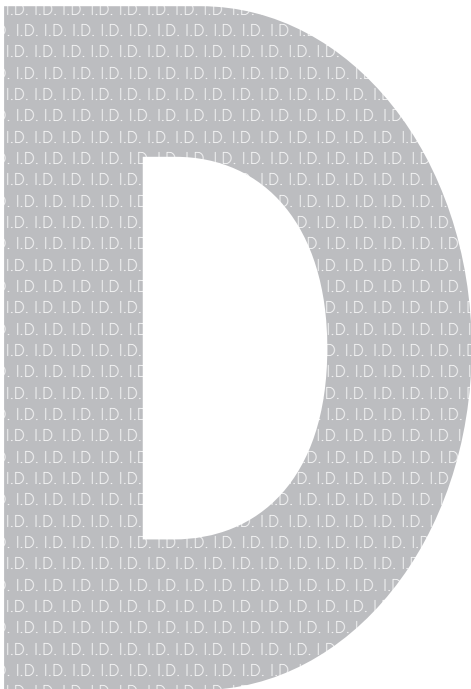
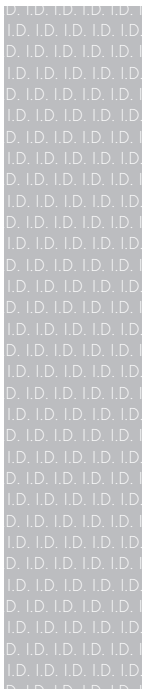


NORDICOM

Contesting the Frontiers

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Media and Dimensions of Identity



Ullamaija Kivikuru (ed.)

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Contesting the Frontiers
Media and Dimensions of Identity

Northern Perspectives 2
(*Nordiska medieforskare reflekterar 2*)

ISSN 1650-5131
ISBN 91-89471-08-3

Published by
NORDICOM
Göteborg University
Box 713
SE 405 30 GÖTEBORG
Sweden

Editor Ullamaja Kivikuru

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Cover by Roger Palmqvist
Printed by Grafikerna Livréna i Kungälv AB, Sweden, 2001

Contents

Preface	7
<i>Ullamaija Kivikuru</i>	
Introduction. The Puzzling Concept of Identity	9
<i>Jan Ekecrantz</i>	
Public Spaces, Historical Times and Media Modernities. Media and Historical Spaces	15
<i>Rousiley Celi Moreira Maia</i>	
Identity and the Politics of Recognition in the Information Age	35
<i>André Jansson</i>	
Contested Meanings. Audience Studies and the Concept of Cultural Identity	57
<i>Christian Christensen</i>	
Minorities, Multiculturalism and Theories of Public Service	81
<i>Thomas Tufte</i>	
Gauchos Going Global. A Critical Assessment of Cultural Globalization	103
<i>Ullamaija Kivikuru</i>	
Communication Competence in Sub-Saharan Africa. A Link to Democracy or Identity-Building?	131
<i>Inka Moring</i>	
Space and Politics of Identity. Imaginary Landscapes and Ideological Reproduction of 'We'	165
<i>Maarja Lõhmus</i>	
Staging Journalism: Professional Identity and Roles of Journalists in Social Changes	187
<i>Sanna Ojajärvi</i>	
From Talking Heads to Walking Bodies. Challenging the Masculinity of the News	209
<i>Sanna Valtonen</i>	
Tracing the National 'Us' from TV Talk	225
About the Authors	243

Preface

This book is a product of a never-ending project. In December 1997, a group of Nordic and Baltic media researchers met at a seminar in Turku, Finland. The participants were doctoral students and senior researchers, predominantly from Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, but some Estonians and visiting scholars from the US attended as well. The group had in fact been in contact via Internet a few months earlier as members of a Nordic doctoral network programme on public service broadcasting. However, discussions on the Net did not flow very well. Partly, this was due to the fact that the Web obviously is not a good channel for initiating discussions – instead, it offers an excellent possibility to continue contacts that have started face-to-face. Nevertheless, in part, the jerkiness of our discussions originated from the fact that not too many in the group felt that public service was the core point in their research. However, they were interested to operate in a group even if the title was not quite to the point, because they were motivated to work as a team instead of solving all their problems alone.

During the two days in Turku, the group decided to seek extra motivation for their networking through a project aiming at compiling a book. In December, days are at their shortest in the North, and perhaps this was a side-factor in that it took us quite a while to properly define our theme. In fact, the focus of the book was sharpened by a kind of elimination principle, thus trying to develop a theme that all participants would feel comfortable with. First we defined issues that we were not focussing on. As a result, public service went down the drain as well as many other fashionable concepts, such as ideology, power, capitalism, class, gender, state, system, institutions, text/context and paradigm. We found ourselves circling around quite many equally fashionable concepts, such as discourse, change, difference, time/space, local, global, “glocal”, nation, we/they, organised sameness, now, the future, history and continuity.

As unorthodox as our approach to the study of identities is our interpretation of “Nordicness”. Since the founding debates in Turku in December 1997, some participants have left the group and simultaneously we have added a few researchers with steady links with the Nordic societies to the list of authors, though they do not have their roots in the countries around the Baltic Sea.

During the preparations, we have met in Helsinki, Finland, and in Kungälv, Sweden, and the email list is no longer jerky. We have commented on each other's texts, we have discussed the proportions of the book, and we have debated whether or not we need a concluding chapter. Finally, we came

to the conclusion that we cannot have one because we do not know how to conclude. The themes in the book are just too many and varied to be packaged properly, and we find it more honest to admit this openly. We simply do not know how the story ends. However, we hope that the articles are provocative enough to evoke further discussions and debates on identities. We do not even want to offer answers but to pose relevant questions.

Thus, this is a book that does not have an editor in the normal sense of the word; we have done practically everything together. The present editor simply stands as a kind of moderator rather than a real substance editor. This book is a product of a highly democratic process. Hence, it took quite a long time to produce, and many of its substance dimensions can be questioned. There are always alternatives for decisions carried out through democratic processes. But this is our decision, developed through colourful debates and in-depth discussions.

In the long course of processing this book, two colleagues have emerged as deserving special thanks for tolerance and support. They are Professor Taisto Hujanen from the University of Tampere and Dr. Ulla Carlsson from Nordicom, Göteborg. Taisto Hujanen was liberal enough to allow us to expand the notion of public service quite considerably. In the course of the preparations, he was glad to find some of us approaching the original theme thus enabling him to save face in Nordic research financing organisations. His project provided us with the basic financial frames to meet and talk. Dr. Ulla Carlsson not only offered us an arena to publish our considerations, but tolerated our constant postponement messages with admirable patience and the trust that one day we would finally provide her with the texts. Her tolerance paid off, because so we have.

March 2001 in Helsinki/Stockholm/Göteborg/
Copenhagen/Tartu/Brussels/Austin/Belo Horizonte

Ullamaija Kivikuru
For the authors

Introduction

The Puzzling Concept of Identity

Ullamaija Kivikuru

As seen in the list of articles in this book, we have been more interested in ideas and abstractions than structures, but gradually we realised that quite often we also touched on structural issues. Then, finally we were able to define the essence of the exercise. The concept which best described our interests was identity, however wornout that term first might have appeared in the eyes of many of us. In our discussions later on, we realised that the original theme of the group, namely public service, was actually not that far from our primary field of interest, either. Many of us touch on it in our texts. Our perception of identity has deliberately been made quite broad; and it hardly passes a close scrutiny in consistency and scientific logic. On the other hand, our idea has been, in fact, to show how wide a variety of perspectives Nordic or North-bound researchers take on identity matters.

Collective identities represent the core of communitarianism. Social activity is part of human life; and all are better off when also those who are weak feel reasonably secure and comfortable. This road leads towards democracy, equality and respect for individual dignity, which trace their roots to the French Revolution. This is how geography has been linked to identities since the beginning of the 19th century. The national “I” has been identified with a link to a particular place, and this place is regulated by social structures, which, in turn, are linked with economy and trade. It is exactly this connection to money and power which has created those particularities of an identity, that we easily tend to push aside because they do not appear to be very pleasant when studied more closely. They are mechanisms that develop both superiority and inferiority; they include colonialism and the oppression of minorities. Some communities are clearly more expansion oriented than others, and all of them have their own rhetoric.

The link between identity and nationalism is not very popular nowadays because this linkage brings to the agenda discourses of superiority and inferiority, as discussed above. They now seem to appear politically incorrect, especially in view of the traumatising developments in the Balkans, Tchetchenia, Northern Ireland and the Middle East. Nationalism and patriotism did not belong to the favourites of the 1990s and no doubt their impopularity has contin-

ued into the first years of the new millennium. Nevertheless, they are part of the package called identity. Though none of us really dwells on the concept of “glocal”, we all circle around it and consider it an important notion while discussing national identities. There is space for further elaboration in this respect.

Instead, it is quite comfortable to start a discussion on what has been called empowering ethnicity, however close its links to such phenomena as events in the Balkans and Tchetchenia in fact are. Signs of empowering ethnicity have emerged in several countries in the process of liberating themselves from a colonial past or experiencing a transition from one political system to another. Several of our articles circle around national, regional and local identities, and their links to history and culture. Benedict Anderson said that there is no space for place. We disagree. Both space and place do count, and identities always have a touch of deliberative, ideological action. They are not naturally born but made.

The articles in this book cover not only the Nordic and Baltic societies, but Latin American and African societies under change as well. It is identity and change we are interested in, but naturally most of us seek the target within our own cultural sphere. Our perception of empowering identity is far broader and more ambiguous than in the study of national identities, though we touch on these somewhat as well. Most articles in the book discuss social identity; in this respect we line up with the majority of researchers in the field since the 1970s. The past 25-30 years have witnessed the downfall of interest in “traditional” identities, with links to nations, regions and “old” ethnicity, while the study of social identities has grown in significance and popularity. In it, there is no doubt that ethnicity has an important role.

The greatest challenge of empowering or de-powering identity-building is met in people's own life-worlds. The authors of the book want to study identities from such down-to-earth, “banal” perspectives as Michael Billig has suggested. We have above all studied problems linked with the ways people produce, distribute and interpret media messages. We see a linkage between empowering identity and communication competence. This simply means the ease in the use media and other forms of communication that enables a receiver to comfortably shift over to becoming a sender or, at least on some occasions, to advocate activity for social change. In fact, identity has emerged during the nearly three years of preparations of this volume, as a far more thrilling concept than we first thought. It has accumulated in our minds around itself dimensions and particularities which we did not even think of at first. Accordingly, the book includes theoretical and methodological considerations, as well as case studies focusing on identity-building processes.

The progression of the book is such that it begins with more theory-oriented and general texts and continues with case studies, focusing on a particular issue. There is no concluding chapter, because the authors prefer to leave the question open, the basic idea being to provoke more relevant questions than to offer clear-cut, narrow answers.

In his chapter, Jan Ekecrantz refers to ongoing discussions of modern communications and the changing parameters of time and space, with reference to changing conditions in identity formation. The purpose is to relativise, historically, received notions of media functions and performance. This also applies to journalism as we have known it – such as public service broadcasting as a typical ingredient of modernity, with its specific constructions of social and cultural temporalities and spatialities. The concept of *media modernities* is used here to highlight the dialectics between, on the one hand, the historically generated structures of domination (locally, nationally and globally) and, on the other, the present-day, mediated worlds of “hybridized” cultures. There is thus a certain focus on the historical component of existing spaces of identity, recreating various local nationalisms in the midst of, and possibly in response to, evolving global cultures. Media modernities are not only cultural hybrids and some mix of the local and the global – they are also the result of a *historical hybridity*, interacting layers of historically instituted forms and systems of communication.

The major objective of Rousiley Celi Moreira Maia’s chapter is to discuss the role that the media plays in the processes of identity construction and politics of recognition, within the scenario of a global and multicultural society. First, three major difficulties concerning studies about identity – the notion of “community”, “time and space” and “voice as perspective” – are reviewed, in order to provide the groundwork to examine the “reflexive” interconnection between media communication and identity formation. Second, an attempt is made to show that insights derived from Habermas’ formal pragmatics, connected to cultural media studies, allows one to seriously appreciate the linguistically-regenerative potential, the context-negotiating and the social learning aspects inherent in the communicative action; these are implied in the processes of construction of identity, without conveying a strong sense of “convergence”, “consensus”, and “unconditionality”. It is argued that the Habermasian formal pragmatics, despite being frequently criticised for its abstraction and empirical difficulties, seems to accommodate cultural diversity in a satisfactory way. Thus, they are of greater relevance for communication theories in dealing with cultural diversity, problems of value and change.

André Jansson’s article explores with the relationship between cultural identity and media use, focusing on two main questions: (1) How shall the concept of cultural identity be theoretically defined? (2) How is cultural identity related to media use? Although a growing body of literature has recently emerged, focusing on problems related to cultural identity, the very concept has rarely been given a distinct definition. This is the case within most disciplines of social science and the humanities. Following these two questions, the article proposes a multi-perspective and multi-methodological approach to issues of cultural identity within audience studies. In order to grasp the complex processes through which media use contributes to the creation and expression of contemporary, indeed multiple, cultural identities, audience studies should be situated, methodologically dynamic, hermeneutically reflexive and critical.

These four keywords should accompany future, non-reductionist empirical work.

Over the past 20 years, a great deal of literature has been published on how public service broadcasting in Europe has been impacted by market deregulation and/or new distribution technologies, according to Christian Christiansen in his chapter. Relatively little has been written, however, on how public service broadcasters (particularly in the smaller European nations) are adapting to social changes in general, and to the influx of large numbers of ethnic minorities in particular. The theory that public service can be a “space” for minority representation is often overshadowed by a number of pragmatic realities: that public service broadcasters – despite their generally non-commercial status – are interested in ratings; that minority programmes are bracketed and pushed to the margins; and, that there exists a tension between the traditional function of public service as a supporter of “national cultures”, and the newer function of reflecting multiculturalism. These issues are addressed using the current situation in Sweden as an example. The information discussed comes from the following sources: previous literature, information from Swedish Television (SVT) and Swedish Radio (SR), and interviews with employees of SVT and SR.

Thomas Tufte’s article presents findings from a research project which explores the relations between social and cultural practices of everyday life, media use and the formation and articulation of cultural identities in Latin America. In doing so, the article produces a critical assessment of current processes of cultural globalisation, affirming the significance of localised cultures, historical trajectories and cultural proximity when assessing the role of media use in everyday life. The point here is to argue for the importance of considering both temporal, spatial and social trajectories when analysing the global-local nexus of contemporary media cultures.

The case study draws on ethnographic data that Tufte has collected in Southern Brazil, where he followed the everyday life of four families for two years. The case study explores two principal issues: (1) How new media and communication technologies – cable television, the Internet and mobile phones – have entered into the lives of people and how does the motivation to purchase the technology, and the particular appropriation of it, relate to questions of modernity and globalisation. In this context, Raymond Williams’ notion of mobile privatisation is reassessed. (2) By introducing the concept of ritual in relation to media use, the media patterns within the family in focus are explored in order to identify ritualised media use in their everyday life and to discuss the social and cultural significance of these rituals. In the course of the article, the author’s ethnographically-informed analysis is supplemented by data from a parallel diachronic study of the same family’s life trajectory, showing how the acquisition and appropriation of new technology enters and negotiates with long-standing cultural characteristics of this family.

The widely-applauded outburst of the “new” African democracy and its reflections in the African mediascapes are critically scrutinised in Ullamaija

Kivikuru's article. She first discusses the media situation in Africa, experiencing the emergence of multi-party politics. The author sets the new media phenomena in a historical perspective, trying to show how the colonial past with its elite orientation, the strong nation-building phase after achieving independence, and finally the present consumer-oriented phase with its fairly superficial definitions of both democracy and human rights are all engraved in the present African mediascapes. The role offered to the media in African identity-building is far more complex and tricky than an outsider first thinks, according to the author. She discusses some examples of the "we" and "they" building on the African continent. Our media frequently present Africa as poverty-ridden and torn by tribal wars. However, in several phases of African history, outsiders – above all colonialists and missionaries from Europe – have done their best to strengthen the division into "us" and "them" among Africans, sometimes via politics, but quite often via literature and the media.

The main aim of Inka Moring's article is to explore how spatial practices define the process of interpretation of cultural forms. The analysis is constructed on the discursive formation of rustic nostalgia in a Finnish film produced during the economic recession of the nineties, and the journalistic texts it provoked. The study reveals that the film was not a reflection of dominant values and beliefs of the culture, but rather a representation of the nation's history based on ideological dimensions. The roots and characteristics of national identity are reproduced with the help of audiovisual cultural forms and negotiated publicly in the media. Through the analysis, questions about the use of mediated cultural products in identity politics are raised: How do we determine what is WE? Where do WE come from? Adapting Henri Lefebvre's work, *The Production of Space*, the analysis is conducted on different levels of syntagmatic and paradigmatic levels of textual representation of three main discourses defining national identity in media. Those discourses are: Geopolitical Borderland Position, Peripheral Nationalism and Metonymic Home. The main argument of the article is that, despite the fact that concepts of space and place are located at the very core of any study of human societies, spatial dimensions have remained theoretically marginal and empirically under-researched in media studies. Space and place remain the constraints of every process of reproducing identities – even in the global era.

Maarja Lõhmus' article has its origin in the question of whether or not journalists' and editors' perceptions of their professional roles change under political transition. The author has carried out a survey among media professionals in Estonia and continues by elaborating on the material from this study. She discusses how journalists/editors see and define their work, and how their changed roles function in newsrooms and media institutions, equally under change in post-Soviet Estonia. The author develops a set of modes of action, typical to journalists, available for journalists under change.

Sanna Ojajärvi discusses the genre of news from the perspective of gender studies. The focus is on the construction of gender and (hetero)sexuality on three different evening news programmes on Finnish television (*TV-uutiset ja*

sää, on the public service channel YLE1, *Kymmenen uutiset*, on the commercial MTV3, *Uutiset ja sää*, on the commercial Channel Four). The aim of this article is to deconstruct the idea of news as a “masculine genre” by examining how the sex-based distinctions of public-private, masculine-feminine, mind-body and fact-fiction are mixed in the performances of the newsreaders and the weather forecasters. The emphasis is on the importance of conceptualising the gendered dichotomies in a new way – the idea of separating the gender of the performer from the (assumed) sex of the performer is developed. The purpose of this article is to put into practice the core ideas of deconstructive theories of sex and gender, to see how they can be applied to empirical material and what they can offer to studies of television genres.

Sanna Valtonen's article focuses on questions of cultural identities in an era of dramatic societal change. The basic argument is that there are ideological communities that are meaningful to everyday life and cultural identity. In post-industrialised and post-modern societies these communities are (partly) formed within the public sphere. In the modern world, the “public sphere” is mediated: the media points out issues, creates common realities and topics of conversation and, in doing so, creates sensations of “us” and “them”. Thus, the media play key roles in the production of cultural, social and political spheres within which cultural identities are constructed. While the concept of identity has been used to refer to all sorts of different identities (personal, professional, ethnic, sexual), the focus here is on discussing the definitions of cultural identities and their national dimensions/aspects.

Public Spaces, Historical Times and Media Modernities¹

Media and Historical Spaces

Jan Ekecrantz

The ‘mass media’, the traditional media of communication, established themselves in urban environments, primarily serving the needs of city-based merchants and readerships. After the advent of railroads the news papers could expand their markets and operate within public spaces that were largely national. In that they were true expressions of both *modernity* and its golden era of capitals and the *nation state*, in the words of Eric Hobsbawm. The *international* connection was provided by the structures of colonialism and the big news agencies that were set up around the mid 19th century.

The ways we perceive and define modern media of communication today reflect this particular historical formation, although, in some significant respects, it is no longer with us. These definitions are implicated in most discourses on ‘journalism’, ‘agenda-setting’, ‘democratic access’, ‘public service’, and other notions relating the media to taken-for-granted conceptions of a predominantly a-historical, national society, the territorial nation state (a given also in traditional sociology and political science).

Typically, in Nordic countries, and apart from being translated literally (“yleisradio”, “kringkasting”, etc.), broadcasting also refers to a *nationwide* transmission with the help of various prefixes: ‘rikskringkasting’, ‘riksmedier’, etc. Public service developed as a service for a nation-wide audience, but not because local broadcasting was missing. Rather, in these countries the historical context included the political-ideological construction of the “people’s home”, a metaphor for a polity resembling a family conviviality on a national basis. The ‘social responsibility model’, often associated with public service broadcasting, need not necessarily presuppose a geographically nationwide audience, but can also operate on regional and local levels. Across social classes and strata it caters for the needs of various minority groups – thus achieving a ‘Gemeinschaft’ by making ‘common’.

In this chapter I will reflect on historical changes creating fundamentally new conditions for broadcasting, journalism and other mass media activities. After introductory remarks concerning the notion of a national public in the

context of modernity there follows sections that expand on some of the themes – the historicity of communication structures, journalism criticism in what could be called “media modernities” and implications of global contexts. What are the effects of globalization on journalism, an institution and a textual system which more than any other parts of the media have come to be identified with modernity? What is the relationship between journalism and modernity in the first place? And, when and where were its democratic aspirations fulfilled? The broader question concerns the temporal and spatial preconditions for social and cultural identity formation – and the extent to which the media intervene in and restructure these conditions.

The term ‘mass communication’ implied both a democratic potential – a mass of information to the mass of the people – and a sinister connotation to an atomistic ‘mass society’ run by power elites. *Public broadcasting* and *public service* have their own connotations. To the ‘public sphere’ (when Habermas’ seminal work was finally translated into English this term quickly eroded to a relatively a-theoretical understanding of it in terms of a non-private, non-commercial sphere of mediated, broadcast communication), to the general public defined as a collective of (active) citizens, rather than as (passive) consumers, etc. The public agenda would comprise public issues, the *res publica*, and for this, public *broadcasting* was one prerequisite. Public broadcasting is thus normally understood not only in organizational terms, but also as a normative theory of contents, including an array of media genres. (cf Maia’s discussion, in this volume, on Habermas, exploring the fruitfulness of this author’s later theories of communicative action)

This structure of communication was realized, to a variable degree, in some historical, national contexts – in the Nordic countries roughly during the first two decades of the postwar period. It should be noted that that particular historical situation differed immensely from that which now obtains around the world, where public service is basically conceived of as a bulwark against further commercialization of the entire TV system. (see further Kivikuru’s contribution, dealing with African experiences)

In the 1990s *globalization*, commercialization and world-wide interactive communication networks have changed the basic parameters informing our understanding of mediated communication and its social, political and cultural functions. Modern media systems and what has come to be called “post-journalism” recreates the forms of public communication and our relation to different realities, but they are largely invisible to themselves and to many disciplines. A new world, organized accordingly, demands that we synthesize different understandings of it, derived from a modernized political economy, from social *and* cultural *and* media theory. (This line of reasoning is pursued at some length in the chapters by Jansson and Tufte, respectively.)

There is ample reason to think through the options for democratic communications in the present situation. For this some theoretical groundwork is needed. What is needed, among other things, is a critical re-assessment of some basic parameters, notably the temporal and spatial correlates of mediated

communication in what has come to be called, interchangeably, late or global modernity. There is a need to further investigate, far beyond the remarks and limits of this paper (but touched on in other contributions to this volume), popular, pseudo-historical notions of 'deterritorialization', 'interactive' media, 'time-space compression/distanciation', 'action at a distance', etc. Who interacts with whom, globally? In what sense(s) have time and space been compressed? What is 'de-territorial' as against 'territorial' communication? Is 'action at a distance' a new invention, or should the concept also include the doings of mercenaries, conquistadors, crusaders, missionaries, pilgrims, not to speak of messengers, throughout history?

For the present purposes the following remarks on the historical and global contexts will have to suffice – followed by an attempt to synthesize historical, anthropological and other understandings of mediated communication in the contemporary world. My remarks first deal with historical communication in general. Then I will discuss journalism, a genre typical of the modern era, and follow up with a comment on globalization theorizing, thus preparing the ground for further, broader studies of media modernities, integrating both historical and anthropological approaches to media modernities – taking into account 'historical globalities' as well as 'global modernities', the latter privileging *spaces of identity*, the former *times of identity*.

Communications and History

Historical periodizations are often, but not always explicitly, based on major historical breakthroughs in communications technology, giving birth to new large-scale technological systems. For instance, what separates the Middle Ages from the modern era is the invention ascribed to Gutenberg. The longer world history is a story of stages or cycles separated or driven by a series of communications revolutions, in the last century and a half deeply connected to the victorious march of 'modernity' and the rise into world dominance of imperial, colonial and metropolitan powers. Printing, and the new social, economic and political contexts with which it interacted, formed necessary conditions for *modernity* and for the Enlightenment as the *modern project*. Later *modernism*, as an almost world-wide aesthetic movement sprung from what has been described as the second great communications revolution. This time we got the telegraph and the railroad (originally part of the same techno-system), the telephone, the radio telegraph and radio broadcasting (Kern 1983).

James Carey has recently pointed out the historical moment when, in North America, the new communications technologies began, on a broad scale, to transform this society's temporal and spatial organization.

The modern era of communications begins during the decade of the 1890s. (...) when, in the United States, space and time were enclosed, when it became possible to think of the nation as everywhere running on the same clock of awareness and existing within a homogenous national space. (...) This not only cre-

ated the knowledge of the time a call was received at the other end of a long-distance wire but also, and more importantly, permitted and encouraged the detailed regulation and control of human activity within the expanded space defined by uniform time. (...) When the railroad and telegraph had linked every town and time, a national system of communication, regular and periodical, was possible for the first time. On the backbone of that system, a national community of politics and commerce could be constructed. (Carey 1997: xx)

The new means of communication, having had their breakthrough in the half century before World War I, revolutionized social interaction in one very significant aspect. From now on it was no longer dependent on the physical transportation of humans or messages. This also loosened the firm tie between space and time, formerly translating into each other in a one-to-one relation. Far away always meant distant in both time and space (this historical reality has been reproduced metaphorically in quasi-anthropological discourse on the distant and, thus, backward Others – a temporalization of so-called peripheries lingering in many modernization theories, something we will return to below). This delinking of physical space also had the consequence that social relations and interactions were set free from the earlier given physical/geographical boundaries (the delinking from immediate temporal contexts was effected already with writing, the first “communications revolution”). Thus, this de-territorialization of social processes and of cultures is not, in principle, a qualitatively new facet of the late 20th century.

Many leading sociologists are busy today interpreting these changes in social and cultural terms, differing, for instance, in the periodization of them. Four names often pop up in this context, namely Anthony Giddens, Ulrich Beck, David Held och Mike Featherstone. They belong to a range of sociological writers who, in one way or another, have problematized the cultural or civilizational repercussions of modern forms of communication (but, with the exception of Held, without any institutional analyses of these forms). One basic issue in this literature is the epochal shifts and the possibility or the reasonable in relating them to the technological dimensions of modernity. Different analyses of the role of the media in this process leads to different conclusions when it comes to continuity vs. change. Is it reasonable to assume that communications developments in the late 20th century, in ways similar to what happened a century earlier, have implied a revolution, an epochal shift ushering in a new society or new world order – as in the imagery of various theories of postmodernity, “postmodernist” or not?

The media and modern society are deeply interwoven, be it in terms of social organization, group and social class relations, or the ways in which the patterns of interaction are formed. The media can not be reduced to places or arenas where social, cultural or political interaction is made visible – such interaction now largely takes place *in* and through the media. Today, when this “media modernity” appears globally the analysis of existing media systems, deeply enmeshed in all other social institutions, turns into an exploration (1)

of the global system as such, and (2) of the ongoing transformations of historically established national institutions.

Modernity as such is of course highly consonant with the idea of public service (as a genuine “people’s home” idea). Public service and ‘national identity’ were seen as territorial phenomena, as uncompromised politically as ever the school book geography of the 1950s, denying the existence of class cleavages etc. And, not least, the contradictions within nations between urban metropolises and the rest of the country. In global (media) modernities this spatio-temporal framework has evaporated and we are left with a globalized media system that has no correlates in formal political structures (especially not in these days when the role of the UN is eroding, because of its lack of legal mechanisms for handling subnational conflicts). This delinking of political systems and communicative, spatial practices in itself turns the late modern media into vehicles that are more apt to cater for the needs of global capital (Bauman 1998), being the only really existing social base for global communication (the ‘world community’ being a purely ideological construct).

The social politics of the transnational corporations reveals itself objectively in the increasing unbalances in the global distribution of resources, the general cause being the close ties between technological developments on the one hand and, on the other, political and economic power. We also witness explicit attacks on welfare politics and on the welfare state as such on the part of global media, when perceiving this politics as an undue threat to their unfettered expansion. Neo-liberalism is the word (Herman & Chesney, 1997, provides figures testing to its successes in the area of communications in the recent past). In the most recent period we have witnessed an acceleration of corporate mergers of a specific kind (infrastructure – superstructure, hardware – software relationships thwarting democratic control of content. In combination with “individual freedom” being redefined as freedom for individual companies!).

The historical development of (national) media institutions and the globalization of their modern generic forms are related phenomena. The national media have not just broadened their diffusion into world markets. It is not a just case of the diffusion of national institutions with their given products, themselves left intact – they have themselves changed in the process. Public service broadcasting on a world (region) scale is unimaginable, for the time being. On the global level there seems to be no alternative to *private* service broadcasting, including not least the overall communication activities of politicizing transnational news corporations.

Anthony Giddens (1991) has suggested that globalization is the logical outcome of modernity and that modernity has diffused its modern institutions into non-Western European parts of the world. This may be so in the case of the social invention called public service broadcasting, that diffused from England in the 1920s, at least to a few other West European countries. However, the longer historical view puts this logic on its head – modernity, also in its “late” or “post” forms, stands out as the equally logical outcome of global rela-

tions and processes of a very long standing. I am speaking, of course, of colonialism and imperialism.

This reversed thesis, which I am going to elaborate in a following section, has implications for mediated communication, be it public or private, service or profit oriented, since it also questions received ideas of time-space 'distanciation' or 'contraction'. For instance, public service (as does democracy) presupposes a particular timespace, meaning among other things that a public also is a temporally constituted entity – the social product of a long-term didactic project. The general public is constituted in communications that has evolved historically, reproducing and transferring cultural heritages and national identities, existing now in contradiction to global cultures. (see further Moring's and Valtonen's chapters) The globalized world is a place devoid of memory (Smith 1995), and this is reflected, for instance in what has come to be termed 'post-journalism', an integral part of a 'super-modern' society giving priority to the instantaneous and to synchronic events, a timeless communication. The existence of such communication, devoid of both memory and time, should not inform our understanding of it in historical terms. A world deleting its own history is still an historical phenomenon. Also amnesia has its roots. I will now turn to journalism as one symbolic expression of an historical epoch, harbouring also other epochs.

From High Modernity to Low Journalism

The general expansion of the media sphere – its relative growth within the national economies – is often related to the globalization and transnationalization of capital, politics and culture. However, there are major differences of opinion how to interpret these transformations. There seem to be considerable agreement, though, that the national media systems, a national press and public service broadcasting, are loosing ground to supra- and infra-national structures of mediated communication, including transnational as well as local media and communication designed for specific market segments. These are among the circumstances that pose a threat to a journalism based on the idea of staging communication between different social groups in the context of a national society.

In John Hartley's version of journalism history journalism is conceived of as *the* sense-making discourse of modernity (Hartley 1996). The media are no less than the foundation for the textualization of modernity and popular culture creates 'readerships', collectivities that are constituted in shared readings. Journalism has certain characteristics in terms of modernity. Both journalism and modernity are products of the developments of European societies in the last few centuries. They are both associated with researching the world, scientific thought, industrialization, political liberation, and imperialistic expansion. Both favours concepts as freedom, progress and universal enlightenment and they are associated with the breaking down of traditional systems of know-

ledge, with capitalization and consumerism, with market expansion and the separation of the product and the buyer. Today's political life, like the consumption society, is unimaginable without journalism. Modernity itself might not be an effect of journalism, but it was a political and marketing campaign. And in this journalism took on the task as modernity's 'campaign trail'. Modernity's built-in contradictions, its mix of modern and pre-modern elements are also, as I have argued in the preceding, found in journalism.

The nation state, one of modernity's defining characteristics (as understood by, for instance, Giddens), has traditionally been the natural space for the journalistic discourse. In fact, it is the space which provides the ideological foundation for the journalistic enterprise and for public service broadcasting. This space is, at the same time, a temporal order, I have argued. Nation building and sustenance always implies a (re)construction of history, the present and the future, carried out in (unequal) negotiations between dominant and subdued public discourses, not least news discourses.

The ideological underpinnings of journalism as a modern project are centered around the classical, liberal idea of the press as a fourth estate. It is a conception increasingly out of tune with the real world, where communications, now deeply entangled with economy and politics, are transnationalized and globalized. Journalistic practices, strategies of representation, definitions of the situation etc. relying and focussing on the national political and bureaucratic systems, at the same time as both administrative and economic power are moving somewhere else, can not fulfil the ascribed functions as a fourth estate. Instead, it tends to adopt – this is how one could interpret much of today's journalism criticism – some of the functions of the first two or three estates, system integration, social and political control, therapeutic, administrative and social or consumer services. Hartley (1996), for instance, argues that journalism, throughout the last century, has strived to take over and textualize the democratic functions of the nation state. The media now make up the most important site for political participation for those very large groups of people who become less and less inclined to partake in political elections or otherwise engage in party politics. This induces the governments of the old democracies to recruit their own members from the world of popular culture (*op.cit.*, 200). A couple of years ago the Swedish government, for instance, set up a number of advisory councils filled with celebrities from the entertainment sector – writers, actors and others giving advice, for instance on minority issues.

In the 1990s we have witnessed an ongoing transformation of the functions of news journalism, signalling the demise of an institution as we have known it (Ekecrantz & Olsson 2000). It is no longer primarily the business of keeping a "journal", to note and comment on the daily occurrences out there. That was what the classical roles, the publisher, the reporter, the observer etc., were based on. These were the roles that made it possible for the media to legitimate their activities, and existence, as the Fourth Estate. The more staging or performing "postjournalism" that has now established itself is a contemporary global phenomenon – one of many expressions of the new transnational

order. However, it should also be placed in its own history of genres, all of them the products of particular, and changing communication practices. The most 'publicly' diffused contents today are certain global media events produced by transnational media conglomerates (reality soaps such as Levinsky soft porn interviews, princess pop funerals, but also European song contest festivals). On the other hand, certain traditional functions of public service, like social information is now catered for on a 'private', individual basis (the Internet connection). The public broadcasters now seem eager to offer digital information services on a market basis.

In the rear-view mirror of history we can look upon high modernity's "serious" and "professional" journalism in different ways. *First*, it can serve as a backdrop for that perennial form of media criticism according to which contemporary culture is a culture of decay. This is a decay which typically expresses itself in the dissolution of all kinds of borderlines – between genres, between roles and between private and public. *Second*, these alleged tendencies can also be interpreted in the diametrically opposite way, as a romancing of the "popular" in so-called popular journalism defying all kinds of borders. The dissolving private-public border is perceived as the beginning of a real democracy, where all voices can be heard. In this perspective talk shows are democratic forms of mediated communication from bottom to top, replacing former communiqué journalism, a communication from the top. *Third*, "high journalism" can be regarded as an historical parenthesis, surviving as an element in contemporary professional ideology, but in real life an elite journalism based on the close ties to other elites (Hallin, 1996). This version is highly plausible in the longer historical perspective. High journalism coincides with high modernity, with the 1950s as the peak period in the US and in the Nordic countries (with Finland as a possible exception). In those days economic growth and neutral expert knowledge could, presumably, solve all social problems. "Objectivity" was no problem in a situation where no cleavages between the people and the establishment were visible in the public sphere. For the same reason the close ties between the media and the elites were not perceived as a principal problem. Genre borders, not least the one between 'news' and 'views' were important editorial dogmas. It was a professionalism founded on the mythos of public service in its broadest sense, on unfettered belief in progress, rationality, universal truths and an unproblematized view of the public good.

Journalism criticism in late modernity (Giddens' term) thus apostrophizes 'post-journalism' as one characterized by the dissolution of the formerly sacred border between news and entertainment. It also highlights the insecurity among journalists as to what voice it should represent. Further, worries concern a strongly market driven journalism (MacManus, 1994) and the so-called 'total newspaper' where marketing and journalism are integrated (Hallin, 1996), and television's 'reality shows', precluding documentary and reportage. TV has transformed politics, the critics say, to a matter of personality, or synthetic personalities (Tolson) and to theatrical performances where the viewers are de-

fined, not as citizens but as targeted consumers. Political events are media events. Realism and credibility are created with visual and auditive conventions rather than through critical engagement. Through technically advanced illusion making television colonizes everyday life and mystifies power (Corner 1995).

These formulations are sometimes based on the assumption that a breaking point is passed. Journalism is no longer the servant of parliamentary democracy that it used to be – somewhere some time – but has become its own centre of (uncritical) attention. The media have developed from an arena for social interests into actors operating by a power of their own and from conditions set by themselves. This is a power generated within the media system – an increasingly independent institution – and it is levelled against other institutions in society and against the general public (Ekecrantz & Olsson 2000; Ekström 1998). This analysis of the journalism of late modernity follows logically from misguided definitions of its earlier (high) modern forms. The argument about media modernities belies any evolutionistic, linear theory of journalism or of broadcasting.

Today's (post)journalism is an historically instituted hybrid culture, mixing premodern, modern, and late modern traits. This is one object for the study of *media modernities* – as generic, institutional and global reality.

Typical *premodern* elements include static hierarchies as in Bakhtin's rabelaisian world (Bakhtin 1965/1968). This kind of vertical social space is an odd remnant in the news journalism of the 20th century and it has been documented in many studies. It implies that there is very little structural change, in the world of the news. Institutions and groups at the top, like those at the bottom of prestige and power ladders are very much the same today as a century ago. This is a world as timeless (no history nor future) as ever the world of Gargantua. This element of timelessness also accrues to the photographic (iconic) representation or filmed images of those human, environmental, political or other catastrophies attended to by the global media. Among other premodern ingredients in today's journalism and popular culture you will find all kinds of superstition and sorcery, as represented in a range of popular magazines and TV shows, bringing us, for instance, ritualistic confessions in public.

Modern ingredients in journalism abound, of course, since this concerns a number of more or less defining characteristics of "journalism" as such: it implies a strong focus on events (as defined by journalistic practice and codified in "news values") and on elites, including those special social categories constructed by the media, the celebrities – political, financial and cultural. The news event is construed out of a modernistic time perspective, defined within the format of the daily cycle of news – causes and consequences ideally being constructed within that time frame. Further, the objectivism of modern news, with its roots in a 19th century camera metaphor, is another cornerstone in what can be described as modern journalism, a sibling to the early 20th century modernistic movement. This is the background for the still dominant claims and presumptions in journalism of being a realistic discourse. Realism is constituted

in a particular conception of time and space, in which, for instance, both temporal and spatial distances matter, like differences between here and there, now and then. Realistic narratives are typically organized around differences as these – and on problems involved in overcoming them (to be pursued below). However, today's news produces stretches of time composed of an uninterrupted series of "nows". Pictures or short film sequences, from Bagdad, Belgrade or other momentary arenas for the global media, representing brief and non-contextualized moments of history, do not generate a narrative of causes and consequences and no reflection concerning the driving forces behind events. What is real is the visualizable 'now', outside of history (de Certeau, 1988; Giddens, 1991).

Late modern journalism, or media practices more generally (the borders get evermore problematic), typically also include media chat in its various forms. Although some may consider it as an ultra-democratic breakthrough, the global diffusion of intimate, personal life weeds out social and political criticism by a "coverage" out of all proportion. Further, the journalism of late modernity tends to annihilate itself in yet another respect. As an effect of direct satellite broadcasting the concept of simultaneity is given a new meaning. Whereas formerly restricted to the simultaneous reception of preproduced, edited media messages reporting what had happened, it now implies a sometimes total disappearance of any time lag between the event and its worldwide reception. The implications are far-reaching if we remember Hegel's reflections on the role of the morning paper as creator of community bonds, just because of the simultaneous reading of the same texts, each representing a slice of history. (cf Schopenhauer on the newspaper as the "second hand of the historical clock") The communion of a world audience for direct broadcasts is of another kind, largely unexplored. It is a phenomenon related to another late modern form, the media staging of highly dramatized events, with their focus on the eternal moments outside of history. The celebrity category comes close to the pre-modern in its feudalistic representational function – it is a social category representing itself and nobody else.

As a first definition *media modernities* – referring to generic, institutional and global realities – is the combined expression of this jumble of historical and present-day media practices. Media modernities reflect a peculiar mix of 'historical globalities' and 'popular modernities', where the former expression here refers to the historically instituted colonial and imperial relations preceding media globalization, and the latter to the contemporary hybrid cultures.

In order to counteract any impressions of a developmental and universalistic cycle when it comes to media and socio-cultural transformations I will now turn to arguments about media and journalism as they relate to modernity and globalization.

The Global Context

Very roughly, two different historical perspectives are posed squarely against each other. First, there are those (like Beck 1998) who conclude that globalization, because of its unique properties, represents a qualitatively new phase (extremely difficult to conceptualize at that). On the other hand, there are those who stick to the idea that the “globalized” world in all essentials reproduce, although in a modernized form, the conditions that have been with us for centuries. Held has identified these divergent perspectives as two schools:

...the current fashion to suggest either that globalization is fundamentally new – the ‘*hyper-globalization school*’, with its insistence that global markets are now fully established – or that there is nothing unprecedented about contemporary levels of international economic and social interaction since they resemble those of the gold standard era, the ‘*sceptical school*’ (Held, 1998, *italics mine*)

Both positions follows logically from different definitions of both modernity and globality, as we shall see in the following pages. Both “modernity” and “globality” (or globalization) are complex, multidimensional phenomena. To some extent they share aspects, in which case any assertions of a relationship between the two becomes tautological or circular. There is, for instance, technical dimension of modernity, defined by some as the expression of global communication systems (cf Thörn 1997), making it identical with the core of globalization, which may lead us into a position of technological determinism, seeing communication technology as the driving force behind both. Economism is a theoretical cousin. Other dimensions of modernity are attuned to the development of the nation state.

All this makes it difficult to disentangle modernity from globality, necessary if we want to posit some causal or epochal relation between the two. As Featherstone when speaking of “globalization as an outcome of the universal logic of modernity” (1995:2). Against Featherstone’s and Giddens’ *globalization of modernity* one might argue for a *modernization of globality* thesis, globality standing for global interdependencies predating and preconditioning Western styled modernity – after all colonialism and imperialism are older than the modern media of communication and, however modernized, these structures are still operative. The overly media-centric view plays down historical communication and cultural exchanges before the technological revolutions of the 20th century. It also implies a mystification of cultures, ancient or late modern. Ferguson (1992: 81) reminds us that cultures are almost never pure and Wolf (1982) has pointed out that there have been no “untouched” cultures, whatever that would be, in this world after the demise of the 15th century. “(M)ost of the cultures we now think of as national or local have been touched and often partially shaped over the centuries by contact with other cultures at ‘national’, regional and global levels.. Mass media .. as one recent wave in a very long series of cultural interactions on a global or nearly global scale” (Straubhaar 1997). We are reminded not only of the historical itinerary of the “Italian” pasta, but of musical cultural expressions of historical cultural encoun-

ters, such as the “Andalusian” flamenco (traceable both to India and Africa) or the “Cuban” salsa (with its roots in West Africa, Spain and New Orleans). Masao Miyoshi (1998:248) echoes the nothing-new-argument: “..if globalization means merely that parts of the world are interconnected, then there is nothing new about this so-called globalization. It began centuries ago, as Columbus sailed across the Atlantic, if not earlier”.

Sreberny-Mohammadi (1996:180), speaking of the cultural effects of imperialism itself, argues that a focus “mainly on the modern media neglects other much older and deeper structures which may embody ‘foreign’ values but may also be the pillars of modernity.” Elsewhere the same author concludes that there are “many, varied and deeply integrated structures of modernity that were in place long before these other, more superficial cultural changes” (Sreberny-Mohammadi 1997:67).

The reproduction, or continuity thesis denies that there has been a major qualitative shift in the structures and workings of capitalism over the last several hundred years – the modern era. To authors of this bend it is up to the defenders of the discontinuity thesis to show what has changed, how much, when and why. One general strategy has been to introduce different stages of modernity (not only among postmodernists), followed among some writers by the idea that globalization results from “late” or “high” modernity (Giddens 1990, 1991), or the “second” or “reflexive” modernity (Beck 1992). These theorists ascribe a central role to the modern media. However, it is not always clear what is meant, in these writings, by “modern media”, nor what is it that makes them revolutionize the world – whether it is their institutional, informational, communicational or other aspects.

Related to this, there are all kinds of conceptual problems with the “globalization of modernity” thesis. First, who is “modern”, where is it, and when? It is obvious that modernity most often is geographically (or rather geo-culturally) defined as something we have in the “West”. At least those of us living in urban centres. For how long have we, and our ancestors, been modern? There are many bids, the starting point being placed anywhere between the end of the middle ages and the last centennial shift, when the communications revolutions of the late 19th century produced the cultural response called modernism (Kern 1983). So, either “modernity” must be situated concretely, or neutralized to mean just ‘at present’. King (1995:109) argues that “because ‘modern’ and ‘modernity, understood to mean ‘as of present’, are neither temporally nor geographically grounded, they float in space, and are empty of meaning and hence irrelevant for either description or analysis. Strictly speaking, a phrase such as ‘the modern city’ applies equally to Kabul, New York or Varanasi.”

In the real historical world there is an indefinite range of “modernities”, seen as unique constellations of all kinds of modernity dimensions. This does not only apply to different national contexts, but also to different urban cultures within a country. Several authors have pointed out that this also applies to globalities. It should be obvious that interdependencies – if that be taken as the ultimate criterion – look different depending on the ensemble of economic, technological, political, cultural and socio-structural conditions deter-

mining global relations. To look for general laws behind modernization/globalization seems to be a futile task.

History helps us postulate another relationship between modernity and globality than the one argued for by authors like Beck and Giddens. Seen in the longer time perspective historical global relations and exchanges are the direct and indirect causes of the really existing forms of modernity. Colonialism and imperialism existed long before modern media of communication (but in interaction with early forms such as the telegraph and the news agencies (above). Modern media have modernized colonial and imperial relations and forms of dominance. The steamers replaced the sailing ships on the colonial trade routes – they did not cause those routes. It was the already existing routes that “caused” the innovation, not vice versa! Likewise, the railroad put rails on the existing roads. This was the case in most countries in Europe where labour was cheap and land expensive. This suggests that the perspective of political economy is at odds with many conceptions of the relationship between globalization and modernity.

With reference to world-system theory the Argentinian philosopher Enrique Dussel makes a very illuminating and telling distinction between Eurocentric and “planetary” conceptions of “modernity”, or the Eurocentric paradigm as against the world paradigm. The former is an expression of the centrality of Europe in what he calls the second world system. From the planetary horizon modernity is conceptualized “as the culture of the *center* of the ‘world-system’”. “Modernity is not a phenomenon of Europe as and *independent* system, but of Europe as a center. This simple hypothesis absolutely changes the concept of modernity...” (Dussel 1998:4). The following is of great importance and relevance to our discussion here of the relationship between modernity and globality:

..the centrality of Europe in the world-system is not the sole fruit of an internal superiority accumulated during the European Middle Ages over against other cultures. Instead, it is also the fundamental effect of the simple fact of the discovery, conquest, colonization, and integration (subsumption) of Amerindia. This simple fact will give Europe the determining comparative advantage over the Ottoman-Muslim world, India, and China. Modernity is the fruit of these events, not their cause (...) Even capitalism is the fruit and not the cause of this juncture of European planetarization and centralization within the world-system. (Dussel, 1998:6-7)

There is thus a broad range of perspectives on globalization. Fredric Jameson found four logical positions (1998:54): (1) there is no such thing as globalization (nothing is new under the sun); (2) globalization is nothing new (as far back as the neolithic trade routes...); (3) current world networks are only different in degree and not in kind; (4) a new or third multinational stage of capitalism, of which globalization is an intrinsic feature.

There are other “logical positions”, of course, but these four probably cover most of the more or less manifest standpoints in the globalization litera-

ture. Other positions may be derived from a general outlook based on ideas of differential developments and on aspects or levels of globalization. What aspect of modernity, technological, cultural, political, or other, is apostrophized when taking one or other position? What level is implied, for instance in terms of Held's (*op. cit.*) extensiveness, intensity and impact of networks and flows? There are different temporalities as well as spatialities and, although globalization by definition relates to global conditions, the meaning of globality varies both in time and in space. What differs across time and space are, for instance, the kinds of timespaces that result from the interaction of the global and the local. Linear, global time ticks away with the same speed all over the globe, but is often only superficially connected with the local rhythms. Global spaces, opened up by global communications, relates to local spaces in ways that follow no standardized formula. Critical media research and analysis is confronted with the immense task of exposing the ways that the media are involved in the rearranging of these basic parameters of the social, political and cultural worlds. This boils down to the study of new social relations and power structures and transforming spaces of identity.

The Study of Media Modernities

Technological changes of communication systems always imply some transformation of society's temporal and spatial conditions and these are never socially or politically neutral. Lives in leaps and bounds or in eternal backwater are not distributed at random – nor are the chances to structure and control the time and space conditions of life. Technological changes also have repercussions on reality perceptions. So, the timespaces are not neutral carriers of social phenomena, they constitute them. They do not only make up a philosophical problem (and a particularly tricky one at that), but a problem for sociology and political economy. Differences, distances, divisions and borders, *however instituted*, serve as a foundation for neocolonial and other forms of power and exploitation. Increasingly, social divisions are culturally and symbolically constituted and legitimized. This is not to say, however, that material forces have no role to play in today's world – more often than not they are reinforced and often masked by the global machineries of communication. The material and institutional basis for the symbolic constitution of divisions deserve no less attention today than they did in 1977, when Raymond Williams wrote, in his *Marxism and Literature*:

The major modern communication systems are now so evidently key institutions in advanced capitalist societies that they require the same kind of attention, at least initially, that is given to the institutions of industrial production and distribution (...) Further, many of the same institutions require analysis in the context of modern imperialism and neo-colonialism, to which they are crucially relevant (Williams 1977:136)

In a global context both media *institutionalization* and media *contents* become central in the analysis, for instance, of the dialectics and structuring of the global and the local. Such studies will arrive at other conclusions than Giddens does when asserting that the upheaval of space, achieved by modern communications, creates a world, where, in certain respects, there are no Others (1991: 27). Visual or other “closeness” may actually produce new Others and in this way the media tend either to support new social divisions globally – relating to new geopolitical polarities, or revive age-old, cultural and civilizational “clashes”, thus turning Huntington’s reputed thesis into a self-fulfilling prophecy. In the words of Bauman (1998:70) “the so-called ‘globalizing’ processes rebound in the redistribution of privileges and deprivations, of wealth and poverty, of freedom and constraint”. Likewise, technologically induced simultaneity does not automatically create solidarity.

So, in our view the media produce distance *and* nearness, cultural and social differences *and* likenesses. In this the global media extend the urban cultural landscape and its typical relations and forms of interaction.

I will now try to pull several strings together to form an argument about the historically changing spaces of identity in what was, heuristically, termed ‘media modernities’.

Media modernities, then, comprise the interdependencies between both spatial and temporal conditions and phenomena. These interdependencies are largely unexplored, because theorizing has tended to privilege one of the sides in the following series of dualisms:

GLOBAL	–	LOCAL
NON-PLACE	–	PLACEBOUND
TIMELESS	–	HISTORY
SPACES OF IDENTITY	–	ROOTS OF IDENTITY
TRANSCULTURAL	–	TRADITION, HERITAGE
SIMULTANEITY	–	SEQUENCE

The study of media modernities, in plural, takes into account the new interactions between the local and the global, as well as the historical layers determining each other. The global and the local also represent different temporalities, spaces of identity also serve as frameworks for all kinds of concrete or construed histories, and in transcultural communications cultural traditions and “heritages” frequently come into play (‘times of identity’, ‘historical hybridities’ are other concepts we have used in the preceding). And the non-places of ‘supermodernity’ (Augé 1998, 1999), spaces for communication, circulation and commerce (airports, supermarkets, shopping malls, etc.), just represent late modernity’s version of transient meeting and market places and the networks and large communication spaces that these have formed throughout the history of civilizations.

The need for consequent (re)temporalization of communication concepts is underlined by notions frequently in use nowadays, many of them implicitly asserting some kind of change across time. For instance, it is said that reality increasingly gets *mediated* and/or “*semiotized*”, that the world shrinks, either in terms of time-space *compression* (e.g. David Harvey) or in the form of *distanciation* (Anthony Giddens), that communication *speeds* now have reached the ultimate limit (Paul Virillo), that we now witness the growth of the *network* society (Manuel Castells), that vertical, national communication structures are being replaced by *horizontal, transnational* structures (Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi). Related to this many have pointed out the ongoing *decontextualization, informatization, digitalization*, not to speak of the *deterritorialization* of communications, and the ensuing new *individualism* (Marc Augé).

Some of these authors, like Harvey and Castells, have gone at some length in exposing the historicity of evolving spatial structures. In many cases, however, assertions about tendencies, as those exemplified above, are based on empty temporalizations (as in a multitude of “-izations”) and on generalizations negligent of socio-economic and other differences across the planet. This is to say that they do not define actual changes. Abstract notions of universal trends will not do the job if we are to understand the ways the media condition societies and cultures.

The idea of “de-territorialization” and “non-territorial” communication is a case in point, not least because of its centrality in prevalent discourses on identity in the globalized world. It relates to the idea of *non-places* being symptomatic of supermodernity. But what is non-territoriality? One interpretation is that geography, physical transportation and the location of the participants are rendered irrelevant (the thesis of extra-territoriality). Another interpretation has it that it is (inter)action not being confined to a given space or place. It is not within, but between territories (the thesis of expanded territoriality). The first interpretation suggests that geography reigned till the advent of the modern media of communication, which is simply not true. Already writing reduced the grip of geography. Second, what of interactions going on between territories? It is in the nature of communication as such that it surpasses distances in time and/or space, always involving the crossing of some kind of borders existing because of the different positions of the participants (Mikhail Bakhtin). And, as noted above, this communication may reduce or increase existing distances – produce sameness (identity) or difference as the case may be. We have also suggested that communication, action at a distance, on a global scale has a very long history. Colonial and imperial communications took place between distant places, located in (what was later to be) centres and peripheries. That communication was not territorial either – in the sense that it was not confined within territories. The new network society is thus characterized, above all, in terms of its unique temporal communication capacities.

The concept of de-territorialization is not very helpful, thus, in analyzing mediated structures of identity and conflicts in today's world. This also applies

to certain other neologisms betraying the historicity of media modernities. Instead, we would need a theory of media modernities that traces the historical spaces that work together to create cultural complexity, as well as the composite identities that this complexity yields. This complexity also mirrors global power structures and conflicts, because it combines historical communication spaces relating to civilizations, nation states and global media empires or communication networks.

Democratic institutions, public service broadcasting being one of them, evolved within national spaces and, as yet, there are no equivalents on the global scene, where, at this moment, different world systems exist side by side. There is the global cultural state called postcolonialism, the system of national, governmental, political actors, and the multi-centred world of hundreds of thousand of communication actors. Major crises and conflicts in the foreseeable future are very likely to accrue from tensions between these world orders, not least because they constantly generate new political and cultural differences and divisions.

Note

1. Portions of this chapter, some in other versions, have appeared in *Sociologisk Forskning* (Ekecrantz, 1998), *Geraes* (Ekecrantz, 2000) and in *Picturing Politics*, chapter 1 (Becker, Ekecrantz & Olsson, 2000).

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Identity and the Politics of Recognition in the Information Age

Rousiley Celi Moreira Maia

Considering the extension of the global forces nowadays – the intertwining of the production and consumption markets on a planetary scale, the political crisis of the Nation State, the rise of the global media and homogeneous dissemination of the cultural industry – it may not be an exaggeration to say that never before have human cultures been exposed to such a massive reciprocal confrontation. Yet, the intention of personal dispositions expressed in the new pluralistic forms of life, in the increasing individualization of life-projects and in greater cultural diversity, including severe forms of fundamentalism, has been noted as a basic characteristic of this end of millennium. There has been a proliferation of particularistic identities and several actors (such as women, gays and lesbians, blacks, ethnic minorities and so forth) have been politicizing a notorious difference. This politization of difference is produced through the intersecting of specific axes of distinction like class, gender, sexuality, nationality, ethnicity and ‘race’, which are taken as resource to express a unique understanding of society members, arising from their group position. In contrast to earlier societies, in which oppressed or marginalized groups accepted their subordinate status, and either conformed to dominant ways of life or quietly kept on the periphery of society, today they demand public recognition and respect for their chosen ways of life. Therefore, the problem is not the *mere difference* between the actors, but the parallel necessity to listen to and understand each other, whether in the context of a majority culture or within a community of people (Taylor, 1994; Rosa, 1996, Gould, 1997).

