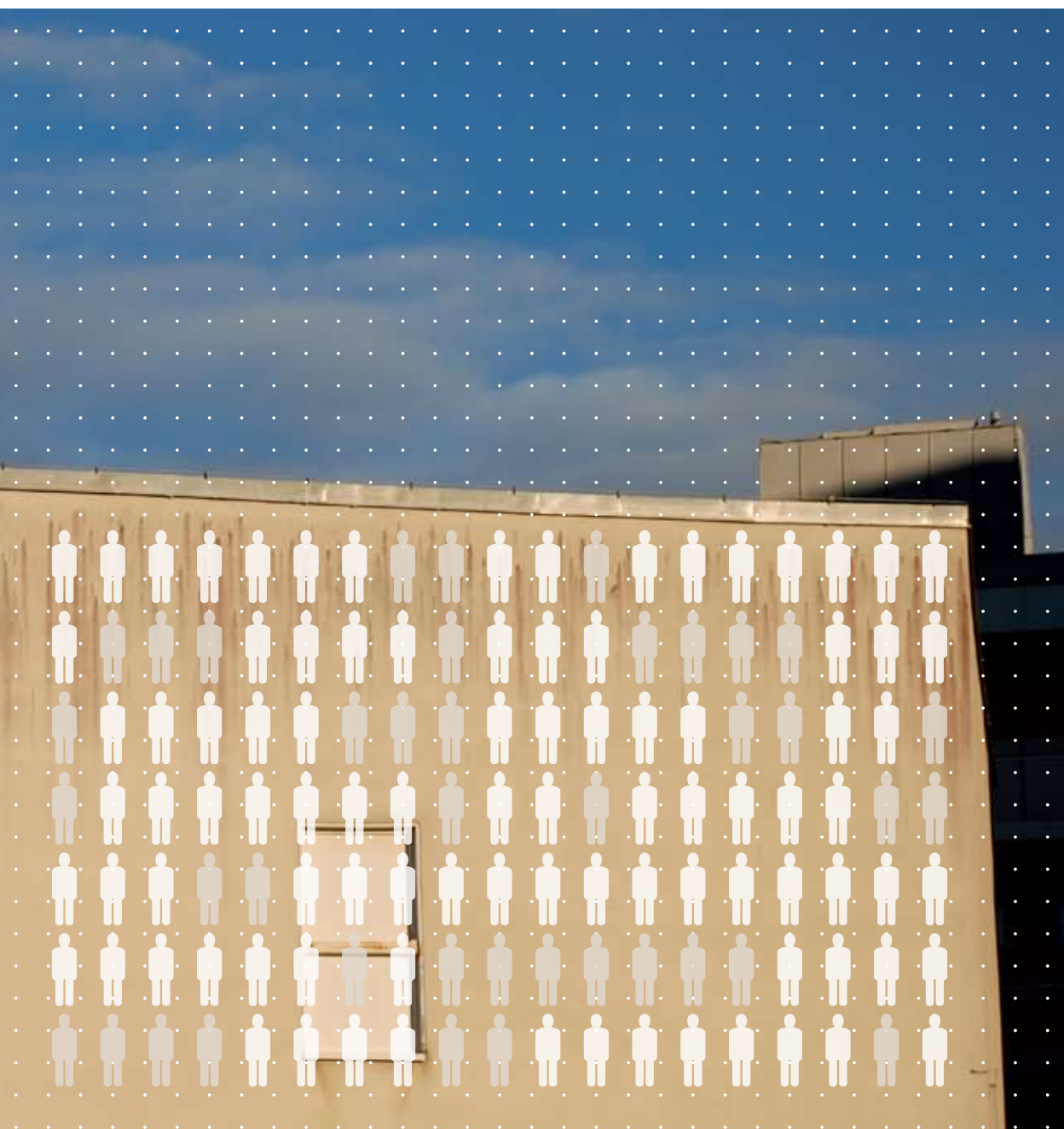


MANUFACTURING EUROPE

spaces of democracy, diversity and communication

Edited by Inka Salovaara-Moring

NORDICOM



Manufacturing Europe

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Spaces of Democracy, Diversity and Communication

Inka Salovaara-Moring (ed.)

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The goal of the research project “The European Public Sphere(s): Uniting or Dividing?” as well as the goal of the seminar, was to explore whether there is a common European public sphere, and if so, what are the empirical forms of its existence. The dimensions of the European public sphere and its relationship to democracy were evaluated through a comparative historical-sociological dimension emphasising national, regional, and global challenges, changing media systems, and the role of European cultural and ethnic minorities. Thus, the challenge of the book has been to reflect on “Europeanisation”, i.e. the process by which regions, cultures, public(s), and ways of communicating mesh, and to consider what kinds of social imaginaries, ideologies, and democratic challenges are involved in this process. This book has sought to address these dimensions whilst keeping in mind that relationships among democracy, cultural and ethnic diversity, and political communication in the European Union are never stable and mostly contested in everyday practices of people, organisations, and media.

No book appears without an army of supporters and a mountain of intellectual debts, and this book is no exception. We want to thank the Academy of Finland, the Department of Communication at the University of Helsinki, and especially the head of the Department Professor Esa Väliverronen, for providing both financial and organisational support for the project. We are particularly grateful to Professor Glenda Dawn Goss – our indispensable language editor

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Bertrand Russell once said, “There are two motives for reading a book: one, that you enjoy it; the other, that you can boast about it.” We hope that both motives apply to this book. However, if one has to be chosen, we hope above all that our volume proves enjoyable.

Helsinki, February 2009

Inka Salovaara-Moring

Manufacturing Europe, Restoring Communication?

Inka Salovaara-Moring

During autumn 2008, the European Union faced a full-blown global financial crisis that brought the challenges of European integration into sharp focus. The leaders of the member states held emergency meetings to prevent a meltdown of the financial system. National banking systems were in turmoil, and governments were forced to bail out domestic financial institutions. The conflict in Georgia sensitised European foreign politics and created frictions across the continent. The Lisbon Treaty had been postponed indefinitely, and this decision was seen as a major failure in terms of the EU's development into a more unified political actor. Against this backdrop, a generalised cynicism about governments was on the rise. Not surprisingly, the newly adopted symbols of the EU, the anthem and the flag, served more as decoration and potential sources of irritation than unifying symbols of an integrated Europe.

