastern past behind.

All this, the various ways of rewriting the nation, point to the dimension of power as an important element in the making of national imaginaries. The writing of the nation is tricky in the ways the assertion of a life in common always is. Things need to be imagined, ordered, remembered or forgotten selectively as the nation is imagined into being. A social imaginary, and a national imaginary in particular, can be understood as 'the way we collectively imagine our social life' (Taylor 2004: 50). In this definition the words 'we' and 'our' become problematic. What is exactly meant by 'social' and 'collective'? Who are 'we' and where are the sites where collective imagining can take place? Consequently, the imaginary construction of 'us', and in particular the nation in this case, is a process conditioned by the power constellations of the day and those who are doing the work of imagining. The Finland appearing in the pages of the *FT* is conditioned by high modernity, westernisation and global corporate power, which are all conveniently presented in the narrative frame of the unique and original nation, the narrative of the one and only Finnish nation.

The Media as an Interface for the Nation

What about the media then? The imaginary of the competition state has been worked out from a variety of forums within as well as outside Finland. The media, the *FT* in this case, can be said to have a marginal role in these processes. However, what seems to be interesting in the role of the media is the ongoing dynamic nature of imaginary work. In this sense the media works as an interface where the latest news is assessed and evaluated, new ideas circulated and incorporated with the old and where suggestions are given explicitly and implicitly on what should be done next. Thus the media reflects the prevailing ideas of the age and functions as a working site for the governmentalities that structure and guide political action.

The *FT* does not propose a single and unitary imaginary of Finland. Rather it works as an interface for economic globalisation mediating the imperatives of the global economy into the national imaginary. By reporting the everyday occurrences, the paper engages in a textual labour by which it makes sense of Finland, assesses and evaluates the everyday developments and thus indicates how the nation should be understood and how it should proceed.

As economic globalisation clearly seems to challenge the nation-state on an everyday basis, the *FT* works as a public site, where suggestions are given to the nation-state and incorporated into the national imaginary. These ideals are clearly reflected in the national narratives of the nation that appear on the pages of the *FT*.

As Kevin Hetherington (1997) claims, modernity has been characterised by an interplay between order and chaos, utopia and badlands, centre and margin. Accordingly there emerge places which engage in the sense-making process between the two poles (Hetherington 1997: 2). From this point the media and journalistic practices work as spaces of ordering. The media engages in textual labour whereby everyday events are reported, interpreted and formulated into narrative sequences and positioned in narrative frames, which contextualise, justify and explain them. At the same time the media constructs social and political imaginaries which define the ontology and ways of being and acting – the normal, acceptable and preferable as well as the abnormal and unacceptable – within the imagined community. These processes of reconstruction, negotiation and struggle over social imaginaries can be analysed in the media presentations by studying how media acts as a ‘working site’ for social imaginaries and the disciplinary governmentalities they entail.

The disciplinary governmentalities entailed in the Finnish model, in the indicators of the competition state, are echoed and enhanced by the critical project of financial journalism. The assessment of nations provides a tempting and useful framework for international journalism. The media, the transnational financial journalism of the *FT* in this case, actively takes part in the disciplinary nation-making processes by presenting countries as models or laggards and discussing the policies needed to improve the state of a nation under the harsh conditions of global economy. Thus the *FT*, or any other influential media, works as an interface between global economy and nation-state and contributes to the exercise of power in the form of working out and imposing new governmentalities over societies. This process is moreover enhanced by the Western project of modernity, which is the prevailing ethos of the *FT* (see also Kantola 2006b) and thus places nations such as Finland on an axis that leads from the unorganised badlands and margins of modernity to the well organised centre.

At the same time, however, it needs to be emphasised that the project of the reworking of the state in an age of economic globalisation is not a unilinear project of power. As the dynamic and heterogenous uses of narrative frames in the case of Finland show, there are discontinuities and several rationalities at work. Globalisation is not producing a single concept of a state, but rather a variety of strategies is applied to reformulate the state.

Aihwa Ong (2006) has described this change as a mutation: as market-oriented ways of governing are entering the state-bound systems, new spaces are opening up for political action, which similarly aim to affect the way the state is organised. A variety of political strategies have appeared, linked to the notion of the competition state and its market-oriented ideas, yet at the same time there have emerged other projects, concerning the environment,

human rights and corruption. These strategies aim to reconstruct the state and reformulate it to better fit the global condition. Moreover, these strategies are combined and heavily loaded with existing national and local projects. Thus, for instance, a mutation consisting of a market economy and authoritarian government, as in the case of China, has become a 'success story' in the global economy. Or, alternatively, the Nordic Welfare Model has been represented as the best possible way of tackling globalisation.