In a rapidly communicating world, where people and messages move about at a great speed, media plays an increasingly central role in the process of identity construction. Through media people can observe others and learn about space-temporally-distant worlds, keeping a vicarious contact with multiple cultural frameworks and divergent ways of being. The growing number of communication technologies and the intensifying of the participatory communication nets have allowed individuals and groups to interact with and influence each other, whilst being geographically situated in different parts of the world. In the contemporary condition, the centrality of mediated experience unfolds unsuspected problems with many assumptions present on former

theoretical explanations of identity construction¹. At the outset of this chapter I argue regarding the role that media plays in the 'reflexive process' of identity building and cultural innovation, in a manner to avoid both the homogeneous view of culture and the radical perspective of cultural relativism. I will concentrate on the manner in which the media, as a generalized form of communication, intersects the project of identity, following the basic pragmatic assumption that identities are constituted and reproduced within the process of communication and everyday interaction. Prior to that, let me briefly point out that which I consider to be the set of major challenges that have been affecting the studies about identity – some arising partially from social and cultural transformations and partially from theoretical outgrowth.

Identity and Associated Theoretical Problems

In recent years, developments in the studies about identity have been marked by three major ruptures referring to the notion of 'community', the notion of 'time and space' and the notion of 'voice as perspective'. 'Community', in the traditional sociological sense, refers to a social grouping that is characterized by great cohesion, based on the spontaneous consensus of individual members. Identity tended to be defined as belonging to a common culture, mapped literally in locations that set a common framework of references. Through the process of modernization of societies, the notions of solidity and homogeneity, previously related to the notion of community, have been replaced by the idea of 'production' of a situated identity (of people or groups). Functionalist models and sociological studies on rule-sets have expanded the notion of 'community', by asserting that the identity of people can never be treated as monolithic. People participate in various social domains, sharing with other symbolic identifications or common interests over an area of life (such as nationality, gender, ethnicity, occupation, cultural and political associations and so on). In the global condition, it becomes obvious that community is not necessarily directly linked to physical locale. Geography retains, of course, analytic importance, but contemporary studies have shown that projects that offer a basis for identification emerge not from *one place*, but from places which can be dispersed. This is a complex process, in which many settings may influence one another simultaneously. Specific identities can be created by fragments derived from intercultural references ranging from provincial processes of associations to global possibilities of connections. Therefore, the vision of a multi-localized identity, divided into multiple loyalties, reconfigure the theme, making much more complex the task of capturing distinct formations of identity, in all its migrations and dispersions.

The second major rupture in the studies about identities has been with the notion of 'time and space'. The break is not, of course, with the historical consciousness nor with the pervasive sense of past in any given place, but with the historical determination as the first explicative element for the formation of

identities the past which is expressed in any locale ethnography is constructed by discourses and memories (individual and collective), this enables actors to establish a connection between past and future, integrating emerging elements of the present into a somewhat unified and coherent account. Contemporary theories have been evincing that identities are not the 'objective reflex' of social class positions or values; they are neither the reflex of 'laws' that follow a course which could be foreseen in advance, nor the result of phenomenologically interpreted rules derived from principles of a 'true inner nature', a universal class, a privileged race (Calhoun, 1994, 1995; Somers & Gibson, 1994; Marcus, 1992). The identities and differences are not 'naturally' given in specific forms of life, as though anchored in some 'essential', objective element, independent of our grasp of it. Identities are built by the actors' ability of self-reflection and self-understanding, and do not exist externally to or independently of them (Taylor, 1994; Habermas, 1994a, Fraser, 1997).

Over the last two decades, it became a kind of consensus amongst scholars that collective identities are social and political constructions and should be treated as such. Collective identity is developed in a circular relationship with other social and political actors, and it always involves a kind of tension between the definition that groups abrogate to themselves and the recognition which is granted to them by others in society. As Melucci has stated, 'in order to act, any collective actor makes the basic assumption that its distinction from other actors is constantly acknowledged by them, if only in the extreme form of denial' (Melucci, 1996: 73). In this sense, identities are not merely produced by acts of individual will, but rather 'formed' through interactive relations amongst actors, within historically constituted contexts and social structures. In keeping with this, contemporary research has stressed that the identities of groups are articulated in the process of communication, since they are not always rationally comprehensible nor well-defined before their articulation in discursive practices. (Melucci, 1996a; Smith, 1994; Touraine, 1994; Cohen & Arato, 1992a) As a result, current studies about identity have abandoned the view of culture as prone to be understood by its internal logic and have shifted the conventional concern with history (what fills, expresses or even determines identities in a locale) towards the relational process of identity construction. The major challenge is to understand the manner in which people and groups attribute identifications to themselves, on the basis of cultural material available to them, and organize meaning in a relational field, in face of other groups' positions and symbolic projects.

Finally, those changes related to the spatial and the temporal have made the notion of 'voice as perspective' rather problematic. Identity studies have been progressively linked to narrative analysis, and have indicated the notion of 'discourse' as a central analytical category. Whilst the most traditional social theories regarded speech and discourse as a form of *representation* or as an instrument which merely reflect more fundamental structures such as class positions and values, it was realised that speech and discourses have an *ontological dimension*, as constitutive of reality itself, not in a static but in a dynamic

process. After the linguistic turn, there has been a renewed concern about 'meaning' in the mainstream of sociological field of inquiry²; linguistically informed paradigms came to the forefront to deal with the anti-essentialist notion of 'identity'. To be sure, pragmatically oriented approaches to identity, from George Herbert Mead on, have proved themselves useful to understand how people reflect on their own nature and the social world, through communication and language, to construct one's sense of self. Yet, contemporary authors have argued that 'discourse', as an analytical tool, should allow us to thematize change, power and inequality, to grasp the manner in which people and groups construct and alter their identity within historically specific, socially situated, signifying *practices* of communication. (Fraser, 1997: 160-167; Habermas, 1998a; Melucci, 1996; Hoover, 1995)

The Reflexivity of Media in Constructing Identities

From the aforementioned, we can recast some polemic issues of media's impact upon the construction of identities. No doubt, media has had a tremendous direct influence on different forms of life and locales producing increasingly higher levels of cultural complexity³. As rightly asserted by the reflexivity theorists, media, as a generalized form of communication, has disconnected 'the capacity to experience' from the 'activity of encountering' (Thompson, 1995: 209; Giddens, 1995; Lash, 1995; Beck, 1995). Through media, individuals can gain access to 'distant others' – places, values, life-styles, modes of action – and derive, in this manner, some distance from the symbolic content of face to face interaction and forms of authority that predominate in the sites of everyday life. The development of the modern media system has allowed people to interact with, influence each other and negotiate their identities in new ways. As André Jansson has shown in his piece of work in this book, mediated symbolic forms have increasingly gained importance as cultural referents throughout the so-called late modernity. "The globalization of culture has engendered new referents of identity; for example internationally distributed and consumed youth cultures. Hence, the creation of cultural identities are increasingly ... negotiated not only in relation to the physically present social context, but also in relation to mediated cultural products". Therefore, locally recognized cultural referents of a given community can become contested by other, locally unfixed referents.

Furthermore, the expansion and diversification of modern media has changed the dynamics through which people and communities can reproduce their cultural traditions. Different groups of people have been progressively using means of communication to transmit symbolic materials, which comprise cultural stock of knowledge, making local traditions more and more detached from social interaction in a shared locale (Thompson, 1995: 187-188; Canclini, 1996; Gillespie, 1989, 1997; Tanno & González, 1998; Hedge, 1998). This creates the condition, as Thompson has stated, "for the renewal of traditions on a

scale that greatly exceeds anything that existed in the past" (Thompson, 1995: 188). The project of identity itself might become much more dynamic, complex and changing and culture more innovative and differentiated.

Stemming from this framework, we cannot, however, adhere to the vision that media has simply destroyed 'traditional local culture', following the well-known legacy of critical theory, nor can we succumb to an exclusively deconstructivist perspective, looking at the media as creating a kaleidoscope of sheer plurality of identities; its supposition is that tradition floats freely and the mediated symbolic referents are simply superimposed one upon another, as well as indefinitely proliferating in time and space. The point to make here is that the development of mass media and the new technologies of information and communication have made the process of identity formation become more reflexive and open-ended. Individuals and collectivities have to rely on their own resources and symbolic forms transmitted through the media, in a more and more intensive way, to form coherent identities for themselves. (Thompson, 1995: 180; Giddens, 1991: 187-188; Barker, 1997: 613-616; Gillespie, 1989, 1997)

The main supposition operating here is that cultural heritages and forms of life articulated in them only reproduce themselves by convincing those whose personality structure they shape. Hermeneutic sensibility can allow us to understand how individuals can draw from media's symbolic forms and alien cultural practices without making relativistic conclusions. From the hermeneutic point of view, individuals *have* to articulate their *own* interpretation of symbolic forms as they cannot achieve a direct determination of them, but only by means of *already* intersubjectively acknowledged concepts. The immediate sense-making of media's symbolic products interacts with domestic settings and local social milieu. People organize information into meaningful structures, according to shared frames of relevance, given by broader collectivity of individuals with their own tradition and basic beliefs. Therefore, 'meaning' must always be reconstructed within intersubjectivity, through the understanding to be achieved by individuals.

To adopt a hermeneutic perspective is to direct attention to the circular dynamics that take place between, on the one hand, the interpretative process of media symbolic forms that happens on local places – a process always dependent on the prior interpretative knowledge through which perception of the world may be acquired and expanded – and, on the other hand, the process of social transformation that is thus made possible. In this perspective, the 'interpretative horizons' or the 'moral framework', given either by tradition or basic certainties of life, function as an 'implicit knowledge' or as a pre-discursive background structure from which all thinking, action and interpretation proceed. This implicit knowledge is a reservoir of non-problematic assumptions, of rather diffuse convictions, which assure the basic understanding, against the risk of dissension that actually emerges in each concrete process of interpretation⁴. Hence, the construction of meaning which is made possible by interpretation is not arbitrary; it is not the outcome of the pure will of the interpreter,

on the contrary, it is limited by the historicity and situationality of the concrete conditions under which it occurs.

The intersection of media symbolic products with the project of identity should be regarded necessarily as a relational process, encompassing the spatial, the communal and the discursive. In becoming re-embedded in narratives of a specific community throughout new contexts and new myriad of sites of a local culture, media symbolic forms can provoke unexpected reactions. Many authors have paid attention to the different outcomes that can result from such a process: unintended symbolic challenges on established codes, new parameters of meaning negotiation within and among groups of given society, revival as well as forgetfulness of shared feelings⁵. Effectively, ethnographic analysis and reception studies have made us increasingly convinced of the importance of taking the concrete empirical experience of specific groups or particular forms of life as the starting point to explore the media's impact on identity construction.

Traditions and local forms of authority might become less secure in binding their members, when the agents who deploy them are given the opportunity to learn from other traditions or adapt and set out for other shores. The point to be stressed here for the development of my argument is that the media, by making the symbolic forms available for public circulation and public reception, can notably contribute to individuals and collectivities to produce cognitive differences within and among social groups. This can lead to a proliferation of identities; though this is not an automatic process. In face of the new mediated symbolic referents, the projections, expectations and memories which provide the basis for identification of a given community must somehow be made active; the new referents must be reconstructed and negotiated within the relations which bind the members together.

To fully appreciate the notion of 'reflexivity' here in question, we should bear in mind that 'traditions, conventions and expectations' of a specific culture are not monolithic entities. They do not necessarily constitute a 'shared experience', for they are also historical constructions which very often have excluded important sectors of people or they have been arrangements which certain groups attempt to impose on the rest (Hobsbawn & Ranger, 1983; Alejandro, 1993). When individuals and communities, as social actors, question the legitimacy of norms accepted at face value and the social practices based on repetitive routine, they tend to undermine frameworks of received meanings and projects of identification. They somehow evince the contingency of their identities and the founding acts of their institutions. This is a strictly political expression of identity. As Laclau has discussed recently:

All political identity requires the visibility of the acts of identification (that is, of the *instituting* acts). This visibility is only obtained in so far as opposite forms of institution (of the social) are possible, and this possibility is revealed when those forms are actually postulated and fought for in the political arena. For it is only in their antagonistic relation to other projects that the contingency of particular acts of institution is shown, and it is this contingency that gives them

their political character. (Sedimented social practices are unchallenged and, as such, they conceal the political moment of their institution). (Laclau, 1994: 4)

Again, recalling Laclau's words,

the more the 'foundation' of the social is put into question, the less the sedimented social practices are able to ensure social reproduction, and the more new acts for the political intervention and identification are socially required. This necessarily leads to a politicization of social identities, which we see as a main feature of social life in the societies of the end of the twentieth century. (Laclau, 1994: 4)

Identity might become more contested and built in new ways. This is a hermeneutic achievement of the cultural reproduction of lifeworlds as long as individuals and collectives are able to productively appropriate inherited social meanings invoking and giving public significance to their own interpretations of who they are or who they would like to be, what their needs and wants are, what definition of good life makes sense to them, and so on. Such an expression of identity can also be understood as a demand for political recognition, that is, the way through which members of a given community want to revise the socially sustained meanings to construct new narratives and new 'scripts' that may be acknowledged from their viewpoint as more 'relevant', 'positive' or 'correct'. (Gutmann, 1994: xi; Appiah, 1994: 161)

The implications that follow are enormous. I should restrict myself to the discussion of the 'reflexivity' of the process of identity construction and politics of recognition, under the contemporary condition. Yet, one may wonder how to deal analytically with such a circular notion of reflexivity – of placing oneself in socially bestowed categories, which are also socially sustained and socially transformed – from the theoretical perspective that holds language and communication in a central position in such a process. I will now turn to the appreciation of the manner in which Habermasian formal pragmatics guides us towards some understanding of this process.

The Politics of Recognition: The Social Learning Process

As well-known, Habermas' social theory has been subject to many a discussion from different perspectives. Regarding the debate of identity, it has been argued that his approach is extremely abstract and fails to meet more sociologically oriented concerns, as it underestimates the role of 'concrete other' as well as the dimension of conflict in society, as a limit of what can realistically be agreed upon⁶. To be sure, if we are to theorize contemporary society satisfactorily, there is the need to develop a theory fully sensitive to the logic and tensions of cultural diversity. Nonetheless, Habermas' theoretical program seems to provide the standard of an explanatory theory sufficiently general in scope to elucidate communicative practices and linguistically mediated interactions in many different situations, giving support to distinct research. In my view, some

insights derived from the formal pragmatics can be fruitfully connected to culturally and historically bounded analysis. In this topic, I will try to explore the way through which Habermas' conception of discourse can help us understand the way through which the identity of people and social groups, in the sense of collective agents, are shaped and transformed over time or how patterns of a hegemonic culture of dominant groups in society are attained or contested. More precisely, I shall explore the essence of groups or collectivities able to productively appropriate inherited social meanings which invoke and give a public significance to their own interpretations, in order to illuminate the prospect of emancipatory social change and political practice.

Following Wittgenstein, Gadamer and Searle, Habermas proposes to see language as 'speech', as a social activity through which a speaker seeks to come to an understanding with *someone* about *something* in the world, thereby making himself *understood*. Habermas' analysis of communicative action revolves around the thesis that linguistic utterances present in everyday language have an in-built connection with validity, which can be constructed as *claims* to validity. There are three sorts of validity claims: 'truth claims in regard to facts that we assert with reference to objects in the objective world; claims to the truthfulness of utterances that make manifest subjective experiences to which the speaker has a privileged access; and finally, claims to the rightness of norms and commands that are recognized in an intersubjectively shared social world'. (Habermas, 1998b: 317) The author makes a systematic investigation which shows the rationality present in the way through which agents direct themselves on the basis of the understanding of the significance of each others' utterances, as well as the appreciation of the validity of the claims associated with these utterances. Everyday linguistic interaction depends on raising and recognizing validity claims⁷. However, when the actors cannot take as certain the ordinary understandings – or more precisely, when the implicit accord has either been broken or has become problematical, as will happen more frequently in post-traditional societies – communicative action cannot continue routinely. The actors may enter into a kind of rudimentary 'argumentation' in face of contested validity claims, and 'discourses' emerge from the background.

In his recent works, Habermas has extended the category of discourse to include the speech of daily life⁸. In everyday communication all substantive questions of life – personal problems, social and institutional conflicts of society – can be articulated. Practical discourse is focused in a way that day-to-day communication is not. It is an attempt *to explain to others* the reasons for our actions, recommendations or commands. Ethical-political discourses are particularly important for the process of identity construction:

In such [ethical-political] discussions the participants clarify the way they want to understand themselves as citizens of a specific republic, as inhabitants of a specific region, as heirs to a specific culture, which traditions they want to perpetuate and which they want to discontinue, how they want to deal with their history, with one another, with nature, and so on. (Habermas, 1994: 125)

Ethical-political discourses are, in this way, forums for the 'hermeneutic explanation' of shared value-orientations that are acknowledged to be authentic; the participants want to achieve a self-understanding of themselves, by interpreting their basic needs and motives. Such a theoretical approach avoids the errors of a Cartesian model of reflection, in which the ego relates transparently to itself. Habermas conceives practical reflection as an activity, as an ongoing relational process of *self-interpretation* and search for an agreement putting forward arguments that could command assent. Of course, when communication cannot continue customarily, the participant may deliberate whether or not to perform a certain action— switching to strategic action, breaking off communication altogether or recommencing their argumentative activity at a different, more reflective level, in the model of argumentative speech. According to Habermas, practical discourse, despite being fragmented, multilayered and 'naïve' points towards more demanding forms of argumentation⁹.

This constructivist emphasis might suggest that we can just invent ourselves. But, this is an idea that Habermas firmly rejects as failing to acknowledge the way in which our interpretative process and evaluation are limited by constraints that are not of our own choosing. Following the hermeneutic path, Habermas argues that individuals, as communicative actors, must be understood as the product of the tradition within which they are situated, of solidarity groups to which they belong, of socialization and learning processes to which they are subjected. "If actors did not bring with them, and into discourse, *their* individual life-histories, *their* needs and wants, their traditions, membership and so forth, practical discourse would at once be robbed of all its content" (Habermas, 1982: 255). This move to a pragmatic approach has an important consequence within Habermas' account, for the claims of validity are open to re-interpretation in ways which transform them and these re-interpretations rarely leave the intentional state unchanged.

The process of identity construction, as has been widely emphasized by contemporary scholars, is articulated in relation to the 'other' (Taylor, 1994; Calhoun, 1994: 24; Melucci, 1996a; Mennell, 1994; Benhabib, 1996b: 83-90, Fraser, 1997: 151-170). Our claims and resistance to identities make sense only against the background of distinct identity claims and valuations. Constructive operations of collective identity and politics of difference coexist only under tension, but they must derive from a background of common recognition. Production of identity is a territory of struggle. Groups or collectivities, either sharing or challenging a framework of socially sedimented meanings, still compete to further their interpretation of the social reality and to push forward boundaries of received meanings.

In this sense, Habermas does not consider the formation of a hegemonic discourse as mechanisms of exclusion that constitute their respective 'others' as though there were no communication amongst those individuals who are 'inside' and those who are 'out', as the Foucauldian model proposes. From the strictly pragmatic point of view, groups that have been excluded from hegemonic discourses should be seen as partners of dialogue; that is, as subjects

who need to understand reciprocally in the hermeneutic sense, through the human usage of language and the sharing of meanings, even if they have no intention of understanding at the level of their validity claims. (Habermas, 1996b: 374; 1992a: 429) This point deserves cautious treatment. One discourse which is articulated in a given language – which has a transsubjective structure and intersubjectively shared meanings – is nobody's personal property. Therefore, discourse, whether defined as hegemonic or not, finds itself open to potentially interact with all the participants of an ideally unlimited speech community. It lays itself open to constant verification and evaluation by others.

Those who feel affected by a given discourse must formulate their self-understanding in their own way, to contest and 'correct' proposed representations. The question is evidently more complex than that¹⁰. Of course, not all subjects in society will have the same capacity of formulation and expression of their self-understanding, as subjects capable of speech and action in equal measure. On the contrary, many institutions in society serve to keep inequality, hierarchical relationships within and among groups; exclusion due to asymmetrical material and cognitive resources and cultural status acquired through socially consolidated representations. Yet, every process of social integration is simultaneously a process of socialization for subjects, who are formed in this process and who, for their part, renew and stabilize society as a totality of rather legitimately ordered interpersonal relationship. (Habermas, 1998a: 252) As Habermas reminds us:

The content of culturally handed-down traditions is always knowledge acquired by persons and dependent on them (...). In a corresponding manner, normative orders, whether they solidify into institutions or remain free floating as fleeting context are always orders of interpersonal relationships. The networks of interaction of more or less socially integrated, of more or less united groups, are constituted only through the feats of coordination of communicatively acting subjects' (Habermas, 1998a: 252).

In relation to the constructive process of collective identity, struggle for recognition may become necessary when the self-understanding of a group is not reflected in the self-understanding of others. Struggle for recognition should, normatively speaking, bring about a change to the collective self-understanding, in such a way as to accommodate those who see themselves excluded from it. Emancipatory interests are not already existing entities waiting to be released, but should be discursively constituted. The identities are neither static nor completely shaped. They are articulated and transformed through the concrete process of debate, and can only be formed in the real process of social action. In this sense, only articulated values are open to social criticism, to be re-interpreted and re-evaluated. The non-articulation of culturally operative values only sustains the *status quo*.

One should be aware of the empirical complexities and the different ways through which claims for recognition of collective identity take place under unequal social conditions as well as their different levels of analysis. It is pos-

sible to say that feminism, multiculturalism, nationalism, and the struggle against the Eurocentric heritage of colonialism are related phenomena in the sense that they envisage a struggle for liberation from oppression, marginalization, disrespect and are, thereby, struggle for recognition of collective identity, whether in the context of a dominant culture or within a community of people. But they are different phenomena that advance different questions for analytical investigation. (Cooke, 1997: 265-269; Habermas, 1994: 116-117) Nonetheless, in order to examine the potential for self-transformation of the discourse, together with the socially regenerative and context-negotiating aspects of communicative action, through a more empirically oriented approach, we note a specific, concrete struggle of our time.

Practical Discourse and Formation of Identities

The review of the U.S. feminist debate, as recently carried out by Fraser (1996), helps us illustrate the point. In the so-called first phase of the U.S. feminist debate, which lasted from the late 1960's through the mid-1980's, the axis equality/difference of gender tends to dominate the feminist dispute. In this first moment, as Fraser has examined, what main questions that divided them were, first, the nature and the causes of gender injustice, and, second, its appropriate remedy, hence, the meaning of gender equity¹¹. In their challenge of male authority, feminist women subjected a previously unexamined normative consensus to argumentative doubt, and undermined the legitimation of the traditional gender framework that previously exercised binding force. This represented a new configuration of the social learning, which affected not only public policy while storing it in the structures of the lifeworld, and transmitting it through socialization.

But what we might call the 'social learning' process through the communicative practices should be made theoretically clearer. Through the discursive approach, we are more aware of how the internal dynamics of the debate potentially bring the cultural perception and the recognition of the difference to a higher level, as the actors owe their mutual understandings to their own interpretations. Against the mainstream of U.S feminism, several voices have raised showing that such a discourse, focused exclusively on gender, was not feminism for all women, since it disregarded differences amongst women. As Fraser (1996) examines, African-American women, for example, raised their history from the slavery and resistance, from waged work and community activism, to contest the assumptions of universal female dependence on man and confinement to domesticity. Latin, Jewish and Asian-American feminists protested against the implicit reference to the white Anglo women in many central feminist texts. Lesbians tried to 'unmask' assumptions of normative heterosexuality in the classical feminist narratives related to mothering, sexuality and reproduction. The mainstream of American feminism, many voices came to ar-

gue, privileged the viewpoint of the white, Anglo, heterosexual middle-class women.

The discursive model allows us to resist, from the observers' viewpoint, the temptation, as Somers and Gibson have mentioned, to connect identities with what often slips into stable, 'essentialist', singular categories (like race, sex, or gender), as if they were pre-political or formed outside the bounds of social constitution (Somers & Gibson, 1994: 40). The general attack on radical earlier feminism, built upon the classification of sex roles and gender dependent differences, has led to a general awareness of the fallible nature of this feminist self-understanding, which has become progressively debatable and needy of revision. Yet, from the viewpoint of the participants in the debate, it is possible to say that the actors, upon actively seeking to make sense of their insertion in real situations, find themselves appealing to standards of value and treating them as having a certain ontological status. This is so because, according to this approach, that which supports our most basic evaluative intuitions in daily life is not an underlying principle of reason or even an overarching value or set of values that trumps all other, but rather a basic understanding of the way the world is. 'Every collective identity ... is much more concrete than the ensemble of moral, legal, and political principles around which they crystalize' (Habermas, 1992b: 241).

Life-histories and basic certainties of life offer a practical sense for individuals to establish boundaries present in the prevailing self-understandings of identities and their dispute. Practical discourses are ultimately rooted in real settings of the lifeworld. Habermas defends that discourse, while drawing from everyday experiences of the lifeworld, operates at a heightened level of awareness that is argumentative in nature and oriented towards reaching understanding¹². As he argues, practical discourse can become auto-reflexive over its own presupposition. When actors enter into a conflict affirming the identity that others have denied them, they are not only reasoning about their own preferences and desires as something utterly subjective. It is also an attempt to make the value in one's own personal and subjective experience objective in face of divergent commitments.

When engaged in argumentative practice, we attempt to justify the expressive aspects of our own feelings and points of view and articulate good reasons that make our position acceptable to others. As Simone Chambers has stated, "reason giving initiates a learning process in which participants acquire discursive skills. Participants are asked to defend their preferences in terms that others could find convincing. They are asked to look at their preferences from both the partial and impartial point of view". (Chambers, 1996: 190) If we want to achieve an intersubjective understanding and convince others, we must take the premisses and values of the others seriously into consideration. In practical discourse, we also submit our views to public scrutiny and cannot prevent the examination of our own beliefs. The language and the vocabulary by which we interpret our needs and communicate our feelings may externalize unreflected moral and cultural contents of our lifeworld. Through debate,

we capture the dimension of the experiences previously excluded from the discussion, are more aware of the way people feel and think, are challenged in the truth worthy of our particular evaluative perspective and auto-correct arguments. In this process, we arrive not precisely at a discovery of our 'real' interests, but at a 'collective interpretation' of the manner through which we should understand our most important interests. In this sense, the procedural dynamics of discourse brings into the foreground the pre-discursive knowledge and implicit value of a particular cultural context and tradition. That is the reason for which ethical discourses are considered simultaneously as processes of self-understanding and 'forums for the hermeneutic explanation' of value-orientations.

To say that discourse is a means through which the communicative action becomes reflexive and self-critical does not mean that it should arrive at a 'final' consensus, which would have to come to terms with the diverging views present in the dispute. On the contrary, the dynamics of debate can sharpen the divisions amongst groups and forms of life, which become increasingly differentiated from one another and unfamiliar in their distinctions. As has been pointed out above, the earlier feminist discourse, in the name of women's interest, has mistakenly universalized the specific situation of one particular category of woman and advanced the ideal identity of one particular category. It falsely extrapolated the conditions of life and the experience of the white, heterosexual, middle-class American women in narratives that were not adequate and could, in some cases, even harm other women. This did not promote female solidarity in general, but rather brought about rivalry and schism. The earlier feminist discourse expressed, other women maintained, cancelled implications of class hierarchy, ethnicity, race and sexuality that were endemic in American society.

Nonetheless, the development of feminist debate itself promoted an enlargement of the discursive dimension, opening up larger space for promoting self-understanding and mutual understanding. Once we have acknowledged the constitutive potential significance of identity formation, it is possible to appreciate the higher (collective) intersubjectivity constituted in the auto-reflexivity of the process of communication. Despite the prevailing diverging views regarding substantive questions and almost endless room for continuing the dispute, these provided a general understanding that gender differences could not be fruitfully discussed without the consideration of other intersecting difference axis. Thus, some implications can be drawn. The feminist discourse surpassed the cultural empirical context from which it emerged; its normative content was generalized, abstracted, and extended to an ideal communication community for verification and correction. The relevance of this is not only that the presence of other women's voices have made earlier feminists aware of the fallible nature of their claims, that is, the limitations of what they have so far judged to be true and worthwhile. Rather, the feminist discourse did not remain impervious to the interaction with the discourse of 'other' women, but had its internal premises modified. As Fraser has shown, the focus of the de-

bate has shifted from 'gender difference' to 'differences among women'. This idealizing extension of the premises and reversal of the interpretative perspective is seen as a new principle that reasserted itself on individual and collective reflection, steeped in particular groups and cultural lifeworlds. In this sense, ethic-political discourses, by invoking concrete subjects to participate in real discourses; it displays a potential for promoting a broader understanding that can be possibly achieved under limited conditions as well as a better empirical orientation for foreseeing the consequences and side-effects derived from following the established norms.

This surely does not mean that critical reflection itself dissolves power relations. Nonetheless, once the validity-questions have been thematised and the ability to pose validity-questions has been installed, a different type of power and authority is created. Once the spontaneous binding-force has been eroded, regulative functions are no longer performed, in the sense pointed out above by Laclau. Rather, as social norms previously invested with 'uncritical', ready-made and taken-for-granted authority are subjected to the argumentative power of language, social action is regulated less by background consensus than by normative agreement. When discourse becomes self-reflexive from the perspective of the participants themselves, the interpretative resources to appreciate differences and judge the validity claims shifts. This may promote new political cultural struggles orienting individual face-to-face interactions, debates in the public sphere as well as formal procedures of reaching agreement towards legal regulation. Yet, we should bear in mind that discourses can only influence the institutional complex; they do not replace it.

Mediatic and Dialogic Spaces: Towards Cultural Innovation

From such a theoretical framework, a crucial role may be credited to the reflexivity process opened up by media, enabling individuals to have some access to symbolic forms that are space-temporally distant and allowing them to engage in world-wide networks of communication. To bring one particular tradition in relation to other traditions increasing the contact amongst alien cultures, sets of practices, belief systems, paradigms, and life forms means enlarging potentially the way through which the formation of identity becomes more reflexive and open-ended. Through means of communication, different cultures meet and clash, suggesting greater cultural movement and complexity. Yet, whether this produces particular blends and identifications; whether provoking reactions that promote syncretism and hybridization or leading to heightened attempts to discover particularity, localism and difference remain empirical questions.

Despite abstractions and empirical difficulties, Habermas' theoretical framework, seems to provide useful means for developing an empirically relevant model of the reflexivity created by the process of mediatic reception integrated with the interactive and dialogic process of socio-cultural contexts. As

I have discussed above, Habermas' general approach avoids giving an essentialist and reified account of different types of community, and does not base the defense of cultural membership on the ground of a stable cultural community. It seems also to provide the necessary theoretical and moral resource to appreciate the value of cultural diversity, which, nonetheless, avoids radical cultural relativism. And finally, his conception of discourse allows for the possibility of transcending cultural contexts, while recognizing the contextualist objections that are limits to transcendence. In this sense, Habermasian theory provides some insights in dealing with certain difficulties and complexities underpinning studies of identities pointed out in the first section. From this broader theoretical background, which contains a more specific implication concerning media reflexive process, the field of mass communication studies can be extracted.

The point I want to stress, finally, is the way through which the habermasian framework opens the way for combining dialogic and mediatic space. As expounded above, the theorists of reflexivity have honed in on the manner in which media's symbolic forms disclose the world to people and communities in a relatively productive way, by offering different, perhaps rewarding, material to exercise reflection and critique of traditions, institutions, and practices. (Thompson, 1995: 209; Giddens, 1995; Lash, 1995; Beck, 1995) According to habermasian theoretical framework, we should make a clearer distinction between the level of linguistic articulation of the lifeworld background and the level of reaching understanding between communicatively acting subjects in terms of cultural innovation¹³. To be sure, media symbolic forms are received and processed individually, yet they need somehow to be publicly appropriated and discussed in order to be transformed into material of cultural innovation.

Very much in tune with the theorists of reflexivity, Habermas argues that we should see "communicative action as an element of a circular process in which the actor no longer appears as the initiator but rather as the product of the tradition within which she is situated, of solidary groups to which she belongs, of socialization and learning processes to which she is subjected. Only after this initial objectivating step does the network of communicative actions constitute the medium through which the lifeworld reproduces itself". (Habermas, 1998a: 246, *sic.*) Habermas makes clear that, in spite of the 'privacy of the individual reflection', the moment of thematization is composed of the motives and competencies of socialized individuals as well as cultural tradition and group solidarity. He emphasizes that persons, in this sense, remain internally linked – via grammatical relationships – with their culture, society and solidarity groups. Thinking (and the internal argumentation as thought-experiment exercise), should be conceived, in this perspective, as a necessarily intersubjective process, because it is the ever deficient and revisable interiorization of the public discourse¹⁴.

In other words, the new senses of identity that have been made possible by interpretation of mediated symbolic forms, in order to manifest themselves

as cultural and social innovations, need to be further developed by individuals in private areas of life as well as public spaces. This takes place at a level in which the validity of moral claims is always at stake and the moral content of the others' condition is submitted to validation.

The interaction between world-disclosure and innerworldly learning processes – an interaction that expands and alter meanings – takes place on the middle level where, within the horizon of their lifeworld, communicatively acting subjects reach understanding with one another about something in the world... Even a linguistically creative renewal of our view ... that allows us to see old problems in a completely new light does not fall out of the blue ... For world disclosing interpretative knowledge must continuously prove its truth; it must put acting subject in a position to come to grips with what happens to them in the world and to learn from mistakes. (Habermas, 1998b: 336-337)

In this sense, a new interactive dimension proper to social realm is required. The societal sphere is the domain where traditions are challenged and new limits to reproduction of cultural stock of knowledge and routines of systemic action are posed. A network of active relationship must consequently be built, allowing actors to assert problems, to thematize issues and to make visible actors' self-interpretations. For "without the hermeneutic appropriation and further development of cultural knowledge through persons, no tradition can develop or be maintained. To this extent, persons accomplish something for culture by way of their interpretative achievements". (Habermas, 1998a: 252)

This process points towards the suprasubjective learning effects that manifest themselves as cultural and social innovations. The reflexive moment in public discourse refers to the level of cultural understanding from whence the creative and transformative dimensions of moral consciousness have entered into a heightened awareness. As I have attempted to evince, once an identity becomes politicized, it plays the role of further differentiating boundaries, of cognitively producing justification for new recognition and understandings within and among groups. In this sense, the media, by providing an amplified mediated visibility, calls forth generalized spaces of discussion and the intermeshing of perspectives. While producing a type of anonymous public discussion, media allows the issues to be stretched out in many directions, generating small texts or compounding new texts into different contexts. Nonetheless, whether the claims of identity and difference will or will not be successful in providing for revision of the antecedent interpretative knowledge is something that ever stands on the understanding to be achieved and realised with others. And thus is the attempt to interfere in the ethical consensus that coordinates social interactions, condensing into new attitudes, modes of perception and identities.

Notes

This text is part of a research program carried out at Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, under the sponsorship of CNPq and FAPEMIG (Brazil).

1. A growing number of research has addressed many different theoretical problems related to media and the process of identity construction. See, Baker, 1997; Becker, 1995; Canclini, 1996; Featherstone, 1995; Featherstone at all. 1995; Giddens, 1995; Gillespie 1989, 1997; Lash, 1995; Melluci, 1996a, 1996b; Morley and Robins, 1995, Tanno and González, 1998; Thompson, 1995.
2. I am referring here to authors such as Bakhtin, Bourdieu (1992) Foucault (1986) and Habermas (1984, 1987), who, despite the differences between their theoretical approaches, have all taken the concept of discourse to establish a link between the study of language and the study of society, and to treat the complex dynamics between agency, structure and culture.
3. The interplay of global forces and local dispositions promoted by the rise of global media has been a central topic of inquiry from many different perspectives and scholars. See, Friedman (1994); Featherstone (1995a); Featherstone, et al. (1995); Morley and Robins (1995); Benko and Strohmayer (1997); Giddens (1990, 1991); Giddens et al. (1995); Beck (1995); Thompson (1995).
4. I am referring here to the notion of 'lifeworld'. In more precise terms, lifeworld can be seen as a framework of pre-comprehended meanings which can never be *integrally* objectified or made consciously, because all attempt to do so would need to base itself on new background assumptions, in a regression into the infinite. It would unwind a vast and unthinkable net of pre-assumptions that need to be met in order to decide whether an utterance has any meaning at all, this is to say, is valid or not (Habermas, 1998b: 335; Cooke, 1994: 51-95; Reh, 1997: 45-55; Holub, 1991: 8-14).
5. As many authors have investigated, individuals and communities can fall back on media products to re-enact traditions, conventions, and expectations against the backdrop of different conflicting traditions (Tanno and González, 1998; Baker, 1997); to challenge attempts of the State or elites to impose one collective identity in the guise of shared values (Shaw, 1996; Canclini, 1996); to recognize and distance themselves from the memories, interpretations, and assessment of their ethnic emigrant social grouping, while affirming their new intercultural identity (Gillespie, 1997, 1989; Tanno and González, 1998; Hedge, 1998).
6. I am referring here specially to a segment of critics who, while operating in a broad Habermasian framework, have been contributing to discuss some of the author's weaknesses and shortcomings, such as Thomas McCarthy (1993), Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato (1992a), Seyla Benhabib (1996b) and Nancy Fraser (1993, 1997).
7. For a recent review of Habermas' presentation of social order as a network of mutual cooperation and negotiation, see Cooke, 1998: 1-21; for some further clarifications on different roots of rationality involved, see Habermas, 1998b: 307-42.
8. Discourses are idealised argumentation situations in the sense that they are typically counterfactual and will not, as a rule, be satisfied more than proximately. In the *Theory of Communicative Action*, Habermas had restricted the term 'discourse' to forms of argumentation that deal with validity claims to truth and moral validity, through which discursively achieved universal consensus is (in principle) possible (Habermas, 1984: 42). By the end of 1980s, Habermas has extended the category

of discourse to include discussion of ethical questions (and indeed, pragmatic questions). The supposition is that, individuals, in everyday communicative practices, already display both general intuitions that can be rationally reconstructed and competencies to give reasons for and against contested validity claims, following an intrinsic logic of moral reasoning, which points towards more demanding forms of argumentation proper of the discourse (Habermas, 1994a: 125; 1998b: 333-334).

9. The discursive process provides a kind of rationalization for every time we make a moral statement, we are implying that we have good reasons to hold such a position. There would make no sense to justify a recommendations, a commands or an action (to denounce an act of discrimination, defend a type of behaviour or claim the right to do something), if we assume that the motives behind our position are irrational or at best arbitrary. In arguing with others about moral questions, we act not only as if we had good reasons to sustain our moral convictions but also as if such arguments could be generally recognized. We assume that we can convince others with reasons, not because they are *our* reasons, but because they are *good* reasons. In discourse, participants want to come to an understanding with others, in order to resolve through reasons impasses or differences in points of view.
10. For a theory of intersubjective moral insight see Rehg 1997; for problems related to the commensurability of the discourse amongst different 'horizons of significance' given by a certain language and tradition, see Cooke, 1997: 258-288; Delanty, 1997: 30-59; Rosa, 1996: 39-60; Benhabib, 1996b: 84-89.
11. According to Fraser (1996), 'equality feminists' tended to see gender difference as an instrument and artefact of male dominance, which deprived them of fair share of essential social goods, such as income, jobs, property, health, education, autonomy, respect, sexual pleasure, bodily integrity and physical safety. Gender difference appeared to be inextricable from sexism. Therefore, their main goal was to displace the shackles of 'difference' and establish equality, bringing women and men under a common measure. In the late 1970's equality feminists challenged such view, arguing that it pushed women into traditionally male pursuits and, therefore, uncritically adopted the biased masculinist view at expense of women devaluation. What needed to be *recognized* was gender difference in order to find the best measures to do justice to women.
12. To be sure, 'reaching understanding' does not imply 'convergence' and 'consensus'. Reaching agreement (*Einverstaendnis*) is not, according to Habermas, the primary function of language, since it already presupposes practices of '*Verstaendigung*', of understanding one another. Reaching agreement does not in any immediate way entail 'consent' (the mechanism by which the speech acts co-ordinate social interaction). Nor need it issue 'consensus' or 'agreement', since shared understandings may, in fact, ground profound disagreements and misunderstandings (Cooke, 1998: 2-3; Johnson, 1994: 432). The communicative consensus is the normative ideal: one that equally respects each individual as source of claims and opinions as well as basing itself entirely on the possibility of discursive resolution of problems. A normative assured 'consensus', on the other hand, would be one that somehow blocks the critical process, the communicative dialogue (White, 1988: 102; Habermas, 1998b).
13. Such a distinction seems useful to avoid slipping into the conception of persons as 'carrier' of culture, as some kind of receptacle (as proposed by the philosophy of

the subject), and thus re-introducing surreptitiously the very conception the theorists of reflexivity have set out to reject.

14. For this point see, Habermas, 1993: 51-53 and Benhabib, 1996b: 83-94.

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Contested Meanings

Audience Studies and the Concept of Cultural Identity

André Jansson

The concept of cultural identity has been put to the fore primarily because its meaning is no longer self-evident. Due to the social and cultural changes of modernity, people's sense of belonging has in many cases become more ambivalent and, hence, put into question. Globalisation, mediasation and the liberation of previously marginalized social groups are examples of processes that together have contributed to the problematisation of (cultural) identity. Therefore, the growing body of research dealing with these questions is primarily to be considered as a symptom of the increasing complexity of contemporary society.

In this context it is important to analyse the functions and meanings of media. The expansion and differentiation of the media system is one important feature of the post-industrial period of modernity. Since the process of social differentiation has been accompanied by a further specialization of the media output, media use has become more individualized, and hence also more group specific. It is no longer possible to nourish a unified national culture around a unified flow of media messages or mediated cultural symbols, as it was for example during the early days of broadcasting in most European countries (cf. Scannell, 1992; Morley and Robins, 1995: 37-42). Instead, mass media have gained increasing importance as a symbolic energizer of smaller and spatially dispersed cultural communities. The internationally distributed and highly commercialised media messages contribute to the creation of lifestyles that are not locally anchored – lifestyles that, nevertheless, are sources of cultural identity.

It seems reasonable to argue that the concepts of lifestyle and cultural identity together constitute one important link between the micro and the macro contexts of media consumption (cf. Reimer, 1997). However, in spite of the culturalistic turn within audience studies, the concept of cultural identity has scarcely been given any precise definition. Even if several research projects have actually dealt with questions that more or less explicitly are termed 'questions of cultural identity' (cf. Liebes and Katz, 1989; Gillespie, 1996; Gonzales, 1997), definitions of this very concept have customarily been absent. Behind

this lies the fact that most studies primarily have focused on particular national, ethnic or religious groups – a condition which implies that the notions of cultural identity have been based on a pre-given set of factors. On the other hand, there are also examples of studies, which have concentrated on specific aspects of identity, for example ‘gender identities’, and hence implicitly may have contributed to a broader understanding of *cultural* identity as well (cf. Hobson, 1982; Modleski, 1982; Ang, 1985). In order to work out a comprehensive theory of cultural identity these ambiguities must be solved. We need a theoretical definition that is open to plurality and changes.

The aim of this article is twofold: First, through a literary exposé, I will try to come to terms with the meaning of *cultural identity*. How shall the concept be theoretically defined? Second, I want to make an analysis of how the concept of cultural identity (as I define it) is related to media use. What does the interaction look like? And how shall the concept of cultural identity be approached within audience studies?

Identity and the Cultural

Since the term *cultural identity* consists of two contested words, it is not surprising that it has been used in various ways in different contexts – and often without any explicit definition. In the preface to the book *Questions of Cultural Identity* (Hall and du Gay, 1996), which is based on the contributions to a series of seminars at the Open University, the editors state that the aim of the volume is not to provide a complete account of the concept of cultural identity: ‘Rather, the collection aims to open up a wide range of significant questions and possible lines of analysis.’ Consequently, concerning the definition of cultural identity, the book raises more questions than it answers. The articles are very heterogeneous depending on whether they emphasize ‘culture’ or ‘identity’, as well as depending on the very meaning of ‘culture’ and ‘identity’. In my view, the book serves as a good reflection of the quite fragmentary state of research.

This example suggests that it may be fruitful to discuss the two semantic components ‘culture’, or ‘the cultural’, and ‘identity’ separately. Through such a double problematisation it will be easier to distinguish between cultural identity and, on the one hand, concepts like ‘social identity’ and ‘collective identity’, and, on the other hand, concepts like ‘cultural community’. To start with identity, is to start at the core.

Identity: Questions of Relatedness and Separatedness

Even if the nature of human identity is contested, within the extensive literature on the theme there seems to be one key idea that is pervading, almost irrespective of research tradition: The processes of identity creation concerns

the relation between self and society, or the self and the Other. This is true for most psychoanalytical theories of individuation and integration, as well as for sociological and social psychological theories, discussing the relationship between individuals and collective communities.

Within psychoanalysis the definitions of identity have very often been derived from analyses of personal development among small children and adolescents – the processes of individuation and integration – or of personality disturbances, such as narcissism. These two areas of research are likewise connected to each other, since an individual's sense of well-being depends on the relation between individuation and integration. In order to establish a balanced self, the individual has to experience both a sense of autonomous existence (through individuation), and a sense of belonging in the social world (through integration). Even if the interplay between individuation and integration is most apparent, or even critical, during early childhood and adolescence (cf. Erikson, 1959; Blos, 1962; Jacobson, 1964), the same process is also important later in life. During all stages of life the individual has to balance between separatedness and relatedness (Lichtenstein, 1977), or between the development of a personal and a social aspect of identity. The establishment of a coherent sense of identity depends on whether there exists a correspondence between the individual's perception of herself as, on the one hand, an autonomous human being, and, on the other hand, an incorporated part of social life. In this way all people, theoretically, live under the threat of losing their identity; either through a return to a kind of symbiotic phase (total integration), or through social isolation (total separation) (ibid: 184).

Additionally, the intricate balancing between separatedness and relatedness leads to a paradoxical state of incompleteness. Identity is never a finished project – an issue that Simmel discussed from a sociological standpoint already in 1908 (1968: 21-30). In Simmel's words we are all fragments of, or attempts to, our own identity. Since our personal character is not only individually experienced, but to a certain extent exists in the eyes of the Other, we can never be our identity. This means that identity always remains an imaginative construction; an absolute convergence between the individual experience and the external views of the self is impossible.

A corresponding point was made within the social interactionism of Mead a few decades later. In the book *Mind, Self and Society* (1934), Mead discusses the importance of 'generalized Others' within the process of individual self-development. To become a social being, the individual has to reflect upon how his or her existence is perceived in the eyes of the social group which he or she belongs to. The assumed attitudes and values of the social context – either a group or an integral society – are, hence, representations of the 'generalized Other'. Without the ability to make this self-reflection, distinguishing between 'I' and 'me', the individual will not be able to adapt to the social world.

Mead's discussion tells us that although identity may always be an unfinished project, or an idealization, the individual can all the same maintain *a sense of identity*, based on self-reflection; that is, an act of interpretation

through which the subject tries to adjust the personal and the social aspects of identity into a coherent form (cf. Holzner, 1973/1978: 298-302). Consequently, self-reflection is something that all people are involved in continuously in everyday life, trying to adapt to the various social situations they encounter (see also Goffman, 1974).

It is in this context we find the reasons for why identity has become an increasingly problematised concept; the Western processes of modernization have made the social adaptation process a more difficult task. Since society has become more differentiated and dynamic, the relation between separatedness and relatedness must be more frequently reflected upon than before. "*Who am I?*" and "*Where do I belong?*" are significant questions of modern identities. As Stephen Mennell (1994: 179-180) stresses, the traditional interactionist theories have to be reworked to better suit the complexities of contemporary social life. 'The generalized other' is far from unitary, and exists to a greater extent beyond the face-to-face group or the locally fixed community. I will return to these complexities in sections below.

The Cultural: Questions of Signification and Interpretation

An important aspect of the culturalistic turn within social science in general, and audience studies in particular, is a revised ontological perspective on the concept of culture. Instead of approaching culture solely as expressive products (like music or literature), or as groups of people sharing the same values, language, habits etc., culture has been studied as people's meaningful social practices (Bocock, 1992: 234). This definition has emerged through the development of cultural studies and the interest in the everyday life of ordinary people, and is thus connected to the discourse that most intensely has come to focus on the questions of contemporary identities. Consequently, this definition also seems to be the one, which is best suited to describe what 'the cultural' in cultural identity is.

The advantages of tracing culture to people's meaningful practices have been clearly articulated within recent anthropological literature – contrasting this conceptualisation from the notion of culture as a shared set of meanings among a delimited group of people. In the latter form the concept of culture converges with the concept of community. As Baumann (1996: 191) points out, to equate culture and community is a way of reifying culture, turning it into a stable entity instead of a contested process of meaning creation. We may then, for example, speak of 'our culture' as opposed to 'their culture', falsely implicating a sharp borderline and an internal cultural homogeneity that rarely exists (cf. Marcus, 1992: 315-316; Keesing, 1994; Featherstone, 1995: 102-108). As Keesing (1994: 302-303) argues, notions of symbolic meaning cannot simply be assumed to be shared within a certain group of people, since there will always be cultural encounters, leading to internal and external tensions and thereby to a successive transformation of cultural patterns. It is no longer use-

ful to perceive of culture as a rigid structure, manifested through public ceremonies and rituals, as was the case in the early, essentialist anthropological investigations of foreign tribes and communities. The focus has, for good reasons, shifted to the creation and negotiation of meaning within people's day-to-day activities.

To state that culture fundamentally is about meaning production is not a controversial move, however. In a similar manner Clifford Geertz in his classical essay *Thick Description* (1973/1993:5) gives an essentially semiotic oriented description of culture, considering culture as the 'webs of significance' spun between people through their own social actions. To study cultural phenomena anthropologically is to search for the complexities of meaning underlying these social actions and the various artefacts that accompany them. Hence, the web metaphor is very fruitful, since it doesn't leave us with the illusion that there can exist unitary and clearly demarcated cultures.

To illustrate the task of ethnography, Geertz (1973/1993: 5-10) uses an example from Gilbert Ryle about the many possible meanings of a wink. What in one situation could be nothing but a quick, involuntary twitch with the eye, could in another situation be a very deliberate signal to a special person, *meaning* something more than the mere physical movement. Depending on whether the two persons are aware of the same cultural code system or not, the intended gesture will be understood or misunderstood. And, the other way around, a simple twitch may be ascribed a meaning that was not at all intended. In the cultural life of ordinary people, webs of significance are continuously worked upon, or negotiated, giving rise to sophisticated expressions like irony, parody or understatements. Ethnography, through interpretation and thick description, has the aim of understanding these webs and sorting them out. What is behind the wink? And behind that?

In this context there are obvious connections between Geertz' interpretative anthropology and the hermeneutics of, for example, Gadamer. In Gadamer's (1976:100-102) words, there can never be a final interpretation, since the interpretation is always 'on its way' (*unterwegs*). This is true both for the hermeneutic praxis of people's everyday life – in their striving to make sense of the world – and for hermeneutics as scientific task. If one equates every cultural phenomenon with a verbal sentence, which could be seen as the archetype of meaning production, the insights of hermeneutics tell us that every such sentence must be seen as an answer to a question. And the only way to understand this sentence is to search for the question which it is an answer to. This is how people's everyday practices become cultural; through the continuous and never completed interplay between signification and interpretation. This is also why all cultural research in itself must be interpretative; the dynamic character of culture makes any search for absolute laws pointless. Since the aim is to understand the meanings of social practices, the researcher has to ground his analytical work in people's lived experience. Both in ethnography and hermeneutics the difficult task becomes to transpose oneself into the situation of the other – making one's own interpretative horizon converge with

the other's (Gadamer, 1960/1989: 300-307). Consequently, cultural analyses will always remain unfinished interpretations of interpretations.

However, neither cultural praxis (referring to both signification and interpretation), nor cultural research can be described as without any kind of structure. Since 'the cultural' emanates from people's wishes to understand each other, it cannot arise in a social vacuum, but only through the symbolic exchange between people. This implies that culture is never an individual matter. Instead, the continuous cultural praxis creates more or less structured webs of significance – or interpretative communities, to use Stanley Fish's (1980) concept. The existence of such communities is the very foundation of people's ability to attain a certain degree of intersubjective understanding. Even if it perhaps would be too much to say that a person is never alone in making a certain interpretation of a certain expression, since every individual has a unique biography and thereby unique cultural experiences, it is clear that the social interaction within a society always leads to the development of shared schemes of basic cultural interpretation. It is a required condition if a fake-wink shall be understood as a fake-wink.

To stress the importance of interpretative communities is, nevertheless, very different from speaking of 'cultures'. As I stated above, it is an act of simplification to outline sharp borderlines, even between groups, which are very distinct concerning their cultural frames of references. This way of reasoning emanates often from a reductionist, as well as traditional, view of what constitutes culture. For example, it is a very widespread notion that culture primarily is about language, religion, race, and ethnicity – while the above discussion tells us something else. Culture is about meaning, and what becomes meaningful is determined from the relation between signification and interpretation.

Cultural Identity as Hermeneutic Relatedness

After having described what I consider to be the key features of identity on the one hand and the cultural on the other, I can now give a more precise definition of cultural identity. Cultural identity, in my view, is the subjective experience of being part of a so called interpretative, or cultural, community. If the creation of the personal and social aspects of identity is about balancing relatedness (integration) and separatedness (individuation), and thus establish a sense of personal coherence, then the creation of cultural identity is about making the integrative aspect hermeneutically meaningful. Cultural identity is about being recognized as a hermeneutic being (cf. Taylor, 1994), and thereby experience what may be called *hermeneutic relatedness*. Hence, cultural identity can never – although situated in the individual – be the correlate of separatedness, since people's hermeneutic praxis is always connected to, or emanating from, social interaction. This idea corresponds essentially to Charles

Taylor's (1994) view of human identity as dialogic in character, based on internalized symbolic skills.

What is important to stress, and what makes cultural identity complex, is that people never experience an entirely homogeneous and stable cultural identity. This is due to two interconnected conditions: First, it is clear that cultural communities, perceived as networks, are rarely unitary in themselves. As explained above, there are both internal and external contradictions. Second, every individual is to some extent involved in more than one single interpretative community. For example, it is possible to – in ideal terms – speak about a Swedish cultural community, based on a certain language, certain codes of behaviour and so on. But a person cannot only be a Swede. He or she may also be involved in the Christian church, the trade union and the supporter club of IFK Göteborg – all examples of established communities that condition certain cultural code systems. Like all other individuals, consequently, the 'Christian working class football fan', is experiencing a plural and dynamic cultural identity.

Since cultural communities are established through the interplay between signification and interpretation, the same must be true also for cultural identity. That is, the individual's sense of belonging to a cultural community demands a situation in which he is able to understand the intersubjectively established sign system, as well as making himself understood as a member of the community. The latter circumstance is especially interesting from a scientific point of view, because it suggests that *expressions of cultural identity* may be observed – as is the case within ethnography. In this matter I agree with Kirsten Drotner (1996: 12), who suggests that cultural identity may be 'analysed as socially located articulations of meaning, articulations that are produced via various sign systems so as to form interpretative repertoires of "who I am"'.

However, it would be naive to assume that all components of cultural identity are expressed or signified in a similar manner or with the same strength, and that the researcher therefore could be able to grasp the truth of a person's cultural identity through mere observation. Some aspects of cultural identity may be constantly repressed. Other aspects may be expressed only within a certain spatial, temporal or social context. This means that although a person has the cultural skill to understand (through adequate interpretation) and to be understood (through adequate expression) within a cultural community, there most often exists an opportunity to choose whether to express or not to express. To express a component of cultural identity – for example by wearing an IFK Göteborg scarf – is to make it interpretable in the eyes of other people.