Europeans sensed what both the European Commission and national executives seemed unable to understand. The important transfers of power from member states to Brussels over the previous two decades risked discrediting both sides: national parliaments had compromised their legitimacy, whilst the European Parliament had failed to acquire any legitimacy for itself. Thus, when the fragile nature of the global financial system was unveiled, the need for unified economic and political communication and for action between the European governments became sudden and vital. The European communicative space became a highly political project, at least at the inter-governmental level.

Europe as political agent has undoubtedly experienced a rather difficult journey into the core of international relations and still struggles with its internal diversity of 27 member states. This diversity has many dimensions: ethnic, cultural, and social, just to mention a few. When the diversity is mixed with the different economic interests, sizes, and geopolitical locations of member states, the democratic project of the EU turns into a highly complex task.

Moreover, the inherent values of capitalism and democracy are not easily reconciled. Hence, the damage to capitalism's reputation caused by the financial crisis also strained the prestige of democracy. The cherished products of European philosophical sophistication, such as "democratic capitalism" and

“liberal democracy”, can be comfortably bundled together in a time of prosperity. However, during a financial crisis Europeans are forced to choose which they prefer: inevitably in the battle between prosperity and democracy, in most cases in Europe, prosperity wins.

Undoubtedly, the European public sphere as a common reference point has many dimensions that are important to European social cohesion. Firstly, in its ideal form, it could enable participation in collective choice – whether about specific policy issues or basic institutions. Secondly, public communication allows for the integration of social imaginaries that bring people from different cultural spheres together as fellow members of a shared community of “faith”. Thirdly, the public sphere is itself a medium of broader social integration and social solidarity – especially when it transcends national borders. These dimensions, however, are to a certain extent compromised by the reality of European institutions and communicative practices.

Democratic practice (as well as theory), in the European context has appeared impotent when faced with questions about its own scope. Binary oppositions between the domestic and the international, and the public and the private, have been central to controversies concerning the proper limits to the democratic project. The efficacy and legitimacy of public opinion in the supra-national constellation have been repeatedly questioned by a large part of the citizenry of EU member states. The EU itself has not escaped its fundamental predicament: that of being a project that first and foremost engages a narrow layer of political elites, who in turn criticise democratic and media practices because of their territorial fixation on individual nation states. Thus, the problem for member states is not only that national political or media practices have not changed; it is also that national conceptions of democracy have remained fixed.

These controversies lie, to a great extent, in the formation of the political space of the EU itself: the territorial scope and cultural diversity that provide the context for public deliberation. In a supra-national polity like the EU, the space for political communication is detached from its natural territory of *demos*. The inter-governmental nature of decision-making detaches power and transfers it to a national political elite. Ministers speak in the Council in the name of national interest rather than for the governmental majority of the day. Members of the European Parliament speak for the public interest rather than for electoral majorities. Citizens have more influence in Brussels when lobbying as special interest groups than when voting or protesting in their national capitals. These changes have profoundly affected the nature of democracy across member states.

This dislocation between new practices and old ideas helps to explain why questions are raised about the EU’s legitimacy, not to mention confusion over who is responsible for EU-related policies. By failing to address the dislocation, national leaders risk being held accountable for actions for which they are no longer fully responsible, over which they may have little control, and to which they may not be politically committed. When it comes to market forces, the scope of financial politics increases from continental to global, and

both transparency and European policy-making are run over by other, more powerful economic actors – like the US and Asian economies. Hence, due to the structural formation, most of EU politics is more or less void of representation, detached from people whose lives the decisions will affect, and separate from national politics.

The transnational democracy project of the EU is further complicated by the historical and ethnic diversities of member states. European states have a long history of a culture of self-government that is now a central component of national identities. There is a liberal democratic component in their identities, that prevented them from descending into mere tribalism during the heyday of nation building. This complication reflects, in part, the unfortunate fact that most European nations initially defined themselves vis-à-vis the perception of a threat from another European nation: a German was a German because s/he was neither a Pole nor a Frenchman, a Finn was a Finn because s/he could not be a Swede and did not want to be a Russian, and so on. These concrete, cultural, and historical paradoxes still form the core of the discussion of the European public sphere and the communicative and democratic practices the EU should adopt.

In this book, discussion of the European public sphere can be divided into three different dimensions that all reflect obstacles to the European democratic project. The first part of the book explores the reality and the content of the concept of a “European public sphere”. This epistemological dimension includes the values and norms inherent in the discussion of the concept as well as an exploration of the nature of the formation and structure of a transnational public sphere: its efficacy, legitimacy, and pluralism. The second part focuses on the media practices and journalistic cultures that bring the European public sphere to life for its citizens. This dimension includes journalistic and media practices and the mediation of European issues in member states. Finally, the book opens up the ethnic, cultural, and historical diversity of the continent, and how multiculturalism generally requires new ways to govern European societies. In all cases, the apparent struggle between idealism and realism forces authors to question, as well as to offer, new ways of understanding the integration process and its communicative side.

Mapping the Theoretical Dimension of the European Public Sphere

In the first part the authors will explore the content and reality of the “European public sphere”. As the authors show, both the idea and the concrete content of the concept is deeply embedded in the history and idealism of European thought. Although the study on the formation of “public sphere” has, to great extent, been dominated by Jürgen Habermas’ seminal work, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (*Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* 1962; English translation, 1989), the new theoretical tendencies from human geogra-

phy, complexity theory, actor network theory, sociology, as well from Manuel Castell's network society have found their way into the discussion. Each turn of this genealogy has taken on both epistemological novelties from the prevailing paradigms as well as the predominant hopes and fears of Western societies. However, it appears that Habermas' work has not lost its edge as an analytical and normative force in reinvigorating the discussion of the fragile relationship between public deliberation and democracy. Quite the contrary; in the midst of re-structuring the rules between economy and democracy and restoring political communication, the normative elements of communication and democracy are even more apparent.

In the opening chapter *Hannu Nieminen* argues that the European public sphere can be seen as consisting of a multiplicity of networks, each comprising a unique public sphere. These networks have a historical and cultural grounding. Nieminen indicates that the concept of the public sphere can be understood as an encounter between European history, geography, and the political governance of societies. This kind of geographically- and historically-grounded attention to the evolution of discourses, regulated regimes, and institutions opens new ways, bypassing both philosophically abstract preoccupations with the essence of communication and normative preoccupations with human rights and moral orders.