The media acts as a site where these national imaginaries as 'mutations' are worked out on a daily basis. Thus it seems that globalisation, and economic globalisation in particular, has opened up the question of the nation rather than dooming the nation as obsolete. What we are witnessing is not a uniform change of nation-states to follow the uniform model of a competition state, but rather the appearance of negotiation and struggle over the nation as an imagined entity. In this process a variety of ingredients can be utilised to cook up the magic potion called the nation, and this narrative flexibility is probably a good reason behind the success story of nationalism explaining why the nation is firmly maintaining its position in modern imagined communities. As a letter by an avid reader to the *FT* editor aptly demonstrates:

Sir,

When John Thornhill seems to wonder why Finland holds the record for the highest number of Asterix albums bought per head ('Asterix and the national treasure', Lunch with the FT with Albrecht Uderzo, *FT Weekend*, December 23/4), he may be unfamiliar with some recent history. Finland (present population 5m) struggled to achieve its independence from Russia in 1917, struggled again hard during the second world war against Soviet invasion attempts, and, like the Gauls' village, survived. Thereafter Finland lived as a free democracy next to the Soviet bear for over four decades. I think Asterix and his pals have a close resemblance to the Finns, and although we may not have any 'magic potion', we have something called 'Sisu' (guts) instead helping us to manage.

Timo Strandberg
90014 Oulu, Finland¹²

Notes

1. The *FT* was founded in the late 1880s in a take-off period of globalisation characterised with a sharp increase in number and forms of global communication (e.g. Hamelink 1995: 22; Rantanen 1997: 615-617; Robertson 1992: 59) as investors needed information on the financial markets both domestically and internationally (Kynaston 1988: 4). From the 1960s onwards internationalisation became, in David Kynaston's (1988: 373) words, 'the single major direction of the newspaper'. In the 1970s the paper was billed as 'Europe's business newspaper', launched an international edition and the number of foreign correspondents was greater than in any newspaper except the New York Times (Kynaston 1988: 375-376).

2. Thus in the majority of the material Finland is not the main and sole topic of the story. Instead stories describe Finnish developments as a part of the story, or mention Finland in some wider context, list it among other countries, use it as an exemplary within the story, or make use of Finland as a model for other countries.
3. Finland as a nation was founded, along with many other Central European countries, in the 19th century by a nationally minded cultural elite. The country got independent in 1917, the year which launched the political life of the sovereign nation. The Second World War and the Finnish Winter War in 1939 in particular added a thick layer of patriotic war memories to the imagined nation. After the war modern Finland was built up and paying heroically its war debts to the Soviet Union. The national romance ranged from the Miss Finland contests to the adoption of the Argentinean tango as a Finnish dance, from the myth of Finnish stubbornness 'sisu' to the cultural struggles to affirm Finland's position as the homeland of sauna and Santa Claus.
4. 'Small nation focuses on wider picture: Finnish success', *FT* September 29, 2005.
5. 'Not quite paradise', *FT* October 14, 2004.
6. 'Hot topic in a cold climate', *FT* June 21, 2001.
7. 'Ollila: His low-key style belies the drive that transformed Nokia', *FT* August 6, 2005.
8. 'Nokia head quits to help children: Woman who worked to overhaul mobile phone company leaves to join educational group for deprived youngsters', *FT* December 4, 2004.
9. 'A man from the shadows', *FT* July 17, 2006.
10. 'Leader has history on his side', *FT* September 18, 2002.
11. 'Traditional saunas lose some of their heat: Saunas', *FT* September 18, 2002.
12. 'How Asterix and his Gallic pals resemble the fighting Finns', *FT* January 7, 2006.

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COMMUNICATING THE NATION

National Topographies of Global Media Landscapes

Anna Roosvall & Inka Salovaara-Moring (eds.)

The nation is one of the most resilient concepts in our understanding of the world and its societies. Politics, sports and cultural events, in news as well as in fiction, are largely structured by the national logic. Internationalism – be it in representation, production or consumption – does not challenge the privileged position of the nation. Globalising processes do offer an alternative to the primacy of the nation, but have so far been unable to overcome its dominance. The nation's resilience is, in part, due to its continuing relevance: ontologically, it offers a sense of territorial stability and security while epistemologically it can supply a sense of familiarity and order in the global landscape.

This volume provides cutting edge analysis of old and new architectures of the nation and its mediated presence in everyday life. In an age of alleged globalisation, nations and nation-states have been claimed to be out-dated. However, the proclamation of the end of the nation (-state) has been premature. Eschewing fashionable obituaries for media, geography and the nation, leading media scholars explore the complex ideological and spatial changes in contemporary understandings of the nation. The nation can be seen as a nodal point of media discourse. Hence the power, the politics and the poetics of the nation will be the subject of this book.

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