The example of the football supporter can also be extended in order to illustrate the multi-layered character of cultural identities. If we presume that the young Swedish supporter is walking down the street of Glasgow, on his way to a football match between Glasgow Rangers and IFK Göteborg, it is likely that only a few people that he meets would recognize him as a supporter of that very team. Many people would perhaps categorize him as a 'football sup-

porter from somewhere else than Glasgow', while others might think of him as 'a person who like a particular sports team'. And perhaps – just to take this example to its end point – in the eyes of persons without any interest in sports he might in some cases be considered a 'crazy youngster who is wearing a scarf in the midst of summer'. This example shows how the expressions of cultural identity may be ascribed different meanings depending on the cultural context in which the hermeneutic process takes place. It also shows how hard it is to identify any sharp borderlines between cultural communities: *Exactly how interested in football are you?*

One distinction that I, nevertheless, think is fruitful to make – at least on a theoretical level – is to distinguish cultural communities and cultural identities from *expressive communities* and *expressive identities*. If the former concerns the *ability* to make meaningful interpretations and expressions among other people, the latter concerns whether any group specific expressions *are really made*. If we study the expressions of football supporters at a football arena – including gestures, verbal behaviour, clothes and so on – we may conclude that most of them, at least in that very moment, are part of an expressive community, experiencing a shared expressive identity. However, just as in the case of cultural communities, we may also discern more narrow expressive communities. To notice the difference between the supporters of Glasgow Rangers and IFK Göteborg is an easy task in this context.

It seems reasonable to argue that the concept of expressive identity is related to cultural identity as the written or spoken word is related to language. As cultural beings all people have the opportunity to use or not to use learned code systems for expressive purposes. To express or not to express certain aspects of cultural identity is a decision of whether to participate in the game of difference or not – a decision which is more about being unlike the Others than being like one's cultural compatriots (cf. Rapoport, 1981: 14-9; Schlesinger, 1987: 235; Morley, 1992: 76-79; Calhoun, 1994: 20-26; Mennell, 1994; Featherstone, 1995: 110; Hall, 1996: 3-4).

The Significance of Cultural Identity in Late Modernity

As I pointed out in the introduction, the reasons for why cultural identity has become increasingly problematised during the last few decades, may be traced to the extended processes of modernization. In the Western world the relation between individual and society is today more ambivalent than ever before, since the power of macro-structures has weakened and the individual has become more mobile – in social and cultural, as well as spatial terms. In this chapter I will present the main patterns of these social and cultural changes, primarily based on the analyses of Berger et al. (1973) and Giddens (1991). Connecting these theories to my above discussion of the nature of cultural identity, I will argue that contemporary cultural theory must become more open to the multi-layered character of cultural identity.

The Pluralised Society and the Pluralised Self

When approaching the problem of identity creation in late modernity, it is fruitful to take the following statements, quoted from Kluckhohn and Murray (1948:35), as a point of departure:

Every man is in certain respects

- (a) like all other men
- (b) like some other men
- (c) like no other man

This is of course a truism. Hardly no one would deny that every individual to a certain extent is unique, but all the same has something in common with all other human beings – more with some people than with others. As I have explained above, the interplay between separatedness and relatedness, between individualism and collectivism, is an essential ingredient within all theories of identity. But Kluckhohn and Murray's three statements can also be interpreted as three stages of social development. Even if all three statements to some degree have been true in all times, the theoretical discourse of modernization and post-modernization suggests that society have become more individualized. Thus, men and women of today are said to be more like no other man or woman than was common in earlier days. Structural forces like kinship, religion and traditions have lost their determining potential concerning people's identities, and locally anchored communities have lost their stability, due to industrialization and urbanization. Altogether, the societal transformations of modernity have come to mean that people's identities are no longer pre-given, but more often problematised (cf. Giddens, 1991; Beck, 1992).

The process of individualization is intrinsically connected to what Berger et al. (1973: 63-82) have called the *pluralization of life-worlds*. The assertion of this concept is that modern people increasingly are alternating between various social arenas. Compared to pre-modern society, in which people lived in more stable and integrated communities, the features of modernity are social plurality and mobility. People have got more specialized jobs, they live and work in separate places, they travel in their free time, they attend public events and so on. Consequently, the typical modern, urbanized individual may during one single day pass through a range of situations and contexts, which all demand of him certain interpretations and certain modes of behaviour, or 'presentations of self' (to use Goffman's phrase). This implies that contemporary people have to be culturally very dynamic, in order to cope with their complex life environment. There is no longer a single scheme of interpretation that transcends the culturally diverse segments of everyday life (Berger et al., 1973: 64):

[...] compared with modern societies, most earlier ones evinced a high degree of integration. Whatever the differences of various sectors of social life, these would 'hang together in an order of integrating meaning that included them all. This integrating order was typically religious. For the individual this meant quite simply that the same integrative symbols permeated the various sectors of

his everyday life. Whether with his family or at work or engaged in political processes or participating in festivity and ceremonial, the individual was always in the same 'world'.

As indicated in this quote, the pluralisation of life-worlds is not an entirely social transition; it is a cultural transition as well. Since people's everyday lives have become socially segmented, the necessity of continuous cultural alteration has increased – leading to a corresponding dispersion and pluralisation of cultural identity (cf. Marcus, 1992: 315-316).

Another important reason to the problematisation of cultural identity, connected to the cultural pluralisation of everyday life, is the pluralisation of choice (Giddens, 1991: 80-88). People's life careers are today relatively open, due to the weakening power of traditions and historically derived patterns of life. This is true in connection to work and family as well as leisure time. Young people have a greater freedom to make life plans that diverge from their parents' experiences and from the prevalent choices of the local community. The opportunities of attending higher education or taking jobs abroad are typically modern phenomena that most Western people are aware of and might consider. However, this kind of individual choices are also the cause of conflicts and frustration (cf. Holzner, 1978: 293; Beger et al., 1973: 69-70). Many people have to prioritise within their own lives, for example between a job career and family life, perhaps leading to a feeling of regret or guilt. In other cases, on the contrary, the possibility to fulfil one's internalised dreams and plans may show up as nothing but an illusion, since the opportunities of choice are still unevenly distributed between social groups.

In general, however, late modern society offers the individual a broadened range of choices. But while the individual, in Giddens' (1991: 81) words, has 'no choice but to choose', it is at the same time obvious that society offers very limited guidance as to which options should be selected. In order to cope with this complex and somehow confusing situation, the individual has to work out a sort of strategy of life; to establish a certain degree of routinisation of practices. This is what Giddens put into the concept of *lifestyle*. Concerning both smaller decisions of everyday life and more consequential ones, the late modern individual is forced to uphold a meaningful coherence and continuity of existence. Otherwise, his or her sense of ontological security (a concept similar to personal identity) will get damaged.

Relating Giddens discussion of lifestyles to my previous definition of cultural identity, I contend that the emerging significance of lifestyle creation can be seen as a way of coping with a plural and contested cultural identity (though Giddens himself never mentions the latter concept). Through the development of a coherent lifestyle, that is making different kinds of practices and attributes fit together, even the ultimate post-traditional being can manage to experience ontological security. However, within highly pluralized and dynamic life contexts, significantly within metropolitan spaces, this development calls for a sophisticated kind of self reflection. People's endeavour of being recognized as hermeneutic beings, members of certain cultural communities,

becomes an intricate reflexive task. The lifestyle creation is therefore essentially a matter of being like some people and unlike others – a cultural strategy in the game of difference. The lifestyle is to be considered as the structuring principle that governs which aspects of cultural identity that shall be accentuated and expressed.

A Multi-Dimensional Perspective on Cultural Identity

According to the above discussions, there seems to be strong arguments that cultural identity has become something increasingly problematic, as well as something increasingly important to study. Then, from a scientific point of view, the following question emerges: How to approach and comprehend this precarious phenomenon? So far, I have outlined a theoretical definition of cultural identity – a definition that has the strength of being open to both cultural and social changes. But in order to gain substantial knowledge of how cultural identities really are created and re-created, we also require a strategy of *how to think* of the concept in the time being.

The main point I would like to make in this connection is that any notion of cultural identity must be multi-dimensional in nature. In the anthropological literature there has traditionally been a general tendency of discussing the concept of cultural identity only when it is a problematic feature of 'the Other', that is, when studying people or groups that in Western eyes are considered as 'foreign cultures' (cf. Keesing, 1994). In a similar manner, within media studies cultural identity has been a convenient term to use when discussing the influence of Western culture in the developing world (cf. Mattelart et al., 1984; Canclini, 1997) or when studying the culture of immigrant groups in Western countries (cf. Gillespie, 1995; Baumann, 1996). My aim is not to make any theoretical attack on these studies, since they have contributed to a broader understanding of the nature of contemporary multiculturalism. Rather, I would suggest that this kind of clearly demarcated analyses must be complemented with an inquiry of crosswise character, trying to grasp the multi-layered character of cultural identity. The doors should be left open for the influence of other aspects of cultural identity than ethnicity, nationality, language and religion.

To achieve this open-mindedness, the study of cultural identities has to consider the concept from two different angles (though not necessarily simultaneously): First, there has to prevail a dynamic interpretation of the cultural-contextual *situatedness* of cultural identity; that is, to analyze the plural constitution of cultural identities at a special moment in time. Second, there has to be a focus on the *narrativity* of cultural identity, illuminating its processual development. Since cultural identity is evolving through the cultural experiences people make during their life, the foundations of its character may be found in people's memories.

As an example of how to approach the cultural-contextual dimension, I will refer to the concept of *cultural referent*, introduced by Renato Ortiz (1997)

in the article *World Modernity and Identities*. This concept is explicitly supporting the idea of cultural multi-dimensionality (ibid: 38):

Thus, I can propose a preliminary definition of identity: it is a symbolic construction made in relation to a referent. The types of referent can clearly vary: they are multiple – a culture, the nation, an ethnic group, a colour or a gender. But in any case, identity is the result of a symbolic construction that has these as reference points. Strictly speaking, it makes little sense to look for the existence of ‘one’ identity; it would be more correct to think of it in terms of its interaction with other identities, constructed according to other points of view.

Although Ortiz speaks about ‘identity’ in general, rather than cultural identity, and uses the word ‘culture’ in a traditional, reifying way, the essential argument is very applicable to the condition of late modernity. To me, the idea of cultural referents seems to be a good way to understand how cultural identities are created in a pluralized social context. Referring to Giddens’ notion of ‘disembeddedness’, Ortiz states that social relations are no longer limited to local interaction, primarily due to the development of communication technology. This new situation implies that the significance of the nation as a cultural referent has become contested by other, locally unfixed communities. Particularly the globalization of culture has engendered new referents of identity; for example internationally distributed and consumed youth cultures. Hence, the creation of cultural identities are increasingly ‘deterritorialized’ – negotiated not only in relation to the physically present social context, but also in relation to mediated cultural products (cf. Berger et al., 1973: 66; Giddens, 1991: 23-27; Kellner, 1992, 1995: 231-262; Featherstone, 1995: 114-118; Gillespie, 1995: 175-204; Canclini, 1997: 28).

The usefulness of studying the narrativity of identities has been proposed by for example Somers and Gibson (1994) and Finnegan (1997). In congruence with the ideas of Ortiz, Somers and Gibson (1994: 40) state that ‘we must reject the temptation to conflate identities with what can often slide into fixed “essentialist” (pre-political) singular categories, such as those of race, or gender’. In order to avoid this reductionism the narrative approach uses ‘relationality’ as an important analytic variable, focusing on the various and fluctuating socio-cultural relations that an individual upholds during different life-episodes. This view of identity formation is much more dynamic than to conceive of people as associated with specific and stable communities, connected to certain cultural interests and characteristics. Which factors, or referents, that are important within different stages of life, are rarely similar to those which are imputed to people from an academic point of view. Rather, the meanings of identities are embedded in the stories and relationships that people themselves consider as essential (ibid: 67). As Marcus (1992: 316) emphasizes, the past that is present in individual and collective memory is ‘the crucible for the local self-recognition of an identity’.

The Mediasation of Culture

The development of mass media and new information technologies is to be seen as one of the most significant forces behind the pluralisation of contemporary society. As I have already mentioned, the expansion and diversification of media products have created opportunities for people to negotiate their cultural identities in new ways. An increasing share of people's cultural frames of reference is derived through the uses of media. Then, when speaking of the 'mediasation of culture' I am referring to the process through which mediated cultural products have gained importance as cultural referents, and thereby contribute to the development of new cultural communities. In the following two sections I will present the most important features of this process.

New Senses of Community

Mass media's potential to create and nourish cultural communities has often been discussed in relation to already demarcated social groups, for example 'the British people' (cf. Scannell, 1992), or 'the European people' (cf. Morley and Robins, 1995). Through the use of mass media, these kinds of groups have been given the adequate cultural material to reinforce a sense of shared cultural identity. The typical example in this context is the former function of national broadcasting. As the range of programming for a long time was very limited in most European countries, both radio and television could gather vast national audiences to listen to or watch the same content. To use Benedict Anderson's (1983) term; people became part of an 'imagined community'. Although they did not interact socially, they could share a common, national frame of reference.

But since the mass media system has turned more international and commercial, the patterns have started to change. For example, in Sweden most people in the late 1980's could still watch only two public service television channels, and only listen to three public service radio channels. Today the situation is considerably different: Commercial television stations have been introduced, and most households can watch several internationally distributed channels via cable or a satellite dish. Moreover, many local and regional radio stations have been launched, most of them commercial. This situation is not a specifically Swedish phenomenon, but an indication of a general process of internationalisation and commercialisation. All over the world people's cultural environments are changing quite rapidly.

Hence, mass media of today do not only nourish the cultural patterns of pre-existing communities; they also contribute to the establishment of new, deterritorialised ones. While it becomes more difficult to maintain a national cultural community – since the differentiated media output rather sustains a polarization between specialized audience segments (Reimer, 1998) – people can experience new senses of community through the sharing of a lifestyle and a certain cultural taste. Such communities are significantly trans-national and developed in relation to popular culture, including advertising. In this regard

the media function as an 'image bank' from which individuals may adopt specific cultural attributes according to lifestyle (cf. Kellner, 1995: 257):

My analyses thus suggest that in a postmodern image culture, the images, scenes, stories, and cultural texts of media culture offer a wealth of subject positions which in turn help structure individual identity. These images project role and gender models, appropriate and inappropriate forms of behavior, style and fashion, and subtle enticements to emulate and identify with certain identities while avoiding others.

Kellner's analysis corresponds to my previous discussion of the lifestyle as a strategy in the game of difference. In relation to media, the lifestyle functions as a kind of 'cultural filter', deciding which images to look for and which images to incorporate as identity defining features. Hence, while media in general support the development of *cultural communities*, there is no doubt that visual media in particular, like magazines and television, have come to play a crucial role for the development of *expressive communities* (cf. Featherstone, 1991: 66-72; Gibbins and Reimer, 1995). In this context I would even argue that the reflexive media culture (intrinsically connected to consumer culture) has lead to the development of a range of *peripheral* interpretative communities, which are hermeneutically accessible only to limited groups of people. As the mediated experiences of distant, even fictive, realities have increased, there has also emerged a larger symbolic battery for cultural distinction. The number of expressive communities, which all try to create specific cultural codes and thereby distinguish themselves from other communities, has increased – a situation which implies that more cultural products are produced and distributed only to make sense within specialized groups. As Lash and Urry (1994: 111-23) point out, a new reflexivity within the culture industries resembles the cultural reflexivity of late modern individuals.

What becomes paradoxical within this development, however, is that the more mediated experiences people potentially can use to create their cultural identity, and the larger the intersubjectively shared life-world becomes – the more cultural symbols will remain beyond the horizon of interpretation. This is, for example, obvious in advertising: the advertiser presumes that the target group has the adequate cultural competence, the adequate hermeneutic skills, to make the 'right' interpretation of the message. This balance between encoding and decoding has become especially intricate since the advent of lifestyle advertising, in which informative arguments have been replaced by an image based game of connotations (Leiss et al., 1997: 225-84) or intertextual relations (cf. Fowles, 1996: 90-3). But if the advertisement reaches the wrong target group, or if the characteristics of the target group diverge from the presumption – then the message will perhaps make no sense at all.

Consequently, mass media's role in the creation of cultural identities is getting increasingly complex the more comprehensive and diverse the output is, and the more media use becomes a natural element of people's everyday lives. The cultural influence of mass media is not as direct and as uniform as was for

example argued by the early media imperialist thinkers of the 1960's and 1970's (cf. Schiller, 1969, 1974; Mattelart, 1974/1980, 1976/1979). Their main thesis – that the global distribution of mass produced American popular culture erodes the authentic cultural patterns of other countries, hence leading to a gigantic process of Americanisation – is clearly diverging from the hermeneutic notion of culture which I have presented above. It totally neglects the interactive and negotiated character of the cultural. It, paradoxically, denies the existence of those cultural patterns that American culture is assumed to wipe out. Several empirical studies have later demonstrated how media use is embedded in a complex web of social and cultural relations, which makes its consequences difficult to interpret, and more so to predict: Martín-Barbero (1988) has through studies in South America found how a range of conditions in people's everyday lives influence their uses of mass media; Katz and Liebes (1990) have in group interviews analysed how the American TV serial *Dallas* was interpreted within different ethnic/national communities in Israel, USA and Japan; Miller (1992) has described the highly localized appropriation of the American soap opera *The Young and the Restless* in Trinidad. From these and other studies one may conclude, as Thompson (1995: 174) argues, that people are making sense of the media according to their culturally derived frames of references:

While communication and information are increasingly diffused on a global scale, these symbolic materials are always received by individuals who are situated in specific spatial-temporal locales. The appropriation of media products is always a localized phenomenon, in the sense that it always involves specific individuals who are situated in particular social-historical contexts, and who draw on the resources available to them in order to make sense of media messages and incorporate them into their life.

However, this is not to say that the text is without any significance in itself. For example it would be naive to suppose that the US domination of popular culture didn't mean anything to the creation of cultural identities. But since the cultural arises from the relation between signification and interpretation, it seems logical to emphasize *both* texts *and* contexts.

Media Interactionism

This section has the aim of weaving together the essence of my previous discussions, in order to introduce a theory of *media interactionism*. As I have just demonstrated, the expansion of the media sector has led to the emergence of communities that are not specifically considered within a traditional interactionist approach. These shortcomings can be overcome through a closer examination of the specific features of mass media as an aggregate of cultural referents.

Initially, I would like to state that mass media hardly can be termed 'one cultural referent among others'. Clearly the differentiation of the media system

implies that people's interactions with the media are far from one and the same thing, having a general cultural significance. Therefore it seems more reasonable to speak of *mediated cultural referents* as a type, distinct from socially experienced referents.

The diversity among mediated cultural referents is primarily found along two dimensions. First, it relates to the question of whether the referents support *change or reproduction* of cultural identities. Typical examples of the former are youth lifestyles connected to popular music and fashion, exposed in such media as MTV, trend magazines and advertising. In these cases media's connection to the consumption industry is a driving force behind the frequent alterations between different styles and fashions. The emergence of reflexive production of consumer goods, demarcating the shift from 'Fordism' to 'post-Fordism', demands the continuous creation of new concepts to be offered on the symbolic market (Lash and Urry, 1994: 60-5; Slater, 1997: 189-193). Typical examples of reproductive mediated cultural referents are those who converge with already established referents. Much of the contents of national broadcasting and local radio stations and newspapers support the reproduction of localized cultural communities. Magazines and journals oriented towards specific professions or interest groups are also mainly reproductive – if consumed by the intended target group.

Second, mediated cultural referents may support either *heterogenization or homogenization* of cultural identities. In this matter a distinction prevails between specialized media and popularised media. While the former are directed towards smaller target groups, such as niche markets or minority groups, the latter appeal to mass audiences. As a good illustration of this relationship serves the archetypical public broadcasting schedule, in which culturally homogenizing television shows are aired at prime time, while more narrow programmes appear at less convenient times. Hence, the logic of the market – which is increasingly diffused to the public service sector – is also reproductive; programmes which have the potentially largest audiences, programmes that appeal to the smallest common cultural denominator, are scheduled in order to fulfil this supposition (cf. Hoskins and Mirus, 1988).

Despite the differentiation of mass media, there are at least four main features that mark all interaction between individuals and mediated cultural referents – features which provide a deeper understanding of how the media-sation process influences the creation of cultural identities. First, the interaction with mediated cultural referents is *space-time compressing* (Harvey, 1989). This means that people who use media can relate to events, places and persons which are both spatially and temporally distant. As Thompson (1995: 94) puts it, media users 'must to some extent suspend the space-time frameworks of their everyday lives and temporarily orient themselves towards different set of space-time coordinates; they become space-time travellers who are involved in negotiating between different space-time frameworks and relating their mediated experience of other times and places back to the context of their own lives'. Hence, the use of mass media contributes to the broadening of people's

cultural frameworks, or the broadening of their minds (Berger et al., 1973: 67) – which in turn is an important foundation of the development of locally unfixed cultural and expressive communities.

Second, the interaction with mediated cultural referents can be *phantasmagorical*. Through the use of media, people are not only spanning the limits of time and space; they may also step into more or less fictive realities – a liminal realm from which they may get new perspectives on their own everyday existence (Newcomb and Hirsh, 1984). If tales and literature in pre-modern societies were the prime sources of cultural imagination, the explosion of mediated popular culture is significant for the modern period. Motion pictures, soap operas and advertising are all examples of media contents which generate phantasms among its audiences – phantasms which to a various degree are used as resources within the creation of cultural identities. For example, studies of female soap opera audiences have showed how this kind of viewing often contributes to the solving of relational issues within people's everyday lives and thus supports their sense of gendered identity (cf. Hobson, 1982; Modleski, 1982; Ang, 1995: 85-97). Another example is consumer culture. According to Campbell (1987: 77-96), the spirit of modern consumerism is about 'the construction of imaginatively mediated illusions' (ibid: 81) which are projected on to everyday life. Thus, consumerism is also, and essentially, about identity creation.

Third, the interaction with mediated cultural referents is *responseless*. While the social interaction from which the cultural emanates normally is a mutual and continuous process of signification and interpretation, people's interaction with mass media is monological. One may say that media interaction, or what Thompson (1995: 82-87) calls 'mediated quasi-interaction', gives rise to an imagined cultural relatedness. By consuming mediated images and symbols, for example an advertisement, the individual may experience a sense of belonging to an expressive community – but he is never recognized personally as a hermeneutic being. If a person develops a certain clothing style in relation to a mediated cultural referent, the media icons will nevertheless remain silent and impersonal. This phenomenon has also been advanced by Douglas Kellner (1992, 1995: 231-262) in his discussion of the construction of 'postmodern' identities. Kellner argues that the significance of popular culture has increased; the other-directedness of modern individuals, seeking recognition from the social environment, is contested by a postmodern orientation towards media images, exposing highly fragmentary and flexible identities.

Fourth, the interaction with mediated cultural referents is *classifying*. As is illuminated by Bourdieu's (1979/1984) sociology of taste, all cultural practices reveal something about the social actor himself. When an individual consumes a cultural product, the product gets classified according to the cultural status of the consumer. At the same time the classified product is also classifying the classifier, or the consumer. Due to this logic of taste, cultural practices can be used as a means of socio-cultural distinction. Through the maintenance of an exclusive cultural taste, people on higher social positions are distinguishing

themselves from people of lower cultural rank, and are hence reproducing the socio-cultural power structures of society. Several studies have shown that this is also true in relation to media. People with large amounts of cultural and economic capital tend to prefer high culture and cognitively oriented media genres, rather than popular culture and affective media genres (cf. Reimer, 1994, 1998; Andersson and Jansson, in press). Similar results are presented by Brunsdon (1992) and Moores (1996), regarding the low prestige of satellite television among wealthier people. Additionally, there are also distinctions concerning the styles of media use; while people on higher social positions use mass media in a concentrated manner, people on lower positions are more fragmentary or distracted (Andersson and Jansson, in press). Taken together, the combination of media preferences and styles of use contributes to the definition of people's cultural identities.

The classifying function of mass media use presents a good illustration of how the analysis of cultural identities can serve as a link between micro- and macro-structural contexts. Although the appropriation of mediated cultural symbols is primarily situated within people's day-to-day contexts, one must also consider the structural mechanisms that condition how cultural skills are distributed within society. As I have emphasized previously, and which is made very clear in the works of Bourdieu (1979/1984), people's cultural preferences and competences do not pop up randomly inside their heads. The symbolic resources which are used in the construction of identities are obviously socially structured. Therefore, media interactionism cannot be a micro social theory. Nor can the empirical examination of media use and cultural identity remain on the micro level, but must be related to and positioned within a macro context.

On the Development of Audience Studies

The last question I posed in the introduction of this article was the following: *How shall the concept of cultural identity be approached within audience studies?* The answer to this question is definitely plural; there are indeed several alternative ways to go. This plurality of choices emanates primarily from the fact that there is no one-way relationship between *media use* and *cultural identity*. Instead, the relationship is characterized by a complex interplay, which makes both media use and cultural identity cause and consequence at the same time. In order to understand these complexities I have in this article discussed three additional concepts (at least), which are of crucial importance: *expressive identity*, *lifestyle* and *cultural referent*. These five together constitute a web of relations which has different features from individual to individual and which is continuously negotiated within the personal narrative of cultural identity. Consequently, depending on which relationships are focused, and whether the aim is to study particular individuals or the constitution of cultural communities, analyses may have different design. I argue that a range of meth-

ods are available and suitable for the study of media use and cultural identity, as long as these methods do not implicate an either-or-polarization. To study *only* media use as an expression of cultural identity or *only* the influence of media use on cultural identity will doubtless lead to reductionism.

As an epistemological medicine for reductionism I would like to suggest four keywords, defining the approach of future audience studies focusing on cultural identities. First, it should be *situated*. This suggests that both media use and the creation of identities must be studied as embedded processes, related to both micro- and macro-structural factors. Within audience studies, so far, the latter concern has been emphasized in a minor way. Second, this kind of studies should be *methodologically dynamic*. Both qualitative and quantitative methods ought to be applied. This idea has recently gained further acceptance within audience studies (cf. Moores, 1993; Gillespie, 1995), while it previously was a topic of conflict. The culturalistic orientation of audience studies has implied a valid reaction against the functionalistic uses and gratifications paradigm, but has at the same time exposed a problematic empirical bias towards micro contexts and non-generalizable methods.

In my view, the linkage of micro and macro perspectives and the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods – which is not the same thing – is the only way to get a fully-fledged and cumulative understanding of how cultural identities are constructed in relation to mediated, as well as other, cultural referents. But, all the same, it is a way with alternatives. On the one hand, there is a need for qualitative studies, which combine an interpretative cultural analysis with a concern with macro structures. One good example is biographical interviews, trying to grasp the narrative of cultural identities and the memories connected to mass media. This kind of analysis could, although based on only a few interviews, illuminate the interplay between structural forces (such as social class, gender and ethnicity) and cultural practices (such as media use) within different stages of life. Of special interest would be to investigate whether media use in late modernity can function as a means to alter the disposition of habitus, and thereby open up new alternatives for the creation of cultural identity. On the other hand, there is also a need for quantitative surveys, lifting for example essential ethnographically derived results to a statistically generalisable level. This could be analyses of which meanings domestic media technologies are ascribed and how these cultural judgements are related to other cultural judgements, to lifestyle practices and to macro structural factors. Such results are to be considered as articulations of cultural identity.

Third, this kind of research should be *hermeneutically reflexive*. As I have mentioned before, all inquiry focusing on cultural phenomena must be interpretative, since it is dealing with issues which are in themselves interpretations. The basic question in this regard is, as formulated by Marcus (1992: 320), 'whether an identity can ever be explained by a reference discourse when several discourses are in play'. The answer to this question is negative; since cultural identity, as I have defined it, is the experience of being part of an interpretative community, the researcher can never fully grasp it. Analyses of iden-

tities can never result in anything else than interpretations of people's own interpretations or expressions – regardless of whether these articulations are gathered through ethnography, reception analysis, biographical interviews, quantitative surveys or something else. But this condition is not an advice to give up cultural inquiry; it is an advice to be even more reflexive.

Fourth, studies of media use and cultural identity should be *critical*. As Keesing (1994: 309) suggests, the production and reproduction of culture must be considered as problematic, since symbolic production is always linked to power and interest. The most extensive analyses of these relationships are so far presented by Bourdieu in *Distinction* (1979/1984), demonstrating that the development of lifestyles and cultural tastes is clearly a contested terrain. Consequently, the same has proved to be true in relation to media use, which is at the same time classifying and classified by cultural identity. Thus, to be critical is also a way to contextualise the processes of identity formation – connecting them both to the interests of social groups and to the interests of cultural producers. On a national level there are empirical evidence that the extended and pluralized media landscape implicates a process of cultural polarization, conditioned by social structures (Reimer, 1998). But in times of commercialisation and internationalisation, when deterritorialised expressive communities are emerging and changing at high speed, critical questions must also be posed on a global level. Are there any losers on the media driven market of contested meanings? And if so, who are they?

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Minorities, Multiculturalism and Theories of Public Service

Christian Christensen

The economic imperative in broadcasting poses a specific threat to ethnic and racial minorities. Broadcasting has often been accused of appealing to the lowest common denominator in order to maximize audience and market share. Accordingly, this practice has tended to exclude ethnic and racial minorities from television programming on the basis that their numbers are negligible. (Thomas, 1992)

Multiculturalism highlights some of the difficult problems in the politics of cultural representation today. National services must, if they are to be that, have programme values which in some ways speak to the whole society...[A]n intrinsic difficulty for mainstream broadcasting is that, however it might try to discharge its task of representing the whole society, it is hard to avoid the ghetto effect – of bracketing out the minorities in special “minority” programmes that are ignored by the majority and do not appeal to the minority. (Scannell, 1992: 35)

The positions outlined by Thomas (1992) and Scannell (1992) highlight some of the problems facing the producers of radio and television programming aimed at ethnic and linguistic minorities in many European nations. When audiences are treated as consumers, the “economic imperative” as defined by Thomas dictates that minority programming be avoided; when audiences are treated as citizens, on the other hand, minority programming can be seen as a necessary, yet highly problematic, requirement. The performance of European commercial broadcasters in providing minority programming has, for the most part, been poor and the responsibility for supplying such programming has been placed, perhaps unrealistically, squarely on the shoulders of public service broadcasters.¹

While a great deal of literature has been published over the past 20 years on the challenges to public service as a result of technological advancements and market deregulation, relatively few works have directly (or even indirectly) addressed the challenges facing public service as a result of a rapidly changing public (particularly in the smaller European nations).² This chapter is not an all-encompassing overview of the relationship between public service and minority representation, but rather a consideration of some of the factors affect-

ing that relationship. Using the current situation in Sweden as a point of discussion, information collected from interviews with employees of Swedish Television (SVT), Swedish Radio (SR), and previously published literature, I will attempt to “flesh out” what I consider to be three of the primary difficulties facing public broadcasters in relation to this issue. Before delving into the specifics of the Swedish case, however, I would like to discuss some of the historical “core values” of public service broadcasting in Europe, as well as the connections between public broadcasting and minority representation.

From Paternalism to...

The term “public service broadcasting” has, over the past 15 to 20 years, undergone a significant amount of scrutiny, criticism, and reconsideration. The emergence of competition from the commercial sector in the early 1980s forced many public service broadcasters to clearly define their social, political, and economic *raison d'être*. One problem for many public service broadcasters is that a significant portion of their organizational ideology was rooted in a paternalistic, top-down view of the public (Edin, 1996; Tracey, 1996; Van den Bulck & Van Poecke, 1996), crystallised in the notion of a “moral” and “educational” broadcasting system. This “Reithian view” was summarized by Van den Bulck & Van Poecke:

...the people had to be educated, emancipated, and to be liberated from their backwardness, their vulgar pleasures and, indeed, their linguistic poverty. It should come as no surprise then that PSB was ‘colonized by the intellectuals of the professional middle class’ (Van den Bulk & Van Poecke, 1996:224).

The ideology of “public service” would, however, undergo a series of changes. During the 1960s and 1970s, for example, public service broadcasters in countries such as Sweden and Great Britain began to reconsider the paternalistic, culturally homogenous bent of their respective systems (Thuren, 1997; Hulten, 1997: 51, Scannell, 1992: 29-31).³⁴ While the shift within public service in Sweden in the 1960s and 1970s, for example, was the result of political upheaval and the professionalization of broadcast journalism, in Great Britain the changing racial and cultural face of the nation impacted the self-image of the BBC. More radical shifts in European thinking on public service came in the 1980s and early 1990s with the deregulation of national media markets, and the introduction of satellite, cable, and digital distribution technologies. The elimination of the classic “spectrum scarcity” argument, a dramatic reduction in viewing figures for public service programming, and an increasingly commercialized media market led to a long line of works on how the “crisis” facing public service broadcasting should be considered (e.g., Søndergaard, 1996; Corcoran, 1996; Tracey, 1996; Dahlgren, 1996; Blumler, 1992; Blumler & Hoffmann-Riem, 1992; Rowland & Tracey, 1990).

In his work on the “vulnerable values” of public service broadcasting, Blumler (1992) identified the following core components of the European public service tradition as being under threat from commercialization: program quality, diversity, cultural identity, independence from commercial influences, integrity of civic communication, the welfare of children and juveniles, and the maintenance of standards (30-39). This rather normative “laundry list” of public service values has come under attack from scholars such as Søndergaard (1996), who believe that the “threat” to public service was overblown, and that public service has actually benefited from increased competition, and from others such as Burgelman (1997), who see the mythology surrounding public service as hiding an alternate reality: that many public service broadcasters simply do not operate differently from their commercial counterparts (129-30).

While disagreements regarding the social, economic, and political function(s) of public service continue, a certain consensus seems to have been reached on at least one issue: that public service broadcasting has the potential to play a vital role in the production and distribution of programming aimed at smaller, marginalized audiences. As Søndergaard (1996) notes:

By virtue of their independence of market forces, public service media are able to serve small and economically or politically weak groups in society, since they are able to ‘cross-subsidize’ in the sense that programmes with narrow appeal can be given the same resources as programmes having mass appeal. This is not possible in commercial television, where the only form of ‘cross-subsidization’ is a technique for spreading financial risk. (Søndergaard, 1996:114)

A vital question, as Burgelman (1997) has pointed out, is the degree to which public service broadcasters should stress the “niche” functions of public service: a situation where the non-commercial sector “fills in the gaps” left by the commercial channels. While such an approach plays to the strengths of public service, it also relegates public service to the margins, as well as perpetuating the idea that society should be divided up into niches and brackets based upon socio-economic, political, and ethnic criteria. (Burgelman, 1997:129)

The National “We”

The use of the words “gap,” “niche,” and “margins” to describe the location of programming for minorities within public service (and commercial) broadcasting systems is linked to a broader rhetoric of media as audio-visual “sites” or “spaces” for the construction of identities:

Like the mass circulation press before it, television reaches a wide variety of different audiences, but it is constantly constructing an image of this audience by stressing certain ways of speaking, by showing certain customs, aspects of history, colours of skin, religious practices. Every day, television sketches out a ‘we’, a collective identity with shifting borders. It chooses, rejects, excludes,

welcomes, praises or makes fun of its subjects[...]. Not all viewers belong to the communities represented (and they probably all feel, at some time or other, that television is excluding them). (Bourdon, 1995: 23)

Rather than help to explain and celebrate difference, however, various authors have suggested that public service broadcasting was originally seen by the state as the “space” in which a unified, national identity could be formed (Cormack, 1993; Van den Bulck & Van Poecke, 1996; Morley & Robins, 1995; Thomas, 1992). Differences – linguistic, ethnic, or cultural – were to be smoothed out via a process of common education, information, and enlightenment. For organizations such as the BBC, “the task was to create a common culture that speaks to the whole society and that can be shared by people of widely different backgrounds” (Scannell, 1997: 26). The presence of linguistic and ethnic minorities was seen as a hindrance to the nation-building project, and as “undermining the assumption of a single national identity” (Cormack, 1993: 101).

Morley & Robins (1995) suggest that public broadcasters in Europe continue to cling to an arcane notion of a national identity rooted in the nation state:

The context for the restructuring of image spaces is the very clear crisis of public service regulation, with its focus on the national arena and national culture. It is a complex process. Thus, whilst it is increasingly clear that technological and economic transformations are surpassing the regulatory capacities of the nation state, there is, at the ideological level, still an obsessive and regressive ‘desire to reproduce the nation that has died and the moral and social uncertainties that have vanished with it...to fudge and forge a false unity based on faded images of the nation’. (Morley & Robins, 1995: 31; citing MacCabe, 1988: 29)

Van den Bulck & Van Poecke (1996), in their examination of the “nation-building” role of broadcasting in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, come to similar conclusions:

The move from a modern to a postmodern organization of society (in which national identity has lost a lot of its relevance), combined with the growth of a new broadcasting marketplace which has undermined the concept of a community’s ‘own audiovisual space’, has been at the expense of the original nation-building project...of the PSB. (Van den Bulk & Van Poecke, 1996: 229)

From these standpoints, the function of public service was, and still is, to act as, “part of the centralizing and homogenizing apparatus of the modern state” (Cormack, 1993: 101).

The notion of the nation-state and public broadcasters as dying (or dead) actors in the realm of cultural production and identity formation is not universal. Ferguson (1995) offers an alternate view of national broadcasting and the nation-state:

Both historically and in the present, national public broadcasters like the BBC, CBC, or ZDF...continue to construct and provide some measure of shared national public space; and this role persists, I suggest, despite market restructuring due to competing technologies, services, audience fragmentation, and an explosion of international television over the past decade. (Ferguson, 1995: 3)

Ferguson has not rooted her argument in idealistic theories of public service broadcasters as guardians of a utopian public sphere, but in the more pragmatic fact that audiences tend to prefer linguistically, culturally, and geographically proximate programming: the very programs provided by public service broadcasters (Ferguson, 1995:5). Collins (1995) points out that attempts to create a single European broadcasting market (such as the European Commission initiative, *Television Without Frontiers*) have, somewhat paradoxically, resulted in, "intensified competition within distinct national markets." The failure of such attempts are rooted in the, "cultural and linguistic differences of European viewers."

One dangerous by-product of current media struggles, Raboy (1994) notes, is that national cultural industries (such as public service broadcasting), in an effort to defend themselves in the face of trans-national commercial competition, will "cloak themselves in nationalism." Despite this danger, writes Raboy, the role of the nation-state in cultural policy will remain vital if cultural participation is not to be reserved only for those who are able to pay for it. If a group is considered to be economically "undesirable" – as minority audiences often are – companies will simply not pay for advertising slots in programming targeted towards that group. The predictable result is that programming for minorities on commercial channels is very limited, and in many cases, is non-existent. Advocates of "death-of-the-nation-state" rhetoric in the globalization debate often ignore the role many nation-states play in subsidizing cultural productions aimed at economically disadvantaged publics.

That broadcasters such as the BBC, SVT, and ZDF continue to exist as potential spaces for cultural expression is a crucial factor in the representation of minority issues at the national level. As Thomas (1992) notes in his examination of multiculturalism in Canada, the promotion of cultural diversity within national broadcasting systems, "would create a cultural space for ethnic minorities – a space that would allow for greater identification for minorities as well as a better understanding between majority and minority groups" (Thomas, 1992: 6). The optimism proffered by Thomas, however, is tempered with a measure of jaded realism:

One would be naive to believe that the entry of ethnic minorities into broadcasting would occur simply through the recognition of multiculturalism within the new [Canadian] Broadcasting Act. If we have learned anything after close to 60 years of broadcasting policy in this country, it is that there is a clear gap between the legislative framework and the performance of broadcasters. (Thomas, 1992:6)

Theory and Practice

Any discussion of the “responsibilities” of public service in relation to programming for minorities is linked to what Søndergaard (1999) describes as two ways of thinking of public systems:

The one, the more pragmatic of the two, consists of redefining or at least modifying the concept of public service so that it better corresponds to the actual course and functions of the media, i.e., it takes the media as its starting point. The second, more speculative option involves rethinking the concept “from scratch”, so to speak. Here it is a question of asking what kind of “public service broadcasting” society actually needs, i.e., it takes society as its starting point. The latter exercise is clearly the more interesting of the two, but – as we shall see – it tends to lead towards a kind of idealization, dwelling as it does among ideals relating to the function of society, far removed from the real-life institutional constraints under which the media operate. Nonetheless, this approach produces more critical perspectives than the pragmatic alternative which dominates the discourse at the present. (Søndergaard, 1999: 23)

What Søndergaard is writing about is the gap between *communication theory* and *media practice*. *Theoretically*, public service broadcasters such as SVT can produce and purchase programming aimed at smaller ethnic and linguistic audiences precisely because such broadcasters do not rely upon advertising revenue for funding. *Theoretically*, public service broadcasters such as SVT can attempt to integrate ethnic minorities and minority-related issues into mainstream radio and television programming in order to strengthen the multicultural nature of modern European societies. *Theoretically*, public service broadcasters such as SVT are free from the influences of both the state and the market. Theory notwithstanding, as Syvertsen (1999) points out, public broadcasters are often involved in a game of shaping the definition of “public service” according to their output, rather than vice-versa. The prizes for winning these rhetorical battles are significant: guaranteed license-fee money, generous concessions, and political protection (Syvertsen, 1999:5). In this highly politicized “real world” of broadcasting, therefore, public service ideals such as “diversity” expressed by Blumler (1992) are often overlooked.

The Case of Sweden

In order to place some flesh onto the theoretical skeleton presented thus far, I would like to use the current situation in Sweden as a source for examples on the difficulties and issues facing public service broadcasters in relation to minority programming.

Immigration & Internal Minorities

Few countries in the world have managed to shape a global reputation for openness, tolerance, and devotion to democracy on a par with that of Sweden. This reputation, together with relatively liberal asylum policies during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, led to a wave of immigration to the Nordic nation over the past three to four decades (Table 1).

Table 1. Number of immigrants to Sweden by decade (& relevant factors)

Decade	Number of Immigrants Entering Sweden (& relevant factors)
1940-1949	174,559 (Danes, Finns, Norwegians; Baltic refugees: WWII)
1950-1959	258,101 (Single Nordic labor market formed in 1954)
1960-1969	373,150 (100, 000 Finns: 1968-70; Greeks, Turks, Yugoslavs: mid-60s)
1970-1979	423,640
1980-1989	84,299
1910-1919	72,855
1920-1929	65,527
1930-1939	65,351
1980-1989	393,289 (Kurdish repression in Turkey, Iraq; 66% of immigrants refugees)
1990-1998	481,128 (War in Bosnia, Kosovo; Kurdish repression in Turkey, Iraq)

As an indication of the impact immigration has had upon the demographics of the Swedish population, out of the current population of 8.9 million, approximately 970,000 (11%) Swedish residents were born outside of the country. While Swedish residents born in Finland, Denmark, and Norway make up a significant portion of the non-native population, just under 700,000 (approximately 70%) of non-native residents were born in non-Nordic or non-European nations (Tables 2-3). Even if Sweden receives a below-average number of immigrants in 1999, the 1990s will prove to be the first decade in Swedish history where the number of incoming immigrants tops the half-million mark. These figures, of course, only reflect the number of Swedish residents not born in Sweden, and do not take into consideration the children of immigrants born in Sweden who are natural citizens. Even with conservative estimates, the number of non-naturalized residents and first and second generation Swedes combined could be as high as 20% of the population.

In addition to its significant immigrant population, Sweden also has a number of "internal minority" populations: the Sámi, the Tornedal-Finns, Gypsies, and Finnish-speaking Swedes (Table 4). It should be pointed out that the relationship of the state to these minorities is rather complicated. The Sámi and the Tornedal Finnish are recognized as indigenous populations within Sweden, whereas Finnish-speaking Swedes and Gypsies are not. Because of the large number of Finnish speakers (now roughly 300,000) in Sweden, however, Finnish was given "special status" by the national parliament in 1945 (Euro-

pean Bureau of Lesser Used Languages, 1999). As will be discussed in following sections, radio and television programming in Sámi and Finnish are provided by both *SR* and *SVT*.

Table 2. Ten largest groups of Swedish residents/citizens born outside of Sweden, December 1998 (Statistics Sweden, 1999)

Country of Birth	Number
Finland	198,912
Yugoslavia	70,891
Iran	50,264
Bosnia-Herzegovina	49,976
Norway	42,049
Poland	39,727
Denmark	38,222
Iraq	37,881
Germany	36,685
Turkey	30,977

Table 3. Ten largest groups of Swedish residents with foreign citizenship, December 1998 (Statistics Sweden, 1999)

Country of Citizenship	Number
Finland	99,902
Bosnia-Herzegovina	44,461
Norway	30,610
Iraq	26,600
Yugoslavia	25,971
Denmark	24,962
Iran	19,793
Turkey	17,396
Poland	15,925
Germany	15,016

Table 4. Recognized minority languages in Sweden (European Bureau of Lesser Used Languages, 1999)

Minority group	Population	Language
Sámi (Lapp)	15–20 000	Sámi
Tornedal Finns	35–45 000	Tornedal Finnish, Finnish
Gypsies	12–15 000	Romani
Finnish	200–250 000	Finnish

Radio (SR) & Television (SVT)

In their comprehensive overview of European television and ethnic minorities, Frachon & Vargaftig (1995) make the following statement regarding public service broadcasting in Sweden:

The Swedish public channels follow a general policy based on equality, freedom of choice and interaction, in accordance with their undertakings. On the specific issue of programs for immigrants, SR can spread responsibility for their production between the various programme companies (radio and television). The overall objective of these programs is to strengthen the position of minorities in Swedish society by making it easier for them to take part in its development, while retaining their ties with their countries of origin.

Swedish policy on immigration states that immigrants and refugees have the right to choose between adopting a Swedish cultural identity and preserving their original cultural identity. The same choice is reflected in SVT's programmes for foreigners. (Frachon & Vargaftig, 1995: 235-236)

The relationship between the public service broadcasters *SR* and *SVT* in regards to programming for minority/multicultural audiences is, as the authors suggest, a co-operative one: *SR* supplies the bulk of programming produced in minority languages (Finnish, Sámi, and "Immigrant"), while *SVT* supplies a weekly television program with a special focus on the Swedish multicultural society, as well as news programs in Finnish (daily) and Sámi (monthly).

The core of *Swedish Radio (SR)* consists of four radio channels (*P1*, *P2*, *P3*, and *P4*), one of which (*P4*) is not actually a "channel", but an umbrella under which 25 regional channels operate. *Swedish Radio* also has an international channel (*P6*), which airs programming aimed at a global audience (via short-wave), but is also available to residents in Stockholm on FM. Responsibility within *SR* for the production and distribution of programming aimed at linguistic and ethnic minorities is divided. The *P6* division of *SR*, for example, contains the Immigrant Languages programming unit. This unit is responsible for news and current affairs bulletins in the following languages: Albanian, Arabic, Assyrian/Syrian, Greek, Macedonian, Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian, Spanish, Turkish, Persian, and Polish. These bulletins are aired at the national level on a daily basis. The Immigrant Languages unit also produces a program called *Breaking Point*, in which journalists with immigrant backgrounds address issues such as multiculturalism and racism within Swedish society. The Sámi (through *Sámi Radio*) and Finns (through *P7*) also have access to programming in their own languages.

SVT is made up of two non-commercial terrestrial channels (*SVT1* & *SVT2*), one digital news channel (*SVT24*), and a number of regional digital channels. (The digital channels are still in their infancy and have negligible viewing figures.) *SVT* produces national news programs for Sweden's two linguistic minority groups: *Uutiset* in Finnish, and *Árran* in Sámi. In 1998, *SVT* aired a total of 102 hours of programming for the Finnish language minority, and 17 hours for the Sámi. Although *SVT* produces virtually no original programming in "Im-

migrant" languages, it does produce a weekly magazine program, *Mosaic*, which has a special focus upon multicultural issues and perspectives. The *Mosaic* division of SVT is responsible for the production of the program with the same name and the purchase of international films with multicultural themes, as well as a few co-productions with countries such as Poland. In 1998, SVT aired a total of 129 hours of television that emanated from the *Mosaic* division (Sveriges Television, 1999: 60.) The programs produced by the *Mosaic* division represent the bulk of programming defined as addressing "Multicultural" issues in Sweden.

Ideals, Hurdles, and the Views of "Professionals"

In order to gain a sense of the professional perspective regarding minority programming in Sweden, open-ended interviews were conducted with the following individuals: the former head of the *Mosaic* division at SVT, the current head of the *Mosaic* division at SVT, the head of the Immigrant Language division at SR, the Under-Secretary of State at the Department of Culture (the department which oversees public service broadcasting in Sweden), and the Assistant Director of Long-Range Planning at SVT. A number of issues were discussed with the interviewees, but the following topics were of particular interest: (1) the "Catch-22" of public service broadcasting; (2) minority programming and the threat of "ghettoization"; and (3), the clash between the concept of a "national identity" and multiculturalism.

Issue 1: The "Catch-22"

A key issue in the current debate over public service is the degree to which public broadcasters, as a result of increasing competition, engage in "commercial" programming strategies in order to attract audiences. As Burgelman (1997) notes, the tendency of policy makers, broadcasters, and the public to equate popularity with "quality" has created a "Catch-22" situation where if public service organizations behave like commercial broadcasting organizations (focusing on audience figures, popular programming, and so on) and obtain high viewing figures, they will be criticized for being excessively commercial, and will find their funding threatened. If, on the other hand, public service broadcasters focus upon what commercial organizations ignore (informational programming, minority programming, cultural programming, and so on) their viewing figures will be low, and funding will again be threatened (Burgelman, 1997:129.) The debate over the use of viewing figures as a measuring stick for public service has not eluded Sweden. The former Managing Director of SVT openly stated that the two SVT channels (combined) should strive to attract 50% of the viewing public: a position that generated criticism both inside and outside of the SVT organization as being excessively market oriented (and for drawing SVT into the very Catch-22 situation described above).

Television and radio programming aimed at the ethnic minority population in Sweden, or programming dealing with issues related to the ethnic minority population, clearly falls into the category of material not provided by the commercial sector: it is programming which will attract relatively few viewers or listeners, and will generate little advertising revenue. In the “Catch-22” scenario, such programming can be seen as a millstone pulling down the overall viewing figures for public broadcasters. For most of the individuals I interviewed, however, the marginal position of minority-related programming is, in fact, the very hallmark of its “public service-ness”. Two comments typified this position:

I think, and others think this too, that this [immigrant-language radio programming] is a typical public service duty that no commercial or advertiser-funded radio station would even bother to do.

We’re damn uncommercial, when I think about *Mosaic*. Can you think of a more public service-oriented program, actually?

While these comments are perhaps unsurprising when one considers the sources (people who produce minority programs are unlikely to consider them millstones), the notion of minority programming as an integral part of public service is also found within other divisions of *SVT*, as well as in the political realm. ⁴A senior manager of the news program *Rapport* (the most watched news program in Sweden), for example, made the following statement after having been asked how he would define a “public service” broadcaster:

...for example, certain minority interests, we make programs which are subtitled for the deaf, we make programs in the language of certain minorities, ethnic groups...these are very expensive contributions we make, which lie in the public service obligations. There is no money to make on this, and that’s why TV4 [the commercial broadcaster] doesn’t do any of it, they shouldn’t do any of it.

The final comment regarding commercial broadcasting and minority programming (“they shouldn’t do any of it”) is not an unusual position. Programming for ethnic minorities and other “marginal” programs are seen as the rightful “property” of public service.

The interviewees generally connected public service to minority programming using classic public service theory and rhetoric: since program viewing figures and advertising revenue are not factors in program scheduling or policy, public service can provide vital services to minority audiences without fear of economic repercussions. One example of this connection was as follows:

...when you consider the public service duties, the fact is that we [SR] should have even small programs. That is to say, programs that very few people listen to...That discussion actually doesn’t exist within radio: “there are so few listeners, so why should we use money for that?”

As the conversations went on, however, the interviewees began to indicate that the realities of broadcasting at *SVT* and *SR* were perhaps less than idealistic. Regarding the degree to which *SR* and *SVT* looked at viewing and listening figures, for example, the *SR* representative (who had also worked for some time at *SVT*) stated:

I noticed that a lot more when I was in television. *SVT* chases viewing figures in much more obvious way [than *SR*].

The same interviewee also made a telling comment as to why funding for immigrant-language services are safe within the *SR* system, noting that the protection has more to do with policy than idealism:

You could also say that we [immigrant language radio services] are also protected by the “culture clause”, because it clearly states there that resources for immigrant languages shall remain unchanged. You can’t cut them back. Otherwise, it would be very easy, it would be very easy to do. But we have that [broadcasting regulation] to stand on.

Similarly, the editors at *Mosaic* speculated as to whether or not the multicultural division of *SVT* would even exist without national regulations and organizational policies:

You know what question one could ask? Would *Mosaic* exist if it didn’t say so in the agreement [with the state]? You could wonder about that. I think so, but that’s because it exists...but would we be created? If we started from scratch, so to speak, would *SVT* have it on its agenda that this is a program we should have, regardless if it’s big or not? It’s not a certainty.

When you start up [a public service channel], its part of it that you do minority programs...because you are forced to.

Issue 2: Niche Programming & Ghettoization

There are two possible variants of the term “ghettoization” in relation to broadcasting: when an entire channel exists at the margins of a system of broadcasting (such as PBS in the U.S. broadcasting system); or, alternatively, when a single program or program genre exists at the margins of broadcasting (usually through poor funding, a poor schedule slot, low viewing figures, or a combination of the three). It is the latter version of “ghettoization” I would like to focus upon in this section. While public service broadcasters in many European nations have provisions for producing ethnic minority programs, the sense is that such programs exist primarily to satisfy certain requirements or agreements, and to deflect criticism:

But there are many who argue that all such series are diversions that allow the broadcasting establishment off the hook. Are these limited interventions [minority programs] allowing the TV establishment to, once again, marginalise the interests and priorities of minorities, by effectively saying to producers and direc-

tors from those minorities, "Don't bother us – you've got a slot, and that's where you belong". (Phillips, 1995: 17-8.)

In Sweden, *Mosaic* represents one of the few minority-oriented programs on public service television, and a former producer of the program recognized the potential abuse of that fact:

"Ghettoization" is one word, the other is that it [*Mosaic*] can be a kind of alibi...like, "we are kind of bad at that [programs for minorities], but at least we have *Mosaic* some time late at night that so-and-so percent watch." We are very aware of those two problems, and I think that SVT is aware of it as well.⁵⁵

While both of the *Mosaic* bosses admitted that ghettoization of minority programming within SVT was possible, both insisted that the advantages of the program outweigh the disadvantages:

The risk of ghettoization exists, but I don't think it is that big. In part because our mandate has changed, and in part because we have professionalized our program, we have begun to be considered equals with other public and cultural programs [on SVT], and so one does not differentiate between them.

There is no contradiction in that there is a program like *Mosaic* that puts forward these problems [racial, ethnic] and that even in "mainstream" programs you have an ambition to do the same. Of course...in a very idealistic society, and in a very good SVT, you wouldn't need a immigrant division or a *Mosaic*. But it's always good to have people who are specialists...

The assertions that multicultural programs such as *Mosaic* are "considered equals with other public and cultural programs" on SVT, and are not bracketed out as special are not entirely supported by the organizational literature provided by SVT. In its annual report to the Department of Culture and the Radio and Television Commission, SVT (1999) noted in a section entitled, "The Multicultural Sweden" that *Mosaic* has, "a specific task to highlight the multicultural perspective" (59). In a separate sub-section on cultural programming produce by SVT, however, no mention was made of *Mosaic*. As opposed to her counterparts at SVT, the interviewee from SR did notice an overt marginalization of her division:

(Q) Do you feel like you are like a little...

(A) A little island, on our own, yes.

(Q) But not just inside of SR, but the entire public service organization?

(A) Yes, I do. You could say that I am never...I never sit in on any managerial meetings other than in my own division. You get more or less forgotten. I wrote a few editorials in the radio magazine, but, in the end, I got tired of that as well. I feel that it is sad that it goes so slowly. The changes go very slowly.

(Q) Has a "ghetto" been created here? A minority ghetto at SR?

(A) In practice that is what happened, but that wasn't the intention. "Ghetto" is probably a little harsh...but something like it.

The organizational rhetoric of *SVT* and *SR* – be it in annual reports, websites, or interviews with management and politicians – is that reflecting a multicultural Sweden should be the goal of all *SVT* and *SR* divisions, and not just the function of one or two special radio or television programs. Incorporating ethnic minorities into mainstream output, the reasoning goes, will help to solidify their position in Swedish society. The representative from Long-Range Planning at *SVT* noted that while it was not the role of program planning to dictate either the content of programming or the ethnic make-up of employees, many divisions did have policies regarding the hiring of multicultural staff, and the inclusion of multicultural angles in program content. These goals, however, have proved difficult to realize in practice. The *SR* representative recalled the difficulty in getting just one of her minority reporters a position at one of the main public service television news programs (one reason given for not hiring the reporter was that she had an accent). Also, a recent investigation by the *SR* news program, *Ekot*, indicated that the policy of incorporating minorities into *SVT* news (both in front of and behind the cameras) was far from successful, and that very few ethnic minorities were working for the major *SVT* television news programs.