Hans-Jörg Trenz explores the discussion about the European public sphere as a field of combat between normative and descriptive elements. In his chapter he argues that the tension between normative standards and legitimating practice should be considered as constitutive for the emergence of a European public sphere. Against recent attempts to define the European public sphere in purely descriptive terms, this implies that there is a need to re-introduce the normativity of the public sphere as part of the dynamics of an evolving communicative space in Europe.

Kari Karppinen explores the notion of pluralism that has become one of the key words of European integration. Pluralism in general advocates a condition in which numerous distinct ethnic, religious, or cultural groups are present and tolerated within societies. This belief advocates that such a condition is both desirable and socially beneficial. When the European public sphere is characterised by a tension between commonality and unity on the one hand and pluralism and diversity on the other, the demand for political unity cannot easily be reconciled with cultural diversity. Theories of radical pluralism have challenged the normative models of deliberative democracy and the public sphere for their ignorance of the implicit struggle between value differences and emphasis on consensus. The chapter assesses some of the radical-democratic critiques and their prospects for European democracy.

Philip Schlesinger explores the cosmopolitan vision of discussants such as philosophers Ulrich Beck and Jürgen Habermas. In their cosmopolitan vision, Europe's global vision should consist of a cosmopolitan order based on international law, the welfare state, respect for the environment, secularism, and so forth. According to Schlesinger the transnationalisation of political action

and communicative space in the EU does herald an emergent cosmopolitan order. There are supranational institutions in the EU as well as transnational political and cultural spaces and cross-border communicative flows. However, the Union's member states remain key controllers of citizenship rights and purveyors of collective identities. In addition, for many purposes they still maintain strongly bounded national public spheres. Because the EU's overall character as a polity remains unresolved, this has consequences for the organisation of communicative spaces. Therefore, the EU is a field of tensions and contradictions inescapably rooted in institutional realities. Thus, wishful thinking about cosmopolitanism can get in the way of clear analysis.

How Media and Journalism Manufacture the European Public Sphere

In the second part of the book, the authors explore culturally – bounded practices of the European public sphere in its mediated form. Modern media practices in this constellation can be understood as technologies of new political entity formation and border implementation. Their distinctive institutional and symbolic forms emerge in response to a set of imperatives constructed in changing power-matrices in order to govern the structures of feelings of dispersed populations.

In his chapter, *Tuomo Mörä* analyses the self-understanding and democratic agency of the EU correspondents. His purpose is to analyse how the interplay among the EU's institutions, citizens, and its media contribute to or restrain the public sphere at a European level. The main question remains as to how the ideals of the public sphere will survive in a transnational environment. The chapter argues that in reality the ideals of the European public sphere and contemporary journalistic conventions do not fit together comfortably. While the public sphere ideals urge rational discussions of pan-European policy issues and promote citizen participation, news criteria tend to favour personalisation of topics, national points of view, and conflicts of élites. These criteria constitute a major component of journalists' understanding of what journalism is all about, and this is unlikely to undergo a major change in the near future.

There are also certainly differences in how journalists see their roles within their respective societies. The emphasis of *Inka Salovaara-Moring's* chapter is to explore how the new Eastern European post-communist member states, their media practices, and the evolving values of young Eastern European journalists are different from their Western counterparts. Theoretically, cultural change, the "transition" from state socialism to free market environment, can be captured as a "forgetting process", which in a subtle way relates to the Habermasian learning process of developing a new set of practices for understanding what is the public sphere and how it should be served. The focal question is how the new free generation acts in systems in flux, and how political agency is organised in

societies where journalists work under different limitations of markets, politics, and historical inheritance compared to their Western Europe.

Claes H. de Vreese and *Hajo G. Boomgaarden* empirically address two inter-related issues regarding the concept of the European public sphere. They begin with the assumption that if a European public sphere is to be found at all, it will be in the *national* media. Media and communication play a key role in the interplay among a polity's institutions, civil society, and citizens' attitudes and behaviours, and are therefore taken as the best "proxy" for expressions of the public sphere. For a European public sphere to emerge, a first but fundamental step involves European citizens discussing transnational and European affairs. Secondly, the chapter focuses on campaigns for European Parliamentary elections. These are decisive moments for European integration, and at these times indications of an Europeanisation of national public spheres are most likely to be seen. The authors conclude that the emergence of the European public sphere cannot be separated from the media's impact on public opinion. There are signs of the Europeanisation of national debates, which suggests that a European public sphere "light" in the form of Europeanised national debates is gaining ground.

Multiculturalism and the European Public Sphere

The last part of the book focuses on the emergence of a Europe that is inherently multi-ethnic and multi-national. Multiculturalism has been a famously vague term, stretched between varying descriptive and prescriptive senses. Moreover, it has acted as a conduit for a complex set of questions concerning identity, belonging, and legitimacy that are at the core of the European public sphere discussion.

Charles Husband and *Tom Moring* explore the complexity of multiculturalism and communication in their chapter by acknowledging that ethnic diversity within the state has policy implications that impact directly upon the operation of a viable public sphere. Given the ethnic diversity of contemporary European states, they challenge the adequacy of a universalist politics of liberal equality and advance a conceptual framework of differential citizenship. They suggest that the EU must abandon its routine practice of hiding behind subsidiarity and address the communicative rights and freedoms of its populations. Their chapter argues for a system of *polyethnic* rights that would facilitate a policy environment capable of nurturing a diverse public sphere.

In his chapter *Gavan Titley* addresses how the question of multiculturalism and "the other" are intertwined in modern media and public discourses. Multiculturalism, whatever it may be, is avowedly in crisis. Lived multiculturalism and social diversity may be the unremarkable fabric of urban life in Western Europe, but they cause resurgent anxieties concerning the political coherence and ethno-racial character of nation-states. Multiculturalism itself has become tangled up in a set of debates concerning the character of European identity

and “European values” and is argued to have undermined social cohesion by encouraging the growth of “parallel communities” – the triumph of cultural particularity over social cohesion. The chapter invites a critical appraisal of how the crisis of multiculturalism is *mediated*, and that is the chapter’s focus.

Miyase Christensen reflects the cultural border negotiation between the non-European and the European in Turkey. Questions of freedom of expression, media pluralism, and tolerance of diversity have been paramount in discourses surrounding EU-Turkey relationships and Turkey’s possible EU membership. The tragic murder of the Armenian-Turkish journalist, Hrant Dink, marked a turning point, refocusing international attention on how the Turkish media contribute to a healthy public sphere. The chapter offers critical reflections on freedom of expression and diversity in the Turkish media, especially in those sectors most prone to freedom of speech violations. It also reflects upon the prospects of exploring nationally specific public spheres and engendering new directions by contextualising or repoliticising public sphere theory.

Yonca Ermutlu considers the differing perspectives on minority groups and minority media in Turkey vis-à-vis the EU. The main focus is on the changes that have affected the use of minority languages in the media in Turkey due to the EU accession process. The chapter provides a mapping of the existing minority media in contemporary Turkey. In order to answer the question of “who are the minorities in Turkey”, the meaning of the term “minority” will first be placed within a historical framework. Additionally, the chapter will discuss the importance of having alternative means through which minorities can attempt to make themselves heard in an otherwise restrictive conventional media environment and how EU requirements for human rights and the protection of minorities, offer different perspectives to those held by Turkey on the issue of minorities.

Current defining of the “Other”, however, is much more complicated than it was during the Cold War when the Soviet Empire offered a “natural” eastern border. *Epp Lauk* and *Valeria Jakobson* focus on Estonia’s Russophone population, which constitutes the largest minority group in the country. As a result of Soviet migration and national policy during the decades after Second World War, two linguistically and culturally separate communities evolved in Estonia, whose members had little in common. As the authors write in their chapter, Eastern Europe thus carries different cultural and geopolitical legacies that modify different practices of linguistic minorities, public(s), and their place in the national constellation.

Camilla Haavisto focuses on Finland as a case study for policies and particularities concerning ethnic minorities and communication. The chapter focuses on the disparities in minority participation in public debate. It argues that attempts to generate a communicative space accessible to minority individuals and communities on equal terms with the majority population do not automatically guarantee that an ideal communication situation actually takes form. Thus, academic criticism has targeted mainstream media texts, accusing the media of providing stereotypical representations of ethnic minorities and

pointing out the discriminatory employment practices applied by media companies, and the EU and state authorities as not being sufficiently supportive of minority media production or multicultural initiatives. Hence, the chapter considers critically the realisation of the normative goals posed in academic writings and policy documents and, together with other articles in this book, joins in the discussion on obstacles hindering the realisation of diverse and inclusive communicative spaces.

I. Theoretical Dimensions of the European Public Sphere

Chapter 1

The European Public Sphere as a Network?

Four Plus One Approaches

Hannu Nieminen

The main argument of this chapter is that instead of attempting to establish the existence of a European public sphere or spheres, one could think of Europe as consisting of a multiplicity of networks, each comprising a unique public sphere. These networks operate across all areas of life, but in essence they are social and cultural in origin. These networks have developed, transformed, and vastly expanded across time and space, so that it is now difficult to distinguish clearly between different networks operating locally, nationally, transnationally, regionally, and trans-regionally as well as globally. However, from the point of view of democratic theory, it is still important to claim a difference between the spatially organised and regulated regimes of these networks, because all indicate different modalities for democratic politics: conditions for democracy are much different on a national scale than on the transnational or global/cosmopolitan scale.

A European Public Sphere?

In the last ten years academic literature on the European public sphere has been expanding noticeably. Much of this research has been funded by the European Union. A number of research projects of varying sizes have been established around the concept of the European public sphere so that, in a sense, an academic industry has developed around the topic.¹ Yet even though there appear to be numerous ways to approach the European public sphere, its analytical definition has remained surprisingly vague, and research still seems to suffer from a rather non-reflective application of what is called the Habermasian *ideal-typisch* way of understanding what the public sphere is about.

In recent years, “the public sphere” has been defined in different ways. As has often been pointed out, the term the “Public Sphere” – with capital letters – began to appear in Anglo-American media and communication research in the 1980s and 1990s, a phrase adopted from translations of the works by Jürgen Habermas as an English equivalent of *Öffentlichkeit*.² For Habermas, the

public sphere is a basic functional principle in democratic society and refers to the ideal of democratic communication. In a Habermasian sense, the ideal public sphere offers free access to public debate, which is open to everyone. All participants in public debate are considered equal and no subject is excluded. The result of public deliberation is determined solely on the basis of the best arguments. Indeed, the purpose of the debate is to obtain consensus and unanimity.³

Today there is a more or less shared consensus in the research community that the “actual” public sphere does not correspond to this ideal. However, the ideal notion still has a strong influence on the vast majority of academic discussions. The reason is probably that the ideal seems to match our understanding of the principles and values of our Western liberal democracy – as if the ideals of the public sphere were realisable, as if we could make public debate free and equal, as if public deliberation could at its best be judged only on the basis of the best arguments. In this sense, the ideal public sphere can act as a regulative idea against which we can measure democracy today.

The Habermasian approach (or the common caricature that has often been painted of his original, rather complex account) has been criticised for different reasons.⁴ One recurrent claim is that Habermas’s account is historically idealised and based on a non-existent phase in history. In addition, the “Public Sphere” as an ideal is based on a particular interpretation of certain national experiences in Europe, specifically in the British Isles, and to some degree also in France and Germany; thus, it cannot be “transplanted” to other cultural and social environments. Another criticism concerns Habermas’s claim that all communication is based on the endeavour to achieve consensus: it is said to be too narrow and thus can lead to the exclusion of differences. The ideal democracy cannot be based solely on homogeneity and consensualism. The concept should address pluralism: we should speak not of “a public sphere” or “the public sphere” but of a plurality of public spheres, reflecting real differences in society.

According to feminist critique, Habermas’s account only universalises the gender-based distinction between the male-dominated public sphere and the female private sphere and thereby justifies the patriarchal social order. Still other criticism has accused Habermas of being too “Hegelian”: it is said that he takes the nation-state as a natural framework in the course of historical progress and fails to discuss the social, cultural, and other differences both within and between the nation states.