Issue 3: National Identity & Diversity

Thomas (1992) compares the role of broadcasting in shaping a Canadian national identity to that of the railroads: in both cases, “technology was used in an attempt to forge a nation into being.” The problem with the myth of “technological nationalism,” as Charland (1986) described it, was that it, “ties a Canadian identity not to its people, but to their mediation through technology” (Thomas, 1992: 1). Public service broadcasting, because of its close connections to the state, and historical functions such as educating and informing the people, has a special place in nation building (as opposed to the mere profit-hunger of commercial broadcasters). Van den Bulck & Van Poecke (1996), noting the work of Anderson (1983), describe this connection:

...virtually all PSB in modern industrialized countries have contributed substantially to the creation of the afore-mentioned ‘imagined community’ for the modern nation-state, that is, ‘an image of the national “we”, an “us”’ (Morely and Robins, 1989: 32). In other words, the community (or parts thereof) attached great importance to its own ‘audiovisual space’, i.e. its own autonomous broadcasting system that integrates internally and draws an imaginary line between ‘us’ and ‘them’, the latter being those to whom the broadcasts are not aimed (regardless of whether ‘them’ could actually receive the broadcast. (Van den Bulck & Van Poecke, 1996: 223)

A question is how public service broadcasting, with its close ties to nation building and drawing lines between “Us and Them,” accounts for rapid increases in ethnic and linguistic minorities. In other words, how do “Them” become integrated into a structure historically devoted to the celebration of the

“Us”? The tensions in this situation are perhaps particularly acute in nations such as Sweden, where the influx of ethnic minorities has been, and continues to be, relatively rapid.

When the issue of national identity and multiculturalism was brought up during the interviews, a number of interesting answers were given. A long-time managing editor of *Mosaic* noted the connections between public service and reflecting the “reality” of Swedish society:

...it's a requirement, the idea behind public service is that we should reflect reality, and the reality is what it is: that 20% of the people who live in this land were either born in another country, or have parents who were born in another country, and that Sweden doesn't look the way that it did 30 years ago. Obvious...but not that obvious when you are talking about media here in Sweden.

The current editor of *Mosaic* also noted the failure of other television programs to reflect multicultural issues, and pointed out that *Mosaic* held a unique position within SVT:

I suggest that *Mosaic* has been a little ground-breaking...because this program is the place where a person with a foreign background can be certain that they will find themselves. That is, in terms of, to use an English word, “portrayal”...one can be certain of it, because *Mosaic* exists [for them].

This response prompted me to ask how a one-hour program could possibly allow *all* people with foreign backgrounds to “see themselves,” especially considering the fact that Sweden had immigrants from nations as diverse as Turkey, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iran and the Gambia. A *Mosaic* editor admitted that mirroring the entire minority population was impossible, and that each program was the result of editorial decision-making.

Despite their claims that SVT was slow to incorporate ethnic minorities and ethnic minority issues into programming, both *Mosaic* representatives felt that there was no real tension between the role of SVT as a supporter of Swedish culture, and the requirement that public service mirror the new Swedish multicultural society:

For me, this is utterly problem-free. I have never had occasion to even think about it because what we are trying to show at *Mosaic* is the meeting [between traditional Swedish culture and multicultural Sweden], so to speak, and whenever you find a collision between the two.

Sometimes we have thought that you can reflect the multicultural by showing those environments [such as traditional, upper-middle class Swedish summer resorts where no immigrants are seen] that are monocultural. There is still no conflict in this, but it's more a fun way to turn it [the issue of multiculturalism] on its head.

In response to questions regarding multiculturalism in the entire SVT system, the interviewees tended to confine their answers to the work done within their

own division. Because of their focus on their own work, I asked a broader question:

(Q) Would it be better if...this is a hypothetical question...if you started from zero, to break up *Mosaic* and spread it out over the entire [SVT] system, and then you would have individuals working, for example, in *Rapport* (the main news program in Sweden)? Maybe two reporters...

(A) It wouldn't work.

(Q) It wouldn't? It wouldn't have the same impact?

(A) I think it's too early. I don't think that the system is mature enough.

The lack of "maturity" of the Swedish system was confirmed by the Head of Immigrant Language Services at *SR* (who has worked in both *SR* and *SVT*). When asked if there was a division between minority programming and mainstream programming within *SR* (and *SVT*), she responded:

It is bad. Absolutely, there is a split. And we have had occasional debates about this, and I have been a part of those debates...ten years ago. I have been working with immigrant issues for a long time. I have written [newspaper] editorials. I recently re-read an editorial that I wrote in 1982, and I could actually just copy it and send it in to DN [*Dagens Nyheter*] again. That's why it feels a little hopeless. In these debates you hear all the time, "Of course, we need to get in more immigrant journalists so more voices can be heard" – you know, it has to be that as well, that they should be good examples. What they [news divisions] have done is just to take people who have strange names, but speak perfect Swedish.

Discussion

As mentioned previously, the information presented in this chapter is not intended to be "proof" of the way in which an entire public service organization – *SVT/SR* – deals with the issue of minority programming or multiculturalism. Much more data and analysis would be needed to even come close to that particular research goal. Rather, this work is intended to be a starting point for considering the way in which public service organizations work with (or around) the issue of multicultural representation. With this conceptual framework in mind, the information I obtained from both the interviews and *SVT/SR* documents sheds further light onto some of the issues presented in earlier literature on public service broadcasting.

Public Service Schizophrenia

The split between theory and practice evidenced in the academic literature on public service broadcasting was reflected in the responses given by interviewees, and the official publications produced by *SVT*. All of the interviewees (with the exception of the representative from *SVT* Planning) considered mi-

minority language and minority-oriented programming to be “classic” public service productions. Such programs, the interviewees reasoned, could only exist inside of a public service, non-commercial system where audience size and commercial revenues were not a factor. These comments usually came at the start of the interviews, but, as the conversations went on, the interviewees began to indicate that although programming aimed at ethnic minorities was “typical public service”, the survival of such output was largely the result of strict policies and regulations, rather than progressive ideologies or social altruism.

The suggestion that immigrant and minority programming exists because it has to, rather than because it should, is indicative of a type of public service schizophrenia: minority and multicultural divisions (and the programs they produce) are hailed as a large part of the *raison d'être* of public service, but are the most likely to suffer cutbacks were it not for regulations and quotas. The “Catch-22” of public service is one possible explanation for this phenomenon. In an era when media organizations (including public service organizations) are forced to streamline and rationalize as a result of increasing competition, divisions that produce programming watched by (or listened to) by small numbers of people are the most likely to find their funding under threat. Comments made by *SVT* and *SR* program-makers suggest that, given the chance, *SVT* and *SR* would cut back on minority and multicultural programming were they not protected by policy.

Integration or Specialization?

In a rapidly changing Swedish society, *SVT* has taken the position that it is desirable to integrate ethnic minorities and multicultural issues into “mainstream” programming. The process of integration, however, is very slow. Despite the rhetoric of integration put forward by *SVT* and *SR*, other facts suggest the continued segmentation of minority and multicultural programming.

One reason given for the slow pace of integration at *SVT* was a lack of “maturity” on the part of the organization. The mainstream divisions of *SVT*, according a number of the interviewees, were not ready to accept larger numbers of ethnic minorities into their ranks. A recent investigation of *SVT* News, for example, revealed that the two major news programs in Sweden had a poor record of hiring minority workers (despite the aforementioned policy). The implications of omitting minorities from major productions are particularly telling when the organization in question is public service: a system of broadcasting that supposedly exists to serve the public and reflect the broader society. The reasons behind the bracketing out of multicultural programming, as well as the lack of integration in mainstream programming, are perhaps as much a function of politics as they are of an unwillingness to accept change, or of an out-dated view of Swedish society.

One could say that *SVT/SR* output such as *Mosaic* and immigrant language news services fulfil a number of functions, and do so simultaneously. First,

such programs play a straightforward role in satisfying regulatory requirements: *SVT* and *SR* are mandated to provide multicultural and multi-lingual output. Second, because they cater to disenfranchised audiences who are otherwise ignored in mainstream output, minority programs can be seen as evidence of social responsibility on the part of both the broadcaster and, by association, the state. Finally, minority programs serve a valuable political function for public broadcasters such as *SVT*. Minority programs symbolize “public service” in ways that other programs (sports, comedy, drama) simply cannot, and so can be used as leverage when license fees and the general operation of public service are scrutinized. Highlighting the unique nature of minority, multicultural, and multi-lingual programming, therefore, serves a political (and thereby economic) function for public service organizations. It is the political function of minority programming that explains the contradiction between the rhetoric of integration and the practice of separation: although separation (having specially defined “multicultural” programs) perpetuates the problem of “Us and Them” in society, having clearly marked minority programming is a valuable tool for public service broadcasters in their political battles with domestic regulators, commercial competitors, and transnational bodies (such as the EU). As most of the *SVT/SR* interviewees indicated, minority programming is seen as quintessential public service output precisely because it is so uncommercial.

Program Output

There are dangers in using either the number of hours produced by a given media organization, or the percentage of programs aimed at minority audiences, as gauges of the “diversity” of output. A popular mainstream program with minority characters, for example, would not be classified as “minority programming”, but could have a significant following in minority communities. However, since the pace of integration of minorities into mainstream *SVT* programming – as evidenced in interviews and recent media investigations – appears to be relatively slow, the volume of programming aimed at minorities remains a relevant factor.

Figures provided by *SVT* do not paint a promising picture. In 1998, for example, prime-time (between 18:00 and 23:00) programs classified as “Minority” accounted for only 1% of the total prime-time output: 42 hours out of a total of 3,779. This figure of 42 hours per year represented a 34% drop in minority programming from 1996. Similarly, minority programs aired during the late-night slots (23:00 on) accounted for only 1% of the total late-night output: 10 hours out of a total of 856. The only time period where minority programming made inroads in 1998 was before 18:00. Six percent of programs (269 hours) aired before 18:00 were classified as “Minority”: a figure that represented a 13% increase from 1996. Overall, minority programs accounted for 321 out of a total of 9089 hours of programming on *SVT* during 1998, or 3.5% (*Sveriges Television*, 1999). On the face of it, 321 hours of minority programming during 1998 might not seem a bad total. The figure, however, must be seen within its proper context. First, the 321 hours were dominated by two single programs:

Mosaic and the Finnish-language news program *Uutiset*. These two programs accounted for roughly half of the “Minority” program hours aired by *SVT*. Second, with the exception of a few youth programs, *Mosaic* represented the only *SVT* program aimed at the non-Finnish, non-Sámi minority population. Finally, roughly 84% (269) of the hours dedicated to minority programming came before 18:00: a time of day in which few working adults would be able to watch.

The numbers I have presented point to the following simple facts: (1) the percentage of public service programs (both on *SVT* and *SR*) aimed at the non-Finnish, non-Sámi minority population in Sweden is radically lower than the percentage of such minorities within the general population; (2) according to the figures and definitions offered, the non-Finnish, non-Sámi immigrant population have one program (*Mosaic*) produced by *SVT* to address specific immigrant issues; (3) *Mosaic*, which makes up 1% of *SVT* prime-time programming, is targeted towards roughly 10-15% of the population (first and second generation immigrants); (4) the vast majority of minority programs on *SVT* are aired before 18:00; (5) according to interviews and news reports, the integration of ethnic minorities into *SVT* (and *SR*) divisions – despite explicit policies to implement such integration – is slow.

Final Comments...

While it is unusual to present figures and statistics at the end of a work, I feel that the information in the previous section can provide a framework within which to consider both the theoretical and interview material that came before it. Also, the figures complete a mirror-image of the issue I discussed earlier: the distinctions between theory (from academia), rhetoric (from workers), and practice (output). What my brief enquiry into the issue of public service broadcasting and minority representation has shown is that there exist a number of gaps between the rhetoric and the practice of public service. I (and my interviewees) have speculated as to some of the reasons for these gaps: politics, economics, organizational history, and the power of the status quo were all cited as possibilities. Naturally, in order to address the issue of minorities and public service in a comprehensive manner, more in-depth work will be needed in the following areas: audience studies, content analysis, organizational research, and research into the output and organization of both minority and commercial media organizations.

Despite the relatively limited nature of my project, a number of important issues and questions have emerged from it that are worthy of further consideration:

- *What is the pace of integration in public broadcasting organizations throughout Europe?*
- *How are program genres bracketed out as “minority” by public broadcasters (what criteria are used), and why?*

- *How are minority programs (and other “marginal” programs) used by organizations as evidence of meeting “public service” obligations? How are such programs used as leverage in political and economic negotiations?*
- *How does (or does) television speed the process of “integration” into modern European societies? Which channels do new citizens prefer to watch?*
- *What evidence is there that commercial entities can/do play a role in programming for minorities?*

The rapid societal changes taking place in smaller European countries such as Sweden as a result of immigration pose challenging questions for their public service broadcasters. Not only must these broadcasters respond to ever-increasing competition from the commercial sector, but they must also find a way in which to account for the changing demographics of their respective nations in their output. Specialized programming for minorities is one solution, but such programming runs the risk of accentuating ethnic and racial cleavages in society, as well as giving public service organizations headaches over low viewing figures. The integration of minorities into mainstream programming and management is another solution, but such a move will require both flexibility and a willingness to change: traits not usually associated with public service broadcasting. As many academics know, the most beautiful of theories can crack under the weight of practice.

Notes

1. Some exceptions to this rule do exist. Channel Four in Great Britain is one such example. It should be noted, however, that Channel Four operates under unique regulations stipulating that the station must provide innovative, minority-oriented programming.
2. I am not referring to a lack of works on public service for “established” minority languages such as those written by Cormack (1993, 1998), Van den Bulck & Van Poecke (1996), and Moring (1998), but rather to works on programming aimed at immigrants and speakers of “non-traditional” languages (e.g., Franchon & Vargaftig, 1995.)
3. During the 1960s and 1970s, SVT went through a period known as *Vänster-vidning*, which translates to “twisting to the left”. The period was marked by an increase in critical investigative journalism, as well as politically-charged documentary films. The shift to the left coincided with the Vietnam war, as well as a series of intensive domestic labor disputes in the Swedish mining industry.
4. An exception to this was the interviewee from the Planning division of SVT, who said that the entire output of SVT was indicative of public service values and functions.
5. Three other programs are usually defined as “multicultural” by SVT: Propaganda, Elbyl, and Sefyr. All three are youth-oriented programs.

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Gauchos Going Global

A Critical Assessment of Cultural Globalization

Thomas Tufte

At the turn of the 20th century, the world is experiencing a series of technological innovations, social, cultural and economic transformations that practically but problematically are referred to as globalization. Global communication flows, increased interconnectedness, the gradual merge of information technology with communication technology – all this is actually taking place. Many citizens of today use, consume and interact with and through the media all day long, with an increasing variety of consumption patterns, cultural and social appropriations indicating manifold local, regional and global connections and orientations. Many modern societies throughout the world are becoming heavily mediatized, with possibilities of establishing many new social and cultural links across the world. One of these societies is Porto Alegre, state capital of the southernmost state of Brazil, Rio Grande do Sul.

This article explores to what extent globalisation is setting itself through in the social and cultural practices of everyday life in Porto Alegre. What is *de facto* new about the recent technological innovations? How do the technological innovations and the access to new symbolic worlds integrate into everyday lives, challenging social practices and ritualized media use, negotiate media patterns and programme preferences, and thus: to which extent do they provide people new understandings of the world and of themselves? The issue of going global, indicated in the title, is therefore to remind ourselves of the constantly changing stage upon which these everyday lives are performed. “Going global” emphasizes the gradual and constant alterations in the cognitive maps of people, in their loyalties and in their frames of social and cultural reference. These processes of change are not new. What is new is the scale and speed with which these processes are taking place.

My project has sought to capture some of the social and cultural dynamics that were at stake in the late 1990s, where 4 families in Porto Alegre were monitored and explored over a 2 year period. The research project ran from 1996-1999. Porto Alegre is the state capital of Rio Grande do Sul. Gauchos is the name given to – all, not just the rural – inhabitants of this state. Vis-à-vis the rest of Brazil, the gauchos have a particular cultural and historical trajectory

which today is reflected in their strong, visible and often very articulate regional cultural identity.

The project is an ethnographic study constituting the *synchronic dimension* of a larger collective project which also counts two Brazilian researchers: Nilda Jacks has worked on the family histories, the cultural trajectories in particular, among the same 4 families as I have studied. Her study constitutes the *diachronic dimension* of the joint project (Jacks 1998). Finally, the trajectories and lives of these families are embedded in *a macro-sociological analysis* carried out by Sergio Caparelli. He studies the urban development of Porto Alegre, the institutional development of the most important media in the city and provides an analysis and overview of the cultural supply offered to the inhabitants of the city.

On an epistemological level, the intention of the joint gaúcho project has been to promote a stronger interdisciplinary approach in studies of culture and communication by exploring the complex relationships between micro and macro, structure and agent. The aim has been to build a bridge between the political economy of the media and research on how these same media integrate into the social and cultural practices of everyday life. While Bourdieu's sociology of reproduction, including his notions of habitus, cultural capital and taste, together with Giddens' structuration theory, provide us with the overall framework of understanding, a series of more or less elaborate theoretical-methodological models of analysis have helped us operationalize the project.

For reasons of space, I have to leave out the theoretical apparatus upon which we have developed our research design. Briefly, it includes scholars as the Mexican cultural researcher Jorge Gonzalez (1998) and his methodologically well-grounded work on family history, family ideology and cultural fronts, Spanish-Colombian cultural sociologist Jesús Martín-Barbero's work on mediation (1993), British sociologist Roger Silverstone's work on the role of television and technology in everyday life (1994 and 1999) and Argentinean-Mexican anthropologist Néstor García Canclini's work on cultural hybridization and modernity (1995). In my study of the synchronic dimension, that is the contemporary social and cultural practices of the 4 mentioned families, I have also drawn on scholars as Victor Turner (1969/ 1995), Henri LeFebvre (1991), Gilles Pronovost (1995). Through the focused family study of this article I draw on the joint theoretical-methodological framework providing an empirically informed example of how to go about in exercising a critical anthropology of everyday media cultures.

Making Context the Text

This gaúcho project takes its starting point in studying everyday life, and also concludes with findings that have to do with everyday life. In principle, everyday life is therefore not a *con*-text, but *the* text, the primary text. *Within*

this everyday life, peoples' media uses are inscribed as some of the many constituents that actively contribute to and participate in the organisation of time, space and social relations and subsequently in the meaning-making and identity formation.

Thus, this project places itself within what Janice Radway a decade ago called for within media studies, namely a *critical anthropology of everyday cultures* (Radway 1988). Radway's point was to call for a less media-centered, critical anthropology of everyday cultures within which then to place analyses of media usage. So, instead of pushing further what some critics have denominated radical contextualism in qualitative media studies (Ang 1991) my argument is to reformulate the epistemological aim of the project, having social groups and their social and cultural practices as my main object of study. In this manner, media *use*, considered as social action, transcends a narrow text-audience relationship. Media use becomes an integrative element of somebody's social practices. What thus is considered context in qualitative media studies becomes "the text" in this ethnographic study. Keeping in an anthropological line of argument, my focus on media culture ideally equals any other anthropological field of study, be it issues of religion, health, corporate cultures or urban (sub)cultures. I thereby seek to provide substance to the call by French anthropologist, Daniel Dayan. Referring to the increased mediatization of everyday life he stated quite bluntly: "ethnography can no longer afford to ignore media research. On the contrary, studies on the media and the groups that use them might become a new ethnographic field" (Dayan 1996: 42).

Giving up mediacentrism and dissolving the media into the practices of everyday life is no new idea, although it still is rarely practiced. Media scholars have been proposing it repeatedly over the years. Shaun Moores, for example, repeated Radway's call in 1996 when he was concluding upon his own study on satellite television and everyday life. First, Moores argues for a cautious approach in studies that relate media use to questions of identity: "the arrival of a tv technology with new programme services and a new territory of transmission does not automatically translate into shifts in patterns of identification." The approach he suggest involves "looking for interdiscursive links between the spaces of identity that are on offer and the existing cultural circumstances or ethnic positions of viewers" (Moores 1996: 74). He proposes the incorporation of a life history approach whereby richer data can be delivered on diachronic cultural processes compared to what so far has been offered by reception studies and media ethnographies. Moores' ambition, and with him mine, is that media and cultural studies should be articulated to a general social theory of modernity. This theory, he argues, "must set itself the task of explaining relations between large-scale institutional transformations, and the small details of subjectivity, meaning and personal experience." (Moores 1996: 75).

The overall gaucho project has had as ambition to pursue Radway and Moore's suggestions – aiming towards the realization of a less media-centered, critical anthropology of everyday cultures, including both the macro-sociological setting (media and urban development), the diachronic and synchronic di-

mensions of family trajectories and practices, and analysing the hows and wheres of media usage within these everyday cultures. The focus here on the synchronic dimension of the study is complemented somewhat by integration of some of Nilda Jacks findings on the diachronic analysis of the family trajectories. The full integration of the three subprojects is underway, but lies beyond the scope of this article. The joint research design is presented in Jacks & Tufte (1998), and an attempt to integrate the findings can be read in Tufte (2000b).

Mobile Privatization and Ritualized Media Use

The incorporation of new media and communication technologies into everyday life was analysed already in the early 1970s and characterized by Raymond Williams as a process of *mobile privatization*. He understood this development process as a cultural process within modern, urban, industrial living and explained it as a combination of two apparently paradoxical tendencies: mobility on one hand and the *increasingly self-sufficient family* home on the other (Williams 1975: 26). Williams saw mobility as the outcome of the increased separation of work and home, processes of urbanisation leading to the formation of larger settlements detached from the work places, whereby increased mobility was required and thus entered as an integral element in the social practices of everyday life.

Parallel to this, these industrializing and modernizing societies experience an increased emphasis on improving the small family home. Roger Silverstone furthers William's analysis, emphasizing the suburbanizing processes of the twentieth century: "a well-planned functional order, standardised dwellings where each single family found a home, hearth and ownership". The suburban homes became "floodlit privacies", concrete embodiments of the modern utopia (Silverstone 1994: 60).

With the dispersal of extended families in the course of industrialisation, and with the increased privatization of the home in suburban settings, the need for new kinds of social organisation merged, requiring also new kinds of communication from and with the "outside". Williams shows how the family home merges as a theme in drama already in the 1880 and 1890s (Ibsen, Chekhov): "the centre of dramatic interest was now for the first time the family home, but men and women stared from its windows, or waited anxiously for messages, to learn about forces, "out there", which would determine the conditions of their lives" (Williams 1975: 27). He further analyses how the radio and later television served exactly the merging needs for links to the outside world. Based on my case study, this article furthers William's analysis to the present day development, exploring the process of mobile privatization in relation to today's new technologies.

Furthermore, this article explores media uses by analysing the ritual elements of media use. My claim is that the concept of ritual can help us to understand better certain aspects regarding the social uses of media (Larsen &

Tufte 1999). Eric Rothenbuhler has in his excellent book *Ritual Communication – from everyday conversation to mediated ceremony* (Rothenbuhler 1998), explored the etymology of the concept of ritual, emphasizing the communicative aspects of rituals. He defines ritual as: “the voluntary performance of appropriately patterned behaviour to symbolically effect or participate in the serious life” (Rothenbuhler 1998: 27).

Ritualized media use helps us in “authoring our selves” (a concept borrowed from Barbara Myerhoff, 1986). Constructing our social identities is tightly linked to a long series of ritualized media uses in the course of the everyday, be it charging our identity as well informed citizens, as mothers, as professionals, etc. One of Rothenbuhler’s main points is that ritual is a form of communication, where “the *form* of ritual is part of its meaning and necessary to its power” (Rothenbuhler 1998: 6, my emphasis). Ritual is a *how*, a quality of the social activity which appears “wherever *form* is emphasized in the symbolic elements we weave together in constructing a life” (Rothenbuhler 1998: 4, my emphasis). There are a series of markers in time and space that represent a “systematic syntax” which then constitutes a ritual order of interaction. As I will be showing later in this article, the lunch hour represents a ritual in the Barcaro family, a ritual with the lunch meal obviously as a central marker, but also marked by the hour, by the television set turned on, by the preparation of the *chimarrao* (a Brazilian herbal tea), by the presence of particular individuals, and marked spatially to be performed in the dining room. A particular social situation is established in time and space, and charged with meaning, for one member of the family it is a time-out from the busy work-day, for another it is the main social encounter with her daughter, having the opportunity to talk and be together. Was the television set turned off, something which never occurs, the ritual would change character.

The Barcaro Family

The Barcaro family nucleus, upper middle class and of German decendancy, consists of 59-year old Lorena, a retired teacher, her 29-year old daughter Marcia and Marcia’s 26-year old fiance, Yherar. The mother, Lorena, is a newcomer in Porto Alegre. After having lived all her life in a small town in the province, she divorced her husband 5 years ago and moved to the state capital. Here she lives together with her daughter Marcia. They live in an apartment in an upper middle class neighbourhood. Marcia is a university student. She took a bachelor in public relations before switching to medicine which she almost has concluded. Yherar studies medicine. He lives part-time with the Barcaros and part-time with his own family. He is native of Porto Alegre. While Marcia and Yherar are tremendously busy youngsters, dedicating themselves exclusively to their future profession, Lorena is much more relaxed, being retired. Lorena has made a major reorganisation of her life from being a married teacher, member of the minority elite in a small provincial community, to a divorced, retired teacher, having adapted very well to the living condition in the

state capital, Porto Alegre. She has given up driving and with her energetic and open-minded manner makes her way around, walking and by bus, having made Porto Alegre her new home city. Lorena is Lutheran and a fourth-generation migrant of German origin. Until the age of 6 she only spoke “Pomeran”, a German dialect still spoken in isolated communities of Southern Brazil. Her daughter is a non-practicing Catholic, passed on from her father’s side.

Media, Technology and Everyday Life

What motivates the acquisition of new technology and how is it used in everyday life? In the case of the Barcaro family, motivations and acquisitions are driven by fascination and some degrees of practical reason and to a lesser extent to obtain social prestige. As we shall see below, their acquisition of cable television and Internet lies in continuation of the process of mobile privatisation that historically, according to Williams, has characterized the purchase of radio and television.

Firstly, which access do the Barcaros have to old and new communication technologies and to media in general? They have a broad access and it is an accessibility which is class specific. All-round, the Barcaro family is a well-equipped family in terms of access and ownership of these communication technologies. In addition to the more common and traditional technologies, radio, television and telephone, the Barcaros have also acquired both cable television, computer, Internet access and mobile phones. As some of the first in their neighbourhood the Barcaros have since September 1996 had cable television linked to both their television sets (the second tv-set is connected via an illegal – but often seen – extension of cable from one tv-set to the other). They also have a computer and have for a period of 8 months (June 1997 to February 1998) subscribed to Internet-access, an access they gave up again due to lack of use. Finally, after years on a waiting list at the phone company, both Marcia and Yherar were in 1998 granted access to buy a telephone line and thus acquiring mobile phones.

The old technologies, radio, telephone and television, are well established, wellknown and thus demystified technologies with structured uses in the Barcaro family¹. They have over the years inscribed themselves into the social and cultural practices of everyday life. What may seem to be happening is that the radio is a disappearing technology. Having been introduced into the family half a century ago, radio used to be extremely important and popular, but is today only used by Lorena. She uses a small mobile radio which she either places by her bed at night or brings with her into the kitchen at breakfast time. Neither Marcia nor Yherar have any current habit of listening to the radio, even though they have access both to their own in their bedroom (part of a stereo) and access to Lorena’s mobile radio when it stands in the kitchen every morning. Being a disappearing technology, at best integrated into the television, is also seen amongst youth in for example Denmark (Tufte, forthcoming).

Figure 1. Access and availability of communication technologies in the Barcaro family

	Quantity	Placed Where	1st Aquisition
Radio	2	Lorena's Bedroom/Kitchen Marcia/Yherar's bedroom	1940s
Telephone	3	Bedrooms + in living room	1950s
Television	2	Living room + Marcia/ Yherar's bedroom	1st: 1960s 2nd: 1995
Video	1	Living Room	Mid 1980s
Cable-tv Connection	2	On both tv sets	Sept. 1996
Computer	1	Marcia's + Yherar's bedroom	1995
Internet Access	1	ibid	06/97 – 02/98.
Mobile Phone	2	Marcia Yherar	1st: 06/98 2nd: 11/98

Television has been integrated into their family since the early 1960s. In the course of the family's social transformation over the years, the television use has undergone some changes. For example has lunch-time viewing been introduced – a phenomenon which first came into the family after they settled in Porto Alegre in the early 1990s. It has obviously happened for the very pragmatic reason that living room and dining room today have no wall division, being one large room, contrary to the physical organisation of their house in Santo Angelo. On another level it can also be interpreted on one hand as an increased dailiness of the television and on the other hand a decrease in importance of the lunch meal as a distinct independant social activity. The fact is that the social and cultural practice of simultaneous viewing and eating lies in continuation of old traditions of simultaneous viewing known from the Barcaro's evening meals ever since Marcia's childhood. In Marcia's childhood, these meals were taken in the living room, despite the house having a separate dining room. Lunch in the Barcaro family had for decades been a social activity separate of television viewing. This is today altered – a social, spatial and temporal reorganisation of everyday life has gradually taken place.

Telephones in the domestic sphere have over the years increased in number and have become more mobile. The Barcaro's today have three stationary phones (two in the bedrooms plus a threadless phone in the living room) in addition to both Marcia's and Yherar's recent aquisition of each their mobile phone. The main purpose for both Marcia and Yherar to buy the very expensive mobile phones was for future professional reasons. Here and now it was more pragmatic motivations such as not having to queue at the student phone booth in the hospital. It situates them as constantly reachable/available – obviously an important issue in their future profession, although somewhat unnecessary at present.

This potential of constantly being reachable in time and space redefines the condition upon which their social interaction takes place, particularly in non-domestic settings. Before, once having left their home and phone, they pro-actively had to choose when they wished to engage in social interaction over the phone. Now this distinction falls away, establishing a constant availability in any setting or sphere at all. They now pro-actively have to decide when they wish not to be available to engage in telephone conversations. Marcia and Yherar are in this initial phase extremely content with their aquisition, having invested many thoughts and a lot of money in their technological purchase. Although having made life a little easier, it does seem a very significant investment, considering them both still being students. The symbolic value of owning a mobile phone undoubtedly has been an important motivation for the purchase.

Where the telephone development from stationary phones, over answering machines, threadless phones to mobile phones have pushed the organisation of everyday life towards a constant availability, the developments with television over video to cable and satellite television have multiplied the places and spaces, informations and cultural discourses that virtually are accessible from the domestic setting, and vice-versa: cultural discourses from many places in Brazil, in Latin America and in the world now potentially enter into the domestic sphere of the Barcaros, although the Barcaro's have the control of this linkage. They decide when and what to tune on to.

In the video years, from the mid 1980s until 1997 video recordings made more flexible the pre-defined programming schedules that were offered by the broadcasters. By recording and screening programmes on displaced hours, they were better able to adapt to personal needs and interests. However, the Barcaro's never came around to making much use of this technological ability. They used video basically to *supplement the programme supply* on television by making use of programmes offered in video stores.

With the aquisition of cable television, using video practically vanished as a media practice among the Barcaros. Where video in simple ways supplemented what a limited number of television channels could offer, cable television multiplied the programme supply, gradually leading to both a somewhat more diversified *and* a increased consumption of television. Marcia, for example, states that her consumption of films has increased after the introduction of cable, not only substituting the video film consumption but increasing the number of films she watches on the tv-screen, now via cable.

The introduction of cable television *challenged decision-making processes* of everyday life. Especially social processes whereby particular (viewing) situations were established. Lorena now increasingly "sets the agenda", introducing occasional changes in long-established patterns of media consumption. An example of this is her choosing a film on cable television and inviting her daughter and Yherar to participate:

Yesterday, for example, around 7 o'clock, the novela Zaza was rather boring, nothing new was happening, so I switched to a film that was about the relation

between 4 women and their men (...) Then Marcia arrived, I asked her if she wanted to see something else, she said no, and that she also wanted to see the film. So we remained watching the film until a little over nine, we even missed out on *Jornal Nacional* (the evening news). (Lorena)

Viewing practices and social routines are therefore still being negotiated as the above example shows. Should it be a film or a telenovela at 7 pm? Lorena opts for film, and negotiates with her daughter. Obviously, the co-presence mother *with* daughter ranks higher in priority for Lorena, the mother, than her tv preference. In this concrete case, both priorities are met. However, the introduction of this new technology, cable, and the program options and viewing practices it offers, is challenging well-established social practices in the life of the Barcaros. In the above case it even made Lorena and Marcia miss out on the evening news, an old social practice is changing. Consequently, the implicit power relations of the family were reassessed albeit not severely challenged, not yet at least.

Buying a computer was Marcia's idea. She financed it with her personal savings and installed it in her bedroom. It was bought for mainly academic purposes, substituting an old run down type writer. Lorena actively supported the idea and demonstrated clear intentions of personally learning to use the computer. Later, in June 1997, the Barcaros began subscribing to the Internet, 25 Real (about 23 dollars) a month for a weekly access of 10 hours. Lorena paid this expense. This acquisition was provoked by the fact that Marcia's university had placed registrations for two exams on the Internet, thereby pressuring their students, like Marcia, to access the Internet in order to register to the exams. Marcia took this as a signal of the future, and – like with her mobile phone and computer – based at first instance on very practical circumstances, decided to subscribe to the Internet: "...I thought it would be useful to have the Internet, *because* we need to do assignments, always to extend our curriculum (...) get articles". However, she only surfed on the Internet a couple of times, she had practically nobody to send emails to so this facility remained practically unexplored. However, while still subscribing to the Internet she argued in favour of keeping it. Yherar used it once in a while, but the main argument for continuing to subscribe was less functional than her initial argument. It had to do with maintaining the connection to cyberspace. Asked whether the new technologies were attractive because they facilitate things in every life, Marcia answered: "Yes, and having access to things I before never had imagined, like the Internet. You can get to know a hospital or something where you want, you can have access to things, you can obtain articles". However, asked whether she and Yherar accessed the Internet and did such consultation, Marcia answered no: "No, it is more, I find it interesting to have the possibility, if you want, having this possibility". The feeling, obviously, of having this possibility of world-wide instant communication and access to infinite amounts of information expressed a fascination about the Internet as a link whereby one became connected to others, and to other worlds – a virtual and emotional connection, much more than a physical.

Yherar, in 1997, while the Barcaros were subscribing to the Internet, demonstrated a similar fascination about the new technologies, both cable television, having had access during about one year, and in particular a strong fascination regarding the Internet: "I find it incredible, some times I dont understand what is happening. Imagine the Internet, colour tv, cable television, it is all a stream of information, absurd piles, truely a lot of information and information. An infinity of things you never even imagined". Yherar compares the infinity of the Internet with the infinity of space. For Yherar, to access the Internet, entering a website, is just as imcomprehensible as accessing space, like travelling to the moon. It ultrapasses your fantasy, and yet it happens:

Making a comparison with people who live in the countryside, perhaps, people whom, when you tell them that Man has already been on the moon (...) they think you are lying, and believe its an American set up, that it is a lie. Some times I dont understand how a plane gets on its wings, and if you dont understand physics you really will not understand. All that weight, that thin-built structure raising tons and tons. How should that be? Its the same thing with cable television. It is a huge amount of things that people have put there, infinite channels. You have to have some organized approach to get to confront it (...). Even more with the Internet, I find it more complicated. There is a lot of information floating around there. But where exactly is it? Its floating around out there. (...) It surely opens new horizons. (Yherar)

Both Yherar and Marcia thus speak of the particular feeling it is having access to an infinite (virtual) space. It becomes imcomprehensible, and difficult to link to your everyday life, although Yherar frequently accessed medical websites. However, comparing planes, cable television and the Internet, Yherar's above statement catches very illustratively the similarity in the cultural impact of these different technologies, illustrating different stages and forms of mobile privatization. On one hand, they all provide nye connections into the world, physically or symbolically. While planes are able to lift into the air and fly hundreds of people off to a distant destination, cable television and Internet provide symbolic access to these destinations, Internet even permitting a virtual interaction with distant others. Mobility thus binds all of these technologies together – the ability to move and connect in time and space, sometimes physically, other times symbolically. It represents the globalizing aspect of modernity, today being the acceleration in time and space.

At the same time, they represent extensions of the processes of privatization described by Williams. Even the plane can be argued to pertain this process of privatization, considering Marc Auge's arguments about airports and planes being *non-places* where individuals remain themselves, being able practically to avoid any significant social interaction, and basically just speeding up the physical connecting from one private sphere to another (Auge 1995).

Lorena has a similar mix of fantasies and pragmatic functional approaches as to how this technology both provides clues to the future and (subsequently) needs to be controlled and domesticated and privatized by each and every in-

dividual, including herself. Her fascination lays in the time/space compression, in the possible linkages to remote places that the Internet could provide. The fact was that I was present it the exact days where they obtained access to the Internet, and they allowed me to send an email to Denmark from their home. Two weeks later, back in Denmark, my email to them was the first international email they received, and the effort in answering it became a collective learning process which whirled Lorena into cyberspace where instant communication with remote and very distant places was possible:

Once, when you sent an email to us that was when I became aware of how easy it was to receive and answer an email right away. One had heard about it but never had direct access. I was tremendously impressed. In the moment where they (Marcia and Yherar, ed) were about to write, and each of us gave our opinion as to what to write in that email to you, I was impressed with how easy this thing was. I was originally accustomed with a type writer and I had never had any direct contact with this thing, I had only heard about the issue. So, I decided that I had to learn this, because it was something very good. It is a facility that, only when you get involved with it, you become aware of the importance of this thing. (Lorena)

Given this fascination, and her pre-determination to learn, Lorena hired a private tutor to give her individual lessons in her home, with the purpose to learn word-processing and later also Internet-use. With a lot of energy, Lorena decided to become familiar with this new technology. It apparently was very important for Lorena to obtain control over the computer and also the Internet. She feared the generational gap her father had encountered. Thus, while having lessons in word-processing, I interviewed her about these lessons:

This is making me feel very well. I have seen my father with a lot of energy and not linking up with the world, afraid of going to a bank because he doesnt know how to key in. From the moment I saw myself alone in the world (after her divorce, ed) I had to inform myself better, because earlier on I was very dependant upon my husband. There are bad things that are for the better (tem males que vem para bem), because I grew a lot after I divorced him, even through necessity. (Lorena)

Lorena had only 4-5 lessons before she stopped again, apparently for a series of reasons: summer was getting close and she would be off for almost two months to her summer apartment by the beach; upon return her daughter Cristina would be close to giving birth to the child that later came to be Lorena's first grandchild. In this context, combined possibly with some difficulty in truly tackling the technology, Lorena post-poned to learn word-processing. Shortly after, following 8 months of Internet access, the Barcaros decided to stop their subscription to the Internet. The fantasies had been substituted by the pragmatics of everyday life where none of them had the time and energy, nor perhaps a pressing cause, to really engage in the Internet. However, the possibility to reconnect remains there – and Lorena was con-

vinced that they will resubscribe at some moment – its merely a question of time, and competence and mood, one might add.

Media, Modernity and Mobile Privatisation

Summing up, what characterizes the relation between the organisation of everyday life and the introduction of two new technologies in the Barcaro Family? If we look at cable television, the main points identified were these:

- cable tv has become a supplement to the programme supply on the open channels, and to some extent increased tv consumption
- cable tv has led to the disappearance of video use in the household
- cable tv has challenged the decision-making processes in the household
- two years after the introduction of cable television, viewing practices and social routines and rituals are still being negotiated due to the new options offered
- cable tv has occasionally provided access to programmes that were not accessible before and that have been used in personal processes of (re)articulation of identities

If we look at the *Internet*, the main characteristics of the process in the Barcaro family was:

- aquisition of it was motivated both by: 1) Practical expectations (work-purposes) and 2) fantasies and unclear expectations regarding access to infinite information and instant communication accross time and space.
- once at home, fantasies were replaced by the pragmatics of everyday life. Experience with cyberspace was achieved – opening new dimesions within information and communication. However, Internet-use never severely challenged the organisation of time, space and social relations. Thus, as seen in this case of the Barcaros, technologies of more recent aquisition and use still have not found a socially structured place in everyday life. Internet was experienced and rejected, but both Lorena and Marcia foresee that it probably will make a reentry into their everyday lives.

The Diachronic Dimension

These findings, identified in the ethnographic field study, gain substantial depth and nuance when linked to the findings of Nilda Jacks' analysis of the Barcaro's family history, the diachronic dimension (Jacks 1999). According to the family history, the Barcaros have a series of cultural characteristics, characteristics which help explain some of the above described motivations to purchase and uses of new technology. Among these characteristics are: the family's strong orientation, motivation and even ability towards surpassing major

obstacles in life, transcending difficulties as migration, ethnic persecution, divorce, etc. In terms of work ethics there is a certain Weberian protestant ethic expressed in their statements, including also a strong orientation towards education. Finally, the family, probably with some reference to their immigrant origin, are open-minded and courageous in their approach to the world. They are receptive to and interested in establishing new links to other people, communities and territories. In brief, this can be translated into a cultural characteristic of the family, their *family ideology*, or guiding idea (*ideia-força*) as Jorge Gonzalez calls it (Gonzalez 1988). In the case of the Barcaros it thus manifests itself in them being socially dynamic and oriented towards the future. It is seen in for example Lorena's interest in learning word-processing and in wanting to communicate virtually. It also lies partly in Marcia and Yherar's acquisition of mobile phones as an investment into the future career.

Another consideration to add is the life-cycle perspective, thus considering where each individual is situated within his or her personal life-cycle. This is where generational differences manifest themselves in everyday media uses, in particular within media uses in formation. In this context, the case of Lorena is surprising. Contrary to what one might expect of a nearly 60-year-old Brazilian woman, Lorena demonstrates substantial energy, interest and motivation in establishing this particular link to the world, and experimenting this form of communication and interaction. So, it is actually *despite* her age, but most obviously *in continuation* of the cultural characteristic of the family, that Lorena in fact begins to use the Internet. The reason for giving it up again lies in the negotiation between a historically traced cultural characteristic and the present moment and situation results in the giving up of it again. This thus shows how media use – from the use of old technologies to the acquisition of and access to new technology – is inscribed into the social and cultural practices of everyday life, being themselves also practices that lie in continuation of a multi-generational life trajectory.

On a more general cultural level, the gradual introduction of media and technology into the everyday life of the Barcaros provides an empirically informed account of how mobile privatisation occurs in practice and which role the new media and communication technologies provide in the transforming temporal and spatial conditions of modernity. The incorporation of new technologies into everyday life of this family reaffirms and furthers the cultural process of mobile privatisation as described almost three decades ago by Raymond Williams.

What we can see in the Barcaro family is how more recent media and communication technologies have brought the process of mobile privatisation into the Internet-era. The nature of the mobility, and within that the character of the temporal, spatial and social relations have dramatically changed in recent years (Meyrowitz 1985). Thus, the acquisition and use of new technologies are conditioned both by socio-economic structures (on both a micro and macro level, as well as by cultural trajectories and tendencies. As Silverstone puts it: "Television is not only a technological output of the development process in society but equally a cultural form and practice that contributes to the suburbanisation

of the world" (Silverstone 1994: 54). What Silverstone states as counting for television has in this case been empirically explored vis-à-vis new technologies. Extending Silverstone's reflections on television, suburbanization and modernity to the total media ensemble helps us understand how the practical and symbolic appropriation of the media influence the process of suburban hybridization of modernity both by 1) reinforcing and enabling suburban existence via a continuous process of mobile privatisation, and 2) by their presence, as both institutions and as media - in their forms and contents, serving as engines of cultural hybridisation (Silverstone 1994).

The culture specific use of new media and communication technology lies less in the motivations and *de facto* acquisitions of new technology, but are seen more clear in the ritualized media use that merges as the new technology gains a structured use in everyday life. These rituals take on particular forms that contemplate culture specific temporalities, spatialities and sociabilities of everyday life.

Media Patterns

Media patterns are integrated parts of established social practices of everyday life. They represent the regularity of everyday life, occurring repeatedly, on a daily or weekly basis. Uncovering these patterns, the point I here wish to explore is how some media practices constitute themselves as a ritual. Conceived as such, they can be understood as socially integrative and in some cases, can be understood as closely related to the processes of creating and articulating identity.

Lorena is the largest media consumer in the Barcaro family, having best time. She is a frequent user of news papers, radio and television, including cable channels. Television is the medium which she spends most time with, mainly at lunch-time and in particular during evening hours. From time to time she also turns on the television in the afternoon, mainly to watch a film on one of the cable channels. Lorena's media use is regular and rather predictable.

On weekdays, Lorena both begins and often also ends her day alone and with the newspaper, using the newspaper in significantly different ways in the morning and evening, glancing over headlines in the morning and reading several or many articles in the evening. However, at both moments it contributes to the transition rite from one space of identity to another. Thus, the media use depends also on the spatial situation, both the momentary situation as well as the spatial trajectory in which it is placed. Lorena beginning the day, being on her way from the intimate individual private sphere of early mornings and moving into public spheres within the city where she will speak to friends and strangers. This combined socio-temporal spatial transition from private to public, from individual to collective, from early morning to up-into-the-day is all marked by breakfast and a glance through the newspaper. In itself a transition-rite, obviously charged by what headlines she actually gets a glance at.

Thus, in the morning, while having breakfast alone in the kitchen somewhere between 8 and 9, Lorena always glances through *Zero Hora*, only rarely reading any article. In 5 out of 10 weekdays the newspaper glancing is followed by radio listening in the morning. Her favourite radio programme is Flavio A. Gomes, a mixed journalistic programme with news spots, comments, travel reports and some music. With reference to the programme host Lorena remarks: "He is a very educated man (...) My husband and I listened to it, in those times I was already very fond of his programme. He is a very travel-experienced man, he brings everything to the programme" (Lorena, Sept. 96). Her emphasis on the cultural qualities of the programme, and in particular on the programme host, becomes her justification of this particular media choice. It is a media practice dating back to her married life in Santo Angelo and as such is has nostalgic value and a retrospective charge.

It happens she has the radio on while reading the newspaper and having breakfast, but it is rare. After her morning ritual, Lorena most often goes out, either between 9.30 and 11.30/12 am or after lunch hours, typically between 2-5 pm. These periods are spent in the street, shopping or with specific chores, aerinds, physiotherapy (twice a week) or appointments. However, these hours may also be spent at home, where they predominantly remain media free hours, although radio occasionally may extend throughout the mornings or a film may be watched in the afternoons. Obviously, in the course of the day there are periods of media appropriateness and others of media inappropriateness. Like the morning hours, the afternoon hours, after lunch, are similarly "media light".

At lunch time, another ritualized media use can be identified. Lorena turns on the television, which shows a regional and a national news broadcast in the course of an hour. Thus, when Marcia sometimes arrives home and makes Lorena company, the lunch programmes on television are most often on in the lounge, as well as the newspaper may be consulted both by Lorena and Marcia. It is part of the lunch-hour break, a sound and image space which deliberately is chosen to form part of this midday break but establishing two different situations depending on the social context, with or without Marcia.

From around noon, television is switched on to RBS showing, from noon, first 30 minutes of regional news and sports, followed on the same channel by Globo's national news and sports, another 30 minutes. Frequently, while Lorena is finalizing lunch preparations, Marcia drinks a *chimarrao*² and takes a glance through the newspaper, with the tv-set turned on, although with principal attention directed to the newspaper. This is a moment of transition from the busy work hours in a public environment to the relaxed atmosphere of the domestic sphere. Marcia's experience is furthermore largely determined by her temporal organisation of the day:

Its not that I spend a lot of time watching TV, it also has to do with time schedules. I see most at night or after lunch. If I come home for lunch and I have to leave again a little later, then its a moment where I watch TV. And it turns out being largely for reasons of convenience, because the Video Show is the only pro-

gramme I watch alot. But it is more a question of time schedule, really, because I finish lunch, then I want to rest a little before doing anything else or before leaving again. Its one of the best programmes at this hour. (Marcia, Oct 97)

Thus, the mid day ritual includes media use, in particular television, used in several ways – firstly, as an audio-visual background contributing to the configuration of the mid day ritual. After having had lunch, increased attention is given by Marcia to the content of the current program, being the program “Video Show”. It is not too demanding, and allows her to rest, recharge, before she shortly after has to leave again.

Figure 2. Lorena Barcaro’s media use

Media Use	Frequency	Medium	Content	Place	Social Relations	Time Use
Early morning (before 9)	Often	Newspaper (Radio)	News	Kitchen	Individual	Polychr.
Morning (9-12)	Frequent	Radio (Newspaper)	News Debate	Kitchen Living Room	Individual	Polychr. (Monochr.)
Lunch time (12-14)	Often	Television	News	Living Room	Collective/ Individual	Polychr.
Afternoon (14-18)	Frequent	Radio (Television)	Music (Film)	Bedroom Living Room	Individual	Polchr. (Monochr.)
Early evening (18-20.30)	Often	Television Newspaper	Novela News	Living Room	Individual/ Collective	Polychr. (Monochr.)
PrimeNovela (20.30-21.30)	Often	Television	Telenovela	Living Room	Individual/ Collective	Polychr. Monochr.
Late evening (21.30-	Often	Television Newspaper	Film Sit-coms	Living Room	Individual	Monochr.

Thus, in the life of the Barcaros, a series of established media uses and practices contribute to the organisation of everyday life, not least to the configuration of certain rituals. The forms of media use depend both on media and life trajectories, and more synchronically on the time of the day, the social situation and the spatial situation. Lorena’s media use seems independant of time constraints, because in principle Lorena has all the time in the world, being retired, etc, but her total media use is not dramatically larger than her busy daughter Marcia’s media use. Lorena decides to have *media-free moments* of the day, moments of silence, often spent with reading or knitting, and more recently, with painting – say, contemplative activities that require full attention (knitting is also carried out in combination with listening to the radio). Another part of explaining her media use, including her media-free periods of the day, lies in her well-established structured uses of media, reflecting life-long media trajectories. Newspaper and radio are morning media, television is *not* a morning medium but rather an evening medium. These uses did not change significantly in the course of the 2-year period I followed her.

All this is to say, that depending on the situation and its social, temporal and spatial characteristics, the media practices configure some degree of ritualized media use, becoming fully or partially “a voluntary performance of appropriately patterned behaviour to symbolically effect or participate in the serious life” (Rothenbuhler 1998: 27). Despite Lorena spending a lot of time alone and thus using a lot of media individually, this does not prevent her from practicing, alone, a ritualized media use.

Marcia and Yherar consume less media than Lorena, and are in their media use subdued to the leisure periods stipulated by their tight work schedule, providing an element of unpredictability. 24 hours shifts make them some times arrive at home at 8 am, subsequently sleeping many hours of the day. Their weekend use is, when not interrupted by work, substantially different – rather introvert, pleasure oriented and carried out more in the most intimate sphere, the bedroom, than what is seen on week days. The underlying time rhythm is somewhat more relaxed.

Marcia is rarely alone when using the media. Except the mornings alone in the kitchen, glancing through the newspaper headlines, Marcia’s media use takes place in the presense of others, principally her mother, but also Yherar. This is the case at lunch hours which has been presented above.

In the relation between Yherar and Marcia, Yherar subdues his social practices to those of Marcia that again often are linked to the presense of Lorena. This mainly counts for evening and weekends where Yherar is present in the Barcaro home³. Often, for example, Yherar integrates the social setting established by Marcia and her mother in the sofa corner of the living room, chatting and watching television. Likewise, Yherar stipulates that he adapts to Marcia’s social and media practices, thus watching the 8 o’clock telenovela together with Marcia in order to be with her.

Figure 3. Marcia Barcaro’s media use

Media Use	Frequency	Medium	Content	Place	Social Relations	Time Use
Early morning (before 9)	Often	Newspaper	News Culture	Kitchen	Individual	Polychr.
Morning (9-12)	Seldom	Newspaper	Culture Fashion	Kitchen	Individual	Polychr.
Lunch time (12-14)	Often	Newspaper Television	Culture/ Fashion News	Living Room	Collective/ individual	Polychr.
Afternoon (14-18)	Seldom	Newspaper Television	Culture Film	Living Room	Collective/ Individual	Polchr.
Early evening (18-20.30)	Frequent	Television	Novela (News)	Living Room	Individual/ Collective	Polychr.
PrimeNovela (20.30-21.30)	Frequent	Television	Novela	Living Room	Collective	Polychr. Monochr.
Late evening (21.30-)	Often	Television	Film Sit-coms	Bedroom Living room	Individual/ Collective	Monochr. Polychr.

Wanting to be together in their leisure time, makes them adapt to each others interests and media preferences. Marcia is aware of Yherar's lack of interest for telenovelas, although he does accompany her in exercising her media preferences. As Marcia states: "Novela, for example, he (Yherar) doesn't like much to watch, but he ends up watching". Yherar generally watches more television when in the Barcaro household than actually is his intent: "I see much more television there (with the Barcaros) than here (in his own family's flat). It is because Marcia calls me in to watch. She likes novelas, she likes the 6 o'clock novelas, the 8 o'clock novelas, but I don't". Yherar basically participates in this novela viewing for social reasons. He is in the living room during the novela screening "not because she (Marcia) calls, but because she is there already. So I stay together with her. We are apart all week, so then we are together watching television and things. I have more time in the weekend" (Yherar).

Their time use, not least during the 8 o'clock telenovela, is always polychronic, including a lot of conversation while conducting simultaneous viewing. With reference to the period of the telenovela Yherar states: "We talk. Marcia and I are always talking. It is very difficult for us not to talk. We talk a lot"

The television set in Marcia's and Yherar's bedroom is mainly turned on in late evening hours on weekdays and more widespread in afternoons and evenings during the weekends. The bedroom is where Marcia and Yherar can and *de facto* do maintain some privacy, separate from Lorena and often in the company of a film on a cable channel. Is it in the weekends, they either check the tv-program in the newspaper in advance or confidently zap around at the moments where films are likely to begin, be it around seven or nine:

...generally, we take a look, "ah, I will see if there is any good film today", even in order to programme oneself, "ah, let's have dinner before watching the film" or something like that. We organize ourselves in order to be able to see the film. This is more in the weekends, but we take a look in the magazine, see what time there will be a good film, because eventually there can be a good film at 7 pm, and then we organize ourselves in order to see it. (Marcia)

Thus, the family organises itself in order to carry out the evening ritual of watching a film, being together and relaxing. The time, space and social situation which is established configures the form of the ritual, where all of these elements contribute to the understanding of the role of media use in everyday life. Having said that, the content of the program which is watched is obviously also a significant element, which I focus my attention to in the next part of this article.

Programme Preferences

The analysis of programmes preferences is structured according to two meta-genres, fiction and non-fiction. The preferences and the processes of identification often articulate and refer to experiences and memories of the past. Simul-

taneously some programmes contribute to establishing the present and in articulating visions and dreams of the future. Finally, these past-present-future perspectives reflect individual characters and identities, and their relation to others and to the world. Examples of these identity-processes in the Barcaro family are given in the following.

With regard to news and preferences within non-fiction, Lorena has a broad and general interest in what goes on around her, responding as follows to the question of what type of information she finds important to obtain: "I receive information on what is going on in Brazil, in the world, here in my region. I want to be attuned to all that is happening, in order to orient myself as well as possible. It is a personal satisfaction". Asked to provide examples of recent issues that interested her, she brings up two regional news topics with cultural content: one was the upcoming show by world known opera star Carreras who soon after was to give a show in Lorena's local regional of Sao Miguel das Missoes.

The other example she provided was the opening of the Mercosul Bienal in Porto Alegre where she lives. It is an art exposition containing art from the 4 Mercosul member countries, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. Here, her motivation and engagement in the art issue is related to her beginning painting classes that same week. She hadn't been to the Bienal yet, but wanted to: "I didn't go yet. Wednesday I began a new course in drawing and painting. I would like to see the art works, I find it beautiful, see something painted well or well sculptured. Every time there is anything on this, I take a look in the "segundo caderno" (Second part of the news paper, ed), (Lorena, Nov 97). She followed the Bienal both in the newspaper Zero Hora, in the regional television news programs and in the radio.

Weather reports from the region, accidents and whatever else that was broadcast with a certain local and regional relevance obtained her interest, with 'high culture' issues being of particular interest.

With the meta-genre of fiction, Lorena's preferences were clear: romantic film and telenovelas. However, these two genres seem to serve different purposes in her everyday life, films providing a more intense emotional engagement than telenovelas – but both elements in her ritualized media use. While discussing reasons for watching telenovelas, Lorena made the following distinction, referring first to the telenovela-watching: "It's a period of rest, of relaxation. I became aware of this one of these days, in the early evening, I was really tired and I wanted to have a look around on some of the other cable channels, but I wasn't ready (disposta) to enter seriously into some issue, so I passed on to the novela and it was pure relaxation, and I didn't have to think of anything" (Lorena, Oct. 97). Telenovelas are generically and thematically very familiar, recognizable, repetitive and with a very slow narrative development. Thus, they are not so demanding, or as Lorena stated: "I didn't have to think of anything".