Habermas has responded to these criticisms on several occasions,⁵ and since the 1970s he has transformed his own conception of the public sphere in many ways.⁶ However, even after all of this discussion, most critics still use Habermas’s early conceptualisation of the public sphere, with qualifications, as a normative point of reference for their own research, mostly because there has not been any other applicable framework for discussing these matters.

Why is the European Public Sphere Such a Timely Research Topic?

In the debate on the European public sphere we can distinguish two camps that have approached the concept from different directions. Firstly, there are the “Eurocrats”, those European policymakers who are concerned about a worsening legitimacy crisis in the European Union (EU) and its institutions. The deterioration of the situation was particularly marked after the European Constitution was rejected in referenda in both France and the Netherlands in the summer of 2005. For this camp the European public sphere is seen as a means to enhance and strengthen initiatives, which in turn may lead to more popular support for European integration. This is one explanation for why the EU has allocated money for research into the European public sphere, the hope being that the research would find a cure for the looming crisis.

Secondly, from the scholarly point of view, quite a number of scholars have grown increasingly concerned about the state of democracy in Europe. From their perspective, Europe is experiencing an alarming increase in disintegrative and anti-democratic tendencies in the face of growing social and political divisions due to the influence of neo-liberal policies. For this camp the European public sphere represents an attempt to create common political ground and democratise European politics. Furthermore, to many of these scholars, the European public sphere is seen as promoting an antidote to the unilateral globalism of the United States, with Europe being given a voice of its own in a globalising world, the assumption being that a European public sphere would have a reasoning and enlightening influence.⁷

Because there are so many different expectations of the European public sphere, it is not always clear what different actors really mean or what kinds of value-based expectations have been invested in this concept. There are a number of critical questions that can be directed both to the Eurocrats and to the scholars. What Europe are we speaking of? There is no one Europe, but many different ones, depending on who is speaking and their *raison d'être*. Europe is not a geographical entity, but a sub-continent whose borders are continuously contested. Europe is a mental and political construction, based on historical traditions.⁸ Another question is whether the concept of the public sphere is applicable at the European level at all. Originally, the Habermasian concept was developed as an historical account of specific European nation-states and their experience of industrialisation and democratisation. With most empirical research having been done on a national scale, is it feasible to try to transplant the concept from a national level to a transnational level?⁹

The national public sphere includes a strong popular national commitment. Can we imagine popular commitment to Europe in the same way? Such concepts as “identity”, “solidarity”, “reciprocity”, and “trust” have been considered necessary for a national public sphere. How are these concepts dealt with in the European public sphere?¹⁰ Also, the national public spheres are strongly dependent on national linguistic communities and national media systems.

How are these restrictions to be handled within the framework of a European public sphere?¹¹

Four Approaches to the European Public Sphere

The distinction between the Eurocrats and the scholars presented above sketches a general picture, but a more detailed approach is needed in order to understand the limitations of the imaginary behind the concept of a European public sphere.¹² In recent literature we can find four main approaches to the issue. I call them the pragmatic, the processual, the sceptical, and the radical-critical understandings of the European public sphere.

1) The pragmatic or affirmative approach

This approach is characteristic of the European Commission (EC) way of thinking and is reflected in the Commission's documents, in the speeches of its Commissaries, and its Commission workers. This approach is exemplified in the *White Paper on a European Communication Policy* by the EC in February 2006, and in *Plan-D for Democracy, Dialogue, and Debate* in October 2005.¹³ The basic claim of this approach is that, while the elements for the European public sphere are in place, there are problems in the execution of the European Union's public-relations work and communication.

If the elements are indeed in place, then who is to blame if the European public sphere does not seem to be working as it should? According to the above-mentioned EC-documents, the European Union's own public-relations work and communications have been deficient; the long-standing and ongoing blame game between the European Commission and the EU member states has undermined the image of the European Union; national politicians have scored cheap points by blaming Brussels' bureaucrats for their own political failures and vice versa. Moreover, European media are not interested in pan-European issues and give a false picture of what is important; European issues are not given enough emphasis and the media do not value them as news.

Solutions to the situation are practical: we – that is, those responsible for formulating and executing EU policies – need to improve the execution of the European Union's communications; we need to work better with the media; we need to make EU institutions more effective; and we need to educate communication professionals and make them more skilful and so on.¹⁴

The problem with this approach is that it preserves a rather bureaucratic understanding of communication and the public sphere. The main issue appears to be getting the message across, which represents a one-way model of communication. From this point of view, citizens seem to be important only to the degree that they can be motivated to react to initiatives from above, and by these means made to engage in an organised dialogue – or consultation, as the EU term puts it.

2) *The processual approach*

In the processual line of thinking, the road towards a democratic European public sphere has been taken, but although the direction is right, the realisation needs still much work. This approach appears typical, for example, of the more legally-orientated scholars and political scientists.¹⁵ They are not satisfied with the way things are: they see that the existing European public sphere is still too élitist and dependent on élite media. We can, however, observe clear progress towards a genuine Europe-wide public sphere. This was evident in the European Union's constitutional process in the early years of the twenty-first century, when many encouraging elements were apparent.¹⁶

According to many proponents of the processual approach, to develop in a more democratic direction, the European public sphere requires better rules and procedures that are also legally binding. For this reason a European Constitution is a necessity. Another widely-accepted notion is the distinction between different functional levels of the public sphere:

- There are "weak" or general publics, consisting of everyday communication; this level is not politically orientated;
- There are segmented publics, which are mainly issue-based and intended to influence political decision-makers; this level includes social movements, civic activities, and so on;
- There are strong publics made up of decision-makers, embodied in such institutions as the European Parliament and the European Conventions.¹⁷

The European Union's legitimacy crisis shows that, today, the distance between the segmented publics and the strong publics is much too wide. The issues that are discussed and problematised in the segmented public spheres cannot penetrate or reach the realities of the strong public spheres: the effective interlinks are missing.¹⁸

The problem with the processual approach is that it is far too abstract. There seem to be no effective answers for strengthening the missing links and promoting the procedures necessary for a functioning democratic European public sphere. What makes the process especially complicated is that the normal dynamics of checks and balances are missing at the EU level.

3) *The sceptical approach*

The proponents of this viewpoint are not at all confident that progress has been made or that the democratic European public sphere will follow as a natural result of the EU's assumed development towards economic and political unity. It is mainly social and cultural theorists and media scholars who take this approach. They see that contemporary Europe is characterised more by disintegration than integration, more by disunity than unity in the realms of economy

and politics. The woes of protectionism and nationalism appear increasingly rampant in different parts of Europe. According to this view, structural changes are necessary in Europe; otherwise, the case for a more democratic Europe is lost. The European Union and other existing European structures are seen in their present form as obstacles to progress rather than as facilitators of a democratic European public sphere.¹⁹

The sceptical approach also emphasises that Europeans should defend their social and cultural traditions and achievements more strongly. The European liberal-democratic legacy is in danger: the European way of thinking about social, cultural, and political issues is threatened by the US-led neo-liberal and neo-conservative global agendas. What Europe needs is a global strategy of its own. Such issues as the environment, immigration, globalisation, and security can only be addressed through global cooperation, and Europe should lead the way.²⁰

Some sceptics further emphasise that what this new European sense of global responsibility requires is a common European identity, not in a sense that would supersede other sources of identity, but as an additional dimension. Its emergence will be a slow but necessary process, and it will also be very uneven: some nations are more ready and willing to adopt a wider European identity than others.²¹

The democratic re-instituting of Europe cannot take place without major structural changes, such as a democratic European Constitution and the creation of effective European citizenship. This, however, requires a fundamental re-definition of the European Union's basic dynamics: instead of the economy, human and social values must be put at the forefront of the European Union's policies. This means challenging the basic power relations in Europe as they exist today.²²

The problem with the sceptical approach is its embedded social and cultural pessimism. It is very difficult to discern an optimistic positive political programme that would convince us of the democratic potential of today's European reality.

4) The radical-critical approach

The proponents of this approach maintain that the European public sphere is the wrong answer to the wrong question and that it is based on an old-fashioned way of political thinking. For them, the European public sphere represents the infamous idea of creating unity from above; from this it follows that such an attitude promotes centralised and universalistic thinking. It is necessary to recognise that instead of consensus, the basis of politics is always conflict – there are different interests that need to be negotiated – and that politics is always conflict-ridden or agonistic.²³

The first thing to recognise is a healthy variation: politics can start only after we have recognised the differences, i.e., the real choices from which we have to choose. Differences are not something that should be tolerated only by the majority, but they are the constitutive factor of all politics.

The problem with the concept of the public sphere is that it exemplifies a top-down model of politics. Instead of genuine pluralism and recognition of differences, it promotes a forced homogeneity. From the viewpoint of the radical-critical approach, the whole concept of the public sphere should be rejected. Instead of talking about a public sphere or the public sphere – or even public spheres in the plural – we should be using the concept of public spaces, since these refer to something that is less normative and more open to conflict and contestation.²⁴

It is not entirely clear what alternative the radical-democratic approach wants to promote. In a European scope, even after recognising differences there remain common European issues needing mutual consideration, including the environment, energy, and immigration. How does difference-based politics result in common conclusions and concrete actions?

Criticism: Two Types of Fallacies

In my view, the main problem with the approaches presented above is that all are still tied to the nation-state orientated social and cultural imaginary. At least the three first approaches appear to be saddled with a hefty degree of Euro-essentialism or an idealisation of Europe – as if Europe could act as one polity and as if it could or should form a single, unified political entity in the way that European nation-states are currently thought to be acting. Even the sceptics are bound by this imaginary, since they cannot actually put forward anything more than a negation of a unified Europe.

The problem is that European nation-states do not appear to function like unified political entities, at least according to today's democratic criteria. Analysis of member states like Germany, the UK, France, the Netherlands indicates that they are suffering from constant social and cultural tensions. European politics today is increasingly conflicted and unstable, understood in terms of domestic politics of the member states as well as of mutual relationships within the Union. There are no natural national identities, no self-evident feelings of solidarity, no media that can be said to be representative of all social and cultural groups within the nation-states. All attributes referring to a collective "we" – especially in national terms – have been challenged today.

From the viewpoint of the ideal European public sphere, the problem is that if the nation-state's social and cultural imaginary does not work well on the nation-state level in modern Europe, since there are legitimacy crises everywhere, then how could these centralised structures function at the European level?²⁵

Moreover, the fourth approach – the radical-democratic approach – seems to suffer from a degree of nation-state bias. It appears that the differences, whose recognition the proponents of radical democracy call for, are actually still the results of a parochial perspective in imagining polity and the political sphere. The first question is who is to make the rules and policies for recognition? From where does this authority receive its authority? Then, what happens

after the differences are recognised? How is the negotiation between different recognised parties arranged, who makes the rules, and who acts as arbiter? How will the outcomes be derived from the contest, and who is to judge what compromises are valid and acceptable and which are not? It seems that answers to all these questions necessarily involve the structures and institutions of the national polity.

A Network Perspective

As I have argued above, one way to imagine public spheres is to think of them as social and cultural networks. According to this approach, Europe has always existed in the form of multiple social and cultural networks: long before the birth of European nation-states, there were local, regional, transnational, trans-regional, and global networks that connected people in different parts of Europe both to each other and to the rest of the world.

The concept of a network has recently been employed in several ways in the social sciences: one branch is represented by Manuel Castells' technologically-informed network theory; another is the actor-network theory (ANT) developed especially by Bruno Latour; a third direction is provided by a more methodological approach represented by network analysis as a method; and then there are the different applications of network theory utilised in political science.²⁶

My understanding of a network in such a context is rather broad. Basically, a network consists of more or less regular connections among people; these connections are motivated by different things, personal, social, cultural, and economic; the regularity of connection produces certain conventions and rules, which then characterise the network and bring more institutionalised features to it. In other words, social and cultural networks are historically evolved chains of human interaction, which have certain regulative effects on our ways of living, thinking, and acting.