Films seem for Lorena to require a larger degree of attention and involvement. Being a closed narrative, often in an unfamiliar cultural setting, both re-

quires and offers a more intense audio-visual experience. Lorena's film preferences at the time were with especially romantic films. As she stated: "Recently I have been preferring romances, I don't know why, because a while ago I didn't like these films". Thus, her emotional state of mind, her moods, translating into preferences for romantic film, can now, with cable television and in particular with the five Telecine film channels, be met:

I believe I always have been quite much of a dreamer, and now I am returning to this. These days I saw quite a good film, it was a romantic comedy. She was running after her boyfriend who had run away, trying to avoid to get married, and she was all upset because of that. So, she meets somebody else and decides to stay with this other man because she discovers that he has what she wanted, the wish to establish a family, have children and a piece of land. (Lorena)

What obviously seems to be at stake for Lorena is a current reflection upon her own life trajectory, particularly her divorce, resulting in a renewed interest for romantic films dealing with question of love, family and unity. A likewise renewed interest in her own Germanic past, having spoken only German until the age of 6, is also an interest which has had possibilities of being sustained via the program options offered on cable television. Alongside with a renewed interest in German, Lorena has thus watched DeutscheWelles' news casts on cable, although she finds it difficult because they speak so fast and they speak modern German, contrary to the Pomeran dialect her great-grandparents brought with them from Germany to Brazil in the 1860s.

Memories and experiences of her personal past were clearly articulated in her watching fiction programmes, both film and telenovelas. When speaking about particular telenovelas Lorena referred explicitly to her rural past, thus connecting a present television-experience to her living more than 50 years in a smaller provincial town and having spent her first years of childhood in a small rural community. As such, it resembles many Brazilian women's motivation to watch telenovelas: rural nostalgia (Tufte 2000a). Lorena's marriage for almost 25 years with a Brazilian of Italian origin was also an explicit marker on what interested her in telenovelas. Thus, her rural and semi-Italian past were two decisive issues in her preferring rural-oriented telenovelas portraying regional rural cultures, despite them being mostly regional rural cultures from Northeastern Brazil:

I liked that one, *The Cattle King*, which ended in February. I liked it because it showed well the regional part (of Brazil, ed). The first part of it was very beautiful, it touched me because it showed the Italian immigrants and an époque. Due to my husband I was very linked to this. These (people in the novela, ed) were seen as very happy, very hard working. All my life I have valued this hard work very much (...) I think this telenovela attracted me because of the first part, about the land, also because I experienced this a little in my childhood, people growing up working hard with the land (...) The novela shows a person

who works, who sought happiness and that found it there (working with the land). (Lorena)

Admittedly more than Lorena, Marcia is a *noveleira*, a telenovela fan: "I am terribly addicted, its a disaster, there are two novelas I turn on now". Her main motivation to see telenovelas is aesthetic and emotional. She explains it like this: "...its because there is this thing, there's romance, it shows really beautiful houses, really beautiful clothes". The aesthetics of the telenovelas provides her with pleasure, it fulfills an interest she has, and which is also reflected in her interest in articles and images on fashion within newspapers and tv programmes.

Her interest in telenovelas is – like in the case of her mother – also linked with the telenovela offering perfect conditions for relaxation: "It is more an entertainment thing, of not thinking, of not having to keep, kind of, like watching the news. You only watch bad news, and I dont know what more. (the moment of telenovela, ed) is a moment of rest, of – how should I say it – of calming down (sopitar), of setting your head free" (Marcia). "Calming down" and "setting your head free" clearly expresses the processual character of this moment of the day, a transition rite from a stressed work day "out there" and to the intimacies of the private sphere. Watching telenovelas is a reflexive ritual, letting the day's experiences pass through Marcia's head, enjoying herself and resituating herself in a slower temporal rythm, in a domestic and private sphere, reajusting her social, temporal and spatial coordinates after an often hectic work day.

Marcia follows two of the three prime time telenovelas on *Globo*, the 6 o'clock novela called *Anjo Mau* and the 8 o'clock novela called *Por Amor*. She makes a point distancing herself from the 7 o'clock novela, arguing it being very boring. Obviously, it is a humouristic telenovelas, less romantic, more satire-like, but in a ridiculous style. It does not fulfill the expectation and motivation which makes Marcia want to follow a telenovela. In practical terms it provides a moment of the evening for eating an for other practicalities, prior to the 8 o'clock telenovela which de facto begins 8.30, after the evening news.

Contrary to Marcia's passion towards telenovelas, and in particular issues of romance and aesthetic beauty, her relation to non-fiction, and politics in particular, is – if at all existant – purely functional, charged with a feeling of obligation. Marcia never seeks, reads or listens to politics: "Politics I find really boring. I dont have the patience, really, it is not what interests me". Thus it is not the political slots she pays attention to in news broadcasts. Television viewing always accompanies lunch and evening meals, and Marcia's principal moments of attention is when the news programmes brings issue related to culture, fashion and food. Thursdays the national news broadcast on *Globo Television* broadcasts a fashion slot: "she always speaks at this moment, about fashion, about fashion trends and things like that. This interests me". Strangely enough, news and debate within the field of medicine and health does not interest Marcia, despite it being her future profession. As reflected in her aes-

thetic interest, she seems thematically more tied to her professional background in advertising.

Although she is not attracted by political issues, Marcia does however have a minimum interest in keeping up-to-date with major news issues, otherwise she feels socially marginalized vis-à-vis colleagues in particular: "I remember a period where I didnt manage to read much newspaper, nor see much TV, wow, I felt really bad about it, I found myself kind of outside things, people where talking about things and I didnt even really know what was going on" (Marcia). For Marcia, despite having no particular interest, she feels a certain obligation in keeping herself informed. It is necessary, she feels, "in order to situate oneself, I believe, in relation to what is going on". Thus, she feels a need and obligation to prepare herself to meet with colleagues and friends, to move out of the private and relaxed sphere into public spheres where a certain level of knowledge is expected, not least from an academic as her.

Yherar's media preferences are substantially different than Marcia's and Lorena's. His great passion is sports, especially car races. He also has an interest in films, especially action films. He is a fan of Sylvester Stallone, has some preferences among international actors, but has not seen much fiction. Tele-novelas he only watches because of Marcia, as explained above.

With respect to news programmes, Yherar is critical. He has a limited interest in them, their format and content awakes no attraction or interest. For example, with regard to the regional news broadcast at lunch hours Yherar says:

I dont like it much. It is kind of messy, it has alot that doesnt interest me, be it some ecological thing they put there and that doesnt have anything to do there (...). I dont like it much, it has alot a stuff just to fill it up, they dont discuss, it is merely crap. The sports slot is full of commercial and the journalist talking all the time about what Inter did, what Gremio did, it is boring (...). It ought to be more objective issues, more telegraphic: its this, this, this and then thats it. (Yherar.)

His approach to news in the media is thus very functional. His expection from news in the media is to be informed, say enlightened, expecting facts and no discussion.

Yherar's main interest in the media is sport. Formula 1 is his grand interest. It's a weekend ritual linked strongly to his long-standing interest in cars. When he was younger, he collected car magazines – on his top shelf I saw the more than 500 editions of a large car magazine. Thus, Formula 1 give Yherar great pleasure, he watches it Saturday afternoons, and Marcia is often around, although not at all interested in the television programme. This is Yherar imposed choice. Yherar still remembers the probably most emotional and tragic moment he experienced in his conviviality with Formula 1. It was when Ayrton Senna died – if he was a hero in life, he became a myth post-mortem. All of Brazil was crying upon the accident and death of Ayrton Senna in 1994. Yherar witnessed it live: "Gosh that was sad. Actually, I have a poster of him here, in

his McLaren, when he won. He won the Brazilian GP in 1991. It (his death, ed) made me want to cry, it came to the point where tears fell from my eyes, incredible. (...) It was a tremendous chock. One of those things we...that are important, for sure”.

Conclusions on Media Patterns and Preferences

Media preferences differ alot within the Barcaro family. Their preferences are constantly being negotiated vis-à-vis the social relations they enter into. Mostly, social relationships – who they wish to be with – determines where they are, and subsequently what they watch. It is on this basis that media use is ritualized in everyday life, be it as an element in the midday lunch break, Saturday nights, or the morning media use, marking a liminal space, a rite de passage from the intimacy, privacy and disconnectedness of the early morning at home to the publicness, connectedness and social openness of the public sphere.

In their textual preferences and motivations for these preferences past experiences and memories both guide the choices and simultaneously are re-articulated, for example in Lorena opting for romantic films. It had clear connections to her rearticulation of past experience. Present day interests as Lorena's art classes likewise filtered programme choices. Finally, in the light of the past, and in the pragmatic administering of the present, media preferences also opened up room for visions and dreams of the future, for example Lorena's dreams of travelling or learning better German, or for Marcia's dreams of a larger house or more beautiful clothes.

Ritualized Media Use – with Synchronic and Diachronic Perspectives

This article has analysed three main points regarding the role of media use in everyday life. Together, the three points substantiate the final conclusions:

- 1) Despite some general structural determinants, cultural globalisation is far from a uniform homogenic cultural process.
- 2) Identifying and analysing ritualized media use in everyday life provides the key to a deeper understanding of contemporary everyday cultures and the role of the media in these
- 3) They highlight the importance of considering both localized and historized socio-cultural trajectories when analysing the role of media use in everyday life and in particular in relation to processes of identity formation.

Mobile Privatization via New Media

Williams concept of mobile privatisation has proven illustrative and particularly useful to place the social practices, and the use of new media and communication technologies, within a perspective of modernity. The case has furthermore illustrated how the local appropriation of new media and communication technologies is negotiated with – and significantly coloured by – the family ideology.

The potential links to the world created by introduction of new technology is a structural characteristic of modernity. Having – and seeking – links to an outside world is nothing new, it has been a condition of modernity and of the process of industrialization. It has been an element of the mobile privatization as Williams argues, and which the history of the Barcaro family has reconfirmed up into our contemporary era. Thus, the local appropriation of new media and communication technology is both coloured by family ideology and by the conditions of modernity.

Where the patterns of use regarding older media technologies were documented to be *long-established structured forms of use*, the use of a series of newer media technologies is currently being negotiated, being uses *in formation*. So far, the introduction of new media into the everyday life of the Barcaro family does not indicate substantial alterations in their configuration of social relations and identities, nor any abrupt or rapid changes in their social or cultural “links to the world”. One change which is currently occurring is the increased possibility of composing a more individual audio-visual menu pointing in the direction of an increased social fragmentation. However, at present it has only implied limited changes in media patterns and points more towards renegotiations of social encounters, for example when Lorena negotiates cable film with her daughter Marcia, as a potential alternative to the traditional telenovela.

With regard to the changing links to the world, it is worth noting the fact that cultural links to the world have for long been possible via the radio, something apparent in this family with the example of Lorena’s father having practiced clandestine radio-listening of German programmes during the Second World War. However, qualitative changes in mental representations of space are occurring, with Lorena’s first Internet-email experience as an illustrative example.

Thus, what in most recent years is changing is the quality and time/space characteristics of a modernity characterised by mobile privatization. The time/space compression of the links to the world create new possibilities of liveness and social interaction across time and space, with potential extensions of existing social relations (ie the case of Lorena writing to me). They make an extension of the symbolic space possible, especially of the visual symbolic space. However, the appropriations of this space are coloured by the particular rituals established in everyday life producing many different meanings in everyday life. This brings me to the second point.

Ritualized Media Use and Cultural Proximity

The identified ritualized media use integrates diachronic life projects into synchronic practices. Past experience, traditional cultural and social practices, established social relations, all contributes to the configuration of a ritualized media use. This media use is fundamental in establishing liminal spaces in everyday life, spaces of identity where intensities of feelings are experienced, particular senses of belonging are articulated and processes of identification occur. The ritual character of the situation articulates a symbolic space where identities thus are at play and where synchronic and diachronic projects of everyday life negotiate with each other. Saturday night film watching, for example, is a way of being together and exercising the family identity, but is likewise a ritualized media use whereby personal identities are negotiated vis-à-vis the specific film content.

The tone, colour or flavour of these experiences and articulated feelings are a result of life trajectories negotiating with the temporal, spatial and social conditions of everyday life, which brings me to the last point of this article.

The Importance of History/The Diachronic Dimension

This article has highlighted *the importance of temporality* in studies of contemporary media cultures. Temporality understood in two ways: One is the placement of each individual within their life-cycle, the other relating to the diachronic perspective of family history and trajectory.

With regard to the life-cycle approach, such studies can – as here done – with benefit draw on Turner's work with ritual processes in the course of life cycles (Turner 69/95). Depending on where a person is in his/her life cycle determines temporal, spatial and social rhythms and dispositions, and is furthermore fundamental to understand which rites de passage the person is experiencing/to experience at that particular moment of time. Lorena, for example, was in a transitory passage from being a working, married woman living among the upper social levels of a small provincial town to now being a retired, divorced woman living in an upper middle class setting in the large state capital. A significant transition period from professional life to retirement, from married to divorced, etc, all of which relates directly to her media use, to the form and content of ritualized media use.

The other temporal dimension emphasized relates to the historical perspective, or rather the diachronic dimension. In order to understand the temporal, spatial and social dimensions of the organisation of everyday life knowledge about the family ideology is very useful. In the case here presented, this was uncovered elsewhere by Nilda Jacks in her analysis of the family history (Jacks 1998). The Barcaros were thus found historically to being an open-minded family with a certain protestant ethics reflected in their attitude to work and belief in progress and development. Being a migrant family has also remained an influence on their strong orientation to the future in the sense of a "migrant spirit", a will and an ability to adapt and readapt in new places, al-

beit always aware of their past and their cultural – and partially their ethnic – heritage. Their ethnic origin seems to be dissolving, losing significance for the younger (Marcia's) generation.

On the basis of this sample from the collected data of the overall gaucha project, I hope to have provided some illustrative examples of how to exercise a critical anthropology of everyday cultures that, in a time of cultural globalisation, can increase our understanding of the complex relations between media, space, time and identity.

Notes

1. Within the use of technology in everyday life, two principal forms of uses of technology can be identified: one form of use is the already structured use. The other is uses in formation. These typologies on forms of media use are elaborated by the Canadian sociologist Gilles Pronovost on the basis of a large case study (Pronovost 1995).
2. Chimarrao is a herbal tea made on the mate leaves, original of the gaucha region. Drinking chimarrao is widespread among both urban and rural gauchos, representing a way of being together. This ritual marks a particular, and very relaxed temporal rhythm, and it is an important configurator of a social space in which everyday stories and happenings are told, reflected upon and interpreted. See also Tufte 1998 for a comparative analysis of this cultural practice to that of watching television.
3. Yherar formally lives with his mother, brother and sister. However, in practice he divides his time between the two households. Thus, he is not (yet) formally a member of the Barcaro household, and his guest status does influence on his willingness to adapt to the social practices imposed by Lorena and Marcia.

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Communication Competence in Sub-Saharan Africa

A Link to Democracy or Identity-Building?

Ullamaija Kivikuru

(T)he nature of social relationships between those who ask and look and those asked and looked at ... (and) ... the gap between engaging others where they are and representing them where they aren't – always immense but not much noticed – has become extremely visible. (Geertz, 1989:69)

Ideological changes have swept over Africa in the 1990s, and most media professionals have made a comfortable and understandable equation: an increase in formal political democracy automatically means an increase in media democracy. It still remains to be seen whether true democracy has increased in Sub-Saharan Africa through the introduction of multipartyism. The equation of the role of media in the promotion of democracy deserves more clarification. The variety of media forms has certainly increased, but what about the strengthening of citizenship, which can be considered to be the ultimate goal for processes working for increased democracy? Edward Said's (1994) discussion on the "colonial" mentality of westerners, tending to define cultures and concepts with a toolbox belonging to one's own cultural framework, is more than ever relevant in the 1990s.

But however democracy, the public sphere, or citizenship are defined, increased exposure to relevant media material can be assumed to increase the ability called *communication competence*. This concept has many definitions, but here it is perhaps enough to state that communication competence is a receiver's quality, referring to an ability to create *an active relationship with the media and other forms of communication* around him/herself. A person with communication competence is active rather than reactive, critical rather than indifferent towards the media, and feels so comfortable with the media substance and various media genres that, when needed, s/he is able not only to address the media but also to act in order to improve the quality of his/her own life with the information received. From the perspective of so-called *public journalism* (e.g. Rosen & Merritt, 1994), a receiver with communication competence makes an ideal citizen, because s/he is competent to organise

himself/herself and to mobilise activity. I thus assume here that communication competence among receivers develops qualities that strengthen full-fledged citizenship.

According to Graham Murdock (1990), there are three major ways in which the communication media contribute to the constitution of citizenship. First, in order for people to exercise their full rights as citizens, they must have *access to information about what their rights are*. Second, the *citizens must have access to the broadest possible range of information, interpretation, and debate on areas that involve political choices on local, national, as well as international levels*. Thirdly, people must be able to *recognise themselves in the range of representations offered by the media available, and they should be able to contribute to developing these representations*.

John Downing (1996:i-xv), while discussing the role of media in former communist states, emphasises the role of so-called alternative media in processes of transition. He considers that the mainstream media frequently remain as arenas of power struggle between the authoritarian state and new political movements. Instead, alternative media offer a channel for dialogue for the new political forces. Downing also wants to look not only at the print and the broadcasting media but also at cinema, graffiti, theatre, music and religion. And he is keen about so-called *capillary communication* that takes place in social networks, both within the state structures, social movements, as well as in popular culture. He also emphasises the symbolic value of international influences.

It were extremely useful and interesting to compare the development of mediascapes of former communist countries and the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, opening up for multipartyism. In certain aspects Downing's remarks seem to fit exactly also the African circumstances, in some others not so well. There seem to be differences, especially in the roles of mainstream and alternative media and the symbolic value of internationalisation. In Africa there does not seem to be any distinct difference between the mainstream and the alternative media, and the internationalisation of the mediascape appears not as a symbolic enrichment process, but rather as an overflow of transnational entertainment. As a whole, changes in African *mediascapes and ideoscapes* (Appadurai, 1996) appear as being far jerkier and cruder than in Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, it is important to keep Downing's remarks in mind. The dynamics brought into the mediascape with the emergence of alternative media is important, as is the principle to study the media in their cultural context. Especially important is the role of capillary communication, both as a "new" social force and a phenomenon that has existed in villages for centuries. Village communication has served as a stabilising factor for local decision-making by simultaneously supporting the existing power structure and by allowing – that is, rationing – criticism of the system.

My analysis of the present situation is based on old contacts, fairly extensive reading and three recent (August, October, December 1998) visits to six Sub-Saharan countries (Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia and

Zimbabwe) This experience suggests that in fact far less has changed than is said, and not much seems to be changing in the near future, either. Despite all democracy and grassroots rhetoric in policy papers, both governments, new political forces, as well as northern assistance organisations in fact are still obedient supporters of modernisation thinking on the implementation level. Shirinas Melkote has described the basic communication policy of modernisation as follows:

In the fifties and sixties, mass communication was considered the prime mover in social development. Information was thought to be the missing link in the development chain. Mass media such as the printed channels and radio were saddled with the important task of spreading information as widely as possible among the people. Government authorities, subject experts, and extension agents would go on radio or visit villages lecturing to people on how to have smaller families, increase their agricultural yields, or live healthier lives. Communication flows were hierarchical, one-way, and top-down. (Melkote, 1991:205-206)

This is part of both a historical legacy and today's practice of African mass communication, and it has a loudspeaker effect because the basic communication ideology of modernisation runs parallel to the communication ideology of colonialism, which was also top-down and hierarchical. These are elements to be adjusted into the "new" media scenery of the 1990s.

The increased multiplicity of mediascapes in Sub-Saharan Africa would not have been possible without northern donor funds, and these funds have been found because it is very easy for northern donors to agree with the "new" demands for multiple voices, private press, competition, increased campaigns and advertising in the field of mass communication. Said's notion of mental colonialism fits well here.

In other words, the situation in fact largely follows a logic of the 1960s and 1970s. The North asks for modernisation – it is now called development in project documents, but actually it suggests a goal of activity similar to western media structures and media consumption. And behind all this it is easy to detect the idea of a "hypodermic needle" effect of communication. Instead, southern professionals still beg for such basic changes which were on the agenda during the heyday period of the Great Media Debate and its NWICO demands: more balanced information flows between the so-called North and the so-called South, more southern voices in the decision-making of global media policies, and possibilities for genuine southern information criteria. A new set of demands has emerged with the information society. "We are still on a bush path of the information super highway", said one southern participant in the UNESCO General Conference in 1997, and made most northerners shiver. The NWICO debate has been muffled in the North, but not in the South, and now it seems to be coming back to international fora in a new attire.

Hence democracy and multipartyism are not the only phenomena on the media agenda in Sub-Saharan countries, but they form a politically correct discourse well received in the North. However, echoes of the 1960s and 1970s are heard in the background.

Nation on Ideological Decline, Development Evergreen

Just as the state is weak in Africa and the markets underdeveloped, so is civil society frail and of limited importance. One obvious reason for this is that the rural areas where the majority of the population lives, the essential marker and organisational structures which form the core of civil society are often less developed or hardly existent. (Rönning, 1993:21)

Returning to Murdock's dimensions of citizenship, my analysis suggests that only task number two has improved considerably in Sub-Saharan media in the 1990s. There are multiple voices heard in almost all the countries, which have undergone political reorientation, especially when compared with earlier decades. The African media, when compared to, say, most European media, are over-politicised and focused on party politics alone, but there is a considerable change, when compared with earlier times.

The other two aspects, namely the range of scope and preciseness of relevant representations, seem to have weakened during the 1990s. The range of media availability among the majority of the population has become narrower than earlier, and though the range of representations now runs from high-brow to low-brow, from mainstream to opposition politicians, from foreign politics to the vulgar sphere of "tabloidized life", people still do not necessarily "find their images" in the media content, as the following random examples show:

Economic crisis looming

Congo conflict worries Chiluba (President of Zambia)

'97 coup treason trial

KK (Kenneth Kaunda) **is my Moses, says Aaron Milner** (local politician)

Retrenched miners warn of anarchy

(*The Post of Zambia*, privately owned, front page headlines, August 7, 1998)

Congo war halted?

US embassies security tightened

UNZA (University of Zambia) **workers on go-slow**

Put value to education, government urged

Wars have no winners

The UNZA woes...

Police corner eight suspected criminals

(*Sunday Mail* of Zambia, publicly owned, front page headlines August 9, 1998)

Farmer accused of sex with girl, 13, in presence of her mother. Denied rape and said sex did take place but with her consent

(*Windhoek Observer*, privately owned, front page headlines, August 15, 1998)

US raids targets in Afghanistan, Sudan

'Urgent' DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo) summit called. SADC leaders to now seek diplomatic solution

Dead man walking? Muyongo's (local opposition politician) fate on line Namaseb (local sports boss, former Secretary General to NFA) takes NFA (National Football Association) to court

(*The Namibian*, privately owned, front page headlines, August 21, 1998)

Woman bomb victim loses fight for life

Mkapa (President of Tanzania) orders troops in Congo to return home Battered woman still in coma 24 days later

Nowhere to store blood at Muhimbili (University Hospital, Dar es Salaam)
(*Daily Mail* of Tanzania, privately owned, front page headlines, August 25, 1998)

Most of the above examples are taken from private papers to show that the journalistic culture remains very similar to the colonial-origin "gazeti" journalism prevalent in former British colonies: it is formal, top-down, and it circles around nation-level politicians and international high politics, while the role of ordinary people is to function as targets of accidents and crime. The private press has brought with it a bias to sensationalism and crude language, but not many other novelties; even the tendency to overload headlines with acronyms and abbreviations has remained unchanged. Some of the above papers are highbrow, some sensational, but the styles do not differ considerably.

Even task number two, the dimension of political information, appears somewhat problematic in present-day Africa. Especially the print media tend to be highly party politicised and adversarial, while most people, after first being fascinated a few years by the new liberties, now seem quite alienated from and disillusioned with party politics. One deep and problematic trait is worth mentioning: the *downfall of the nation state* in the media rhetoric and action. With an endless row of reports on conflict, mismanagement, wrong decisions and corruption, the questionable, if not outrightly bad image of the State emerges quite distinctly even in the reporting of many media receiving government or leading party support. What might be the reaction of ordinary people, urban or rural, who have either lived through a strong nation-building period or have been born in a newly independent State, poor but proud of its achievements? Even if one did not fully adopt a Hegelian ideology of individuals leading a full-fledged citizen's life only within the framework of a nation state, the rhetoric of the nation state has been so strong in Africa since the 1950s that it forms a part of personal security. When the good is turned to evil, not all concerned follow the argumentation. Here an analogy to Eastern Europe is in place. Downing talks about a link between memory and the media (Downing

1996:238) which has brought to the surface prejudices and hate-talk. Here one could claim that the mainstream view of assessing the State as the archenemy of democratic forces in society is hardly a sound sign but rather an attempt to rewrite history. There is still a long way to go to a recovery of solid social memory.

If the hate of the State is prolonged, the already weak national, publicly-owned media may collapse. The downfall of national news agencies is already obvious; still no media system in the long run can survive without some kind of national news agency. Decision-makers, as well as media communities in most Sub-Saharan countries, also seem to accept the collapse of the most important mass medium in Africa, that is *public radio broadcasting*. However eloquent or brutal, sophisticated or vulgar the urban-based new commercial media might be, they can never compete with a public service broadcasting in giving the majority of the people information about their citizens' rights and responsibilities and in bringing them to the arena of public debate. Furthermore, a public service system with a large variety of programmes also has better chances to meet the people's request for relevant representations.

It is definitely true that African broadcasting companies, designed on the broadcasting institutions of former colonial masters and later turned into massive, bureaucratic monuments of one-party states, carry almost no resemblance to public service broadcasting. But it looks like nobody was interested in the public service formula and possibilities to develop it. Nevertheless, the most obvious option, beneficial to both the political systems and the media, would be to sow as many seeds of public service as possible, not to strangle and finally bury the giants.

The image of *development* is not damaged in the same way as the state. Journalism in a wide majority of present Sub-Saharan media still has a marked developmental bias. Quite interestingly, the style of reporting on developmental themes has not changed much from the 1970s and 1980s. Perhaps it is so that while the welfare state is the holy cow for Scandinavia, development plays the same role in Africa? Unfortunately, development journalism still carries the same detached qualities which became marked in earlier decades: top-down reports, general policy statements, predominantly by political leaders and civil servants, formal visits, statistics, openings of seminars, compliments to foreign donors, occasional visits to rural locations, when some dignitaries drop in. Follow-up of developmental projects is minimal. These stories rarely carry motivational, empathy-oriented elements, and in a way, many stories seem to "hang in the air" because they are no longer linked with mass organisations, co-operatives and the like, but there are no new social movements to compensate for these links. (E.g. Kivikuru, 1990:369-389, 1994:93-105; Kupe, 1997:13-50, 60-70) Might it be that while the welfare state is the holy cow for Scandinavia, development plays the same role in Africa?

Here the dominant African development reporting, though far more outspoken than earlier, is clearly in contradiction with the ideals of public journalism which is intended and designed not only "to inform the public, but to form publics", as Jay Rosen's famous slogan goes. Thus the new, "independent" me-

dia have inherited the development reporting formula from the previous phase of regulation oriented communication policies.

The previous government-led and development-oriented mass media no doubt talked *to* their recipients rather than *with* them. Their relation to the audiences was far from democratic, because they rarely elaborated on the issue at all. But is the manner in which the new media are attributing to their audiences much more democratic? They approach their audience as consumers rather than as citizens. The ones especially fascinated by this attribution are the youngsters. But does a solid basis for consumerism exist in these countries, struck with structural adjustment programmes and mass unemployment? Does the recent development of African media in relation to their audiences actually carry a resemblance to the Latin American media in the early 1970s, accused by *dependistas* (dependency theorists) of rudeness, disillusionment, alienation and crude dependencies on western markets and values? At least the increase of foreign imports of media companies in Sub-Saharan Africa is enormous and the imported material can rarely be called relevant or carrying such symbolic significance as Downing suggests.

African media presently talk eagerly about *democracy*. If scrutinised more precisely, media democracy is quite frequently interpreted as standing for the multiplicity of media enterprises, reporting on multiparty politics and dramatic conflicts created by opposing, party-based ideologies. Instead, African media seem to feel quite uncomfortable with another fashionable concept, namely *human rights*, though in fact human rights pose a bigger challenge to the media performance than abstract notions of democracy. Human rights related issues turn the focus on receivers, citizens. Human rights issues bring into discussion aspects of ethics and morals, good and bad.

In Africa, human rights are rarely attached to democracy. Usually they are considered as forming a set of separate, specific questions, often defined in laws. The three successive generations of human rights have hardly been discussed in the African public sphere: the freedom rights, the economic and socio-cultural rights, and finally the solidarity or collective rights, in which the right to development is often included as an instrument to set conditions concerning people's core human rights. The right to communicate and communication competence are brought into the human rights frames via this mediation. (Linden, 1998:204-231) A fact that makes the issue especially interesting here is the focus on ordinary people. Communication rights are not restricted to the media alone but to the public, which is a more active concept.

There are three alternative routes taken in the handling of human rights in the African media publicity in the rare cases it gathers publicity. First, human rights are simply turned into shallow rhetoric and generalisations. Second, they could be attached to a few – often otherwise privileged, elite-oriented – groups. For some reason, journalists are quite interested in how journalists are treated in society; another group receiving considerable at least lip-service attention is women, perhaps partly because northern donors emphasise the role of women in society. The third alternative is more radical than the others: one

can also condemn human rights as a “northern hang-up” or “a luxury that the rich can afford to have”, lacking relevance in the South.

An answer suggested by the North to all problems related to media, democracy and human rights is *community radio*, an immigrant from India. It first arrived in West Africa in the 1970s. Now it is flourishing all over the continent. “Independent”, commercial papers and radio stations take care of the urban, consumer-oriented populations, while the rural communities and urban *squatters* are served by community radios. In South Africa there are more than 80 community radios, and northern donors, NGOs, and UN organisations alike are establishing community radios all over the continent. It does seem to have given voice to some voiceless. Most obviously, international donors seem to have learned something since the sad, frustrating UNESCO experience in the 1970s at Homa Bay where international naiveté contradicted the harsh policies of the Kenyan government and a community radio in a base area of an opposition tribe was closed down in a week. Now ambitions are realistic, infrastructures solid and simple, and the training component is always included. The sphere of politics still occasionally causes problems. For example, UNESCO has tried to set up a radio station in Caprivi, Namibia, probably the most troubled region in the country with political groups not only standing in opposition, but demanding independence.

However, not all experiences of community radios are convincing. Financial problems seem to emerge as soon as foreign money is exhausted. In the countryside there are no supplementary resources for funding community radios, however cheaply they are run. There is no space for consumerism and hence no interest for advertising. Urban communities can cope with this better than the rural, because there is purchasing power. However, NGOs seem to have a tendency after a while to retreat from the arena in towns as well, leaving the stations to youngsters who easily fill the airwaves with popular music. This is possible as long as no royalties are paid, but as soon as the Sub-Saharan countries enter international copyright conventions, the stations die out, as similar exercises have gone bankrupt in the North.

Nevertheless, the community radio does not offer a solution to problems of addressivity. The core of these problems seems to originate from the urban/rural contradiction in society. The new media have focused on the urban well-to-do, while the majority of the population is left aside, living either in rural conditions or the fast-growing urban *squatters*, but respecting predominantly rural values.

The Rhetoric of Democracy and “Independent” Media

- a) What are the results of transferring cultural forms from one society to another in which the dominant ideological matrixes are not the same; and
- b) How does the content/form of an ideology change when it becomes embedded into an institutional/bureaucratized form. Put in other words, what is the

practice of liberalism as expressed through its institutionalisation in a public broadcasting corporation under the dominant influence of a more authoritarian ideology? (Teer-Tomaselli, 1994:130)

The official rhetoric definitely tries to include rural populations in new media exercises, all advocating democracy. However, the new political climate with multipartyism is at its strongest in cities, while many rural communities remain hesitant or reserved while facing rapid changes. New private – or, according to the politically-correct rhetoric, “independent” – media have emerged almost entirely in towns. According to a northern vocabulary, these media are “private” or “commercial” and hardly more independent than party papers or government radios, but their pressure groups are found in business and advertising. The new media must pay more serious attention to the receivers, because they have to sell their products to the audiences – and to sell their audiences to advertisers.

Hence it is a very particular type of receiver that the new media have in mind. The 1990s have been characterised in rural communities by weakening rather than strengthening communication services, because publicly owned media, such as national broadcasting companies and government papers, hardly cover those populations that they used to earlier, while the distribution networks of the new private media rarely reach beyond urban centres. Most rural communities lack purchasing power and hence they are not interesting in the eyes of advertisers. Simultaneously, publicly owned media have lost their charm in the eyes of northern sponsors; hence they are gradually becoming operating media museums. The main reason why big public media do not interest donors is the present dominant rhetoric of democracy that fits perfectly in the European (“European” stands here for “western”) value systems. Hence European states, organisations, and NGOs happily sponsor such media exercises for which at home they would never recommend any public support.

Efforts to create democratically-oriented – and in the African frames this still means a rural orientation though cities are growing fast – communication in Africa have rarely respected communication “as such”, as a dialogue leading to *emancipation* and *empowerment* in a true Freirian sense (Freire, 1970, 1978). In the African frames, a Freirian approach appears far more relevant than the nowadays-fashionable discourses of shallow democracy or communitarianism and sharing. The way they are defined reveals that they are based on western concepts of society, culture and the individual, and are thus ahistorical in Africa.

The Freirian strategy of teaching fits the African frames exactly because the African mass communication, traditional and modern, carries a strong trait of teaching. The role of mass communication – via songs, rituals, or conventional modern media contents – has been to teach an individual where his/her place in society is. But this does not mean that mass communication would necessarily oppress or subdue the individual, because the individual gets his/her full “citizenship” first as a member of the group.

Attempts to increase communication in African villages have their origin in plans to create change in rural communities – and in principle, for the better of the majority of the population in the community. As documented in modernisation statements, communication has been considered as an agent of change rather than a channel for increased sharing and communalism. Thus the communication competence aspect has long been part of the exercise. As Francis Berrigan (1979:7) said already in the 1970s, “(i)n the use of media for development, emphasis has been on *telling and teaching*, rather than on exchange of requests and ideas between the centre and outlying areas”. This still applies to communication in rural communities in Africa. It is communication to the villagers rather than a dialogue with the villagers that all others – national politicians, foreign donors, professional communicators and researchers – are interested in. Despite the strong democracy rhetoric of urban media, rural oriented communication remains predominantly hierarchical and top-down, and this does not seem to disturb too many. Those living outside African rural communities still do not view a villager as a full-scale person, contradictory and selectively active in all his or her doings, as Paul Hartmann (Hartmann & al, 1989) suggested.

The tension involved in the issue is composed of both *a desire to control rural communities and a genuine will to improve the circumstances in villages*. However, the definition of what should be changed and how comes from outside. The procedure carries quite a clear *paternalistic flavour*. As such, both traits are natural in reference to rural Africa. On the one hand, weak nation-states are on their guard and want to play it safe, because at least in western concepts of democracy, unrest and pressure to change a political system usually come from where the majority of people live. On the other hand, efforts to bring in developmental measures cannot be explained with power politics only; a genuine interest to improve the living conditions of people does exist, even in the most undemocratic, bureaucratic and corrupt African societies (e.g. Amupala, 1989:109-113)

The concept of development has undergone a severe redefinition. Now the new catchword is *sustainable development*. Only rarely has sustainable development been linked to communication in general and even more rarely to human rights questions. It tends to be attached either to extremely broad and abstract dimensions of communication (e.g. Ninalowo, 1996) or “soft”, very specific grassroots oriented problems (e.g. Abdul-Raheem, 1997; Sarpong, 1997) The implementation of sustainable development, carried out by international agencies such as the UN organisations, remains vulgarly modernisation-oriented. What is typical of these projects is that *developmental communication is put aside, while increased attention is given to communication in development or development support communication*, whatever one wants to call it. The main point is that the definition of communication becomes more and more limited, specific and rational, and this kind of communication does not definitely focus on a full-scale person but on a target to be improved or reconstructed. The contradiction between “ordinary” mass communication and development communication is thus widening in Africa.

Only in urban mediascapes, both entertainment and full-scale political rights are thus offered, in the Murdockian sense, while the rural population, still a majority in each country, is given a motivation for development but no space for entertainment or genuine capillary communication to develop.

Freedom From Versus Freedom For?

Information, ideas and values originating in the media acquire currency by a process of diffusion. This process is neither automatic nor indiscriminate; diffusion tends to follow the patterns of social interaction already structured by cast, class, age and sex.

The effects of communication should not be thought of only in terms of the spread of information. One of the more important effects is to gradually alter the cultural climate and to introduce new values in a slow, diffuse way. In this, the entertainment media may play the major part by helping to promote a greater receptiveness to new values and openness to change. (Hartmann & al, 1989:263)

It is in fact not justified to discuss communication and communities in Africa on general terms, because there is a huge variation of modes prevalent in African media systems. It would be better to compare in detail country cases (e.g. Ng'wanakilala, 1981, on Tanzania and Ngwaimbi, 1995, on Cameroon, and Louw, 1993 on South Africa), if such up-to-date studies were available. However, the literature on African mass communication is extremely uneven, both in approach and in focus. Some countries are covered quite well, some not at all (more in Walsh, 1996).

An interesting and very recent phenomenon is the discussion on *civil society in Africa*. (e.g. Khumalo, 1996; Kizito, 1996; Mamdani, 1996; Raftopolous, 1997; Rönning, 1998; Sachikonye 1996) These elaborations about the character of civil society in Africa and its contradictory colonial inheritance tend to view the political developments in the 1990s as a prolonged transition process. They give special attention, on the one hand, to elections and party politics and, on the other, to new civic organisations, however weak they still are. It is perhaps understandable that the role of mass communication appears extremely limited in these considerations; the few exceptions put their thrust on community media, above all community radio. (Mwangu, 1996) Instead, it is not at all justified that rural populations as a whole get minimal attention in these learned debates – on a continent where more than two-thirds of the population still live in rural communities. Here one could state that the search for civil society has almost become a kind of mantra, especially intensively exercised by expatriate or intellectuals educated abroad; here again an equation with the eastern European situation could be made, because a similar trait is found there. (Downing 1996:237) One could claim that an African civil society could be composed of

totally different types of ingredients than, say, the political debates in Western Europe.

Furthermore, such central media concepts as media freedom have frequently been discussed on exogenous terms, emphasising “*freedom from*” rather than “*freedom for*” and viewing the state as the ultimate enemy for relevant media production. Recently, alternative definitions for media freedoms have also emerged, assessing press freedom from the perspective of sustainable development and demanding of the media advocacy for *good governance, transparency, accountability, and responsibility*. (e.g. M'Bayo & al., 1995) The problem is that all these concepts remain on a high level of abstraction and easily become empty rhetoric.

Today we do accept that a variety of mass communication in African rural villages, traditional communication, popular communication, and conventional mass communication exist operating side by side. Nevertheless, we should remember that conventional mass media are the ones still enjoying far more legitimacy and formal appreciation, while the others are hardly tolerated. The position of popular, entertainment-oriented media is the weakest, because entertainment is still looked down on by the authorities, national, regional, or village authorities equally, though the role of entertainment is expanding in urban areas. The traditional media form a sphere of their own; their links to the others are quite weak.

Furthermore, various shades of social consciousness are found among those who use both conventional media and traditional forms of communication. According to Ngwaimbi (1995:25-36), the three main types are *remote conscience* with strong ancestral links, the *split psyche* living in “two worlds”, and the *contemporary personality*. All three types have a strong representation in rural and *squatter* communities and all affect the communication behaviour, problem solving and policy-making of the population. These kinds of sharp divisions in the receiver cadres makes an audience an especially demanding and complicated group to develop a relevant dialogue with. In fact, one can very easily not only produce irrelevant communication material but also hurt the delicate social networks in the social mosaic of these semi-rural communities. This is the ground on which the *oramedia ideology* (e.g. Ugboajah 1985a) bases its rationalisation. It gives due appreciation to the existing, oral-based communication networks in local communities; girls at the well, old men narrating tribal history at a fire. However, the *oramedia* dimension, which emphasises local communication and judges national media as unnecessary, hardly gets any response from power-holders or ordinary members of the public.

In fact, more and more counter-argumentation to the *oramedia* ideology could be raised. Extremely few African local communities are today isolated from the rest of the society, though their direct media-based links with national centres might be weak. Media coverage and media-based perspectives to certain issues reach rural communities in the form of multi-step flow – somebody reads a paper or listens to a radio programme and tells about the issue to a neighbour, who tells his/her interpretation of the issue to his/her sister, and so forth. Accordingly, many basic definitions of the society and a citizen's role

also have their origin in the media in villages which are only occasionally at the reach of the media apparatus. Todd Gitlin (1980) already discussed the matter some 20 years ago, though he did not stress the multi-step flow but rather the *framing ability* of the media or *the first definition of phenomena*. This is where the media are powerful; they draw the profile of the most obvious social phenomena and problems involved. Media coverage legitimates a certain perspective on things and makes it impossible to go beyond the media definition:

Media frames, largely unspoken and unacknowledged, organise the world both for journalists who report it and, in some important degree, for us who rely on their reports. *Media frames are persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol handlers routinely organise discourse, whether verbal or visual.* (Gitlin, 1980:28-29)

Thus the media agenda provides frames for the public sphere debates also in villages. Then, from a communication competence perspective, we should study the mass media apparatus as a whole. The more relevant nation-level and international mass communication material is offered in a particular society, the better chances exist for capillary communication and addressing the people in a meaningful way also about local problems, and *vice versa*.

Rural communities are far more complex and contradictory than outsiders – domestic or foreign – have understood. Researchers have discussed this for years, but the problem remains unsolved on the level of practical action. Furthermore, the problem is growing because rural African communities become more and more “mixed”, characterised by what Ngwaimbi justifiably sees as “living in two worlds”. Urban *squatters* should also be included in these semi-rural communities, because inhabitants of urban slums have been found to keep up with the rural communication habits quite long after moving to the fringes of cities (Ugboajah, 1985b.)

Three Phases with Multiple Entries

The herders have gained ‘a voice’, which will enable them to agitate for changes in their living and working conditions and ‘empowers’ them to influence policy-makers. Their involvement in the process of making the video also led to the examination of, and reflection on, issues that concern them. This resulted in the resolution of differences and the realisation of common concerns. (Scott, 1994:68)

Crudely speaking, media activities in rural communities could be viewed as having three phases: The *ideological phase* started during the late years of colonialism, with an ongoing independence struggle, and shortly after that during the nation-building period in each country. The *developmental phase* started in most African countries in the late 1960s and lasted up to the late 1980s. A third phase, still in the embryo stage, approaches what has been

called *a universal media concept* (Pietilä, 1980) Universal media operate as a specialised sector of society, with the double function of an economic-ideological apparatus.

If one scrutinises the history of African mediascapes deeper, a few characteristics appear more and more evident.

First, *ideological traits emerge as distinct, though also very mixed*. The scope of ideologies varies considerably. The ideology might be religious, as in the early papers run by missionaries. It might support *status quo* politics, as in the papers and radio systems run by colonialists and again one-party politicians in the 1970s, and it might be radically party oriented, as in the few media set up by liberation fighters in the late 1950s and 1960s and again in the 1990s, when most Sub-Saharan countries changed to multipartyism. In short, attempts to twist African minds, rural and urban, have been multiple, and perhaps due to these mixed messages, even isolated rural communities have been able to groom and strengthen their selectivity. Today most rural communities are far from isolated, naive, and ignorant masses accepting any information offered to them.

Second, the development of *media with a rural orientation in Africa has predominantly been exogenous by origin, or regulated by exogenous forces*. The “first definition” has come from outside the communities and rural people’s lifeworlds. First it was missionaries and colonialists who set up media, then the initiators for media activities were national politicians from towns, or foreign sponsors. Subsequently, media modes have followed an exogenous logic. Not until recently was it accepted that “village voices” do exist, though they apply different communication modes than those developed outside African rural communities. What this means is that the two lines of communication, the weakening traditional one with long and strong ties in the community, and the slowly strengthening modern one with looser ties to the community, have developed separately and hence mutual support has not been found. This has slowed down the emergence of the “total communications vehicle”. People have needed to command two types of communication competence, traditional and modern.

Most communication efforts oriented towards rural communities have followed a top-down model, to change village life according to standards set by outside forces. Projects often define the objective according to phrases, which fit to the criteria of participatory communication, but the project practice often takes another course. This control from the outside has probably reduced interest in developing indigenously organised local-level communication, other than those modes of social and traditional communication which have existed for ages.

On the other hand, not everything has been imported in African villages. Paternalism and hierarchy are built into the traditional modes of communication existing in any local community. Andrew A. Moemeka, while talking about community and African values, emphasises the role of authority in rural communities:

In general, communalistic societies in Africa have two culturally recognised levels of leadership – formal and nonformal. The formal is composed of (a) the officially appointed or selected leader of the community and all subordinate sociocultural and political leaders that govern with him and to whom they are responsible and (b) parents and guardians who are responsible for those under their care. The nonformal level of leadership is predicated on one of the major characteristics of communalism, that is, the fluid type of leadership structure that derives from the philosophy of gerotocracy or leadership by elders. (Moemeka, 1997:179)

Those over whom these individuals exercise normative on-the-spot leadership are expected to recognise and respect their authority, Moemeka points out. Des Wilson (1989: 31) brings the same issue to the realm of communication with a simple, concrete example:

Then one might ask, what is communication if not a young African saying 'Good morning' to an elder with an appropriate gesture of respect? Communication and culture lie in the individual's use of proxemics, chronemics, kinesics, haptics, numbers, colours, odours, olfactory and gustatory senses, symbolic display, semiotics, picture, gesture, facial expressions and appearance, among others, to express relationships. – The distance between two persons in an open place could be used as an indicator of the relationship between them.

Wilson wants to defend traditional communication, but simultaneously he reveals a fact, which describes a very basic contradiction met in centre-periphery communication in Africa. The centre has wanted to change local communities according to ideals defined by the centre – an undemocratic, though mostly well meaning attempt. Village structures and communication systems have defined their goal – in practice, based on a *status quo* ideology – indigenously, but by no means in a more democratic way. Consequently, two hierarchical communication systems have met in African villages and partly prevented a smooth development of integrated communication competence among citizens.

Third, *African rural oriented communication seems to be quite apt to "fashions" in mass communication.* At one point in the 1960s, literacy papers and radio fora were the "right" media which started in West Africa and then swept over the whole Sub-Saharan region. Somewhat later came audio cassettes and campaign packages of audio cassettes, radio fora, posters, and leaflets promoting health, literacy or nutrition education. Then, somewhat later, came the film or video vans and community media centres offering possibilities for communal use of various media and production of community-based papers and cassettes. Now in the late 1990s, community radio has been assessed as the right vehicle, both by national authorities, as in South Africa, as well as by churches and international organisations, such as UNESCO and UNDP in Mozambique and in Namibia. Thus all eggs tend to be placed in one basket at a time, and in these changes, many useful means and modes of communication – such as au-

dio-cassettes – are never allowed to develop fully, because they become outdated and are replaced with new attempts.

In the following, I divide the mediascapes into three historical phases. The distinction is made on the basis of a communication ideoscape (Appadurai, 1996), the dominant “media ideology” and orientation as it appears in the research in the field. In the African context, it is more justified to study the existing media than to analyse policy documents, because the orientation of theory and practice tend to fall far apart.

However, the division into phases is somewhat artificial, because communication modes do not proceed and disappear according to particular phases. Various historical developments bring into the media arena a variety of ideologies and media modes based on them. When a historical period changes into something different, previous media modes do not disappear but rather move into a less dominant position in the mediascape, remaining alive and gradually forming the profile for mixed media ideoscapes and consequently perceptions on good journalistic practice.

First scene:

Catchword: Nation-Building Communication Mode: Propaganda

African countries, which gained independence in the 1960s onwards, understandably make a clear distinction between the last years of colonialism and the first phase of independence. From a mediascape perspective, the change of power is an interesting period; the ideoscape changed, but not the media orientation as such. A few years after independence – there was always such a delay – the media policies in a country were redesigned, but the orientation remained on the national level. The political rhetoric after independence never forgot the rural masses, and that rhetoric was transferred to the newspaper ordinances and broadcasting acts. Nevertheless, the media practice remained fairly much unchanged.

The colonial regimes regularly understated the precolonial African political community; according to their ideology, there was a danger embedded in Africans living in groups or clusters. Accordingly, the core of colonial politics, which considered ordinary people as objects rather than subjects, started during the colonial era in quite a distinct mode and forms part of the postcolonial communication policy heritage. This characteristic has frequently been mixed up with such traditional African values as non-individuality and group orientation. (e.g. Ong, 1982:78-138; Bourgault, 1993:76-79) In media discourses, these elements of tradition and western political thinking might indeed become intertwined, though their origins differ. Contrary to present times, there was practically no sign of a developmental quest during the colonial period. There was no emphasis by colonialists on developing the rural or remote areas.

Clandestine broadcasting means political propaganda, often operating from stations without a license – the most recent example coming from the Eritrean independence struggle. However, the term has often been used more generally, referring to all political broadcasting. In the focus, then, is the way these programmes address people while discussing politics.

The heroes have been such revolutionary thinkers as Eduardo Mondlane and Franz Fanon, while the communication ideology in these programmes resembles the tradition once called the “hypodermic theory of communication effects” or “bullet theory”, which presupposes that individuals exposed to broadcasts will automatically be positively affected. (Soley & Nichols, 1987, ref. Downer, 1993:101-102) In fact, in this ideology villagers are not important as individuals but as members of the mass to be evoked.

The listener, enrolled in the battle of the waves, had to figure out the tactics of the enemy and in an almost physical way circumvent the strategy of the adversary... A real task of reconstruction would then begin. Everyone would participate. (Fanon, 1965: 85)

Clandestine oriented radio has been talking to Africans for more than 30 years, predominantly through agitation and propaganda. This is a heritage that African broadcasting has to live with. Many researchers and communicators (e.g. Kupe, 1997; Munyaneza, 1997) view that the potential for genuinely democratic broadcasting depends on ownership – only private radio stations are able to handle relevant material, while “political puppets” have a stronghold in national broadcasting. The problem might be more complicated than this as the example of European private local radio stations indicates. And it is interesting that African media scholars rarely mention radio addressivity or intimacy. They are concerned about political oppositions having a say in radio.

However, some private radio stations quite eagerly reinforce the tradition of clandestine broadcasting despite the ownership form. The African inheritance in political broadcasting – and perhaps more generally, in all political reporting – is loud and one-way. It is no wonder then that the new media, print and broadcasting, private and public, tend to carry on this legacy with authority statements and stiff yes-or-no reporting. A many-sided political media debate seems impossible on a continent with long traditions of oral eloquence and debate.

In the colonial days in the late 1940s and early 1950s, many national broadcasting services were established to inform, entertain and educate European colonialists and gradually also their African co-opters. Accordingly, these broadcasting institutions resembled their paragons in England and in France both in structure and in operative principles, but they were far more elite orientated than, for example, the BBC. (Mytton, 1983) This is another legacy of modern African mass communication – the media are meant for the elites, though policy statements claim the opposite.

A medium showing local orientation at least partially, in the late years of colonialism and during the liberation struggle were *newspapers produced by missionaries*, though their basic mission was definitely exogenous. These pa-

pers used local languages to reach their target audiences, that is the ordinary people. Most of these papers were judged to be pro-colonialists and anti-liberation. Hence they were forced to stop publication when independence was achieved. However, as Nkwabi Ng'wanakilala states, the hasty condemnation could in fact be more strongly linked with projects of nation-building. Regional papers were viewed as a danger for nation-building and a potential channel for tribalism. (Ng'wanakilala, 1981:16-23) The judgement was probably justified from a nation-building perspective, but in practice it meant a cut-off of regional mass communication, easy to break down and extremely difficult to reconstruct.

Cultural groups still use traditional modes of communication in a new set of frames: for political campaigning, or agricultural, or health education – quite often all these together. Because as McKim Marriot says, “no state, not even an infant one is willing to appear before the world as a bare political frame. Each would be clothed in a cultural garb symbolic of its aims and ideal being” (Marriot, 1963:27) Most newly-born African states had a variety of ethnic groups, but it would have been dangerous to redefine “tribal histories” based on a few and leaving the rest aside. For example, in Tanzania the Swahili poetry was assessed as carrying a “too strong” Islamic label. Traditional dances were easily available and seemed ideologically far less problematic, because in these performances several languages could legitimately be used. (Lange, 1994:29-30)

Though the wording especially of some political singing is quite crude and some dances have become vulgar, lacking the elegance of true dance-and-singing tradition, this is still a living part of popular communication in Africa. Some groups have taken on a political function, others a developmental one, but they still also carry a hint of social criticism. Songs have been a legitimate channel for protest and criticism as the Mozambican *Paiva* song indicates, still very much alive. (Vail & White, 1997)

Modifications of traditional communication have been well received, lacking such dramatic consequences as in India, where for example birth control education using old religious songs caused riots (e.g. Kidd, 1984) However, Tanzanian *ngoma* performances praising political leaders and balanced diets are still perhaps more representative of a more “talking to” mode in the nation vs. village relationship – outside actors have borrowed rural forms of performance for their own purposes and then brought them back. Naturally, the cultural barrier is lower there than in nutrition education transmitted on national broadcasting, without any way of catching-up on the village level. “Social communication” drama in Mozambique and “theatres for development” in Sierra Leone (Malamah-Thomas, 1987) are of the same origin, mixing traditional public debates and drama with modern developmental messages, designed originally in metropolitan offices.

To summarize, at this phase the nation-oriented media did not pay much attention to the needs of rural populations. However, to use Jonathan Friedman's (1994: 24-41) concepts, people who predominantly had a “*homo hierarchicus*” identity, everybody knowing his/her place in the community system,

were fed with elements of “*homo aequalis*”, a modern citizen with individual needs, rights and responsibilities. People who only had a social (group) identity, started to gather elements of an individual identity. At least that possibility was available to them, thanks to a political process which had not learned to talk with its members in any other mode than by shouting and commanding, but which still, in a spontaneous and diffuse way, was able to make it clear to these people that it represented a change for the better. Everybody sensed it, though the message was by no means formulated to meet the information needs of the majority of the population.

Second scene:

Catchword: Development

Communication Mode: Campaign

Quite soon after the first wave of nationalist politics, *development* emerged as a new catchword in the newly independent African countries. In some countries, development took on a socialist flavour, in others it did not. The main message, however, was quite similar: the idea was and is to improve the life circumstances of the masses, to eradicate poverty and to raise the quality of life. The problem was implementation. How should this be done in the given circumstances and with the scarce resources available? Both African leaders and northern donors were puzzled, especially after finding out that things did not become better merely with increased empathy and access to media, as advocates of modernisation first taught and thought. (e.g. Lerner, 1958; Fougeyrollas, 1967)

The emergence of development as a central concept in the ideoscape meant that African nations “found” the rural communities in a more real sense than during the nation-building period, which remained predominantly as a drama for a few activists and intellectuals. Nevertheless, the profile of development was imported. Project co-ordinators, designing programmes and attaching new means of communication to them, rarely cared to ask villagers whether or not they wanted these changes. Communication between the nation and rural communities grew, but on exogenous terms. With time and increased experience, addressivity improved gradually, also in mass campaigns.

Efforts to start rural newspapers in Africa began in the early 1960s, first in Liberia. The “ideological mother” of rural papers was UNESCO. Thus, the concept for rural papers came from abroad. The start with one-page mimeographed news-sheets was modest, however with a circulation of about 2,000. (Rural Mimeo Newspapers, 1965; Ansah et al., 1981) All earlybirds were linked to literacy projects, later also to health, nutrition and hygiene campaigns. The strong educational undertone remained unchanged, though efforts have been made to shift the focus of rural papers to more general communication objectives (Andersen, 1996:87-106) Part of the reasons have been administrative-ideological, because rural papers in practically all African countries have been

regulated by educators and produced by teachers, while all other media belong to the “realm” of the Ministry of Communication or equivalent. (Hetland, 1985; Kivikuru, 1990: 400-451) Rural papers were the trademarks for African rural oriented communication in the 1970s and early 1980s. In 1981, rural papers (2-14 per country) were published in 17 countries. (Ansah et al., 1981:9-10) However, practically none were economically viable; governments received donor funds for the publishing. The first wave of rural papers died out in the late 1980s, when the foreign funding gradually ceased.