Three Views of Networks

As discussed earlier, the problem with much of the research on the European public sphere derives from its normative critique. This research tends to be based on an ideal notion of the public sphere, against which the reality is then measured. From the "reality" only those features are selected that either match or do not match the ideal criteria. To reiterate my criticism of attempts to establish a European public sphere or multiple spheres through critical research, I have three basic observations: firstly, there is no European public as such, but a vast number of local, regional, national, and transnational publics; they do not necessarily correspond to each other, and they are not necessarily commensurate in size, formative issues or duration. Secondly, there are no European

media or common communication infrastructures, but there is a plethora of local, regional, national, and transnational media that seldom follow the same political, ideological, religious, or cultural agendas. Thirdly, there are no commonly shared and accepted pan-European frames of reference or patterns of interpretation; as Europe becomes more and more genuinely multi-cultural, it is very difficult to see a way to establish such frames and patterns.

The concept of Europe made up of social and cultural networks is a way of overcoming these problems by abandoning the embedded normative mode of criticism derived from the ideal notion of the public sphere, yet trying at the same time endeavouring to save its democratic core. In the following paragraphs, I discuss the network idea from three perspectives: the historical, sociological, and political.

1) A historical perspective

My basic claim is that Europe was created by networks. Even before there was an idea of what Europe is about, there was an infrastructure of trans-European cooperation and communication based on different kinds of networks. In this view, Europe has always existed in the form of multiple social and cultural networks – local, regional, transnational, transregional, semi-global, and so forth.²⁷

Some of the earliest networks that can be called European, in the late-modern sense of the word, were commercial. Trade routes and, along with them, patterns of cultural exchange were established over thousands of years, not only within the European regions but also in with African, Middle Eastern as well as Far Eastern territories. In the Middle Ages these relationships became more regular, and (pre-)modern commercial institutions began to emerge. European trade routes developed and were institutionalised (e.g. the Hanseatic League was established in 1157; the great European financial families began their rise to power – Fuggers, Medicis, de la Poles). Europe began to take shape in the form of a rather loose economic network, consisting of several regional bases.

The Christian Church developed into the most influential network in the Middle Ages. By 1000 AD most of Europe was “Christianised”, leaving only the northernmost fringe (the Nordic countries and the Baltic lands) to be Christianised over the next few centuries. With the exception of the challenge by Islam in southeastern and southwestern Europe, especially in Muslim Spain, the power of the Church – both Western Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy – was not seriously challenged until the Reformation in the sixteenth century at which time the Church gradually began to fragment into several competing networks.

European networks of literate élite also started to evolve. Several European universities and academies of letters were established during the High and Late Middle Ages, including the Universities of Bologna, Paris, and Oxford, all established during the eleventh Century. Universities and their scholars formed

widely influential and very active networks, which were really transnational in character. The famous scholars of the time followed developments in science closely and communicated actively, not only in correspondence but also by visiting each other regularly.

Trades and crafts networks also developed in the Middle Ages. The tradition of young artisans completing their apprenticeships as blacksmiths, masons, printers, cabinetmakers, and so on, and travelling around Europe as journeymen to gain new skills and techniques was Europe-wide. In addition, multiple networks of the arts and culture flourished: writers, painters, musicians, theatre groups, performers, have all been the part of the long history of European networks.

From the viewpoint of the network approach, what is significant here is that these networks developed and functioned, firstly, without a pan-European language: Latin, French, German, Greek, and other languages were used, depending on the network; secondly, they functioned without a pan-European identity: the shared frames of reference were those adopted as a part of the membership of a network; and thirdly, they worked without a pan-European system of communication: each network developed a functional way of communicating both within the network and among other networks of its own. At the same time the networks were based on a strict hierarchy, both between and among themselves: some were more powerful than others, with the Church being dominant. Within the networks power structures positioned their members in strict order – as was the case with the Church.

2) A sociological perspective

The description above applies to what can be called functional networks, which developed over time from local and regional networks into much wider and even transnational structures. Of course, not all networks are like this: different networks serve different purposes. We can make a general division among four or five types of networks relevant to our purposes here:²⁸

1. Primary or formative networks, which concern our primary engagements to society and the world in general (the micro level). We are born into social and cultural networks, and our way of living is based on networking. Our primary identification takes place within and through a close network of family; emotionally, we – or most of us, at least – belong to the network of our family and kin, to the extended family network. On this level we have very little room for negotiating our own space and role within the network. We have to adapt – or break out.
2. Societal networks (the semi-meso level), which concern our formal socialisation and membership in a formal community, such as networks based on professional or educational relationships, but also including networks based on shared living environments – i.e., neighbourhood networks. Since these relationships are usually based on our organisational or in-

stitutional roles, they are mostly non-negotiable as long as we occupy those particular roles; but they can be re-negotiated or dispensed with if and when we leave the roles, for example, when changing professions or when retiring. As role-based networks, they can be utilised in different ways, which means that although their membership is principally non-negotiable, the way in which they are used can be very flexible.

3. Associational networks (the meso level) are based on voluntary and free time associations (e.g., hobby related) or they can be based on workplace relationships. Although membership in these kind of networks is conditional on the availability of opportunities (the selection of potential hobbies can be restricted in many ways; the availability of free-time associations can be limited; work environments differ, and at any given time, there will be a number of people permanently out of work), membership in these networks is usually based on choice: we can regulate, at least to a certain degree, our commitment to these types of networks.
4. Issue- or interest-based networks create another level (the semi-macro level), whose character is defined by the goal of influencing decision-making. This goal links these networks to the formation of political will and thus to the realm of the political. These networks can, for example, be political, professional, or trade-based or ideological or religious in nature. Characteristically, these networks are based on voluntary membership and a high level of personal commitment. As such, they are not bound to spatial restrictions and are thus trans-local, trans-regional and transnational in character.
5. Imposed networks (the macro level) concern us as citizens or as members of the political nation. Membership in these networks is non-negotiable, which means that we share certain basic duties and rights with all the other members, which in normal circumstances cannot be waived. It seems important to make a clear distinction between the formal structure of the institution, which gives the frame for the network, and the real network: for example, in Finland all “fit” young men are conscripted and thus institutionalised in the Finnish Defence Forces (FDF). The FDF establishes cultural and social frames for the network: it regulates the issues and activities of the network, but the meaning and values that the network embodies are created by the members.

Principally, people live their social and cultural lives in and through these networks. One cannot escape them even if one tries. To a great extent the kinds of networks to which one belongs or is a member are not at all accidental; there are selective mechanisms, inclusive as well as exclusive, which regulate access to different networks. The selective mechanisms are manifold: they are based, for example, on class, gender, ethnicity, education, area of residence, cultural background, and so on. This again brings about a power hierarchy in which certain networks enjoy priority, while others are suppressed.