The coverage of rural populations was considerable in countries where the circulations of ordinary newspapers remained between 30,000-50,000. Dailies were rarely distributed beyond regional capitals, while development projects brought rural papers down to the village level. Thus the rural papers gave rural communities the first fairly regular possibility to get acquainted with the print media. For example, in Tanzania rural papers were made available to more than 4 million people in the early 1980s, while other newspapers barely reached half a million, all living in urban areas. (Hetland, 1985) No wonder an analyst was thrilled:

This particularly refers to the rural newspapers’ role and potential in a mostly *literate African society*, their function not only in post-literacy and other adult education programmes, but an expanded role along the line of ordinary, though rural-oriented, newspapers and other media. ... (T)here may be a unique possibility of changing and developing the papers further ... ultimately and in a long-term perspective it creates a truly decentralised, rural-oriented, educated and developmental press in the country. (Hetland, 1985: 2)

Hetland saw the emergence of rural papers as a catalyst for the decentralisation of all media systems in Africa. He also talked about the democratisation element built into the concept of rural papers; thus he could be called an early-bird of voices that became much stronger 10 years later. However, rural populations in Africa in the 1970s and early 1980s were not enthusiastic about the democracy potential embedded in rural papers. The news criteria were different from national papers, and the strong educational tone turned the messages into a one-way flow. Further, the practice of the hierarchical use of sources was transferred to rural papers; while a prime minister gave statements to the national papers, village secretaries were the main sources for the rural papers. Rural journalism tended to turn into mini-scale urban journalism, strictly following “professional” formats and modes such as the converted pyramid. (Kimaro, 1981:25-29)

Another form of development communication reached a higher stage in addressivity and two-way communication, namely *radio fora*. The idea of local-level study groups, asking questions and giving feedback and reactions to national or regional radio programmes or newspaper material was “imported” from India, on a UNESCO initiative. (Mass media in an African context, 1974:7) The strength of such fora was that they combined the strong sides of mass and interpersonal communication in quite a natural way. (Kasoma, 1993) Still, the infrastructure was as stiff as in rural papers; a radio forum was established in a

village to discuss and elaborate themes presented in a radio programme or on an audio cassette, under the village leadership.

Nevertheless, radio fora gave village people an opportunity to open their mouths and to discuss their own genuine problems. Women and young people, usually ignored in the village hierarchy, were found to be interested in the radio fora. But if these groups did not receive special encouragement, they did not participate in the listening groups – and quite often, the special encouragement was never given. (Mass media in an African context, 1974:34-35) Thus the mere existence of possibilities for participatory communication was not enough, if nothing else was done. Local power-structures and hierarchies tended to be transferred to the new communication modes, while marginalized groups easily remained marginalized.

Most village-level radio fora took the mode of a campaign. They were organised as temporary set-ups and scheduled according to exogenous timetables. Thus the fora never became part of the village infrastructures as did village meetings, co-operatives, churches, party cells and local chapters of mass organisations. This, again, meant that regular, village-level communication on a variety of themes remained isolated from these attempts for localising national communication.

A more ambitious mode of radio fora emerged, predominantly through UNESCO and church initiatives in several African countries, at the middle of the 1980s. The objective of *community media centres* was not only to make available existing nation-level mass communication, newspapers as well as radio and television services plus educational video programmes. The centres were structured in such a way that villagers could produce simple media products, rural papers as well as audio cassettes and radio programmes. Even systems of local “*barefoot reporters*” were introduced. Though these kinds of village papers muffled their educational tone and genuinely tried to instigate discussion and debate, spontaneous debates rarely burst out. Only gradually did people accept papers and audio cassettes, which covered events and processes in the village itself. But after a while, people already started to queue outside the community media centres a day or two before the production day – only to find out that the machines had broken down and the rural reporter had left the village because nobody paid his salary. And people learned to live without the village paper, because media availability did not have enough time to develop into a habit. A “gift from heaven”, given without a request, disappeared as so many other products of short-term projects. (Kivikuru et al, 1994:180-189)

Gradually, the development orientation became the most typical characteristic of all African mass communication. No doubt the development orientation frequently remained on the level of rhetoric only, and its mixture with top-down news criteria did not always bring successful results. Nevertheless, *the development orientation is a feature that even today characterises the African mainstream journalism and distinguishes it from the so-called western mainstream*. This ingredient is hard to define, but it is there, integrated in all materials, and though its expression mode has remained quite formal and general,

it probably also has become a dominant feature in the eyes of ordinary rural people due to redundancy in the media material. In short, it is now part of the ideoscape. Instead, the way the media address people has not changed much from the propaganda phase. African media still tend to treat ordinary people as targets, not partners in a joint exercise. (Lundby, 1993; Scott, 1994; Tomaselli, 1989; Traber & Lee, 1989)

The developmental orientation brought in fact into Sub-Saharan Africa a more radical change than political independence – though, naturally, the two are interlinked. Both region-level and local mediascapes changed considerably, because the national media also started to show an increased interest in the ordinary people. Radio companies even developed contact programmes which went beyond death announcements and public information, which have a long history throughout the continent of poor roads – the radio reaches people with this kind of crucial information better than any other medium. Nevertheless most African mass media remained more urban-oriented than their European counterparts. African media cannot afford news-gathering networks covering whole countries on a regular basis. However, the change, compared with the colonial times, was considerable. The problem is that though most media professionals have strong personal ties to the rural areas, professionally they live in another world which is totally dominated by western-origin rules and ideals. And because they do not meet the rural communities regularly on professional terms, they have not been able to develop genuine African journalism. In fact, most training programmes for journalists in Africa, with perhaps the exception of rural communication syllabuses, are today more western-oriented and polytechnic than the ones developed in the 1970s.

Over the years, development communication has become more sophisticated and elaborate, more “effective” one could say. The relationship between the African media and their audiences still remains formal and one-sided in the sense that they have not paid much attention to genuine, spontaneous entertainment; instead, cheap tricks to charm the receivers have emerged. The existing media have had a tendency to exhibit social developments as highly rational and “serious” exercises. The mistake of not taking entertainment seriously might be one of the greatest “sins” of the developmental phase.

Third scene:

Catchword: Freedom

Communication Mode: Consumerism

An attempt to describe present trends in Sub-Saharan mass communication from a communication competence perspective provides a real challenge; there are a variety of contradictory elements found in the mediascapes. In any case, far less has changed than has been said on the level of declarations. *Private media* have emerged, but they have not brought into the mediascape strong new voices as such. Most journalists working for the new media are in fact

journalists who some 10 years back worked for the public media; the only really new voices are most often heard in the government media, which have been forced to replace the old journalists with new graduates from universities or high schools. Many private papers preaching about press freedom in fact approach yellow journalism with their rumour-mongering, intrusion into private lives and an uncritical attitude towards their sources. The media, new and old, more and more have become business actors who approach their receivers as consumers, though frequently in the name of democracy.

Perhaps the most marked change is that these media approach their audiences as consumers. As the Canadian communication researcher Dallas Smythe (1982) once said, television programmes are a side-product of a business deal between the producer and the advertiser, to whom the producer wants to sell a particular type and size of audience. The producer needs the content in order to hunt for the right type of audience. Scandal papers flourishing all over Africa and sensational tendencies in the more serious media give some verification to Smythe's argument.

Nevertheless, however quasi-democratic the new wave of media outburst in Sub-Saharan Africa might be, it has important consequences which carry mediated influence in the centre-periphery relationship between urban and rural communities, as well as capillary communication. There is hope for change, and there is potential for a genuine public sphere – on African terms – to be developed with the assistance of the media.

The new media situation has given strong support to *mass communication in indigenous languages*. The language to be strengthened is usually the strongest one in the society, but still this distancing from the colonial past bears significance. The development is also important in view of the future and the ownership changes to come. The use of a local language might operate as a safeguard against international chains. Strengthened competition in the media market has also assisted in developing new, simplified, often vulgar expression modes; the oral and the print are in this way approaching each other in cultures labelled with a strong bureaucratic legacy in the print media. Further, *poetry and other forms of traditional communication* have strengthened their footing in newspapers. It is definitely interesting that the political and developmental phases of media were not able to combine conventional media and popular communication, but the commercial media seem to be able to do so, at least to a certain level. Commercial media in a competition situation try to listen to their audience's inclinations. In principle, this means that the media should package their messages so that people with less education and stronger ties with the tradition also feel motivated to enter the mediascape. However, they are still left in a the position of receiver, not a participant position.

Another equally important feature of the 1990s is that *the profession of communicators has gained both self-respect and respect* – sometimes also fear – among those in power. The media apparatus is no longer a fringe area of social development, but a social force. When the quest for increased media services reaches saturation in urban areas, perhaps rural communities might even start to become interesting for the private media. Once “discovered”, the rural

populations might even give a potential to political consequences, however undemocratically the media might still address the rural people. The rural audience is large and hence powerful, if empowered for or against any social issues. According to an American researcher studying gender violence in the Kenyan media, there is power embedded in the situation:

I have argued that media and other ideological institutions constitute crucial sites where hegemonic perspectives are constantly reinforced and challenged. In the case of gender violence, media may support patriarchal hegemony via a wide variety of mutually-reinforcing framing techniques, which intersect with and are supported by news traditions and values. Media also may combat gender violence by responsible reporting (e.g., avoiding rape myths) and by reporting perspectives that call for accountability and change. Urban print media's power often is underestimated in developing countries, where the vast majority of the people live in rural areas and illiteracy is widespread. Yet, these media influence the educated, urban minority (including political leaders), who wield disproportionate power to effect change. (Steeves, 1997:97)

Lesley Steeves might be right. With the new political situation, African societies are gradually moving towards a similar unpredictability of the public sphere, which characterises any society with a strong media vehicle. Universal media are filled with contradictions and value anarchy, but they also carry seeds of true democracy. Subsequently, the conventional, money-making media vehicle and the media modes tied to development projects and programmes – at their best, well-planned, consistent, rational and even at their worst still emphasising semi-rationality – seem to depart from each other more and more. Here is a contradiction embedded in the argumentation allowing more and more entertainment for urban audiences, while the rural ones are left with campaigns and leaflets stressing rational thinking.

The sheer expansion of the media vehicle greatly fascinates both decision-makers and ordinary people. A freely-bloated media system easily leads to negligence of those who do not make a big noise about their needs, that is those members of the public who are not crucial for policy-making.

In summary, it could be said that the present phase of universal media trends still faces the same basic questions which were put to the nationalists in the 1960s: What to prioritise? What, in the given circumstances, is the right path to truly democratic development, which appreciates the basic human rights of every citizen, communication rights included? The questions sound more sophisticated today, but the answers are as difficult to find as 20-30 years ago. We still have the dilemma of the village and the mystery of communication in our hands.

From Bush Paths to Suburban Streets?

Hardly no one any longer dreams about a communication cut off from the society around a village or a region as Ugboajah suggested. Oramedia today are a histography of the past, an account of how people used to interpret the world around them. Oramedia are indeed relevant, respected, and participatory, but they are in fact partly an appendix to a lifestyle slowly fading away.

In these circumstances, it does not help too much that sensational newspapers nowadays publish letters-to-the-editor in poetry form and give space to witchcraft, sorcery and other traditional particularities. From a societal point of view, this can even be interpreted as if oramedia or traditional media are now accepted because they have lost their power. They are no longer capable of advocating village values to people who are adopting – at least superficially – norms and behaviour with a clear inclination to town life.

Nevertheless, the oramedia – or perhaps it is more justified to call them popular media now – stand for two intertwined and important concepts, participation and indigeneity, though both have lost some of their earlier glory. Is indigeneity feasible as a principle for communication implementation in transitional communities? A claim could be made that the hybridisation of culture, advocated among others by the Columbian communication researcher Jesús Martín-Barbero (1997), is actually the only choice available. If communication plans are carried out wisely, new hybrid oramedia might emerge, more fit for criss-crossing networks of social linkages. Martín-Barbero discusses *the city*, which according to him is a source for identity-building. He says the metaphors used in relation to communication – flow, traffic, intersection, and vehicle – indicate that they are not haphazardly chosen but deliberate. The fundamental concern of the modern society is not that citizens meet but that they circulate. The imperative is to be *connected*. This applies equally to urban as well as rural communities. But, as Martín-Barbero has repeatedly pointed out, connections do not always take the form of a rational, linear discourse. Connections, as well as Freirian empowerment, might emerge out of information but also out of laughter, joy or entertainment.

Another question open for African communicators just now refers to democracy-put-into-practice. Rhetorical statements on democracy, human rights, good governance and sustainable development are easy to make, but how do we act when we encounter the lifeworlds of ordinary people? Does a “democratic” communicator remain aside and thus perhaps sacrifice the basic ideology of sustainable development when a human being or a group of human beings are oppressed or humiliated, either in the name of traditional values in villages or in the name of party politics in towns? A *safari* to the grassroots easily leads a visitor to ignore questions of power – but power does not go away by ignoring it.

This kind of journey to the grassroots is easiest to do with reference to the liberation struggle tradition which still forms part of the everyday rhetoric, both on the level of formal discourse and of ordinary people’s lifeworld representations; even in the ‘oldest’ Sub-Saharan countries, independence is hardly

40 years old, in Zimbabwe 20 and in Namibia only 10 years old. Furthermore, an ideological reorientation touching all these countries applies to South Africa. The arch enemy became a friend – and so powerful a friend that it almost frightens those with less power. No wonder such authors as Wole Soyinka found these kinds of dramatic changes challenging, as says the Zimbabwean literary critic Emmanuel Ngara (1990) while analysing Soyinka's famous poem *Ogun Abibiman*:

In *Ogun Abibiman*, Soyinka has created a minor epic, which is of direct relevance to the African predicament. His prophecy that Samora Marchel's act of 1976 was 'a summation of the continent's liberation struggle against the bastion of inhumanity, namely South Africa, has been partially fulfilled'. Four years after Soyinka wrote the poem, Rhodesia became Zimbabwe and the struggle with South Africa became even fiercer. – Gods are indeed contending with gods as the god of apartheid musters support from the major imperialist forces of the world. For *Ogun* and Shaka the going is tough yet, but 'Meander how it will, the river/Ends in lakes, in seas, in the ocean's/Savage waves'. Epic poetry is the most appropriate medium for depicting this titanic struggle of the African people against the worst of the human enemies.

The epic form of the poem is evident in its grand design – gods contending with gods – and in its elevated and declamatory style. It is evident in the poet's assumption of the role of *griot* in the tradition of such great epics as *Sundiata*. For the first time, Soyinka genuinely turns to African tradition to seek poetic inspiration and suitable motifs. (Ngara, 1990:101)

The legacy of liberation is easy to carry, because it is so near, it represents heroism, which is comfortable for any community, and it is usually strongly linked with the tradition. But there are elements in the tradition which are not as easily digested. One is the trait of nomadism and occupations attached to it. The balance with city life and tribes and groups sticking to a "remote conscience" with strong ancestral ties is not as easily found, because these groups often are openly in opposition to the dominant order as the *Masai* tribe in Tanzania, refusing to respect national borders, to pay taxes and to send their children to school. Chuck Scott talks about the "power-knowledge" which his video team was able to develop in those Lesotho herders whom his team was making a video "with", "of" and "for". The herders started to discuss critically conservation and livestock problems and to reflect on how these issues affected their livelihoods, but finally the author has to admit that he does not know how the exercise ends. "We" and "they" are mixed, partly merged, but both are unable to change things. The team has the possibility to leave the arena, the herders have not that option available. (Scott, 1994:62-65)

Scott's dilemma can perhaps be treated with an overdose of exoticism. The lifeworld of nomad herders is a rarity in present-day Africa also to genuine Africans. There is no other way to judge them as being "Others", oddities far away. A discourse on popular entertainment might be far more relevant to the majority; a discourse on entertainment imported, exported and domestically produced. In fact, this is a discussion of high relevance in the African culture

which has so long formally ignored the existence of media entertainment. That discussion does not lack the dimension of power, either. Simultaneously, with the brewing discussion on entertainment, cheap transnational imports, regional – South African, Nigerian, sometimes Kenyan – media superpowers' assembly-line productions, as well as home-made format adoptions dominate the Sub-Saharan entertainment mediascapes. The *oramedia* culture is still present, but the “consolidation of a global media system” (Robertson, 1997:7-8) is more and more present in the arena. Only in the case of popular music has Africa been able to produce industrially and to consume in large volumes material that can be called genuinely African. For example, African film has had larger audiences in Europe than in Africa, though here we naturally meet cultural hybrids or more likely the phenomenon which Arjun Appadurai has called cultural cannibalism, a kind of semiotic traffic back and forth:

a politics of the mutual effort of sameness and difference to cannibalise one another and thus to proclaim their successful hijacking of the twin Enlightenment ideas of the triumphantly universal and resiliently particular. (Appadurai, 1989:308)

In fact we have to relate to quite complex problems while opening up the question of media entertainment. For example, we face Otherness and *apartheid* as it has been found in popular fiction up to the 1990s. Joy Packer was a novelist and romance-writer whose texts were steadily popular in South Africa beyond her own background, white South Africans. She was very skilful in her “ultimate subnarrative of fear” (Stotesbury, 1996:189) dominating the minds of the liberal anglophone Capetown region. She erected “coloured” as a racio-cultural buffer, and that fit well with the thinking of liberal white *laager*, that is understandable. But why did her “popular market-place” (Stotesbury, 1996:217) of love and action, as presented in the novel *The Dark Curtain*, published the first time just before the 1976 Soweto uprising, also become popular not only among the white Anglophones but among the young, partially westernised, urban black population in a time of immense social stress and frustration? Packer, with her appeal to apparent realism, was able to suggest to such readers that there was an African Other to keep a distance from, an Other filled with witchcraft and superstition. Parker offered “sister-textual” memories which came closer to the urban black than witchcraft and traditional healing which were given as characteristics of their “own” culture. (Stotesbury, 1996:210-219) The South African political journalist, Allister Sparks, has discussed the political power embedded in witchcraft. Sparks suggests that, in a contemporary western context:

these images are lodged deep in the psyche, and although with the exception of a few isolated and aberrant cases, the practice of witchcraft has long since died out in the West, the psychology that gave rise to it has not. There is still a recrudescence impulse, especially in times of social stress, to blame the crisis on subversion from outside on the betrayal within, and instead of attending to the

underlying causes to seek out these imagined conspirators. Thus the witch hunt. (Sparks, 1990: 18-19)

Packer was not the only one in her time. There were many other South African popular writers, all implicitly allying with the *apartheid* state and its values, which used witchcraft as a means for cultural distinctions. Some others used, and still use, “African sexuality” and militantly oppositional African political movements as an “automatic linking of sex, violence and blackness in colonialist consciousness”. (Maugham Brown, 1985:124) As David Maugham Brown has noted, the same method was used in East African colonial popular fiction. Identity politics, the distinction of “us” and “them”, thus carries a varying but still consistent logic linked with both power and identity, far more complicated than a simple division into fact and fiction or politics and entertainment. Blacks who lived in either very privileged or very marginalized “bridgehead cultures” reflecting western values found their allies in these authors.

Today the phase of simple identity constructions is over. Because so many people still have a split psyche, partly living in the village, partly in the city, processes and rites of liminality – re-membering and dis-membering (Turner, 1977) – are both sensitive and complex. In present-day African popular fiction, the probably most common strategy of Otherness-building is based on the distinction between a “good” village versus a “bad”, sinful and corrupt city (e.g. Sekoni, 1997) Again, a link to power is easy to detect: mobility to urban *squatters* is a problem in almost any Sub-Saharan country today. This does not naturally mean that fiction writers are given orders on how to write. They operate as fiction writers in the North: they smell the ideoscape, make distinctions and write – in the name of free expression but with an appeal to be popular. They often have a strong African rhetoric, and even witchcraft is now given positive connotations, because it is part of the tradition to be cherished as part of the “indigenous” culture but shelved in the everyday lifeworld. On the other hand, African ideoscapes do not yet seem to be “connected” or truly urban in the Martín-Barbero sense. The city is not yet the source for identity-building.

What makes the picture even more interesting is the fact that side by side with African popular identity strategies more and more transnational ones are offered, especially via television and film. The clash of cultures might become powerful, and there is hardly space for such mediators as in the 1960s and 1970s, when white colonialists and all-white Joy Packer served as some kind of buffers in Otherness-building among Africans. Media audiences meet products of the transnational entertainment industries straight, without mediations. Unlike in the post-socialist states in Europe, which Downing has talked about, international material in African mass communication lacks practically any symbolic emancipatory value. On the other hand, Downing points out that it is important to note the cumulative effects of media contents (Downing, 1996:234-239), and this applies to Sub-Saharan Africa as well. They bring about raw sensationalism, sexist exploitation, as well as elements of emotive rediscovery of tradition. The mediascapes would require time to support recovery

of social memory, but this is not allowed; the expansion of the media systems is fast and haphazard. The media are no longer on the fringes of the exercise of power games, but they still tend to remain distant to people's struggle for a meaningful life.

Urban slums can hardly be considered as offering their inhabitants options for a meaningful life. In the same way, *The Bold and the Beautiful* barely carries any relevance to subsistence farmers or the youth living in huge urban *squatters*. Nevertheless, it is this cocktail of media contents – political declarations, sensations, highly stereotyped domestic or foreign popular entertainment – on which the communication competence of present-day Africans has to be constructed.

Almost all these media forms tend to “audience” the receiver, to force him/her into the position of a passive member of an audience, but here the cliché of “living in two worlds” might help the African. S/he has already been moulded by quite a heavy arsenal of communication strategies by paramount chiefs of the village, political propagandists of the nation-making period, by development well-doers, and most recently by the commercialists crusading under the flag of freedom. An African knows the rules of rough communication games, better than his/her northern counterpart with far more sophisticated but also pacifying experiences. And s/he has inherited a fairly strong *corpus* communication identity from the village where his/her roots still are and to which the popular music frequently links. Corpus communication lacks a clear-cut distinction into senders and receivers (Vansina, 1985), though the social structure does exist, allowing more flexibility of operation to some and denying it to some.

Today it would perhaps be legitimate to talk about a *diasporic corpus identity* embedded in city-dwellers. It is the diasporic identity that makes a poor man living in a city to construct a house in the home village, though the living conditions of his family are scarce in the city; the village house used during 2-3 weeks per year gives a similar dose of self-respect and stability as does recognition of one's own tribal songs on the radio. It is the diasporic identity that makes an African UN official, after decades of living in New York, after retirement to return to the home village without electricity. It is the corpus identity that makes an African send a sum of money of his/her scarce earnings each month to the extended family living in the home village. Some urban Africans, badly hit by structural adjustment programmes, have found a compromise solution for this financial-traditional problem in new religions preaching individual salvation: a Pentecost believer does not need to take care of any other relatives than those who acknowledge the same religion. Tight economy and western religions are assisting in the gradual deterioration of the unofficial social service system that is in a dis-membering process. (Turner 1977)

We in the West have given the African extended family another name and filled the concept with a considerable dose of mystique: We call it communitarianism, and the basic idea of it is to broaden the borders of “us” to all who belong to the community, but exclude outsiders. Its communication mode is considered to be capillary, to use John Downing's concepts. The only essen-

tial difference between the African corpus community and western communitarianism is that the African community is far more concrete; it has a “hoe and digital watch” dimension, which the western concept lacks.

Present African mediascapes reveal an interesting contradiction. Power hierarchies, from villages to expatriate donors with their rhetoric of human rights, transparency, good governance, and sustainable development, all speak the same language with a wide “us” but with precisely-defined borders. All “good”, rational people are included in an abstraction of “us”. Instead, the media blur the picture somewhat because they represent far more vulgar distinctions, varying from product to product. Some are relevant, some others totally irrelevant. Perhaps the value anarchy offered by the mediascapes brings into the lifeworlds of Africans that hybridity that helps them to find their way in suburban streets. Despite the corpus history, neither the media nor those in power have learned to address the citizens in a dialogical way, but the corpus identity still carries the potential of turning receivers into senders, and in this activity the media in all their irrelevance might give the final motivation, in the form of a two-step flow or directly. As Paulo Freire says about the process leading to this kind of true communication competence:

The knowledge of the earlier knowledge gained by the learners as a result of analysing praxis, in its social context opens to them the possibility of new knowledge. The new knowledge going far beyond the limits of earlier knowledge reveals the reasons for being behind the facts, thus demythologising the false interpretations of the same facts. And so, there is now no more separation between thought, language and object reality. The reading of the text now demands a reading within a social context to which it refers. (Freire, 1978:24)

In the 1990s, it has become a kind of mantra in the North to talk about multiple identities as a must for people living in late modernity. We no longer talk about structures or classes or social groupings but identities, which seem to engulf all these concepts. As often in these kinds of situations, the concept tends to become diluted and vague. For most Africans, multiple identities has been a fact of life for decades. They live continuously with at least two distinctly different sets of “us” and “them”, those based on the tradition and those based on the exogenous-origin city life in which they operate. For them, identity is not only an abstract cultural construction supporting one’s search for a “self” but also a strong cultural power structure setting concrete demands on an individual. Perhaps this southern horizon to identity-building could be useful for the North also. If we ignore the dimension of power built in the concept of identity, we miss something essential of the substance of identity. However broadly we want to define the concept of identity, processes of re-membering and dis-membering always mean challenges to the existing power structures, too.

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Space and Politics of Identity

Imaginary Landscapes and Ideological Reproduction of 'We'

Inka Moring

Did it start with Bergson or before? Space was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile. Time, on the contrary, was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic. (Foucault 1980: 70)

The nation state and its imaginary past are an endless source for filmmakers when the great narratives of late modernity show signs of fragmentation. Concrete spaces, in this case places (i.e. localities) provide visual representations as ground for a common mental space, which in this case could be called the national identity also. The concept of national identity can be understood as the construction of collective memories of the nation and the people. National identity is usually represented as a historical narrative offering answers to questions; who are we and where do we come from? In this remoulding process the images of the past, the future and the goals of the nation are increasingly mediated to people via mass media and cultural products (Fairclough 1997; Stevenson 1994; Silverstone 1994). The media, especially public service channels and the domestic film industry remains in a central position both in providing material for the construction of national identities and at the same time (with Hollywood counterparts) blurring geographical borders in a global sense.

According to MacCabe (1992), since the mid-seventies there has been no attempt to theorise relations between politics and film. While there is always a production of local ideological readings that are fuelled by identity politics, these do not engage with film as national history. For example Jameson (1992) has suggested that we should analyse films comparatively and in relation to a nation's history. Our understanding of films could be successful only when we place it both in its local political context and its global context as a film, as any film will inevitably reflect on what one might call its place in the global distribution of cultural power.

Inspired by this idea, the concepts of place and space are located right at the core of this article. The concept of 'place' is reserved for spaces that are named and possible to localise. The concept of 'space' is used when referring

to the abstract dimensions of the concept, whether material, social or imaginary (Lefebvre 1991: 33). The concepts of space and place are actually located at the very core of any study of human societies but as theoretical problems concerning spatial dimensions at least in Finnish media studies these concepts have remained marginal and under-researched.¹

The concept of national identity can be understood here as imagined and ideological community. Speaking of “community” in this case means that relations between human beings are collective. Speaking of “imaginary” means that most of these relations are only imaginable but never actual. Speaking of “ideological” means that national identity is usually formed and maintained with political aspirations. It is constantly reproduced in cultural praxis and this reproduction is leaning on beliefs of common experience.

In this article the construction of national identity, i.e. space of “Finnishness” is explored through the relationship between two poles. On the one hand I will look at how the nation was constructed in the visual form of popular culture during a time of economic recession with one selected case. On the other hand I will explore how the history of the nation had been organised in order to serve the purpose of mobilisation and unity of the nation in this new situation. More than textual, my approach is contextual. The film studied is not seen as a reflection of dominant values and beliefs of the culture. Rather it is a representation of the nation’s history where some ideological dimensions take over. Spatial and ideological dimensions of journalistic texts are studied as borders of public space where the process of signifying and the selection of interpretations is done. In this selection process also ‘common sense’ – the right, natural and ideologically correct way of thinking – is defined (see Valtonen in this volume).

So, how may the social space(s) of the culture and their representations in media be recognised as active constitutive components of national identity? What kind of representational spaces is journalism able to create for the “space of Finnishness”? Could the concept of national identity be understood as a spatial category with the help of these concepts?² Those are the main questions to be asked here. In answering the questions, I am not trying to respond to the smallest variations of the meaning in the role of a film or literary critic – rather I am trying to sound out larger entities of discursive practices. In this process of social objectification and categorisation, I believe that human beings are given social, political and personal identity.

Media, Film and Territories of Power

Audiovisual cultural forms have in many ways restructured the parameters of basic categories of space and time. This radical re-structuring of time-space has been capable of relocating symbolic impressions globally and also locally at an ever-quickenening rate. Consequently, present (post)modern cultural forms do indeed signify, although differently, when comparing with earlier modernist

culture. Following Lash (1990: 174) modernist culture signified in a largely discursive way – whereas now more likely the signification is importantly “figural”. This figural sensibility is visual rather than literal, contests rationalist and/or “didactic” views of culture and asks not what a cultural text means, but what it does. Cultural and social spaces of the identity politics are transforming swiftly.

Audiovisual cultural forms and media construct discursive and figural landscapes or mediascapes following Appadurai’s definition (1996). Mostly these mediascapes can be understood as national layers of a global mediascape. These context-sensitive landscape(s) are symbolic and textual webs of meaning and interpretations of the national culture. They emerge as containers of images and stereotypical flashes from history producing the symbolic fabric and linking the self-understanding of the people with a particular territory, everyday practices and imagination.

Film, for example, as a cultural form as any other medium does not reflect or record the culture in causal manners. Instead it represents the past with conventions, codes, myths and ideologies by specific signifying practices of the medium. It works within and on the meaning system of the culture by renewing, reproducing and organising its categories and values. This formation of meaning systems is ideological by nature, also usually specific to an ideoscape e.g. political system, ethical codex and value aggregates of the culture. Film and media are creating spaces for the ideology of everyday practices forming identities.

Usually when we refer to local or national identities, we are leaning on relational models of identity. These are formed by beliefs of common ancestry or experience. They also give rise to shared characteristics or traits stemming from the culture. In this case, identity can be defined as much by *what* we are as by *who* we are (Crang 1997). This is where geography and spatial dimension come into the picture, since these ‘us’ and ‘them’ are often territorially delimited groups. Relational identity models also have temporal dimensions. National identity is therefore always something that has to be constructed in time and space. The maintenance of this symbolic construction needs also constant reproduction with the help of cultural forms.

Thrift’s (1996) idea of an ideology of everyday practice is the location where this reproduction is carried out. An ideology of everyday practice basically means a set of practices upon a population – which in turn affects the way a population makes account of cultural practice. This ideological set of practices was more autonomous earlier in history and located in specific cultures (see Ekecrantz in this volume). Globally, we are now in the situation where a series of cultural flows oblivious of national boundaries produces cultural homogeneity and cultural disorder (see Tufte in this volume). This is a process where links between previously isolated pockets of relatively homogeneous cultures are constructed.

Analysing the film as a part of the nation’s past, the lines between some theoretical dichotomies (text-context, micro-macro, actors-relations, etc.) have to be exceeded. The film as an object of analysis becomes a part of the repre-

sentational practice and the visual or cultural landscape of the imaginary space. That is why the concept of national identity is essential in understanding the changes in cultural signification as well. Space as a binding concept – being theoretical, historical and physical – can link interpretations of the film and media texts to the ‘real’ or at least documented historical and social transformations of the nation and the identity of the people. Along this definition the illusion of realism, representing space as a neutral and passive geometry, has to be unmasked. The space for history or interpretation of the history is produced and reproduced textually in the media and other cultural forms. As such it represents the site and outcome of social, political and economic struggle.

But how to analyse this struggle? Harvey (1989:355) has emphasis on a recognition that *the production of images and discourses* is an important facet of activity that has to be analysed as part and parcel of the reproduction and transformation of any symbolic order – even the category of nation and national identity. Aesthetic and cultural practice matter and the conditions of their production deserve the closest attention. Following Harvey *the dimensions of time and space* matter as well:

There are real geographies of social action, real as well as metaphorical territories and spaces of power that became vital as organizing forces in the geopolitics of capitalism, at the same time as they are sites of innumerable differences and otherness that have to be understood both in their own right and within overall logic of capitalist development.

In the vein of Harvey and from a practical point of view, the reconstruction of a spatial code for analysing cultural texts forming national, regional or individual identities may be then considered to be an immediate task. This code would recapture the unity of dissociated elements and bring together levels and terms that are isolated by existing spatial practice and by ideologies of late capitalism underpinning it. The code would therefore comprise significant oppositions (i.e. paradigmatic elements), bridge seemingly disparate paradigmatic terms and link them to syntagmatic elements of politically and economically controlled space.

The Last Wedding – *The Production of Imaginary Space*

My case study is based on one particular Finnish film that was produced during the most severe recession period in Finland (1991-95) and a comprehensive collection of newspaper articles about this film. Imaginary time and place in the film are closely related to the fact that the whole nation was paralysed and unable to look towards the future. In real life in 1994 both the Finnish film industry³ and the national economy were literally in a deep trough. The unemployment rate reached its peak in 1994 at the time when the film was pro-

duced. The province of North Karelia (the setting of the film) was among the poorest regions in Finland⁴.

The Last Wedding is a comedy directed by Markku Pölönen. It was released on February 24, 1995. The Finnish title *Kivenpyörittäjän kylä* translated literally is "The village of the stone-mover" or "The homeland of the boulder-pusher". Symbolically this title refers to the myth of Sisyphus (and also to the myth of the Finnish work ethic). Sisyphus was a tragic figure in Greek mythology. As a punishment by the gods he was forced to push a huge boulder up a hill every day. Every evening the boulder rolled down again, and Sisyphus had to start all over. In this film the boulder-pusher is portrayed as a retarded giant working his way with his boulder through the fields and countryside roads of a Finnish rural landscape as punishment for having been too weak to prevent the boulder from rolling over and killing his little brother. This futile work can be seen as part of the tragedy of the whole village. Pushing and moving boulders in the fields has been the fate of previous generations. The soil had been scant of growth and the forest poor in productivity. But the land had been one's very own and people have worked hard to survive in the narrow condition until societal transformations forced people to leave the village. The director Pölönen commented on his film and the hard mode of (Finnish) life thus:

Man has an inbuilt dislike of wasted efforts. Prisoners are spiritually devastated when forced to carry sand from one pile to another for no particular purpose. What is useless work? If work is useless, then what is important? What's left when death annuls everything concrete? These are questions that this film asks. And the answer is: the stories remain, stories about people.

The Last Wedding is an epic portrayal of an August day in the small and remote Finnish village of Jerusalem in North-East Finland. It is the early seventies and the country is facing both the economic depression and the 1973 oil crisis. The ongoing structural transformation from an agricultural society to a more urban form is creating a sense of displacement among the people. The village has lost its younger generations; they have moved to the towns or to the more affluent Sweden in search of jobs. The film tells the story of the last wedding in the village.

The film's hero/protagonist Pekka has travelled to the wedding from Sweden together with his family. His secret dream is to be able to move back to his native village. His wife, Meeri has fully embraced the Swedish way of life and she does not share her husband's dream. As their relationship grows cooler, Pekka seeks the company of Ritva, his former girlfriend. Alongside the love triangle is the comic story of Urho, the last bachelor in the village. The third subplot is about legends conjured up by Eljas, the storyteller of the village. Eljas is a figure signifying the stories and traditions of the region.

The village of Jerusalem is a site of "a rural landscape" where the global cultural flows and disorganised capitalism do not affect the life of the village people. It serves as the soil of the spiritual home where political or economic forces do not shake and shatter the agricultural way of life. As a rustic stereo-

type Jerusalem clearly shows present (Finnish) cultural hierarchies. These hierarchies are more common and frequently used when describing rusticity. "Finnishness" is constructed with dichotomies like development-backwardness, urban-rural, rich-poor or even cultural sophistication-rural idiocy. Within these dichotomies Jerusalem as a place becomes a grounded metaphor of the film. This place shapes identities being both real and symbolic.

Why have I chosen this particular film and its wide media coverage⁵? Is it representative as a case of the TV-series and films produced during the nine-ties? Yes, in a way it is – many of the TV-series produced during this period also reached back to history. However, the importance of *The Last Wedding* lies in the form and intensity of the audience reception. It reached a wide audience among Finns (approximately 350,000 cinema-goers). Also the reactions of the audience and the critical response the film received were, on the surface, amazingly strong and emotional (at least in relation to the themes of the film, which could be regarded quite marginal for many of those who saw the film).

The *Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE)* later broadcast the film and the size of the audience even larger.⁶ Obviously the film had a particularly strong symbolic power through its reproduction of the space of national identity. At the time, this was a need broadly felt by the audience. The success of this film leaned on intensive cooperation with the mass media along the process of publicity. It could be argued that the film also served the needs of the political elite, although unconsciously, especially in its search for a national unity.

Romancing the Geography – A Conceptual Matrix for Spatial Analysis

Henri Lefebvre's work *The Production of Space* is a central source to building a conceptual base for the analysis of the film. The interpretation of the film as such would be meaningless. The contextual space of the film and the publicity it created is a process that is culturally more general. It is a process of ideological remembering the past and negotiating the meanings and interpretations. The conceptual framework has been further developed by Harvey (1989: 220-221). The framework facilitates a simultaneous analysis of three (paradigmatic) levels of discourses on space (material, representational and imaginary) in four (syntagmatic) dimensions (controlling, producing, accessing and appropriating the space). The paradigmatic levels and the syntagmatic dimensions may be represented as a matrix (Table 1).

Geopolitical politics in film and media, space and (national) identity are bound to one another in many ways (Meyrowitz 1986; Jameson 1992). In order to keep the analysis within reasonable limits, I focus on those items coming out from a systematic reading of the visual representations of the film and the journalistic discourses that are explicitly addressing issues of nation formation

and commodification of its (Finnish) culture. These items are fundamental in forming the dominant discourses that have the hegemonic or ordering function in the visual presentation and the journalistic texts⁷.

In this kind of analysis the crucial question is to what extent may a social space of journalistic and cultural texts then be read or decoded? Following Lefebvre (1991: 17) a satisfactory answer to this question is certainly not evident. The question he raises concerns the language. Does language – logically or epistemologically speaking – precede, accompany or follow social space? Is it a precondition to social space or merely a formulation of it? The solution to this problem could be in the logic of language itself. The logic intrinsic to articulated language holds the capacity to formulate spatiality in a way which makes us capable of bringing order to the qualitative chaos presented by the perception of things.

Not so long ago, the word “space” had only a geometrical meaning. To speak of “social space” would have sounded strange. Social space could be defined as a space of social practice, the space occupied by sensory phenomena, including the products of imagination such as projects and projections, symbols and utopias (Lefebvre 1991: 11). Aesthetic and cultural practices such as language are peculiarly susceptible to the changing experience of (political and economical) space and time precisely because they entail the construction of spatial and social representations out of the flow of human experience.

An analysis of sociocultural practice of communication and communicative events always involves spatial dimensions as well. Spatial dimensions could at least be seen as (1) an immediate situational context (the location of everyday life), (2) a wider context of institutional practices (ideoscape, specific to the culture in question) or, (3) the wider frame of the society and the culture (Western values and moral codex). Fairclough (1995: 62) differentiates three dimensions within these locations: economic, political (concerned with issues of power and ideology) and cultural (concerned with questions of value and identity). Social space for language use is indeed culturally, spatially and socioeconomically defined practice.

Fairclough claims further that the language of the media allows us to arrive at logical conclusions about how the world is represented. We may also make conclusions about the identities that are set up for those involved in a particular story (article, programme etc.) and what relationships are set up between those involved. In the analysis of discourses we may refer to representations, identities and relations (Fairclough 1995: 5). Fairclough does not exactly speak of the spatial dimensions of the language. As a linguist he is more concerned with the structures of language, the orders of these structures and institutions where the discursive practices and structures are given their orders and in that process also their place in the matrix of ideology and power.

Certain problems arise with linguistics (like Fairclough and others) and their universal claim of discursive practice. Following the criticism by Lefebvre (1991: 132):

Every language is located in a space. Every discourse says something about a space (places or sets of places) and every discourse is emitted from a space. Distinctions must be drawn between discourse in space, discourse about space and the discourse of space... ..Apart from what it 're-marks' in relation to space, discourse is nothing more than a lethal void – mere verbiage... ..The theory of space describes and analyses textures.

Although there is a system of production (information, news, knowledge, images) that can be found in many places within the audiovisual and media industry (such as production of other cultural forms in different institutions) which is defined by professional and commercial praxis and ethical codex – this system also differs due to the cultural landscape and the location where these texts are produced. The question concerning the relation between texts and social space could be therefore defined as mapping practice. Language is understood here as a system that is specific to a certain culture. It is a device for mapping this culture, its cultural, political and ideological configurations. As a certain device it contains characteristics of a map. Language is a social practice of mapping the respective culture.

Social practices are not given or natural. They are social, psychological and even technical accomplishments. They are produced as spaces within which certain actions are sensible or even necessary. As such they are ideological in their nature – but their ideological underpinnings are not only structural or political. They are more often spatial – geopolitical, national and regional. So, for example, there is no one set of journalistic or audiovisual practices – texts or images – but a culturally specific set of techniques in using language defined – a social practice of journalistic discourse.

Discourses as Conceived, Perceived and Lived Spaces

In the following three short chapters I will discuss certain points in discourses about space(s) in the film and in articles following its release. Mostly the newspaper articles studied reflected the film as a product. The most interesting part of the articles were, however, those that did not immediately relate to the film as a product, but to discourses telling something about the space(s) of Finnishness – its position, displacement, field, territory, domain, soil, horizon, geopolitics, region, landscape. Discourse as a concept could be defined here as a systemic dispersion and formation of arguments constructing the object, in this case Finnishness. Three particular discourses were strikingly the most fundamental. They infused the texts and answered questions such as: "Who are we?" "Where are we?" and "Where do we come from?"

These were:

- 1 The material preconditions and practices (of the space) of Finnishness. That discourse has been named the "Geopolitical Discourse of a Borderland Position".

- 2 The representations of the “space of Finnishness” – “Discourse on Peripheral Nationalism”.
- 3 The spaces of representation (imaginary Finnishness) – “Discourse on a Metonymic Home”.

I am concentrating mainly on the two paradigmatic levels of spaces of representation and representations of space and their relations. In order to clarify the outset, a brief introduction to the material practices in Finland are presented that crudely describe some lines of historical and recent experiences basic to the characterisation of the film by the media. Of course, concepts, experiences or created spaces do not always fall neatly into categories. Thus classification is only a heuristic device for clarifying space-place, space-discourse and space-representation relationships.

Table 1. A ‘grid’ of spatial practices (adaption by Harvey 1989: 220-221 from Lefebvre 1964)

	Accessibility and distanciation	Appropriation and use of space	Domination and control of space	Production of space
Material spatial practices (experience)	flows of goods, money, people, labour/work force, information etc.; transports and communications systems; market and urban hierarchies; agglomeration	land uses and built environments; social spaces and other ‘turf’ designations; social networks of communication and mutual aid	private property in land; state and administrative divisions of space; exclusive communities and neighbourhoods	production of physical infrastructures (transport and communications; built environments; land clearance etc.); territorial organization of social infrastructures (formal and informal)
Representations of space (perception)	social, psychological, physical measures of distance; map-making; theories of the ‘friction of distance’	personal space; mental maps of occupied space; spatial hierarchies; symbolic representation of spaces; spatial ‘discourses’	forbidden spaces; ‘territorial’ imperatives; community; regional culture, nationalism; geopolitics; hierarchies	new systems of mapping, visual representation, communication etc. new artistic and architectural discourses; semiotics
Spaces of representation (imagination)	attraction/repulsion distance/desire access/denial; transcendence ‘medium is the message’	familiarity; heart and home; open places; places of popular spectacle (streets, squares, markets); iconography and graffiti; advertising	unfamiliarity; spaces of fear, property and possession; monumentality and constructed spaces of ritual; symbolic barriers and symbolic capital; construction of ‘tradition’; spaces of repression	utopian plans; imaginary landscapes; science fiction ontologies and space; artists’ sketches; mythologies of space and place; poetics of space; spaces of desire

Material Spatial Practices as Historical Lived Spaces

Material spatial practices or lived spaces refer to the physical and material flows, transfers and interactions that occur in and across space in such a way as to assure production and social reproduction. Spatial practice, as the process of producing the material form of social spatiality, is thus both a mediated presentation and an outcome of human activity, behaviour and experience. Lefebvre also links modern spatial practice under capitalism to the repetitive routines of everyday life and to the routes, networks, workplaces, private life and enjoyments of the urban people. Following Lefebvre (1991: 38): “From the analytical standpoint, the spatial practice of a society is revealed through the deciphering of its space.”

In my analysis those practices can be understood as urban/rural hierarchies and economical realities communities faced in the seventies during the depression and social transformation in the film. This transformation was interpreted in the context of the economic crisis of the nineties as historical lived spaces. Paradoxically, territorial organisation and agricultural communities were at stake again.

Table 2. Adaptation of Harvey's/Lefebvre's conceptualisation of Material Spatial Practices

	Accessibility and distanciation	Appropriation and use of space	Domination and control of space	Production of space
Material spatial practices (experience)	flows of goods, money, people, labour/work force, information etc.; urban hierarchies;	land uses and built environments; social spaces	private property in land; state and administrative divisions of space; exclusive communities and neighbourhoods	production of physical infrastructures; territorial organisation of social infrastructures formal and informal

It may not seem surprising then that the films and TV-serials of the nineties in Finland have one common feature: they document traumatic transformations (in material and historical practices) of the nation. At the same time they describe spaces of Finnishness (geographical, mental and social), looking at the golden past. This past may not have been so golden after all. In this particular case, the actual political situations of the early seventies and late nineties create interesting tensions as mentioned above. These are underpinning a reading of the film as history and as an interpretation of those spatial practices that constructed past experiences.

In the seventies Finland developed a particular form of borderland position that was built on the country's earlier history – which was easily read from the film's setting. Having lost considerable territories in the East to the Soviet Union in recent wars and having to pay reparations to its former enemy, Finland's economy was in a poor state. The population structure was also heavily affected, since more than 400,000 settlers (10% of the population) from the lost

Eastern territories had to be placed on small farms around the country. By the late 1960's and early 1970's, the relative poverty of Finland and the expansive economy in Sweden created a migration stream from Finland to Sweden. (Even today, the Finnish population in Sweden amounts to around half a million, which is 10 percent of the Finnish population. Most of these are emigrants and the descendants of emigrants who has moved to Sweden during the postwar period in hope of better job opportunities and higher income.)⁸ Looking at this as a historical background, the film can clearly be interpreted as a mapping of representational practices of the national identity and the past. Director Markku Pölönen himself explained this feature of his film in a comment, which was cited in numerous articles:

The psychological setting of the film was already sealed when the war ended: the war-weary men returning from the front were allotted small pieces of the fatherland as a 'reward'. In some instances, the reward was endless work, clearing rocks in the wasteland. The fields that were to be their livelihood were never completely cleared. It's as if the spiteful earth was producing new rocks every spring to crush the hopeful farmers. And this work was the dream of a generation. Then suddenly, it had no meaning. The children did not want the settlers' land, and Finland swept it under the carpet, in shame. This created enough national traumas for several films. As was later seen, when the children of the settlers moved into the cities, neither form life benefited.

In the early nineties Finland faced new political and economic transformations that were combined with a severe economic recession and new geopolitical configurations due to EU membership. The concept of work became important because actual work opportunities diminished (see Valtonen in this volume). The value of work is one of the basic elements of Finnish cultural identity – and the film was calling out its most sensitive parts⁹.

A Geopolitical Discourse of a Borderland Position was one layer of the narrative of national identity. It was leaning on economical constraints and in the newspapers it was constructed with the help of lived historical space – that attained its trajectories from the aforementioned facts. The story of the film was interpreted as a territorial organisation of social infrastructures in the seventies– both formal and informal. Pekka's return from Sweden in the early seventies was seen as a process of making sense of market and urban hierarchies – both as an actor in the labour market and a member of a specific rural community of North-East Finland, i.e. Jerusalem. His longing for a place of his own, a farm, was seen in terms of an ultimate act of sovereignty – domination and control of one's own space. Migration, flows of money, people and the labour force had changed the place to which he was returning. Jerusalem had turned into an exclusive and fading neighbourhood.

The relationships between the seventies and the nineties could thus be summarised in three concepts describing material practices in experiencing the past and the present. They were (1) politics, (2) poverty and (3) a borderland position. The Borderland Finland of the seventies was an entity between the East and the West – the Soviet Union and the Western countries (Polvinen

1995). In the nineties, the geopolitical situation changed. Finland's position as a member of the EU sealed country's political and economical location in Western Europe. At the same time another border within the country grew stronger, tearing it to parts. Journalistic discourse portrayed the economically stricken countryside in terms of arguments about Finnish capability to join the EU. The vast wastelands of North Karelia and North-East Lapland should not be allowed to keep Finland from becoming fit for the Common Market. Finland had to prove its fitness for Europe, as it had had to prove its fitness to the Soviet Union in earlier decades. Now there was the urban, wired and relatively prospering Southern Finland and the rest of the country.

In this situation, the representation of Finland that was provided by *The Last Wedding* served as a reminder of past, national borders and the country's political nonalignment location between East and West. Some journalists even depicted the film as an explicit critical comment on Finnish EU-memberships. This particular case provides support to a remark by Barbara Hooper (1994: 80) on ontological insecurity of people:

...in times of social crisis – when centres and peripheries will not hold – collective and individual anxiety rise and the politics of difference become especially significant. The instability of the borders heightens and the concern with either their transgression or maintenance is magnified. When borders are crossed, disturbed, contested, and so become a threat to order, hegemonic power acts to reinforce them, the boundaries around territory, nation, ethnicity, race, gender, sex, class, erotic practice are trotted out and vigorously disciplined.

Apart from the basic conceptualisations, which were largely similar, some interesting differences pertaining to geography occurred in the newspaper articles. The political division between the countryside and the city and the respective means of livelihood was mostly present in radical left-wing newspapers and rurally oriented newspapers close to the Centre Party. In these writings, references were usually made to the impoverishment of both rural people and rural areas. At the same time, referring to the film, harsh criticism was directed against the EU. The film provided tools for active regionalism in the regional press and was seen as proof of vanishing traditional communities that should be supported by the means of state intervention, i.e. active regional politics.

The big newspapers in Southern Finland usually described the film as a monument of a vanishing landscape, an exotic part of Finnishness that it tried to conserve and prevail. At the same time the film was considered to be a national project and a flagship of the Finnish film industry. Also its box-office success was portrayed as part of a new revival of Finnish film industry, which would give hope for new economic growth for the entire country. In this case, the film was commodified as part of "Finnishness". Commodification of "exotic" features of the Finnish culture was not seen through the lenses of shame or periphery but as something original. Afterwards, director Markku Pölönen almost literally became synonymous as a portrayer of Finnish rural life. This feature was also politicised in the newspapers. Was this way of life vanishing in the hard negotiations of agricultural subsidies in Brussels?

Representations of Space as Conceived Spaces

In the beginning of this article, I called the representations of the “space of Finnishness” the “*Discourse on Peripheral Nationalism*”. It mostly contains elements of community and regional culture that were the backbone of nationalism or nationalistic rhetoric of both 70s and 90s.

Table 3. Adaption of Harvey’s/Lefebvre’s conceptualisation of Representations of Space

	Accessibility and distanciation	Appropriation and use of space	Domination and control of space	Production of space
Representations of space (perception)	social, psychological, physical measures of distance; map- making; theories of the ‘friction of distance’	personal space; mental maps of occupied space; spatial hierarchies; symbolic represen- tation of spaces; spatial ‘discourses’	community; regional culture, nationalism; geopolitics; hierarchies	new systems of mapping, visual representation,

Representations of space or conceived space encompass all of the signs and significations, codes and knowledge, that allow such a material practice to be talked about and understood. This concept defines a conceptualised space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers – all of who identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived. Representations of space are tied to the relations of production and to the ‘order’ that those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to frontal relations (Lefebvre 1991: 33). In this analysis ‘conceived space’ can be understood as codes that were given to regional culture and communities in the film and how these signs were interpreted, bitter sweetly though, in newspapers as nationalism of the time.

The Discourse on Peripheral Nationalism is constructed in the newspaper articles around the fact that communities, regional culture and territorial imperatives in Jerusalem (and all over rural Finland) were at stake. Pekka was seen as a figure symbolising people in a new situation of societal change. He had to make his personal and mental maps once more after returning from Sweden. His accessibility to that social or physical space of Jerusalem was denied him and the symbolic distance had to be measured and reconsidered.

Around the world nationalist projects invoke rural life as the source of national essence. That was the case also in Finnish newspapers about the film. This nationalist project was needed in the seventies when spatial discourses followed Cold War rhetoric. And it was needed again in the nineties when the geopolitical constraints changed again. It was easy to see Pekka as a strong though contradictory figure of peripheral nationalism and expand this resistance to a public opinion of the Finnish people by the means of a regionally and politically active press.

Nationalism is a temporally and spatially biased code. It is usually thought of as articulating a historical bond between past and present members of the nation-state, while also providing a sense of spatial connection through certain places, rituals and traditions¹⁰. In Finland nationalism was born comparatively late. But since its birth in the nineteenth century, nationalism as a myth can be regarded almost as a civil region. The symbolic element represents the enduring expressive aspect of culture, transmitting its values from individual to individual and from generation to generation. Being a periphery in the new cultural order, Finland has, however, had severe problems with its patriotism. A great number of the people in rural areas (like in Northern Karelia) at the time of Finland's joining the EU felt as if the Finnish elite dissociated themselves from a common project. This brought about one clear division in how the press wrote about the film. Newspapers in Karelia, Savo and North-East Lapland stressed the place and the province, which the film made famous. The film was in part considered to be homage to one realm of Finnishness that could be geographically positioned to the place where the film was made.

The emergence of nationalism in the form of a description of the life of common people was part of a politisation of Finnishness. Under the conditions of a borderland position, both in the seventies and the nineties, Finnish nationalism was problematic. Finnishness was something to be ashamed of and to hide. In the seventies, Finnish emigrants in Sweden felt inferior. In the nineties they felt inferior among the European civilised countries. Notions of nativeness and native places – where this code of nationalism could be understood, however, had become even more complex. There had also emerged a new awareness of the global social fact that people are chronically mobile and routinely displaced and that they invent – or have a continuous urge to invent – homes and homelands in the absence of territorial and national bases (Malkki 1992; Appadurai 1990; Hannertz 1987; Robertson 1988). In the core of this particular film and also in discourses about it, a broad concern for “cultural displacement” that concerned people, things, values and cultural products was found. In the discourses on nationalism, found in the writings about the film by journalists, deeply territorialising concepts were used to depict the identity of those categories of people classified as displaced and uprooted. Out of these depictions grew a particular nationalistic discourse within a frame of the political economy of the Borderland: “We are not Swedish, we do not want to be Russian. Let us be Finns (paraphrasing the catch phrase of the Finnish nationalist movement of the 19th and early 20th century)”.

The nationalistic ethos gained power from the resistance of the villagers and the way in which they positioned themselves with respect to the changes. In spite of the perspectives threatening their life style and outcome, life in Jerusalem was genuine. Journalism took part in this construction of “genuine Finnishness”. This stubborn and patriotic Finnishness became a trademark, which served as a means of romanticising such features of the national character that were perceived of as non-qualifying in the context of the European Union. As an identity construction, this “Genuine Finnishness” was capable of

combining features of both shame and pride that traditionally have been part of the depiction of Finnish national characteristics.

As a commodity within the Finnish cultural market place, the ‘imaginary landscape of Finland’, as depicted by *The Last Wedding*, became a success. The economic success of this commodity was also closely followed and reported by the press. Also the international success of the film (it received several international awards) was subjected to close scrutiny. As a particular brand, “Peripheral Finnishness” was thus given the status of an export product. Through this market metaphor, this “Finnishness” could be conceptualised, and its lines of demarcation could be constructed in a European and global context. Peripheral nationalism became a product that made it easier to handle. As such it was not politically threatening but a positive, exotic and distinctive feature. And once again, Finnish journalists skipped the deep historical traumas of Finlandization. Commodification of geopolitical history is in the first place a cultural, not a political act.

Spaces of Representation as Perceived Space

The discourse on spaces of representation (imaginary Finnishness) was labelled as the “*Discourse on the Metonymic Home*”. It mostly contained elements of nostalgic and sentimental feelings of longing for the mythic home. The film was imagined as a metonymy of home with a symbolic capital and barriers and as a conveyor of a tradition.

Table 4. Adaptation of Harvey's/Lefebvre's conceptualisation of Spaces of Representation

	Accessibility and distanciation	Appropriation and use of space	Domination and control of space	Production of space
Spaces of representation (imagination)	attraction/repulsion; distance/desire access/denial	familiarity; heart and home	constructs spaces of ritual; symbolic barriers and symbolic capital; construction of tradition'; spaces of repression	imaginary land- scapes; mythologies of space and place; poetics of space; spaces of desire

Spaces of representation stands for mental inventions (codes, signs, spatial discourses, utopian plans, imaginary landscapes or even material constructs such as symbolic spaces or particularly built environments) that imagine new meanings or spatial practices. They are embodying complex symbolism, sometimes coded, sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, thus also to art (which eventually may be defined less as a code of space than as a code of representational spaces) (Lefebvre 1991: 33). In this analysis the metonymic home is a synonym for those mythologies of space and place – with one common denominator – Finland.

In a broader perspective, the imagined space that most frequently was constructed by the journalistic discourse springing off *The Last Wedding* was the discourse of a “mythic home”. The whole film was portrayed as a metonym of “Home” or alternatively, “Return-to-Home”. This would seem natural, as the narrative of the film itself was arranged around the themes of coming home and departure. In the journalistic representation of these themes, the “Return-to-the-Roots” was lifted to the forefront. Discourse of the “metonymic home” in the film was constructed with symbolic structures referring to the mythologies of space and place. Jerusalem as a place became a metonym of the home and its roots. It was seen as a signifier of familiarity and an ontological security in the age of transformation.

The metaphorical concept of having roots involves intimated linkages between people and places. Quoting Simone Weil (Malkki 1992: 24), “To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognised need of the human soul.” Home in its profound form is an attachment to a particular setting, a particular environment, in comparison with which all other associations with places are only of limited significance. It is the point of departure from which we orient ourselves and take possession of the world. Heidegger writes of home in past tense: “Home nowadays is a distorted and perverted phenomena. It is identical to a house; it can be anywhere. It is subordinate to us; easily measurable and expressible in numbers of money value.” (in Relp 1976: 40)

In the discourse of “Mythic Home”, there was a mix of experience, emotion, memory, imagination, present situation and intentions. In the process of this discourse, the village of Jerusalem was conceptualised as the identification of the concept of place itself. Rather than developing out of a particular group or individual experiences, the mass identity formed around “Jerusalem” was a given, as constructed by the mass media and by advertising. This identity was provided “ready-made” for the people. Mass media conveniently provided a simplified and selective identity for this place. And hence the mass media tended to fabricate a pseudo-Finland of pseudo places. Somehow it well served the needs of the people who longed to return back to home. Foucault (1986: 23) has added the following defining “external space”:

The space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our times and our history occurs, the space that claws and gnaws at us, is also in itself, a heterogeneous space. In other words, we do not live inside a void, inside which we could place individuals and things. We do not live inside a void that could be coloured with diverse shades of light, we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another. (in Soja 1996: 157)

The identity of this place called Jerusalem (the location of the film) was constituted through somehow alien but quite beautiful imagery. The distinct organisation of space and time formed a framework within which individual identities could be formed. The images of divided spaces were particularly powerful, and they were superimposed upon each other in the fashion of montage and collage. The nomadic antihero Pekka returns to his roots, but the home is de-

stroyed. "Home" becomes an imaginary time-space: the nature, the fields, the forest and the flashbacks from childhood. This imagery developed an "external space" of Finnishness, which was created by audiovisual representations and journalistic discourses in intensive cooperation. The main goal of this cooperation was to build publicity for the film. The audience of the film was ready to buy this imagery of the common home.

A Happy End in the Homeland of the Boulder-Pusher?

In this analysis I have been in the vein of Lefebvre's ideas of human desire to understand environment through creating spaces. These spaces are not natural or given. They are always constructed – social and imaginary as well as material and physical. Some of them are more preferable and sensible than others. Some of them can be located regionally, some of them culturally (also Crang 1999). Contextualising cultural forms includes giving them spatial and political dimensions. To analyse cultural forms critically is to take spatial dimensions (political, mental, cultural) into account. Psycho-geographics and geographics of late capitalism are not written in the context of social master narratives – more likely they have been constructed within nation-states that are under heavy transformation both as nations and members of larger geopolitical entities.

One film can be interpreted in numerous ways. The close reading of the researcher usually tells more about his/her mental landscapes than the texture and the context of the particular cultural product. I have tried to demonstrate some possibilities inherent in such an analytical enterprise by reconceptualising the public sphere as contextualised spaces. Within this framework the implicit dictatorship of interpretation could be avoided by adding transparency in the terms of critical examination of the film's sociopolitical environment. Using a matrix provided by Lefebvre (and Harvey) I have analysed visual representations of the film and journalistic discourses, tying them into political and social practices operative in a certain phase of the history of one particular nation.

Through journalistic representations of *The Last Wedding*, mass communication took the function of a mediator of fateful events of the nation's history (Stevenson 1995) and symbolic ceremonies of the present (Dyan & Katz 1992). Mass communication also facilitated a socialisation process within culture (Carbaugh 1989; Grodin & Lindlof 1996), offering discourses that were suitable in reconstructing different imagined communities within one – Finland (Anderson 1983). The Finnish media reconstructed local political readings of the film. Among different rural communities, the viewpoint according to which this imagery of "Jerusalem" was seen – differed. Depending on their distance from the actual locations of the film, the communities took different approaches. Local newspapers close to the locations directly stressed their homeland and particular landscapes. Local newspapers in regions farther away (the South-West ar-

chipelago, Western Finland) looked mainly for connections with the landscape and with the national character. When the distance grew larger from the actual locations of the film as in bigger newspapers in Southern Finland – the metonymic home was described in very general terms although with nostalgic longing. The core of Finnishness could be spotted the North Karelia. It gave a new status to the poor regions which had suffered serious setbacks during the economic crises.

The film itself served as a preservation of “Finnishness”. The borders were reassured by dividing Finland – and the space of Finnishness – from the outside, be it the EU, Russia, or an undefined outer world. Borders were affirmed both in the articles and in the film. Despite its position as a Borderland, Finland was Finland and Finnishness was clearly distinguishable. It was as distinguishable as the national landscape, the beauty of which was praised almost as a metaphysical experience.

All in all, in the analysis, we encountered a juxtaposition of Wasteland and Disneyland as part of the self-identification of a peripheral culture in the middle of an (economic) crises. The discursive practices used are highly political in their nature. Following Jameson, it could be argued that it is in the nature of a capitalist economy to commodify culture, and it is in the nature of the commodified culture to form (to some extent) capitalism. The political character of this enterprise is, however, still not fully grasped. Could, as a matter of fact, commodified culture, giving voice to discourses of resistance, form a threat to the dominant discourse of society, thus transgressing its political limits? Or would that be only a daring dream of a utopian capitalist?

Jerusalem is also a real location in Finland. Its literally biblical denotations were not accidental. But rocky soil and trust in God have not been able to stop global economic changes that turned Jerusalem into a European periphery. Now the region is under heavy migration and the present government is struggling to stop similar development all over the fading regions of Finland. When the political economy takes over there are always poetic and mythical spaces in Western unconsciousness. If places are vanishing in our real geographical environment we are ready to create a space for them in cultural forms. Perhaps that is why our relation to these “places” is so intense although they might seem quite marginal to us. But that is only the surface. The meaning of these distant places as suffering spaces of the mythological past are expressed – with the help of religion – in the prologue of *The Last Wedding*. In the end there is always – no free lunch, but punishing God and hard work.

Long ago, the Karelians built a tower to Heaven on a hill. Using ropes, pulleys and the labour of their naked bodies they piled rocks to support the canopy of heaven. But God descended and with his blazing staff destroyed the tower, thus creating the rocky soil that will pester man forever.

Notes

1. There are voices among social scientists, becoming stronger, speaking for a revival of interest in geopolitical theory (see for example Soja 1988, 1997; Giddens 1990; Gregory and Urry 1985; Keith and Pile 1993; Lash and Urry 1995), the aesthetics of place and a revived willingness to open the problem of spatiality to a general reconsideration.
2. These master narratives could be defined stories in which questions such as; 'Who speaks of whom?'; 'Who is empowered to tell what kind of stories about whom?'; and 'Who speaks and who is spoken of, but silent?' are not answered. (also Morley & Robins 1995: 209)
3. The Finnish film industry has suffered serious setbacks as other mass media has continued to grow and expand. In the 1980s, the main challenge came from video and television. In the stiffening competition, the number of cinema ticket sold declined steadily throughout the 1980s. Towards the very end of the decade the numbers picked up, but this turned out to be a temporary development; in the 1990s the numbers declined again. In 1995 Finns went to the cinema no more than approximately once a year per inhabitant. For a number of years the cinema business has been at the low end of the mass media sector. From 1998 onwards cinema chains have started renovation projects aimed at raising the quality standards of cinemas. This will undoubtedly increase cinema-going. (Source: Statistics of Finland, Culture and the Media 1998)
4. According to the Labour Force Survey the total unemployment rate in 1974 was 1.8% whereas the rate in 1994 was 18.4%. The total number of unemployed Finns in 1994 was 456,000. The unemployment rate by province was the second highest in North Karelia (22.1%). (Source: Social Statistics; Labour force)
5. The printed material portraying the film, its production and reception, consists of articles, feature stories, reviews and interviews. The publicity this film received was enormous both in the number of articles and intense reactions it produced. It was collected by the press surveillance service in Finland, SITA. This institute constantly follows approximately 1,400 Finnish publications. The sample excludes only publications with restricted readership (some religious communities, newsletters for organizations' internal communication, scientific theoretical journals) that provides a total surveillance of the printed media. This sample covers a period of somewhat more than one year, starting nine months before the film was released and ending about half a year after the release. The articles are from 135 different local newspapers, but also from magazines, periodicals and film journals. A total of 391 articles from 164 newspapers, magazines, periodicals and other publications were collected.
6. The film was broadcast on February 22, 1997 on a Saturday evening at 10pm, which is prime time. The size of the television audience was 1, 292, 000 viewers. The majority of the tv audience was in the age group of 25-34 years (23%), 35-44 years (31%) and 45-64 years (38%). Suprisingly enough, the audience was also regionally evenly spread.
7. Accordingly, the analysis will lean solely on those parts of the matrix which address items that are chosen for analysis. As is often is the case in structural functional analysis, my analysis is exposed to the fallacies stemming from tautological induction (or even worse, deduction). The risk with this methodological solution is, however, reduced as the selection of the material is independent of the model,

which is used mainly to systematise, and thus to allow for an analysis within a model that has more general ambitions.

8. Source: Statens offentliga utredningar 1997; no. 193. Stockholm.
9. After joining the European Union, the border between the urban (South) and the rural (North) was re-politicised and subjected to political debate. During the recession, the relatively better employed people of the South of Finland nourished the rural Northern and Eastern parts, where structural changes and a failing forestry industry had caused huge unemployment. The geographical division grew wider, the crisis did not treat different parts of the country equally. No political upheaval followed, but the governments (be they based on the Centre Party with its agrarian links, or the Social Democratic Party, with its base in the crisis-worn industry) in their rhetoric called for the spirit of the unifying Winter War. A National Consolidation Project was needed.
10. This argument is further complicated if we consider that the transmission of national culture has historically been dependent upon a variety of media including cinema – and also magazines, newspapers, radio and, of course, television. (Stevenson 1995: 116). According to John Breuilly (1982: 343; also Bauman 1990:153), nationalist ideology is neither an expression of national identity (at least, there is no rational way of showing that to be the case) nor the arbitrary invention of nationalism for political purposes. It arises out of the need to make sense of complex social and political arrangements. The nation-state extends its rule over a territory and claims the obedience of people. This obedience has different forms in different localities.

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Staging Journalism: Professional Identity and Roles of Journalists in Social Changes

Maarja Lõhmus

The article was inspired by a few studies on how journalists' and editors' ideas of their professional roles have changed or remained unchanged in the social context of the post-Soviet Estonia. I try to study how journalists/editors see and define their work, and how their division of roles function in an institutional framework.

Researchers studying professionalisation of Estonian journalists have brought out general tendencies and the main criteria of professionalisation related to the historical development of journalistic institutions. According to the changing role of journalism in society, such different stages of professionalisation have been discussed as stages of specialisation and role differentiation, for example a view of the press as a post-office, or an all-purpose printer, of journalists as full-time salaried members of the working team in a diversified newspaper firm. (Lauk 1997:22; Hoyer 1997)

My hypothesis is that in a modern journalistic institution there might exist an established division of roles and positions based on the perception of professional role, of personal characteristics and of experience. I analyse the roles of journalists in Soviet and post-Soviet Estonia in the context of the restructured Estonian society and a media system reflecting it. Did journalists/editors change during the period of transition as well, or does journalism have its own inner structure and balance, where the most important roles persist despite changes?

In my previous studies I have dealt with journalist's/editor's work with texts and edited texts and found out that journalistic texts represent different social roles (Lõhmus 1997, 1999). In a closed society the normative roles were 'inscribed' in the last phase of pre-text by editing and censorship. Instead, in a transitional society such roles are inscribed by choosing the author and defining format and style. A comparison of two different journalistic structures shows that the central tasks of media institutions are working with texts, adjusting them to certain norms, plus adding in them socialising and institutionalising elements. The clearest difference is that during the Soviet period total editing was carried out, but in a democratic society there are a variety of methods, including hidden ones, for institutionalising texts. (Lõhmus 2000)

Theories: Journalistic “Autonomy” in Society and in Journalism

The definition of the role of the press in society contains internal contradictions between the “normative” naming of the processes and actual relevant content, no matter what kind of society and journalism we are dealing with. The structure of society includes the functions and roles concerning not only society and the individual, but also journalists and editors as social links between these levels, participating in the social processes.

Jan Ekecrantz has dealt with the problem of the functions of news journalism from the viewpoint of the future of the media. It is no longer primarily the business of keeping a “journal”, to take notes and comment on daily occurrences. Those were the classical roles of the publisher, the reporter and the observer: the roles that gave legitimacy to the activities of the media and to their existence as the Fourth Estate. (Ekecrantz p. 15-33)

According to Nordenstreng (1997:60), reflecting upon the various proposals for normative theories, particularly from the point of view of their relevance to the contemporary world, there is a typology of five paradigms: the “liberal-individualist”, the “social responsibility”, the “critical”, the “administrative” and the “cultural negotiation” paradigms. In a post-modern society several paradigms may exist simultaneously. Dynamics can be added through the autonomy of the media in society: the “collaborative”, “surveillance”, “facilitative” and “critical/dialectical” roles of journalism (Nordenstreng, *ibid.*).

Vihalemm *et al* (1997:199) have presented a similar idea from the viewpoint of the cognitive theory of society, suggesting “mythological”, “ideological” and “critical-rational” stages in the social process in which the press fulfils different functions.

Both Nordenstreng and Vihalemm treat the press as a participant in the social processes. In a particular society, the profile of this participation can be either more endogenous or exogenous, more active or passive, more critical or non-critical.

As the fundamental political, economic and military polarities between East and West have vanished (Sparks 1998:5), a new exogenous “sign” system and a process creating connections between “signifier” and “signified” have appeared. This means that new functions and new meaning systems have emerged, both in the East and the West. The media carry and reinforce these new functions and meaning formations. But for those actively participating in the change process – for example for Estonia – it has led to great endogenous modifications in the fundamental structures of society and how people make sense of them.

To study these changes through texts, we may focus on the meanings of signs. The study of semiotics deals with the analysis of signs and the meaning of the “signifier” and the “signified”. Dynamics is achieved by viewing the object at various stages of the process. The object of the study should be the logic by which the permanent “harmonising” movement between the form and the content of the sign takes place. This might enable us to determine the in-

ner movements that connect or differentiate “real” and “symbolic” levels and produce certain rules and causalities.

Journalists and editors are the main participants in journalism. Journalism and editing are frequently ambivalent. They cannot be adequately explained, as they include a constant possibility for change – the possibility to vary interpretations of meanings, words and deeds. These discrepancies can be revealed in problematic or ambivalent situations, in quick changes.

In the 20th century, different aspects of the roles of journalists/editors were discussed on a theoretical level. In the history of journalism we can observe different questions concerning the essence and activities of journalists/editors. In describing the media process, several approaches can be distinguished:

- the *media-organisational* approach. For example, Lewin coined the term “gatekeeper”, other authors, such as White (1950) and Gieber (1964), applied it more precisely to journalism. Altschull, who sees the problem of different relationships between the “piper and the paymaster”, belongs to the same school. This approach takes four different forms: official, commercial, interest and informal. The problem is topical in news journalism, where the “institutions” and “actors” are often implicitly within the “event” or the obligatory source (Schudson 1989:263). Tuchman argues that the news is a social construction and the problem is embedded in the limitation of an analytic understanding of contemporary life (Tuchman 1978:215). Journalistic work as a routine of production, has been viewed as problematic for a long time: Gieber, looking back to the telegraph editor, found him to be preoccupied with the technical pressures of his work rather than with social meanings and the impact of the news (Schudson 1989:265);

- the *sociological* approach. Merton looked at the relations and possibilities of “bureaucratic structure and personality” as forms of deviant behaviour and participation in a changing social structure. He divided this behaviour into innovation, ritualism, retreatism and rebellion. (Merton 1957/1968:231-246)

Merrill presented two types of journalistic orientations: the mainly objective (scientific) journalists and the mainly subjective (artistic) or existential journalists (Merrill 1977:36). Existential ambiguity can be seen in the terms “intellectual journalist”, used by C. Wright Mills, and “intellectuals as occupational type”, used by Merton to denote a social role posing similar questions about the structure of society/public bureaucracy;

- the *cultural* or anthropological approach dealing with the question of different generations of journalists (Aula 1991) or journalists’ socio-cultural background and differences (Servaes 1999);
- the *media functional* approach. Different classifications are applied for journalists/editors in media history. Gans divides reporters into two cat-

egories – beat reporters, “who cover a specific and bounded turf”, and general reporters, “who cover everything else and therefore appear on many different turfs”. These types have different contacts with their sources and enter into different relationships with them, from which different kinds of information emerge (Gans 1980:131). Gans differentiates the functions of journalists, for example “leadership testers”, “storytellers”, “myth-makers” and “agents of social control” (ibid., 290-295).

I approach the roles of editors/journalists on the level of social identities, based on the perception of the specific role and the journalists/editors aspirations. Social identity as a term includes one's cultural and social environment as well as one's social activity. “By identity, as it refers to social actors, I understand the process of construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute, or a related set of cultural attributes, that is/are given priority over other sources of meaning. For a given individual, or for a collective actor, there may be a plurality of identities. Yet, such a plurality is a source of stress and contradiction in both self-representation and social action (Castells 1997:6).

Roles are defined by the norms structured by the institutions and organisations of society. Identities are the sources of meaning for the actors themselves, and these meanings are constructed through a process of individualisation (Giddens 1991). Role theory perceives a tension between two “facts”: that of individual self-expression and that of society and social determinism. Social positions exist independent of any particular individual; they are impersonal or supra individual. People learn to play a role (Potter & Wetherell 1987:98). Identities are stronger sources of meaning than roles, because of the processes of self-construction and individualisation involved. *Identities organise the meaning while roles organise the functions*. Identities can also originate from dominant institutions; they become identities only when and if social actors internalise them, and construct their meaning around this internalisation (Castells 1997:7).

Material and Method

I do not analyse the changes and alterations in the journalistic process as they were reflected in the interviews and answers to the questionnaire, but rather *journalists' and editors' subjective visions of participation and their roles in social processes*. What I am after is how journalists and editors see social processes, how they define themselves, and which functions they fulfil in the transitional society in Estonia.

A questionnaire and interview study was conducted in Estonia in 1997 with 80 journalists and editors. The questionnaire comprised 100 questions, with divided into five thematic blocks: (1) background of the editor/journalist; (2) work assignments and relations/dependencies; (3) changes in editing over a period of time; (4) material and text edited and (5) changes in society, in the

media and in the life of the respondents.¹ Some two-thirds of the questions were open-ended.

The answers were analysed using a combined method based on Gerbner's "cultural indicators" and on a structural analysis. The indicators were the following: to what extent the answers were related to the respondents themselves, to the values and attitudes expressed and to the consistency and logic expressed in the answers, as well as to the contradictions and corrections.²

This means that the answers are treated and deconstructed as a text (Lotman 1984), that is, as a narrative in which the roles and characters of an "implied speaker" or "talking subject" are fruitful for the survey (Rimmon-Kenan 1983). The material has been analysed qualitatively by systematisation and typification of answers, and the results presented as a typology.

Among the respondents, 51% were men and 49% women. On the average, they had worked for 6 years. One-fifth had worked for more than 10 years and another fifth for less than 3 years. More than two-thirds thought that their income had increased during the past 4 years; slightly less than one-fifth thought that their income had remained on the same level; and one out of ten said that her/his income had decreased. Somewhat less than one-fifth (17%) worked in the capital Tallinn, 77% in other towns, and 6% in the countryside. Three-fourths worked in the printed media, less than one-tenth (6%) on TV and 20% in radio.

Society as a Social Actor: History as the Context and Basis for Self-Definition under Transition

Estonia was occupied from 1940-1991, and under the Soviet regime rules and norms were established to the "Soviet people". Official rules, references and interpretation of these rules and methods, represented by official power caused inner conflicts for individuals, official versus non-official was often in deep cognitive conflict. During the Soviet time, serious problems arose in Estonia. There were internal contradictions in people's identity, in the adoption of different obligatory roles, as well as in the obstruction of a free formation of a person's identity, keeping it under ideological control.

In identity, the social aspect was considered especially important. It was particularly focused in education and in the directed process of socialisation (Hion *et al* 1986:49-50).³ Although the principle of "social equality" was officially in force as one of the basic ideological ideas, social identities were defined by: different educational opportunities, position as a leader, and the perception of social processes. Hierarchical positions as well as living standards differed. In Soviet Estonia, social identities were largely influenced by the Communist Party, and defined according to political mentality, social status and the origin of the person. In certain areas, more levels, aspects and criteria for self-definition may have existed. (Hion *et al* 1986:22).⁴

Individuals with social roles (e.g. journalists/editors) often had double identities, double biographies, and official normative biographies with structural holes (Susskind; Hinrikus). In the Soviet time, the role of an editor/journalist was often ambiguous (Lõhmus 1996). A high level of media consumption and cultural participation were a sign of adaptation to the Soviet system (Lepikov 1980, Lauristin 1999).⁵

Soviet propaganda checked the definitions of identity very carefully. In the press, as well as in fiction, censorship prevented the mentioning of small nationalities (Estonians) as a basis of identity, since it “expressed nationalism”. “Russians”, as the name of a nationality was considered pejorative and was therefore forbidden in the press. The preferred definitions of identity – worker, collective farmer and employee – carried an ideological meaning. The ideological apparatus made efforts to alter people’s definitions of identity. For example, in 1971 a programme was launched for the formation of the “Soviet people” as a historical “ethnic” amalgamation.

The social processes that have taken place in Estonia during the past ten years have completely changed the structure of society. These structural changes have been accompanied by changes in people’s positions in society and by their renewed self-definition. The social activity of the 1980s-1990s carried the idea of the restoration of an independent statehood and a joint social identity, and offered opportunities for everyone to participate. The majority of the people were activated, particularly through the media. In the course of this process, new structures were established and institutions were renewed, which, with increasing legitimacy (Berger & Luckmann 1966:110-113), began to rearrange people’s social positions and relations. After the new structures (in the late-Soviet and post-Soviet periods) had been established, some of the activists retreated. They found themselves in a new, tougher and more competitive economic reality whose rules of functioning were unknown. Most people lacked the experience of coping with it. A spontaneous expression of joint social interests was replaced by a policy of “representatives” and thus institutionalised.

To understand the framework of the media, some specific and typical features must be described. The changes which have taken place in Estonia in the 1990s have often been contradictory internally:

- Social simplification, primitivisation – return to a certain “beginning”, for which it has not been possible to choose freely – has led to the formation of new roles, identities and relations; on the other hand, the “import” of new structures and quick surface integration into global relations have had an influence (cf. “return”, “back to the truth”, “back to the nation”, “back to normality”, “back to Europe” and “back to the present”, Lagerspetz, 1999.)
- In a stable (“normally developing”) society people’s attitudes and value orientations can guarantee the preservation of their stable identity and mental relations to their environment. In a transitional society, there is no complete harmony between the ruling values and real life, as the material and social environment observe different rules in their development rather

than cultural conceptions, interpretations and value orientations, which originate from different contexts. (Lauristin & Vihalemm 1998:906)

- An apparent broadening of opportunities, opening up of the world can be observed, but for many it is difficult to fulfil the conditions to make use of new opportunities.
- Despite political and ideological changes, a disruption has occurred – public reference to the entire Soviet era, concrete discussions of its background and of its associations are avoided; and phenomena are discussed historically, rather than in the context of “this century”, or geographically in the “global”, “Western” or “European” context.
- The changes are not of a revolutionary but of a reformist character. For instance, after structural changes more than 70% of former ideological leaders continue to enjoy positions as party leaders or businessmen. This is a group that took advantage of the possibility of a quick change of identity for their own interests.
- During the course changes hidden influential institutions and relations, existing in the past, have penetrated into a number of legal and legitimate parts of the new structure.
- It is easier for people to define the society than to analyse their own development and the occurring changes, for which they do not have a subjective systematic terminology, or they do not recognise this lack as a problem.
- The perception of changes is paradoxical: their initial phase seems long, and people would like to pass through it even more quickly. In the later phase the changes seem to be too fast and cause new identity crises and difficulties of adjustment. Constant problems of choice and adjustment cause contradictions in self-definition and orientation.
- In the case of Estonia, the greatest fundamental change is the establishment of the idea of an independent and free personality.
- The task of the press embodies the presenting, reflecting and wording of ongoing processes, i.e. serving the society versus the periodicals’ own interests in directing these processes.
- The press has polarised the subjects and objects of changes as winners and losers, in a vulgarly materialistic sense.

Changes in the Estonian Media

The period of 1987-1992 was unique in Estonia as well as internationally. At the outset of the changes, the former Soviet journalists were particularly active, since the general public supported them. For many journalists it was the most

prolific and purposeful time. The ideas of an active “public sphere” (Habermas) and “participating journalism” (Glasser) emerged and journalism was frequently viewed as a “forum” (Kunelius & Heikkilä).

The press as an environment for public dispute (public sphere) became the venue for discussing the possible trends for development and the mobilisation of people. Nine out of ten Estonians trusted the media, believing that the media covered everything that happened (Tamre 1990, 1993). All public events were significant – people “participated” in them and identified themselves with them.

In 1990, the periodicals cast off the domination of the Communist Party of Estonia and called themselves “independent”. The electronic media dominated among the change agents. Until the formation of political parties in the autumn of 1992, the press provided seemingly unrestricted opportunities for public presentation and at the same time directed change processes actively, both directly (via media text) and indirectly (through editors and their choices).

The cadre of journalists changed quickly with the emergence of new publications and commercial radio stations. They did not pay attention to the professional skills of the journalists. In the “old” print press and state-owned radio and television, which continued appreciating professional and technical skills, the changes were slower. A general characteristic of the changes was the appearance of young journalists without any special training (“child-reporters”). The general educational level of journalists dropped (Lauk 1996).⁶

The change process of the Estonian media proceeded in four stages:

1. *penetration* of existing social conflicts into the media,
2. *approximation* of the media to politics,
3. *creation* of the foundations of the new media policy,
4. *formation* of the new media system.

In the course of these changes, first, the identity of the media changed. Simultaneously, the media, with its new identity, had to create an audience for itself, they had to consistently reform and destroy the previous value systems and create new, more “floating” value systems, forming the basis for a new “flexible” identity for their audience.

At the onset of the media change, television and radio, in particular were kept under special surveillance and censorship. Attempts were made to use the media to stop the processes of renewal, to attack and redirect dissent and to punish “offenders”. Journalists were forced to use the media to maintain order among the people and to write threatening articles in the vein of obligatory ideology.

The approximation of media and politics began through the media coverage of the ongoing processes. Rapid processes proceeded simultaneously in real life and in the media, whereas the media participated in the changes. During that period a great number of journalists went into politics; the Estonian-language press was homogeneous. Intoxication with liberation prevailed.

For example, a radio programme on the veterans of the Soviet revolution was smoothly transformed into a programme by the same author on the history of Estonian "forest brethren".

Everyday news items presented interviews with foreign guests who admired and praised Estonia, encouraged by the developing self-image (identity). This, as well as asking "foreign experts" for advice about what Estonia should do, serve to form a new collective identity.

The creation of the new media policy began when the new economic mechanisms, generated by the privatisation of periodicals started to rearrange the media. The new media was based on the size of the audience and the sale of advertising space. This brought about conflicting interests and fierce competition, which quickly destroyed the previous apparent homogeneity of the media.

To mould the new society of "private ownership, richness, youth and success", and to ideologically and strategically breed a consumer, young journalists were employed by the media because they led a "correct life". They became activists in the new era, reshaping its ideology. The analysis of problems, primarily social problems, and finding solutions diminished this differed greatly compared to the first period when "participating journalism" tried to find solutions to acute problems. New glossy magazines began to appear, with the aim of shaping media personalities and politicians as "marketable commodities".

This period is characterised by an acute internal crisis within the press: the press as a phenomenon which actually openly participated in the processes and functioned as a public figure in society, was channelled into apparent openness; it came under the control of owners and political interest groups. The social process, with an initial task to express social ideas and to find solutions to problems of cultural identity, was narrowed down into a struggle between predominantly economic and political interests. The status and function of the journalists and editors became more formal. One of the causes of the crisis might have been the lack of new cultural leaders, whose emergence was hindered by Soviet censorship. This question has been posed in media criticism as well. "Are we going to have new strong leaders who carry on the processes, or have we lost this battle already?" The question may reflect a fear of losing a new collective ideal identity, or a fear of achieving an ideal identity that would demand conditions which do not exist.

What then began was the passivisation and reshaping of an audience from politically active participants – that is, citizens – towards passive consumers. The most active agent in this change process were the new commercial stations. Thus, access to the media became selective because of changes in the "news criteria". Several periodicals were taken over by foreign capital at a time when the share of Estonian capital was diminishing in other branches of the economy as well.

Journalistic Practice: Changing and Unchanging Identities

Professional journalism presumes professional stability: an analytical and rational approach to social processes. Several main differences are apparent in journalists' background and working conditions in transitional societies such as Estonia, compared to their colleagues in the Nordic countries, they are those quick, dynamic social processes which have shaped a different – more politicised, nervous, non-stable – working environment than in more stable societies.

After the fall of the Soviet regime, the political balance in the whole world and the relations with the hitherto stable countries could not remain on the same level. One could see change tendencies in most European countries. On the one hand, societies "turned outwards" – they widened the common sphere in the cultural space. On the other hand, they "turned inwards" by redefining their own cultural identity.

How do people respond when asked about their professional values? What performative effects follow from the survey answers? A functional perspective forces us to pose such questions (Potter 1987:176). All the answers are treated here as narratives. To understand the text as a narrative, the following explores the problem of the "talking subject".

The questionnaire made a distinction between two different functions of journalistic work, those of a journalist and those of an editor. Most respondents had done both jobs. They considered the work of a journalist as unrestricted ("depending on one's own experience"), while the work of an editor "can be influenced" in order to regulate the society and impose certain norms on it. Frequently, respondents expressed quite different role descriptions. For example, one stated that the role of a journalist is analytical, while the role of an editor falls into the category of a manipulator. This refers to a person's conscious or unconscious role division or role conflict.

In the formulation of definitions, a distinct difference emerged based on professional age. Those who had worked for more than ten years concentrated primarily on problems. Respondents who had worked as journalists for a shorter time often referred to what they had learned. Sometimes they presented ready-made opinions about "journalistic practice" as their own experience.

According to the interviews, marked changes have taken place in the journalistic environment and in the functions of journalists and editors in Estonia. Journalists openly advocating Soviet ideology were no longer working actively. The role of manipulator had often been transferred to young journalists under the age of 30, most of whom had been hired in 1992-94. The majority of the older generation of manipulators have already retired, while younger staff members have taken over leading positions on editorial boards.

The number of manipulated journalists who gave up their work was large because the time had the strongest influence on them. Many professionals also left the field because they did not find their place in the new Estonian journalism, which was no longer open to their ideas. Public affairs remained in

the background for years. Those whose work required special skills remained in the profession, disregarding their previous thoughts of the profession. ETV and Public Service Radio have the greatest number of old editors, who suffer of hard competition and uncertain situations. These disturb the everyday working environment especially because structural changes have been lagging for a too long period.

In more “peripheral” publications, professional journalists and editors who have survived the changes still seem to enjoy a strong position. They claim that “the role of the journalist does not depend on the system of government”. In the case of journalists who have been made redundant, the real cause for their dismissal usually seems to have been their inflexibility.

In the study, there were some incomplete answers. For this group, the questions seemed “very hard” and “not understandable”, incomprehensible. They answered only a few of them. Then there was a group of respondents (c. 20) who refused to complete all the questions in the questionnaire. Very often their reaction was “I have never thought about it”, although the question concerned their everyday practice. Some also suggested several answers to the questions. The fourth reaction was that of a long and very detailed philosophical monologue about the roles and identities of journalists/editors.

While analysing the responses, I compared different texts and looked for a particular logic or system concerning the talking subject in the narrative: who is speaking? What kinds of different speakers can we find in these texts?

I treated certain questions as indicators. Such question areas were questions about (1) motives, (2) own aims in journalism, (3) the respondent's view of the functions of journalism, (4) named authorities and (5) problems caused by shame or fear.

Answers to these questions varied considerably. Different individuals have different work-related problems. Some may concentrate on production or the content of professional products, while others may only consider journalism as a means to earn a salary. Some “signs” (notions about owners, news) were interpreted differently by different talking subjects. Problems related to journalism can be classified differently depending on the role they give to media owners. Some interviewees viewed media owners as helpers or, alternatively, as journalistically influential. The latter case means that owners cause problems. News was perceived as “the goal of journalism”, lacking any deeper meaning and connection with social processes, while others saw the news as an indicator of processes taking place in society.

The main differences between various publications/stations were in the amount of work, in the organisation of the work, in speed and in styles and genres. Thus, specific features of particular media or channels were not decisive. Instead, general working conditions varied considerably.

A uniform requirement for journalists/editors was that they must have command over their own material. A clear majority also stated that a journalist carries greater responsibility for his own text than an editor. A journalist compiles and creates, an editor cuts and breaks up. Therefore, a journalist cre-

ates a structure, while an editor restructures and institutionalises. The expression “compulsory material” was frequently used for institutionalised texts. Nevertheless, it was seen that in Estonia an editor must also write.

It is possible to regard the writers of texts as clear, fixed types. The following complete answers can be considered characteristic of various types individuals.

Person 1. *Subjective*: Does anyone control your work – “Yes, the reader”. Which are/were your motives as a journalist/editor – “I don’t have any skills for other work”. Which (verbal and nonverbal) rules do you follow in your work – “To beat the worst bureaucrat but respect him as a co-citizen”. How has your style changed? – “Hope towards more impressive”. Functions for journalists/editors: “To highlight problems and look for solutions; to highlight activities of people from different fields”. What is unexpected/occasional – “Unexpected events are expected too”. How has your attitude changed towards the work of a journalist/editor (in 1980s and 1990s) – “Not at all”. Which (media) events do you consider crucial in the changing of Estonian journalism? – “Less influence of editors over writers.” What is the aim of your work in journalism? – “To write honestly and well. (My head is full of text all the time.) A journalist must follow cultural and ethical taboos. Shame is caused by a wrongly presented fact”. What are the problems in journalism? – “A lot of noise, no information”.

Objective: The respondent received the Ministry of Environment prize for his/her articles about forests and the economy, two annual prizes awarded by the Journalists’ Union (1996, 1997), as well as some other prizes.

Person 2. *Subjective*: “Journalism does not play a specific role in social processes. The function of journalism is to reflect real life. Journalism offers opportunities to write one’s own thoughts. The circle of businessmen have exerted pressure; the journalistic routine is to write repeatedly about one and the same theme; overestimation of some unimportant news is negative; problem – there is nothing to read in some issues, often a problem is raised, but there is no follow-up, nothing about the solutions. The problem of journalism: it also wants to win where it is better to lose.”

“There are some persons who seem to be untouchable, nothing critical can be written about their activities, nothing can be questioned. Nothing is not exactly prohibited, but some articles are stopped and they do not appear in newspapers.”

Objective: “I have repeatedly given up work as a journalist, but I have returned now because I was coaxed. I own a farm and am able to work there, to live in peace in the country, to own a good library and have a circle of friends, and to love”.

Person 3. *Subjective*: His work is controlled by the editor-in-chief and media owners. The changes are towards a more authoritarian style. Not just a single

text, but the flux and flow of texts have a strong influence. The task of an editor: to restructure other peoples' articles. The work of journalists: to write by the implied rules, to construct a story following structural rules. It is hard to get good journalists. Rules for oneself: to try to attract a readership, has to make his stories more entertaining. He likes light genres, such as features, because of less responsibility. What is expected is a change is more formal order, better organisation and division of work. The information about events arrives from 'the generator of events'. He likes the profession because it offers contacts with people and influence. Principles – "Don't let the source of information influence you. Information spread by journalism is important; journalism actively influences the society, especially the political and market spheres. Journalism is the 4th estate and has influence."

Objective: Salary is a secret but it is high. Plans his career long in advance; practical decisions are influenced by personal interests.

Comments: Strong personal interests and motives which partly cover general interests.

Person 4. *Subjective:* S/he has worked in one place only. The most important motive for journalistic work is the nice company and an active style. S/he is a newscaster on the (local) radio. Nobody controls his/her work. S/he describes his/her journalistic style as "active and free. I am in the centre of life." S/he does not feel any restrictions on his/her self-expression. No norms or control exist in the editorial office. Randomness plays an important part in the daily work. There is not sufficient time to elaborate on the themes. Some themes make him/her uneasy. S/he avoids speaking about politics. No (preferred) genres exist. S/he usually finds events and material through the help of friends. Listeners are "ordinary people around us". The media "must be taken into account". The role of the media is to form and shape opinions and attitudes.

Objective: S/he works at the local radio station and hopes to continue his/her career there.

Comments: Naïve.

On the basis of the expressed activities, aims and attitudes towards journalistic work and its context, we can distinguish between four different types of journalists and editors (see Figure 1):

1. *manipulated*, trusting, that is, a politically naive (young) journalist who lacks background knowledge and professional skills;
2. *manipulator*, that is, an editor, functionary or journalist who takes into account economic or ideological considerations;
3. *analyst*, that is, an expert, editor or journalist with professional skills; and
4. *maladjusted*, that is, a journalist or editor who does not want or is not able to cope with the changing requirements.

Figure 1. Model of types of journalists/editors

Indicators of determination	Manipulated	Manipulator	Analyst	Maladjusted
1. Formulation definition of his/her own work	Life is fascinating well-informed about current events	Profession is interesting challenge, influence, salary, prestige	A professional is able to understand and influence processes	Possibilities Contacts Experience
2. Focus on journalistic work	Events, people	Hierarchical relations	Persons having problems, persons, events	Different dispositions to the problems of people and society
3. Activity	Presentation of phenomena, description, collaboration	Selection of phenomena, persons, following established discourse, collaboration	Presentation of contexts Widening the borders Creative work Collaboration and/or conflict	Contradictory activities between collaboration and conflict
4. Understanding of, consciousness about processes	Natural developments, no connections between the processes	Connections from certain aspects partially conscious/unconscious	Consciously analyses the connections between the processes,	Participates in different roles in different (renamed) processes Different connections
5. Basis of stability	Presentation of new content	Formal order	Connects different processes, levels	Reconciliation
6. Description of routines	Writing about one and the same thing	Everyday work	News	Means Method Attitudes
7. Description of what is unexpected	Events, new persons	Circuit failure	Not keeping one's promises	Hard to say ...
8. Responsible to	One's boss, recipient –audience	Owner Publisher	Recipient – audience	Recipient, owner, one's own generation, memory
9. Levels of activity (real/symbolic)	Real	Real, (partially symbolic)	Symbolic and real (material)	Real and symbolic
10. Process in herself/himself process in society	Reflects society	Active in corporative group	Active in society, regulates processes	Process in a person
11. Context of self-determination	I in the world	I in the office, corporative group	I in society, world	I in time

Descriptions of types

- *Manipulated journalists* or editors, (as well as child-reporters) are, in their own opinion, full of vitality, believe in their good prospects. They are relatively well-paid, which gives them self-confidence. Single or cohabiting men or women, who are satisfied with the changes in the situation, think that they need upgrading of their qualifications, believe in the solid basis of an independent Estonian statehood and find that the well-being of Estonian culture is guaranteed.
- *Manipulating journalists* are directly interested in the continuation of the current processes in the press, as they have made or are planning to make a long-term career in journalism. They conform to the interests of employers or owners and know that one cannot go against the interests of the owners or harm the owners or the circles connected with them. They see the changes in the press as part of social changes and identify social changes with changes in the press. They try to conceal their private or the group interests of media owners, presenting them as common interests and directing the formation of public opinion respectively. They are often active and dynamic persons with obligations to make (quick) decisions.
- *Analysts* are analytical editors/journalists, professionals who claim that there have been no essential changes in their work; what has changed are the conditions of work and social relations. They consider the educational function of their work as very important. In analysing social processes, they attempt to widen their dialogue-based openness. They consider ongoing changes as correct and justified, but see problems in everyday life. They often criticise the work of manipulated (child-reporter) journalists. They analyse themselves and their participation in different processes.
- *Maladjusted*, often tired or old journalists or editors who are often connected with the structures preserved from the earlier times (usually county newspapers, also Estonian Radio and Estonian Television). They support changes but they feel embitterment. They usually do not conceal their former activity, but try to motivate and justify it. Their values have changed considerably but their private life has not changed for the better, and they do not believe in any essential improvement. As a rule, they do not own any private property or real estate. They analyse the events (later) and define themselves both in the old and the new situations.

We can further condense the categories using two dimensions: critical vs. non-critical attitude towards the influence, and active vs. passive participation in the media process (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Types of journalists/editors as actors in journalism

Participation	Critical	Non-Critical
<i>Active</i>	Analyst	Manipulator
<i>Passive</i>	Maladjusted	Manipulated

Active, consciously acting professionals in Estonian journalism are *manipulating* and *critical-analytical*, nevertheless a clear type is seldom found in reality. The above classification is based on the survey questions. They indicate whether respondents falling into different categories keep a critical distance both from the material and the dominating discourse in society. The replies also indicate what kinds of compromises the respondents are willing to make and what is important to them. Their wishes and ability to participate independently in public discussions finally determine the place of editors/journalists in society, in their professional view.

Conclusions

The material allows me to state that the period of social change in Estonia enables one to discern more clearly internal and general problems of the press. One of the most important dimensions in the analysis of the public realm are the people working in the media, their expressed functions and their adjustment to the new conditions. From this perspective, journalists/editors can be divided into four types: manipulated, manipulators, analysts and maladjusted journalists. These types can be found in nearly all publications/broadcasting centres.

What kind of internal autonomy do Estonian journalists have or assume to have? This varies in different societies. During the recent decade, the model of the press has changed in Estonia. A transition has taken place from the press operating under ideological supervision in the 1980s, to the liberal information market in the 1990s. Social processes, with a few “mythological-ideological” dimensions embedded in different stages often create contradictions with a professional’s meaning-construction, which forms the framework for journalists/editors. The “critical-rational” stage of the 1980s is in changing into a “mythological-ideological” stage on the recently restructured society.

Common decline in the need for social criticism and the changing of functions are related to the changing of “stages” (Lauristin) and “roles” (Nordenstreng). This, in turn, has restructured the work and identity of journalists/editors, relieving them, on the one hand, from the earlier system of rules. On the other hand, there are new problems cropping up on a new level and creating a new structure.

The journalists' answers to the questionnaire reveal that the prestige enjoyed by a journalist or a editor has declined since the Soviet period. The prestige of the media is not high. Nevertheless, the influence of the press on social processes is considered strong. Journalistic work is unrestricted; journalists have to make everyday decisions themselves and bear responsibility. There are more possibilities for risks. However, most journalists/editors do not seem to be very willing to actually use the new liberties.

While rapid changes were taking place, attempts were made to conceal some of the driving forces and influential factors behind them. Leaders who represent media owners have mostly employed young people whose character is not fully developed, whose values and worldview can be influenced and directed. This is one of the most marked changes compared to the early 1980s. At that time the average age of journalists was 46, and few young people were able to make their way into journalism (Journalists' Union 1988). New qualified experts have been employed, mostly by publications focusing on the economy.

Notes

1. Questions comprised (1) education, salary, economic situation, etc; (2): nature of work as a journalist. Further questions included: what do you find common and different in the work of a journalist and an editor? Which are/were your motives as a journalist/editor? What must you give up (have you given up) because of working as an editor/journalist? Does anyone control your work? Have you signed a contract of employment? How do you describe your journalistic/editing style? What are your tasks as a journalist/editor? Which (written and unwritten) rules do you follow in your work? Who/what determines the situation in Estonian journalism today?

The following questions were asked about changes over time (3): What has changed in your work compared to the time you started, in ten years, during the last 5 years? Which place, in your opinion, did journalism and the media occupy in society in the 1960s-1980s? What place do the media have in society today? What should be the task of journalism? Whose interests does Estonian journalism represent? Do you feel any restrictions on your self-expression as a journalist/editor at present, in the 1970s-80s? Has some kind of censorship/control influenced you directly? What kind of influence has it been? How was control over the established norms exercised in the editorial office you worked? Have you ever been ashamed of anything as a journalist/editor? Why? Which subjects/spheres have been difficult to handle in journalism before the 1990s, at present? What kind of difficulties did you meet in your work before the 1990s? What has changed in your attitude towards the work of a journalist/editor? Who are/have set a good example to you? Whom do you trust a) before the 1990s, b) in the 1990s, c) today (in society, political life, culture, journalism, in your own life)? What have you been afraid of as a journalist/editor? How prestigious is the job of a journalist at present, before the 1990s? What types of punishment are used in the publication you work for? Have you been punished? How? How are you satisfied with the current situation in jour-

nalism? What and whom did you as a journalist/editor feel responsible for the 1970s-1980s? Today?

Questions about the text edited (4): Are there in your editorial office/publication any bias towards certain subjects? On what subjects have you written? Have these areas changed and how? Which genres do you prefer? Which subjects are difficult to publish? Please name direct/indirect/hidden bans? How are bans presented or worded in the publication you work for? How do you understand that your material, speaker or anything else is "unsuitable"? Where do you usually find events and other source material? Have there been/are there any persons whose names were not/are not printed in stories and have been/are avoided? Why?

The following questions were asked about changes in society and life (5): How do you estimate changes in the world and concretely in your country/society in the 1990s? How have changes in society changed your life? What do you wish and expect from the future, what are you going to change in your life? What do you consider the most important values in life? Are you doing some other work besides your main occupation? How long would you like to work as a journalist/editor, have you thought of changing your profession? How difficult or easy, in your opinion, is to "buy" a journalist/editor?

2. How (in which context, perspectives, aspects) do journalists/editors see their problems? How do they solve them? What is existing for them in the world? What kind of meanings do they give to their work and work context? What kind of connections do exist between them? What is the system of hierarchy and evaluation? (Gerbner 1969).
3. For instance, asking about 'the most exciting, important problems' (scale from 1- 'not important at all' – to 5- 'especially important'). The first five were:
 1. How to improve and keep one's health (average marked 4.11)
 2. How to help people needing help (3.91)
 3. How to avoid nuclear war (3.85)
 4. How to fight against the pollution and destruction of nature and environment (3.77)
 5. How to get enough money (3.67)
 and the last 5 were:
 21. How events are proceeding in other socialist countries (3.13)
 22. How to train oneself to perceive and express one's real 'me' (2.98)
 23. How to use one's knowledge and skills better (2.95)
 24. How to keep one's beliefs and ideals (2.90)
 25. How to regulate the relations between different nations (2. 89)- (Hion, Lauristin, Vihalemm 1986:49-50)
4. For instance, there were 28.7% of country and 71.3% of towns people, but in interviews in 1984 48% considered themselves country-identity people, 39% town-identity people, and 13% didn't define their identity. (Hion, Lauristin, Vihalemm 1986:22.)
5. Journalists/editors (who had studied journalism at Tartu University) often found satisfaction in their profession. They think about the profession of journalist/editor in terms of communication skills, editing and expression abilities; individual qualities include individual thinking, sense of humour, strong self-control and self-constraint. (Lepikov 1980:37)

"Estonians have been, for over a hundred years, amongst the leaders in information consumption." In the 1970s and 1980s, Estonia was in media use one of the

most active republics in the Soviet Union and was comparable to countries with a very high media use in northern Europe. In 1987, there were 406 newspaper copies per 1000 inhabitants. During the highlight of political mass movements in 1988-90 the number of newspaper copies per 1000 persons reached 528. (Lauristin 1998:32)

6. * Changes in the Age of Estonian Journalistic workforce (in percentages)

Age Group	1988	1995
under 24 years	3	21
25-29	9	19
30-39	31	28
40-49	27	15
50-59	25	14
60 and older	5	3

* Duration of the Job Career of Estonian Journalists in 1988 and 1995 (in percentages)

	1988	1995
Less than 2 years	11	25
3-5 years	14	26
6-10	20	14
11-15	13	13
16-20	11	8
21-25	11	4
25 and more	21	10

* Educational background of Estonian Journalists (in percentages)

Degree	1988	1995
degree in journalism	29	29
other university degree	49	41
some academic studies	7	9
high school	8	13
other	7	8

Figures 1.-3. (Lauk 1996:97-102)

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From Talking Heads to Walking Bodies

Challenging the Masculinity of the News

Sanna Ojajärvi

Women newsreaders must search for a visual style that stresses their femininity yet defers to the seriousness of the news, that complements that of the man, yet takes care not to impinge on the male preserve. Hair that has not been “done”, lack of make-up, the less studied appearance associated with feminism, must be avoided. They must embrace the ‘post-feminist’ worked-on appearance of the young businesswoman of the 1980s, a style made current in advertisements and magazines directed at women executives. Their self-presentation must stress a rigid and unbridgeable difference between men and women, while distracting from the continuing process of differentiation (Holland 1987, 150).

For decades, the news studio used to be a masculine sphere where only men were allowed to speak and look straight into the camera. The idea of masculine as convincing and, at the same time, the invisibility of women were so obvious that it took time until they were paid attention to. Nowadays, this one-sexed nature of the news has been reconstructed and every channel has solved the sex trouble in some way: there are both women and men newsreaders on every channel, either at the same time or on different broadcasts, on different evenings. What does this tell to the viewers? That women are as trustworthy as men? That the sexes are equal, or the same? That there are two different kinds of people in the world, women and men – and they should complement each other?

It is no more than eighteen years ago that the first female newsreader invaded the masculine space of the television news studio in Finland. At that time, feminists were hoping that the growing number of women making the news would have some impact on the contents or values of news. That is, they were expected to bring something of their “softness” to the “hard” genre of the news (Sana 1995). Still, after these first decades of women taking part in both the production and presentation of news the arena of newsworthy topics – economics and politics – seems to be unchangeable, and mainly inhabited by men in dark suits. The question is whether the division between men acting in the public sphere and women performing as passive decoration can be seen even at the end of the 1990s. As Patricia Holland continues in her article: “The invitation to speak with the voice of authority may be nothing but an invita-

tion, yet again, to be a decorative performer” (Holland 1987, 445). She is quite suspicious of the new space that women are given on television news and fears that, following the ancient pattern of being-looked-at-ness (Mulvey 1975), the role of decoration is more than suitable for women also in these times of “post-feminism”¹. It is interesting, though, that Holland does not pay any attention to the artificiality of men’s performances; she seems to take their masculine business-style for granted, as something that every man carries with no special effort.

In this article, I will study the performances of the newsreaders and the weather forecasters on three different news programmes, shown on three channels on Finnish television (*TV-uutiset ja sää* on the Public Service Channel *YLE1*, *Kymmenen uutiset* on the commercial *MTV3*, *Uutiset ja sää* on the commercial *Nelonen*), in order to understand how, in the Finnish context, the process of *gendering* is situating women and men in relation to what is considered as feminine and masculine. I assume the Finnish connotations of femininity and masculinity to be slightly different from their American versions. For example, the idea of gender equality (also gender “neutrality”) and the myth of strong, autonomous and independent working Nordic woman are very strong in Finland. When it comes to the news, a certain gender neutrality is assumed by the journalistic culture that “presumes the newsreaders (women or men) to hide the markers of their sex as far as possible” (Halonen 1995, 25). It might also be due to these myths of equality and neutrality that there was almost no discussion about women decreasing the seriousness of the news when the first female newsreader appeared on Finnish television (Holland 1987).

My approach to the gender question in the news is based on the assumption and the result of many studies showing that there are more differences within the gendered categories than between them (Weitz 1998). Following the deconstructive meaning of “post-feminism”, I approach the performances of the hosts for the news from a slightly different angle than Holland, and claim that the invitation of women, on the contrary, has also given men a sex and a (hetero)sexuality and drawn them into the feminine realm of being-looked-at-ness. Thus, the news might be understood as opening new spaces, however limited, for all performers. Moreover, since the definitions of feminine and masculine can be thought of as cultural constructs and thus anything but fixed, I would like to take this seriously and take into consideration some new ideas of the assumed “masculinity” of the news. I find it fruitful to try to conceptualize gender in a new way, distracting it from the essentialistic view (separating sex from gender) and perhaps turning to totally new definitions. I suggest that the categorization of performers – if necessary – should be done according to acts and practices instead of the (assumed) sex – also in empirical studies (Weitz 1998). As analytical tools, however, I use the categories of feminine and masculine as they are presented in numerous studies of gendered television, where feminine and masculine are understood as complementary and mutually exclusive categories (Brown 1990, Fiske 1987)². I hope the use of these conventional categories will help to open up spaces beyond them.

Representable Genders – Available Identities

The categories of masculinity and femininity do more than assist in the construction of personal identities; they are critical elements in our informal social ontology... neither the homosexual nor the muscular woman can be assimilated easily into the categories that structure everyday life. (Weitz 1998, 39)

In this article, I aim to determine the limits of intelligible, and thus representable, gendered positions available for the various performers in the news. What is central here is the idea of the media constructing “realities” for everyday life and offering available identities for large number of viewers. The representations in the media are connected to what is considered intelligible, i.e. they have to be somewhat understandable to the viewers³. They might also affect some changes to the realm of what can be understood as possible, as the increased number of women newsreaders has shown. I understand the representations of genders as constituting the “real” world, that “...is constantly transmitted and created through textual and visual discourses. What is experienced as reality is actually formed through the represented and the representable. Thus the question of how ‘reality’ relates to ‘text’ becomes the wrong question: they cannot be divided into two separate realms” (Meijer 1993, 368; see also Berger & Luckmann 1966; de Lauretis 1987).

The basis for my understanding of the construction of genders follows Teresa de Lauretis’ series of four propositions: (1) Gender is (a) representation; (2) The representation of gender is its construction; (3) The construction of gender goes on as busily today as it did in earlier times; and (4) The construction of gender is also affected by its deconstruction (de Lauretis 1987, 3). The last two propositions are of particular interest here.

Even if de Lauretis restricts her propositions to concern only gender, I will expand on them to the construction of sex as well. Basically, this means that I understand both sex and gender as effects of the same knowledge-power system (see Foucault 1978)⁴. Following Judith Butler (1990), I name the repetitive and circulative mechanism that discursively produces sexes as well as genders, *the heterosexual matrix* – an ordering power which produces two entities, a woman and a man that both consist of a unity of a specific sex, a specific sexual desire, a specific sexual behaviour and a specific social appearance, gender. The mechanism produces certain representations through compulsory *imitative repetition* while, at the same time, excluding other representations as impossible and unintelligible. Thus for Butler, both the intelligible gender and the intelligible sex are performative, they are an effect of their performances (Butler 1990, 1993; Scheman 1998). I find this approach fruitful when trying to make sense of the available and thus representable “identities” concerning hosts on television, for example.

Drawing from the performative theory of gender, I study how the repetitive imitation of gender and (hetero)sexuality works in the news. I aim to deconstruct the idea of news as a “masculine genre”, as well as merely women performing as decoration, by examining how the categories of “masculine” and “feminine” are being mixed in the news. Quite briefly, I will examine the cast-

ing, visual setting and some generic features of the news on Finnish television by concentrating on four different, artificial distinctions that are commonly used in media studies, for example when categorizing programmes in different genres: public-private, masculine-feminine, mind-body, fact-fiction.

Instead of worrying about stereotypical representations, I will analyse the moments when it is possible to interpret sex and gender (understood conventionally as assuming each other) in a different way: as incoherent and not-necessary-related categories. I will also study the effects of these contradictions between the ideal of gender neutrality (or “equality”) and, at the same time, the pressure to maintain the sex-based difference, that is, the ideal of two different, mutually-exclusive and complementary categories of sexes. Central here is the importance of the *recognition*⁵ of genders that, in turn, leads to more or less complete differentiation of femininity and masculinity (see for example Fiske 1987). Besides questioning the unquestioned use of femininity and masculinity, I intent to go even further and ask: *why is the dichotomic division of two different sexes maintained* and *why do we need to ask these questions of one’s sex anyway* (Butler 1990; Pulkkinen 1996; Sipilä 1998)? To me, it seems worth asking why the issues of sex, gender and sexuality are so central in our understanding of as well as acting towards other people – in order to be able to interact we seem to need knowledge of the gender as well as the “real” sex of our counterpart.

What is Masculine about the News?

The national news is primarily masculine culture, though it often ends with a “softer” item that is intended to bring the female back into the audience. (Fiske 1987, 281)

The definition of news as a masculine genre has been based on the idea of news contents as stressing masculine values over feminine ones, the underrepresentation of women as experts or professionals and the notion that men tend to watch more news than women. Also, the division between “soft” and “hard” news goes along with the ideas of femininity and masculinity (read: women and men). Moreover, the visual representations of the sexes claim to maintain the difference between them. Women’s role in the news is seen as secondary, unless she is willing to confirm to masculine norms – and this can only happen at the cost of her femininity (Brown 1990; Holland 1987; Sana 1995).

All the claims have proven to be “true” in some sense, and they are certainly of importance when re-thinking, among others, the construction of values and the power-subordination –systems. Nevertheless, the taken-for-grantedness of women as a coherent category has been the major criticism of feminism during the last decades. What bothers me is that the criticism of this tendency to generalize is still very much left out of the discussion in (part of) media studies, for example, when categorizing genres by using the categories of feminine and masculine as a basis of research⁶. The problem arises when,

without questioning, trying to connect all women with feminine (emotional and private) and all men with masculine (rational and public) and determinedly biasing the research on these assumptions. Taken this into consideration, I am interested in the implications that the criticism of universal categories would have when taken seriously and applied to empirical material.

When looking at and listening to the Finnish newsreaders, it is not so obvious that, besides representing different sexes, they also represent different categories of genders⁷. In general, the Finnish newsreaders perform in a “gender-neutral”, masculine way. Regardless of their sex, they dress in the same way; there is no difference in their manner of speaking, or the topics they choose to speak about. Typical public interest news topics, such as war and economics are represented by women newsreaders as well as men newsreaders, as are the human interest stories required nowadays in the news. The stereotypical images of feminine and masculine are thus blurred, or actually, feminine is turned into masculine. This is also the conclusion that many feminists have drawn from the “masculine” genre of news: women are “forced” to act masculine in order to fit into the serious space of news (Sana 1995). Thus, feminist criticism of news would be a criticism of the masculinity of the genre that leads to a total invisibility of women and issues that are important in “women’s culture”. What this kind of feminist criticism fails to notice – or at least does not take into further consideration – are the differences within the category of women, and thereafter the possibility that ‘femininity’ or ‘women’s culture’ has nothing to do with some of the women. The same applies for men and masculinity. When referring to masculine values, for example, what is it exactly that one is talking about? Economics and wars? What is masculine about them and how is this masculinity connected to experiences of “living men”? And why are these values called masculine anyway? The idea of two separate cultures, feminine and masculine, restricts the understanding of certain acts and practices and must be considered on a theoretical level.

To understand and interpret the variety of gendering performances, the conventional categories of feminine women and masculine men are not enough. Instead, the Foucauldian-Butlerian approach to sex and gender, *both* as socially constructed and *both* as effects of the same power and knowledge system, begins to seem reasonable (Butler 1993; Foucault 1978). Following the assumption that the ordering power that discursively produces sexes and genders is organized around the expectations of a heterosexual matrix (Butler 1990), the central question in this article is whether it could be possible to understand the representations of gender as more flexible and less related to the sex of the performers. In the case of television, for example, instead of accusing female newsreaders of acting in a “masculine” way (Sana 1995) would it not be fruitful to accept and take seriously both ways of performing (doing woman)? The same applies of course to the representations of men: could there also be various ways to perform for male newsreaders? These questions, when taken seriously, would make more complex the conceptualisation and interpretations of genres as gendered.

I would claim that classifying news as a masculine genre is more an old adage than something that should be used as the basis for understanding the genre. What if we accept that there are two newsreaders in the news studio who perform in a masculine way, both verbally and visually, and despite their sexes? What if the femininity in the news lies somewhere else than in the performances of the female newsreaders? I suggest that, when trying to understand how gender and sexuality are materialized in the news, instead of concentrating on women only, we turn our eyes towards the male newsreaders and the relationship between the newsreaders of different sexes as a means of representing “femininity” and “masculinity”, “public” and “intimate”, “hard” and “soft” at the same time, and by both of the newsreaders.

From Public Homosociality to Private Heterosexuality

The most obvious attempt to represent feminine and masculine and, private and public at the same time takes place in the studio of the *Ten O’Clock News* (*Kymmenen uutiset*), on the commercial channel MTV3. Every we see a very familiar couple of a female and a male newsreader sitting side by side (a few years ago they moved even closer to each other), convincing us that everything is as it should be. They could be a mother and a father, or a daughter and her husband. The setting and casting are thoroughly planned – the pair of newsreaders is selected to look and sound familiar to the viewers: they represent the “natural” categories of two different, complementary and mutually-exclusive sexes.

The strategy of choosing two hosts of different sexes can be traced to the performances on radio, since it was considered important that the audience could differentiate between the hosts, i.e. be able to recognize by the voice which of the hosts was talking. Applied to television, there should be no such need, since it is usually possible to make a difference between the hosts by the way they look. Therefore, there seems to be no reason why the hosts could not be representatives of the same sex as well as of different sexes.

I assume that on television the choice of two different sexes has very much to do with pointing out (implicitly) the importance of the difference between men and women. Of course, it might also be an implication of taking seriously the demand for equality between the sexes. In any case, there is also a very explicit pressure towards heterosexuality in the Finnish evening news, that is made evident both visually and verbally. Let me give an example. There is a custom of telling a joke, called “*loppukevennys*”, at the end of the evening news on MTV3. After reading all the serious news items in a very masculine way, the newsreaders suddenly start acting in a different way, reinforcing their until this moment “hidden” sexes. The jokes quite often refer to feminine or masculine ways of doing things, for example the natural masculine interest in sports or playing with cars, the natural feminine interest in soft values such as children or animals and the naturally heterosexual tension between the hosts.

What is of importance here is the sudden change from the public space of the news and the masculine performances of both the newsreaders to the intimate space of “public privacy”. There is certainly a need here for the imitation of heterosexual couple – I assume that today it would be nearly out of the question that there would be two male newsreaders in the studio, as there have been in some countries (not in Finland, though). Nor would it be convenient for the news to be read by a female couple (or a too “feminine” woman), for the news still requires masculinity (homosociality) – which is now achieved by the masculine couple of a biological woman and a biological man.

On other channels there is only one newsreader at a time in the studio, but the balance (and at the same time the difference) between the sexes is maintained as the reporter of the “opposite” sex appears to present the weather report or sport news. However, the choice of only one newsreader makes this type of news quite interesting, especially if we think of what Patricia Holland wrote about women as decoration of the news (Holland 1987, 445). Programmes where women might perform by themselves, i.e. hosting a show without a co-host, are extremely rare on television. How is a woman to gain the seriousness that is needed in the news? Certainly not by stressing her femininity, as Holland suggests for the visual style of female newsreaders (Holland 1987, 150). Quite to the contrary, both female and male newsreaders, when appearing by themselves, have adopted a masculine style of performing – they look straight into the eyes of the viewer, with no sign of a smile and no “soft, feminine” gestures. This style of performing differs from the news on *MTV3*, where the couple is allowed to play their game at the end of the programme. Therefore, this demand for “masculinity” seems to be connected to the setting of the news rather than to the sex of the performers.

From Talking Heads to Walking Bodies

There has been an interesting visual change going on in the last few years, from merely talking heads to the walking bodies of the newsreaders. The only exception is the most serious news on the public broadcasting channel *YLE1*, where the newsreader appears as a conventional talking head throughout the programme. On other channels, the newsreaders are seen walking, sometimes even running, through the studio before seating themselves (*MTV3*) or remain standing (*Nelonen*) behind their desks. After reading the news they are seen discussing and laughing with other people in the studio. These small changes bring the news closer to “reality” and lessen the authority and gender neutrality of the news – when the newsreaders are shown to have a body, it also affects the understanding of the news as being constructed by somebody, and therefore being a part of this material life instead of merely being a matter of the mind. The walking or running bodies of the newsreaders also highlight the busy atmosphere of the newsroom: we viewers are really getting the latest news that are brought in by the newsreaders.

The weather forecasts bring out the idea of walking bodies even further: they bring the viewers to a very obviously gendered sphere – to use conventional terms: the feminine sphere. There has been one major change in presenting the weather forecasts quite recently: the long tradition of professional meteorologists – both women and men – has now been broken by *Nelonen*, where the so called “weather girls” were introduced a couple of years ago. As implicit in the term, the weather girls on *Nelonen* are young, beautiful girls, and what they do is perform in front of a map with a broad smile. They seem to know very little about the weather. Their task is not to interpret the satellite pictures, they just seem to tell what anyone could see on the maps – whether it is raining or not, whether it is hot or cold⁹. By presenting the “weather girls” – and by naming them that way – this channel has made an obvious statement about the sex and gender of the attractive performers – they are and should be young women. As a curiosity, I find it almost impossible to understand how the title “weather girls” succeeded in breaking through at the end of the 1990s¹⁰.

Even on other channels, where the weather forecasters still are professional meteorologists, and thus serious, their performances differ from those of the newsreaders. For example, the weather forecasters perform their sex very visibly: the most popular of them on *MTV3* has long, blond hair and wears a variety of decorative dresses and blouses. She also smiles into the camera. The common feature of all men forecasting the weather seems to be that they are younger than the male newsreaders. This follows the gender system where women (in this case men appearing in the feminine sphere) are expected to be at least a little younger than the men (the newsreaders) they are performing with. The dressing code for the weather reporters is also interesting: it seems that they are advised to distinguish themselves from the newsreaders by looking more casual. Due to this, we have seen men with long hair and earrings, women wearing decorative bunny-pullovers – appearances that would be out of the question if the meteorologists were to perform as newsreaders behind a desk.

The most “gender-neutral” performances are to be found on the public service channel *YLE1*. This feature is in line with the performances of the newsreaders on the channel. The most famous meteorologist on *YLE1* is a ‘business-style’ blond woman, a professional who also has her own “weather service” on the Internet where she answers all kinds of questions concerning the weather.

Regardless of the channel or the professional education of the weather forecasters, they still tend to differ in many ways from the newsreaders, not only in their appearance but also in their performance: they stand or walk in front of a map of Europe and raise their hands to point out the sunny or rainy figures on the map. They smile or look sad, depending on the contents of the weather forecasts. In other words, they are allowed to have feelings, or even more than that, they act as if they had bodies and faces. All these markers make the weather forecast a little less serious than the rest of the news. At the same time, the weather forecasts could be interpreted as representing the

“feminine”, human interest, side of the news and, when so inseparably connected to the news, thus repetitively imitating the dichotomous and complementary gender system.

The idea of “forecasting” is also interesting in connection to the idea of the news giving the “hard facts”. The weather reports remind us that it is always possible for the forecast to go wrong. Sometimes the reporters even apologize for having “promised wrongly”. This could never happen in the news: even if something that has been said is proved to be incorrect, it is more a new topic for the news than a place for apology. While meteorology is also a highly professionalized science, the terms used in weather forecasts remind us of the difficulties of “knowing for sure”. This, however, is only revealed in the “soft” end of the news.

Gender Bending in the News?

“Changing how you walk and talk and dress and who you fuck, change your gender as well as surgery” (Halberstam & Livingston 1995, 17).

There are some implications in the news to prove that Patricia Holland is right in her statement: “The invitation to speak with the voice of authority may be nothing but an invitation, yet again, to be a decorative performer” (Holland 1987, 445). On Finnish news, the weather girls on *Nelonen* are the best example of the positioning of decorative performers. The weather reporters on other channels confirm to this notion, too, since they might be interpreted as practicing femininity or acting in a feminine way. The confusing “fact” is that half of the reporters on other channels are not women. The same kind of “gender bending” applies to the newsreaders, who in many ways can (and have been) be said to act in a masculine sphere. At least in Finland, the status of newsreaders – be they women or men – is still that of a professional journalist, not merely an acting decoration.

A central question I pose in this article, is how sex, gender and sexuality are interconnected and what kinds of intelligible variations can be discovered in the performances of the hosts? I also ask whether it might be possible to understand the representations of gender as more flexible and less related to the sex of the performers¹¹. In this sense, the various spaces and subject positions given to men or women (as sexes) hosting the programmes seem to be a mixture of different kinds of femininities and masculinities:

The news:

newsreader/man:	masculine/feminine
newsreader/woman:	masculine/feminine
their relationship:	homosocial and heterosexual

Weather forecasts:

reporter/man:	masculine/feminine
reporter/woman:	feminine/masculine
their relationship:	no relationship

I interpret the newsreaders of both sexes as acting mainly in a masculine way when presenting the news. Thus, it is possible to interpret the relationship between the newsreaders as homosocial – representing two cultural masculinities despite the “fact” that one of the newsreaders is biologically a woman and the other is biologically a man. In an interesting way, the heterosexual matrix is, if not totally broken, at least a bit confused: here two different sexes are performing two variations of one gender for the most of the programme. The masculinity allowed for newsreaders could be considered quite “gender neutral”, however. At least it is still far from the masculinity found, for example, in sports. Neither male nor female newsreaders would be allowed to look “too masculine” – or male-like: the body (sex) still has to be a secondary element when presenting the news.

When conceptualising sex as a social construction as well as gender, as Judith Butler suggests, I find the analysis of the demands for heterosexuality (the heterosexual matrix) the most fruitful way of approaching the realm of intelligible representations. The discourse of heterosexuality is as its most obvious at the end of the news on *MTV3*, when the two masculinities of the newsreaders suddenly split to express one femininity and one masculinity that are – occasionally – combined with heterosexual desire. Then the until then masculine woman suddenly acts in a feminine way. While at the same time, to add confusion, the man is drawn into a conventionally feminine sphere of confessing something about his “private masculinity” in contrast to the “public masculinity” of the actual news. I would claim that these light parts at the end of the news are used to bring the viewers back to the familiar “reality” of everyday practices (of being able to recognize femininity, masculinity and heterosexuality according to a heterosexual matrix) that it at the same time naturalizes. To some extent, this might happen on other channels too, when the newsreaders present the performers to follow – usually of the “opposite” sex – either reporting sportnews or weather conditions. Stressing heterosexuality is not as obvious, however.

As an essential part of the news the weather reporters can be interpreted as performing a combination of the traits considered feminine and masculine by being “hard professionals”, on the one hand and “bodily decorations” for the news on the other. Since this applies both to women and men, they seem to break the expected coherency of the sexes of the performers and their performances, in terms of femininity and masculinity.

In this article I also examine what would happen to the assumption of news as masculine if the traits of masculinity and femininity in the news could be deconstructed, i.e. understood in a different way. Quite generally, some major changes in the news, from the perspective of deconstructive gender studies, are quite obvious:

- 1) the private realm is sliding more and more into the public sphere when the newsreaders present a “public intimacy” between each other,
- 2) mind is complemented by body. This began when a woman’s body was allowed to appear on the news a couple of decades ago, and continues

with men and women walking into the studio on their own legs instead of sitting behind the desk as merely talking heads. On the whole, the weather forecasts complement the “hard” news with there “softer” setting.

- 3) facts are shown to be constructed, that is, a kind of fiction, especially in the self-reflection of the weather forecasts. Also, the facts of sex and gender as natural and coherent categories, at least for a critical viewer, are made seemingly fictive.

What I find very interesting is that instead of expressing only masculinity, the news appears to make use of performances of femininity, masculinity and heterosexuality. Although the blurring of feminine and masculine is far from the explicitness found in some other genres, for example on late-night talk shows, the news still participates actively in the production of available and representable genders. These changes might have further implications as well on the assumptions of immaterial “objectivity” and the “seriousness” of news.

Borderlines of Gender: “When Something is about Masculinity, It Isn’t Always about Men”

I hope that the examples I have given have sufficiently clarified the point I wanted to make: “When something is about masculinity, it isn’t always about men” (Sedgwick 1995, 12). The same of course applies to femininity. What I have been seeking through this article is the possibility of “repeating in a different way” in practice, as well as the possibility of separating sex and gender from each other when analyzing these practices. It seems possible to claim that in the news the heterosexual matrix is broken in many ways: the categories of sex and gender are not coherent, neither are the categories of gender and the “desire” for the “opposite” sex. It seems to me that new conceptualisations are needed to understand the variations of the representations of genders, and here the radical constructionist view seems to have something to offer.

A closer look at the evening news presents some limits in representing and understanding gender in a different way, though. The possibilities of representing something that has not yet been represented are limited (de Lauretis 1987; Butler 1990, 1993; Scheman 1998). The problems that rise are not only problems of representing something that is not (yet) intelligible, but there are also obvious difficulties in receiving and interpreting those representations.

Cultural expectations of femininity and masculinity, as well as cultural knowledge of generic conventions of television programmes, guide the interpretations of the gendered performances. Here I return to one of my previous questions: how are we to interpret gendered performances if we are fixed with ideas of only men being allowed to do masculinity and only women to do femininity? The variety of “possible” gendered representations may have grown, but the performances of gender are still in principal based on the dif-

ference between the two sexes, women and men. As said by a Finnish philosopher, Tuija Pulkkinen:

The main feminist project has been that women (in the meaning of sex) have assumed more men's gender positions, even if men (in the meaning of sex) also have been taking on some "feminine" gender designations. Despite all this traffic in gender, even in this time of daring gender bending in 1980's and 1990's popular culture the distinction between sex and gender has remained clear: in gender bending you play with your gender, but biological sex remains what it is (unless you, as a transsexual, go through a medical and legal operation. (Pulkkinen 1996, 178)

Whether the newsreaders and weather forecasters act in a feminine or masculine way and the question of how this is connected to their sexes might seem only theoretical: the rigid and unbridgeable difference between men and women can be said to be maintained as long as the sex (a biological either-or) of the performers is a matter of importance.

It is not that the programmes did not offer other than conventional subject positions of feminine woman, masculine man and heterosexual couple. Women do already read the news – a task that was considered impossible twenty years ago. The next step is to find a way to react to a man newsreader who is interpreted as doing femininity, that is, for example to perform as having a body to which the talking head is connected. The slight changes as well as the effects of men acting in a way that was previously called feminine and vice versa go unnoticed until they somehow become more understandable¹². What has remained quite unchanged is the culturally expected heterosexual desire as a norm of performing and organizing sexes and sexualities.

When moving in the not yet intelligible sphere of sexes, it is not easy to conceptualize or name the features that are under examination. "It is a movement between the (represented) discursive space of positions made available by hegemonic discourses and the space-off, the elsewhere, of those discourses..." (de Lauretis 1987, 26). Nevertheless, what I have been trying to do, is to broaden the dichotomic categories and perhaps open new ways of thinking about the performances of bodies. I have attempted to distract the sex of the performer from the gendered traits that are performed. If we accept the commonly used definition of private as feminine and body as feminine, I think we must begin to think of the performances of the male newsreaders as much more feminine than has been previously understood. By stating this, I want to point out that when talking about gendered traits of television programmes, for example, it is extremely important to explain what is meant by the terms feminine and masculine and their connection to the people practising femininity and masculinity.

One of my main questions still remains unanswered: why do we have to ask these questions about a person's sex anyway. I am sure the viewers would be quite uncertain if they could not recognize the "real" sex (a fiction in itself) of the newsreader – wars and economic crises would pass by unnoticed until the problem was solved¹³. We have learnt (without particular explanatives, per-

haps) that it is extremely important to be able to point to a “real” difference between biological women and men, even when it “only” concerns the performances of newsreaders.

Notes

1. The term “post-feminism” can be used in very different meanings. Patricia Holland uses it in the meaning of depolitization of the feminist movement, as a backlash or “ex-feminist” behaviour. (see Brooks 1997, 2-3) In this article, however, I use the term in connection with poststructuralism, postcolonialism and postmodernism (see Brooks 1997, 5).
2. The genders are categorized, for example, by the following traits: feminine-masculine, passive-active, secondary-primary, dependent-independent, heart-head, body-mind, object-subject, soft-firm, matter-form (Nelson (1985) quoted in Fiske 1987, 203). This approach has also been used in Finnish television studies (see for example Sana 1995).
3. Wendy Chapkis has paid attention to the failure of recognition (not-understandable representations): in her book about the politics of women’s appearances (1986) she points out the various difficulties of interpretation that, for example, the combination of women and moustache have caused.
4. The sex-gender distinction is used to explain the cultural differentiation (gendering) of sexes. About the limits of the sex-gender distinction, Judith Butler points out that “Taken to its logical limit, the sex-gender distinction suggests a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders”. Instead of separating sex from gender, she suggests that “...perhaps this construct called ‘sex’ is as culturally constructed as gender; indeed, perhaps it was already gender, with the consequence that the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all”. (Butler 1990, 6-7)
5. In her study of working class women, Beverley Skeggs (1997) pays attention to the importance of being recognized as respectable when performing femininity.
6. It started as a desire to make visible the neglected area of “women’s culture”, i.e. the previously unexamined culture, but it is also effective in keeping the sexes “in their places” (see Brown 1990; van Zoonen 1991).
7. I must leave out the analysis of the news content and concentrate on representations of the newsreaders in this article. The understanding of them, however, is closely connected to the general understanding of the concepts of feminine and masculine that I aim to deconstruct here.
8. This is also pointed out in the feminist criticism of the news, but, as I mentioned, the conclusions reached are quite different.
9. At least this is the impression, although the weather girls are known to write their lines with the assistance of professional meteorologists.
10. Although this could be interpreted as a phenomenon brought by the commercialization of television. Vibeke Pedersen (1993) has shown that the number of women has increased after the first commercial channels were introduced in Denmark. According to her, the increased number of women has also broadened the variety of possible performances (those of pin-up and masquerade performances, for example) for women. (Pedersen, 1993)

11. Even if this, according to Judith Butler (1990), is the major weakness of the sex-gender distinction. I hope, however, that this approach makes it easier to understand the cultural conditions that set limits to the construction of sex as well as gender.
12. These examples are somewhat simple and do not have radical implications on the existing sex-gender-system. I am still convinced that even a slightly different understanding of gender is important to allowing for a broader variety of gendering performances.
13. This kind of discussion has actually taken place in a case of Amazonia, a late-night talk show on Finnish television that was hosted by two women – and only one of them could be defined as a woman at first glance. The audience was occupied for weeks, trying to figure out the other person's sex.

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Tracing the National ‘Us’ from TV Talk

Sanna Valtonen

Do you middle-aged ministers really think young people – who by the way do all the ‘atypical’ work – believe all that?

The empirical material of this article is a talk show presented in 1998 by the public service channel *YLE2* and the on-line discussion (156 letters and 74 participants) that was sparked off by the show. *Channel 2* is by its own definition “a many-sided channel for family and targeted audiences, with an emphasis on fictional programs, domestic and imported. Current affairs programs and documentaries also have a central role in *Channel 2*’s profile”. The program being analyzed was a two-hour long special edition of a program called *Ajankohdainen kakkonen*.¹ Special editions are called “Theme evenings” and through them the program attempts to tackle current, problematic social issues that perplex most of the Finns. Discussions have been lively: all kinds of interests and viewpoints have been stated and the virtual on-line discussion accompanying each theme evening has been quite active, and frequently quoted and noted in the talk show itself. The on-line possibility is also open to people’s suggestions for theme topics, so there is a discussion going on even when the show is not on.

The Case

The two-hour debate I selected was conducted in autumn 1998 on unemployment, underemployment and short-term and other atypical forms of employment and, it included the participation of politicians, experts and the unemployed themselves². During the three years that theme evenings have existed, similar discussions have been conducted on e.g. racism, homosexuality, obesity and environmental activism. Work and working life has frequently been in the public eye – four out of twelve special edition discussions have been somehow connected with the concept of work: in addition to the one selected there has been an equal pay-evening, an unemployment-evening and a burnout-evening.

Talk shows are said to be one of the most influential forms of talk in contemporary broadcasting (Tolson 1991:178). It is a genre loosely based upon a

set of protocols of television interviews, but it simultaneously transgresses these protocols and produces an interesting mixture of forms of talk designed to be informative and entertaining. Tolson calls talk show speech “chat” – studio talk that recognizes rules and conventions of interviews but instead of following them, it flirts with them by bringing aspects from the “private” and “personal” alongside with “public” and “general” issues. (ibid., 180-183)

It is possible to outline some conditions under which programs that allow audience participation negotiate and re-construct common sense. The debates are usually held at a time of crisis or social concern about the topical issue: the representation of an issue must emerge not only in the laity talk, but also through the conversation of ordinary people. Secondly, there must be a mediating element between the interpretations of the laity and the issue – this means either “ordinary people” in the show and/or prototypical examples from everyday life (see also Livingstone & Lunt 1994: 30-31).

Different genres of journalism have been challenged by theories of public journalism. For example, Carey (1987) argues that journalism should be understood as a public form of conversation about common concerns. It has also been argued (van Zoonen 1999, Livingstone & Lunt 1994) that talk show is a genre with several possibilities for creating such a conversation. I am interested in *how* this conversation could be possible and how it could be organized by current journalistic and generic practices.

The Crises

Would it be okay if I pay my rent in atypical installments?

Finland lived through a severe economic crisis in the 90s. In three years the unemployment rate went from 3,5% up to 20% – a development which shocked the nation with unified values and a strong culture of Weberian Protestant ethics. Although the crisis was also about deflation, growing international debt, post-industrial changes in production processes and getting the national economy ready for the demands of the EU, from the people’s point of view the whole crisis was about unemployment. Suddenly it was not “them” that lived on welfare, it was “us” – everybody knew someone who lost his/her job during the recession, and since the risk of losing one’s job was immense, the consumption rate went down, which only made the national situation worse (Uusitalo & Lindholm 1997).

There are two competing interpretations of why the crisis ever happened. The first one blames it on the international market forces: when the regulation of monetary politics was dismantled, the national economy was blooming. Companies were easily able to get loans from abroad and private households were almost told to finance their consumption on borrowed money. When the monetary system and the real economy were driven apart, the companies and households went into debt and the national economy reached a state where it could be best described as “overheated”. In order to diminish the amount of

international debt companies had to cut down on their investments, and private households on their consumption. Banks started to be in trouble, and companies laid off people at an unparalleled rate – the massive unemployment problem was created, and the national debt had grown from 50 to 400 billion FIM in just a couple of years. (Heinonen 1993, 1996; Kasvio 1993; Vartiainen 1993) The second interpretation sees the crisis as innate – therefore this is the version the “winners and survivors” tend to appreciate. Its main argument is that Finland just could not afford the welfare state: developing it had led to mechanical equality, too high progressive taxation and constant inflation, and that the whole state bureaucracy had ended up oversized and ineffective.

At this moment, we are in the middle of a debate where the “right” interpretation is argued about. Different thoughts and ideas are exchanged at an intensive pace, which according to Heinonen (1997:215) can be seen as a sign of the rise of a new hegemonic project. It has been claimed that a “third republic” is about to be defined, and along with the process, cultural identities are both questioned and reconstructed. Thus, we Finns are looking for means of conveying history and the narratives of the past to a form that serves both the current situation and the future.

Amongst scholars interested in such issues, it has been questioned whether it is possible to study a national community, when the community does not exist at least in a physical sense. Benedict Anderson (1983:15) offered the concept of an imagined community – i.e. a political community, that is imagined as “both inherently limited and sovereign” – for an analysis that would tackle the tension between the individual and society, or the social community and democracy. And when turning to the concept of an imagined community, the media plays an important role. It emphasizes existing social and cultural norms and values and, on the other hand, introduces its own values to be reflected upon. It is then worthwhile to ask questions like what the media’s role is in constructing “us”? What means does a specific genre – a talk show in this case – have for this? How are the means utilized? Who are brought into the studio and what are they to say? And finally, how are the tales about us and them interpreted by their audience?

Identity as a Matter of Common Sense

The nation-state has become the locus of identification through its ability to provide a vehicle for political ideology and notions of citizenship. National identity is also reinforced by a global system of nation-states in which each state depends on recognition by other states for its status. Within “nation state” it is possible to encompass competing domestic interest groups, and formulate national politics “in the best interests of citizens”. The constraints of national and cultural identities have been widely discussed during the last couple of years. It has been asked, how the conceptions of what is national have changed and why. A global line of development, under which the roles of nation states and nationalities become more and more problematic, has been suggested alongside explanations that draw from internal and local develop-

ments. In the context of the economic crisis of the 90s, the discussion about transforming national and cultural identities seems relevant: it is interesting to know what contents Finnishness as a cultural identity is given.

In the modern world, cultural identities are phenomena that cannot be solely reduced to language, nationality, religion or ethnicity. Rather they could be described as sensations of belonging to something or being aware of something – in practical terms cultural identities are formed in how we locate ourselves in our social world. Morley (1992) argues that identity, like language, is constituted through categories of similarity and difference. Differentiating between us and them, also means suppressing differences within our group in comparison to those outside it. The “national” defines the culture’s unity by differentiating it from other cultures (e.g., Keränen 1998).

In order to grasp both the richness of detail and the structural elements of cultural identities, I will follow Preston’s (1996, 1997) line of argument and inspect them in terms of three categories: *locale*, *network* and *memory*. By *locale* I refer to the sphere of everyday life (both the locality and routine activities), and by *network* to the various ways people lodge themselves within dispersed groups within larger community. The idea of *memory*, in its turn, is used to refer to the ways of collective understandings: nation-states are identified with common patterns of communication, shared myths and practices, social and cultural institutions and (constructed but still very much real) collective memory.

National memory is represented in collective representations which contain actions, pictures, interpretations and emotions from the past, it serves to give meaning to political traditions, the social organization, cultural institutions and the national “way of life”. Through collective representations, national memory defines “normal and ordinary”, that is ways of knowing, being and living. (Moscovici 1981: 7-10, 181) The historical nature of collective representations makes them difficult to resist: they integrate strongly with our everyday life by guiding the way we give meanings to social practices as “ready existing patterns”.

Collective representations have a lot to do with what is often called “common sense”. Common sense could be defined as an interpretative framework of the social world, that derives from everyday practices, and is therefore contextual and flexible. In Gramsci’s thinking, tradition and/or popular interpretative frameworks are sources of “common sense”, but not quite the thing itself. Common sense is filled with new material (e.g. the historical phases of the nation and the people, with single happenings, with popularized scientific “truths” and philosophies) all the time; thus it is never fully logical (Gramsci 1979: 34). With this commonsense framework people are able to produce opinions and position themselves within the society: to practice common sense means to connect oneself with different kinds of (imagined) communities.

Gramsci connected common sense to questions of power and consent. He argued that common sense varies not only in time and culture but also within different layers of society – it is an essential part of the power mechanisms of

any society. It can hinder alterations in social practices even aggressively – extreme examples of this could be the racist movements developed all over Europe in the 90s. Gramsci did not mean, though, that a person's or group's common sense could be drawn strictly from his/their historical and social position. People's conceptions of the social world are always disjointed and episodic by nature: people belong simultaneously to multiple groups and their discourses. And secondly, hegemonic discourses cultivate common sense, they take it inside a particular discourse or form of thinking (see also Kunelius 1996: 207-211). In this sense, common sense is a matter of power – it can be harnessed into a discourse.

Media content and common sense are intimately intertwined. Media rely on common sense, but at the same time media content is a paradigmatic example of a machinery that reproduces common sense. Media symbolize our belief in the possibility of seeing things from a common perspective (Kunelius 1996:204-205). The argument of the media being one of the makers of common sense and cultural identity gains importance in the present situation. Media are linked to the functioning and legitimacy of the political system and there is a wide ongoing discussion on the role of the media in modern western democracies (e.g. Rosen 1996; Fallows 1997). As politics have become more and more medialized, public life presented by the media is an increasingly important field of democracy as it creates an arena for discussion and debate. In addition, media texts make good research material to study common sense on a large scale, for common sense is articulated and actualized in communicative situations and the media (here national television) addresses (in theory, at least) to all Finns.

Kunelius has been inspecting news texts to find out "the moment when the discourse of journalism and the common sense of the audiences are articulated together" (1996: 212). In this article, I will go a step further and look at the contradictions and negotiations that the media discourse about a controversial and emotionally charged issue initiated in its audience. To better substantiate my claim of the close connection between media texts, common sense and cultural identity, I will briefly consider what it is to be "Finnish" before beginning my analysis.

Constraints of Finnish Identity

– Uniform, Rural, Peripheral and Work-Centered Culture at Stake?

People in atypical employment are the tenant farmers of today! Work services are given whenever the master wants, and the tenant is never asked anything.

There have been a considerable number of studies on the "essence of Finnishness", and the similarity of different people's conceptions of what is Finnish has been stated. This does not mean that the personal relations to Finnishness would not vary, but that there is a strong mutual understanding between different groups of people and their cultural codes: "good life" in Finland has been defined as uniform life. This is seen for example in recent "let-

ters to the editors” in the print media: ways of life of ethnic minorities and even more the moral obligation of appreciating them have been questioned and criticized. Individualism has never been that popular in Finland. The powerful bond between state, citizenship and uniform cultural codes can be seen as a risk, for “a mature and functional democracy should be built on spontaneous and autonomic citizen’s society” (Wuori 1993: 32).

Finnish civil society was strongly bound to the state from the beginning – the social structure was built in such a way, that there were almost no other relations of domination than the state bureaucracy. Therefore it was easy to put official quarters and municipalities to work for uniform national ideology – for example the public school system was one of the most powerful media through which the people were taught about their own character. A Finnish historian Pauli Kettunen, argues that the strong uniform culture draws from the fact that in Finland, citizen’s needs and problems have been defined as being part of state politics (1987:242). This has furthered both the development and continuation of the state-centered political life when the welfare state was under construction.

The idea of uniform cultural codes is at stake from the perspectives of new international and global circumstances that bring new contents to the ideals of a good life. Cultural identities are in a process of individualization and the traditional codes organizing living and interaction are now facing competition from the new demands of new technology, consumerism, globalization and medialization. The postindustrial society offers grounds for both the continuity of traditional cultural values and production of new identities: in order to survive in the globalizing world we must be able to construct both national and transnational identities, based not only on national values but also on the similarities of experiences, tastes, ideas and professions. Even though in postmodern “imagined communities” the emotional binds are not as strong as in the modernist project constructing the nation state, I assume, that national characteristics of identity formation and cultural codes will survive – they might even become more meaningful in turbulent and risk-filled circumstances.

The second essential element, that could be described as rural or agrarian Finnishness, is drawn from the fennoman idea of being almost “sacred land”. The rustic way of life and the idea of an economically independent, self-reliant and stubborn tenant farmer have been the key elements in defining ideal Finnishness. Urbanization could not really break the ideal: even Finnish towns are small and countryside-like, and the population from the few “cities” travels to the country for weekends and even for the shortest holidays. The peripheral element is seen in two ways: firstly, we have grown to think of Finland as being the distant borderline between East and the West. Secondly, Finland is inhabited in a way that emphasizes the center-periphery relations. Matti Wuori (1993:15) describes Finland as “a sparsely populated province with one little town and a couple of smaller villages”. Heinonen (1997:48) in turn, says that both the processes of urbanization and industrialization were conducted with

no master plan: the little towns and factories were placed here and there, which allowed the people to maintain their close relationship with nature despite these processes. The problem of peripheral identity is its constant competition to gain appreciation in the eyes of the center: the final evaluation always comes from outside (Kivikuru 1996:13). Within both the state and the international community peripheral identities appear contradictory and stiff and slow in their reactions, for they are loaded with distanced otherness.

The third essential element in the collective representation of Finnishness which I would like to inspect more closely for several reasons is the strong focus on work. Lack of jobs was one of the most painful problems in Finnish society in the 90s: How can a society built on strong work ethics not be able to provide work for its members? Doing theme interviews for another study I found that people tend to organize their everyday experiences from a frame that emphasizes working life – did they themselves have work or not. My interviewees also saw the good qualities of Finland and Finnishness somehow connected to work. For example, they brought up the high standard and diligence of Finnish workers. This has been found in other studies as well: Kortteinen (1993:30), argues that working life has traditionally been the area, where Finns measure their value in the eyes of others. By participating in the labor market it has been possible to live up to the ideals of self-reliance and control over one's own life.

Jari Heinonen connects the core elements of what is considered "Finnish", and writes that people fostered in a work-centered and uniform peasant society easily adapted the discipline demanded in an industrial paid-work environment. He goes far enough to claim that agricultural and Protestant workaholism are different sides of the same coin, and that together they form a sort of cult of hard work, in the framework of which people produce their survival strategies (1997:52). In addition to this, work has been associated with citizenship and civil society: the ones working construct the "us" of civil society, and those who are not – or "them" – are positioned outside of it.

From the three basic parameters of Finnishness I have introduced the third one: work centered mentality/ethics, seems to be the most relevant when looking at the current societal situation. It has been suggested that during the recession the concept of work became the most important criteria for evaluating people's ways of participating (Kettunen 1997; Andersson *et al.* 1993; Kangasniemi 1997). Working connects people with social and communal structures whereas the lack of work attains one with discourses of otherness. Then, when trying to analyze the cultural identities constructed within a national crisis and the international process of globalization, changes in (discourses of) work cannot be unnoticed. In this article I aim at presenting the representations of working life seen through the talk show and the on-line-discussion in a frame that points out how cultural definitions of belonging and otherness, or "us" and "them" are being constructed.

Identities as a Matter of Language Use

If identities are constructed, they also can be deconstructed: the boundaries between us and them are not fixed, but change over time. Identities are carried in language and made and remade in social practices. They are complex, fluid, subtle and ever contested. They do not reside in given symbols, but in the ways people organize their experience in their social practices and give meanings and values to matters. Thus, it is especially interesting to look at discourses defining identity issues when the conditions to which a set of cultural identities have been attached (and thus becoming cultural symbols) change. An analysis of language use is necessary to be able to reproduce the concept of cultural identity and its impact on defining one's place within a society. Focusing on media texts and language use does not mean identities would only be a matter of language – there is always a danger when focusing upon one aspect of a social process that the rest of the process becomes reduced to that aspect alone – but as ever-shifting and constantly reproduced phenomena, cultural identities do become “concrete” or visual (and therefore possible to analyze) in used language. I am interested in the language use in the media from the point of view of citizen's possibility to find relevant material for his/her identity work. For this purpose, studying the on-line discussion gives unique possibilities to spot patterns of language use in media discourse that raise the willingness to disagree, negotiate or comment and therefore are not “of common sense” to the audience.

The Analysis

Making sense of media texts necessarily involves linking episodes to existing interpretative frameworks. Individual texts are tied to broader issues in complex ways. The relationship between the talk show genre and its subject – in this case the phenomenon of un(der)employment is central to the analysis. In the making sense of the social world, both the media and the public employ simplifying frames as hooks to capture pieces of the abundant flow of information – this is how we get to the concept of discourse.

An application of discourse analysis is utilized as the methodological framework of this study. Discourse analysis can be viewed as an attempt to trace the systematic relations between texts, discursive practices and wider socio-cultural practices. It focuses on language use, and believes that, in doing so, it is possible to create analytical, theoretical and practical connections between text and context. Discourse analysis as a paradigm is not the clearest or most established one at least in its definitions of concepts. Most of the key concepts have been defined differently in different studies – even the word discourse has been used both in the meaning of “all language use” and in the meaning of “a specific pattern of language use or representation” (Fairclough 1989, 1992, 1995). Therefore the whole approach could be defined more as a loose theoretical and methodological framework than an established method-

ology. The approach allows a great deal of variation in terms of research material, concept definition and research setting. In this text, I will settle for defining media discourse, pointing out its function as an "arena" by emphasizing variation in constructing one specific theme, and connecting media discourse with the concept of common sense.

Media Discourse

By discourse I refer to a particular language use and its relation to the institution it came from or was (re)produced within (e.g. Foucault 1972). Discourse is social, historical and practical, and even though it cannot be reduced to text, it is accessible through text. It does not refer to individuals but to the way institutions control the way individuals use signs and symbols: the institution articulates and negotiates the perspective from which signifying processes are put into practice. In this sense the media are institutions that produces their own discourse.

Even if media discourse is a discourse in its own right, it could also be described as a discursive site where other discourses meet and challenge each other in defining various aspects of social reality (see also Kunelius 1996: 87-91, 126). Media discourse opens a short cut to cultural phenomena, at least in the sense that there is an unquestionable likelihood or correspondence between "culture" and journalism's ways of constructing and representing it (Heikkilä 1998: 91). When not looking at one single text or genre, it could be said that media discourse itself is the central practice in which modern societies make sense of themselves. For example, Ekecrantz and Olsson's historical analysis shows that the values and symbols which the media elicits are in fact values of outside institutions and actors (Ekecrantz & Olsson 1994).

Media discourse functions largely on the material provided by other institutions of the society – for example on discourses of politics or economy, and, of course, the discourse of everyday life. Media – and in this case the talk show literally – bring the discursive action of different interest groups onto the stage. Therefore, the media should not see themselves as merely reflecting the culture they originate from but should actively evaluate both the culture and their own role in constructing it.

In interpreting the un(der)employment problem the media tend to rely on framing the issue in three institutional ways. All three frames give different contents to locale, network and memory by linking the issue with different events, protagonists, localities, "us" and "them", and other issues on the agenda. The three frames or discourses defining working life were named roughly according to the institutions they draw from: economic discourse, political discourse and commonsense discourse.

Since I have chosen to define cultural identity as a complex set of relationships between three dimensions (locale, network and memory), I will also try to show how the discourses crisscrossing the talk show use the dimensions to attach meanings.

The *discourse of economy* reflects the preoccupation with profit and loss, and wider values of the culture of capitalism. The discourse functions on conditions set by the capitalistic market economy, and arguments from within the economic frame tend to be technical in their language. The frame fits well with the media's propensity to cover news issues from the standpoint of the official sources and arguments within the discourse were rather technical in their language. When the framework was utilized by the experts and politicians on the talk show, it was both abstract and ritualistic. When the "ordinary people" in the show argued from the economic frame, they tended to "give it a human a face" by naming people or specific situations from ordinary everyday life. While the experts applied the frame to emphasize abstract and technical aspects of economy, the ordinary people (on the show and the on-line) tended to draw moral lessons about greedy human behaviour out of it.

The *political discourse* was brought onto the scene in the form of professional politicians: i.e., members of parliament and ministers. By political discourse I refer to talk that emphasizes for example, conflict between facts, interpretations and policies etc. This is where politics and media intertwine: political discourse as well as mainstream journalistic tradition emphasize telling "both or all sides" of the story, even though the same strategy is pursued for different purposes. In the data, the discourse was found to be utilized not only by politicians but also by the experts and the "ordinary people". In the case of the latter, it was mainly to refer to the conflict between the 'common interest' and the interest of "people like me" or "situations like mine".

The difference between the argument within the discourse of economy and political discourse was that, while "economy talk" explained and stated, the political talk focused on values, norms and morals (behind right or desirable policies) and on constructing an imaginary "us". There was much "facts" and "developments" arguing in the economy talk, but people as actors or agents were either nonexistent or functioning at the mercy of economic laws or market forces. There was also a difference in the strategies of making an argument seem "factual". Within the discourse of economy, reasoning was often based on an irrevocable course of events or on circumstances that would only allow one rational option for action. When arguing from within the political framework, the factual reasoning was more often drawn from history: circumstances were not seen as equally dominant, and historical comparisons were made in order to show how the "impossible" can turn out to be possible, and even rational in the long run.

Lastly, the variety of different grass root frameworks was addressed: the "ordinary people" and their discourses were represented by guests with different kinds of experiences of unemployment, and atypical work relationships etc. Naming this discourse, that draws not from a legitimate institution but from a wide range of everyday practices and experiences, is problematic, at least when theorizing discourse in the Foucaultian manner. Crigler *et al.* (1992) suggest the concept "humanistic frame" to categorize expressions and logics that draw from everyday experience. This frame brings out the concerns of ef-

fects on “ordinary people”, “us” or “them”. Since the logics of everyday practice cannot be reduced to effects and concerns alone, I argue that the concept of common sense seems suitable (but also too wide and not analytical enough) for representing the voice of the ordinary people.

The *commonsense discourse* (like media discourse) is a meta level discourse in that it “translates” other discourses and puts them in perspective from the point of view of everyday experience. The commonsense discourse sought its rationale from a logic different from the other two forms of knowledge. It expresses feelings of responsibility, caring, worry and compassion for others. It brings out the concerns of effects on “ordinary people”, “us” or “them”. On the other hand, it also has its own logic and hierarchies, its own ways of knowing and organizing the lifeworld. In the data, it was often both connected with and contradicted by the discussion within the economic frame; and within it, us and them were connected with more traditional and practical issues: i.e. experiences in the labour market.

If discourses have so much to do with institutions, one might ask, why is it then relevant to study their variation? The answer, to my knowledge, lies in the nature of media discourse itself. As already noted, media discourse brings discourses from other institutions together and makes common sense interpretations based on them. In doing so, it must set the discourses it quotes in a set (hierarchical) order – it must prefer some discourses over others. Looking at the way different institutional discourses vary within a media text, it is possible to reconstruct some of the power relations of the society. When it comes to questions of power and elite, media tends to have a double role. They are parts of the inside power elite and on the other hand they are part of the mass they “represent” (Kunelius 1996: 87, also Mancini 1993). This double role creates dual alliances – journalists are on the side of the people they represent, and this usually happens explicitly, but at the same time, they are allied to their sources and their interpretations.

Media discourse and common sense are strongly related to each other. When investigating communication between institutions and people, there is always a moment when the institution wishes to place a part of the social world in the explanatory framework of its own discourse. In order to make people take notice, the discourse will have to pay attention to the processes of common sense logic and the practices in everyday life (Kunelius 1996: 208). This is done in the media, within the media discourse.

Kunelius suggests that today's media is a complicated intersection of at least three things: (1) the more or less systematized discourses of various institutions performing in the news (in this case, economy and politics), (2) the voices of the medium in question, or the media in general, and (3) the common sense of the readers (Kunelius 1996: 209). The study of the on-line discussion was fascinating in one aspect. Even though the talk show as a genre has invited “ordinary people” to be more or less active participants in its discussions, the on-line is something new. Throughout the talk show, the hosts, experts and the studio audience all have the home audience in their minds (see

also Livingstone & Lunt 1994: 55). An on-line discussion that is monitored by the hosts of the show brings in a new element. By studying it, it is possible to look at how the “common sense” that the institutional discourses represented on the show is negotiated from the point of view of the ‘imagined community’.

The on-line discussion consists of 156 comments, most of them commenting on simple arguments or outlooks presented in the talk show. Some topics discussed in the talk show woke up the viewers awake. On-line discussions started from an argument presented by one of the studio discussants and continued more or less vividly within a group of people following both the on-line and the show. There were three “real” discussions carried out on-line: one concerning a comment one studio discussant made about wage costs in enterprises (11 on-line comments in a row, 8 other comments on the subject), the second concerning trade union policies (9 comments in a row, 4 comments in row a bit later) and the third about experiences of atypical work (3 rows of 4 comments, 7 other comments on the subject). There were also two shorter on-line discussions – one about the quality of the program (5 comments in a row) and another about dole scroungers (4 comments).

People commented not only the studio discussants but also on their fellow viewers. It is said that television and especially the talk show have a role to play in constructing a space rather than providing one (Livingstone & Lunt 1994:32). It seems that the possibility of an on-line discussion also works to provide a space, and the active response shows that there are people willing to participate in such a space.

Beyond providing people with a “place to meet” and permitting the expression of diverse voices, media debates also provide a source of social representations, myths and beliefs – the contemporary version of common sense (Moscovici 1981:18). Television and especially its discussions, play a part here, for they popularize expert knowledge for mass consumption.

Some features were typical of all the thematic discussions on-line. Firstly, the arguments that the economic discourse and humanistic discourse produced were set opposing each other, more often in favour of the latter: people participating in the discussion actively filter, sort and reorganize information about public issues in personally meaningful ways. Even comments sympathizing with values placed high within the economic discourse were presented in a form, that gave priority to the humanistic setting: personal contributions, real life and “decent” morals of ordinary people. These comments (with a couple of aggressive, provocative exceptions) also wanted to oppose the economical elite’s discourses at least on the level of everyday experience or common sense, even if the ontology of their discourse was alike. This brings us back to the fact that common sense and its norms and morals are culturally and economically derived.

Secondly, there was a strong emphasis on separating “us” and “them” on the grounds of everyday experience. It seemed to be “clear” to most of the on-line discussants, that the people in the studio (even the ones representing “ordinary people”) did not know what “real life” was all about. The mediating el-

ement was either lacking or not considered as strong enough. It also seems that on-line-discussants were a bit confused with the diversity of speech genres within the one show: the same people that commented on the show misrepresenting "real life" longed for a more controlled and rationally oriented discussion, richer in expert discourses. Media criticism was in its most concrete form when focused on the false representation of everyday life in the form of e.g. questioning the choice of discussants and the choice of questions posed to the discussants:

I can already tell, that this program leads nowhere. Almost all the discussants are bright red. Socialism is dead!. Shame on you Channel 2!

Back to Concepts of Locale, Network and Memory

Young people will end up paying for the retirement allowances of the huge generation ruling the country at the moment. Unless of course the systems falls apart before that, which does not seem that far fetched anyway.

In every period of time, certain discursive entities that are very meaningful to everyday life exist, and as such these discursive entities have community-binding forces. The media exchange material with our social worlds on various levels and enable identity work on personal, local, national or even global levels. Thus the sphere of media comprises meanings that resonate in all three aspects of identities.

My argument is, that we can only understand identity if we grasp its specificity, complexity and contingency. To be able to do this, I have chosen to refer to concepts of locale, network and memory. These three concepts are differently constructed in different discourses, and because of the media discourse's common sense element, the construction is worth studying. To be of common sense, all three aspects have to be touched somehow, at least in the long run.

Media discourse constructs different aspects by bringing divergent actors on stage. Since the locale by definition (Preston 1996, 1997) refers to everyday life and its familiar elements, or as Preston (1997:44) puts it, to the "depth of experience", it is not easy for all genres of media discourse to reconstruct it plausibly. Therefore the media tend to do it either by using cliché-like common beliefs (e.g. Ojajarvi in this book) or by re-presenting ordinary life as such. In this talk show both means were utilized, but still the on-line discussion was often motivated by the studio discussants' "wrong" conceptions of everyday life³. The talk show (and to my understanding, news and current affairs genres of national level media in general) does not succeed in portraying the elements of locale as well (thinking of common sense, again) as in portraying the elements of network and memory.

The element of network, in its turn, refers to the spread of everyday experience – to the domestic sphere, the sphere of working life, an array of other

formal institutional spheres and the media which is at the same time present in and distant from everyday life. The spread of relationships that have to do with questions of cultural identity is wide and complex, and the media has a double role in it. On one hand, it is part of the network realm as such, and on the other hand it represents (other) elements of it in its discourse. The latter is dealt with by "mapping" it out for us so that we can participate in imagined communities within the media realm. When thinking of media content, it is possible to see its identity potential as to the concept of network. For example the consumer-oriented material in the media ties identities with given politico-economical structures of a society and the news and current affairs programs tie identities to cultural (and political) structures and understandings (see also Preston 1997:45-46) by creating common realities and topics of conversation.

It is clear that the sets of relationships that identities are constructed within are not only lodged in time but also have extensions over time: they persist and decay. This is where the concepts of identity and memory become interwoven. We can remember in different ways: private memory is idiosyncratic and makes material for biographies, whereas history is constructed from sets of ideas that are affirmed within groups of people and finally acknowledged by a collectivity. And it is not that uncommon to sense tension between 'private' memory or community tradition and the more generalized demands of mass culture. By memory I do not only refer to the past and things already known, but also to ways of knowing that are naturalized (Foucault 1972:15, 215-216). Knowledge, like discourse, is historical: what is worth knowing, the subjects and methods of knowledge and how truth or knowledge is represented vary in time. Memory then, means the ways history, knowledge and truth are organized within a discourse.

Media discourse, in turn, seeks to organize different institutional discourses from the framework of "common sense". In media discourse, the "memory"-aspects of discourses constructing a specific theme are put together in a way that is meant to make sense to the audience: media discourse connects the levels of locale and/or network to the more epistemological and profound level of memory, to produce common sense interpretations of a specific theme. The means for doing this vary in different genres of media discourse: in journalism, different institutional discourses must be organized in a textual level, but in a talk show, it is possible to let representatives of different institutions do the organization alongside the edited material and the host's comments, interruptions and turn-taking control. Thus a talk show constructs a certain kind of world through the choice of the events, people, and explanations that appear. Although different members of the audience may interpret its discourses differently, the show supports certain interpretations by building its discourse on a shared understanding of a certain reality.

To become a part of an imagined/mediated community, one needs to share the community's collective representations and memories. Collective ways of producing meanings are born in social practices, and in today's mediated society, it is the media discourse, that turns other institutional discourses

into texts provided with more or less common sense understandings. Concepts of common sense and identity overlap in many respects, but it is still of importance to separate them. They both refer to the sphere of everyday experience and reasoning, and they are both historical, spatial and political by definition. Nevertheless, the concept of identity grasps a more individual, private level or in Preston's words, the depth and spread of experience. Thus, my presumption is that identity is more useful when studying audiences, and common sense when studying texts. I would argue that, *because* of the overlap discourse analysis could utilize the concept of identity and especially its aspects locale, network and memory analytically to refer to the different means available to media discourse in reproducing common sense.

This is why I insist on exploiting both of the concepts. I look at media as an ideological apparatus, (re)producing social relations and power structures *within media discourse* (e.g. Hall 1992:176-179). Therefore power means doing things, creating space for certain forms of understandings or actions and omitting others. And in the on-line discussion, viewers' comments referred either to the media's conceptions of everyday life (locale aspect) or to truth conceptions, morals and values concerning un(der)employment (memory aspect), that is to elements where they saw themselves or the truths and values they represent as being wrongfully treated. From the point of view of the viewers, the common sense produced by the various discourses within the talk show included wrong kinds of 'us' and 'them'. In other words, the further consequence of audience participation, then, is the construction and maintenance of cultural identities and power relations.

It is just so hypocritical to hear all this talk about how "nowadays the meaning of work itself to people seems to have diminished, and other areas of interest and fulfillment have arisen". I'd only like to be able to pay my rent!

Notes

1. *Ajankohainen kakkonen* is a 45-minute current affairs program, broadcast on prime time once a week. One show covers four to five stories and the subjects vary from politics to popular culture. It has been on the air since 1969 and it attracts approximately 700 000 viewers per show, which makes it one of the most popular current affairs programs in Finland.
2. Participants of the discussion were the Minister of Labour, the Chairman of Finnish Trade Unions, a Member of Parliament, the Director of a company that hires short-term employees, the Chairman of the Employer's Association for Service Industries, a moral philosopher, a sociologist, a nurse, an actress, two industrial workers (all on short-term, atypical employment or unemployed), an entrepreneur, the manager of the Elcoteq network, and a shop steward of a factory.
3. Other genres in the media, for example light entertainment like soap operas can succeed much better in tying identities to common sense conceptions of everyday life (Preston 1997, 47, also Livingstone & Lunt 1994).

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This book discusses the fashionable concept of identity in present-day hybridized mediascapes characterized by 'cultural mixes'. The ten articles present a variety of perspectives, some quite unorthodox. The main focus is on identity as it is discussed and debated by researchers in the Nordic countries, but some contributions lead us to Latin America and Africa, as well. To a certain degree, all the contributors advocate the return of place – or, rather, glocal elements in culture – in identity as it is reflected in the media.

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ISSN 1650-5131
ISBN 91-89471-08-3

NORDICOM is an Institution within the Nordic Council of Ministers