3) A political perspective

From this point of view, one can also ask if the emergence of public government and the basic function of public structures – local governments, nation-states, regional, and international organisations – can be interpreted as resulting from the need of different networks to exercise cooperation. The networks that operate in the same geographical area or region must necessarily consider each other and develop at least some degree of cooperation, since they have to share the same geographical area or certain basic resources, such as water, living area, roads, energy sources, location of market places, and the like. In order to resolve the competing claims peacefully, networks have to create a system of negotiation and coordination of action, i.e., a system of common government.

Within the network hypothesis, creating this system can be seen as the start of local and regional governance: it emerged first and foremost in order to coordinate the use of common resources and to arrange negotiations between competing claims and interests by the networks. A developmental line from the medieval city councils to local or municipal authorities of today might be detected here. Applied at the national level, national states can be understood as intersections of different networks (embodied first, for example, in the King's councils, and later on, in political parties and lobby networks organised as state governments), established in order to negotiate their conflicting interests and help in coordinating the use of common resources at the level of the national state. However, an important qualification must be mentioned here: in all matters other than those concerning the direct interests of the emerging national state, the networks were originally meant to be autonomous and self-regulating, such as in the areas of international trade, political and ideological movements, religious issues, and so on.

Thus, instead of an open, ideal-type of public sphere and a critical debate aiming at consensus, what we have on the national level is a space for public negotiation among organised interests, restricted and regulated according to the issues and themes which are of national character. From this perspective, public political structures – such as local governments and nation-states – can be seen as nodes or intersections between the networks that operate on that particular geographical level: there are issues that need to be coordinated among different networks – economy, social security, energy, immigration, environment, and so on.

Conclusions: Networks and the Public Sphere

Where does this approach then leave the concept of the public sphere? It leaves a clearer image of conditions for the normative application of the notion of the concept: what we should do and what we should not do with this notion. What it does not mean is that the public sphere as a normative regulative

principle should be totally abandoned. Instead, the network approach seems to suggest that attention should be directed to a more procedural concept of the public sphere.²⁹

When society is seen as a multiplicity of networks, some networks appear more democratic and equal than others. Networks that connect highly educated, white, middle-class men are more powerful than networks connecting women of similar status. Networks connecting European conservative politicians are more powerful than those connecting European supporters of Green parties. Networks connecting Catholics are more powerful than those connecting Muslims, and so on. It does not appear to be realistic to imagine that all the networks would share much in common, such as universal values or norms or beliefs. All modes of networks – from kinship networks to religious, professional, and political networks – are based on some kind of membership, which necessarily brings about rules of exclusion and inclusion. Many networks can potentially find common interests and grounds for negotiation; yet for many or perhaps most, this will not be the case. Thus, it does not appear realistic to raise the ideal-normative model of the public sphere as a general model for a society consisting of networks.

If we now re-introduce the concept of the public sphere within the framework of the network approach, the public sphere could perhaps be understood as a space or spaces of negotiation among different networks. In the course of the negotiation process, each network brings out publicly its interest-based claims, and the public discourse is then about negotiating competing claims. The result is always some sort of a compromise, an attempt to balance competing interests. This inevitably raises the question of power: networks are not equal in relation to their negotiation competence, that is, in their ability to influence the resulting compromise. Some networks have more resources and potential to influence results than others, while some networks are without such resources and thus are left with little or no negotiating power. The question of power then remains unresolved.

Notes

1. Some of the projects can be listed here as examples and also to show the areas of their interests:
 - AIM: Adequate Information Management in Europe (<http://www.aim-project.net/index.php?id=4>; accessed 24.10.2006) – directed in Germany;
 - CIDEL: Citizenship and Democratic Legitimacy in Europe (<http://www.arena.uio.no/cidel/index.html>; accessed 24.10.2006) – directed in Norway;
 - EMEDIATE: Media and Ethics of a European Public Sphere from the Treaty of Rome to the “War on Terror” (<http://www.iue.it/RSCAS/Research/EMEDIATE/Index.shtml>; accessed 24.10.2006) – directed in Italy;
 - EUROPUB.COM: The Transformation of Political Mobilisation and Communication in European Public Spheres (http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/knowledge/projects/article_3479_en.htm; accessed 24.10.2006) – directed in Germany;
 - Eurosphere: <http://www.eurosphere.uib.no/about.php> – directed in Norway;

- IDNET: Europeanization, Collective Identities, and Public Discourses. (http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/knowledge/projects/article_3501_en.htm; accessed 24.10.2006) – directed in Italy;
- RECON: Reconstituting Democracy in Europe. (<http://www.arena.uio.no/recon/>; accessed 24.10.2006) – directed in Norway
- 2. See e.g., Kleinstüber 2001.
- 3. Habermas 1989, 36–37; Calhoun 1992b; Roberts and Crossley 2004.
- 4. See Calhoun 1992b; Fraser 1992; Roberts and Crossley 2004.
- 5. See especially Habermas 1992.
- 6. The best accounts are perhaps Habermas 1992 and 2006b.
- 7. Habermas and Derrida 2005; Habermas 2006a.
- 8. See Cameron and Neal 2003; Rietbergen 2006.
- 9. See Fraser 2007.
- 10. See Calhoun 2009.
- 11. See Schlesinger 2003.
- 12. Here I use social imaginary in Charles Taylor's sense: it is about "the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations" (Taylor 2004: 23).
- 13. White Paper on Communication 2006; Plan-D 2005. See also The Period of Reflection and Plan D 2006.
- 14. See Plan-D 2005; The Period of Reflection 2006.
- 15. Stie 2007; Trenz 2008
- 16. See Eriksen 2005.
- 17. Eriksen 2005.
- 18. Eriksen 2005.
- 19. This approach is reflected in several comments in Levy, Pensky and Torpey 2005.
- 20. See e.g., Habermas 2006c; Levy, Pensky and Torpey 2005.
- 21. See Habermas and Derrida 2005; Habermas 2006c.
- 22. Habermas 2006a.
- 23. See e.g., Mouffe 2002.
- 24. See Carpentier and Cammaerts 2006.
- 25. For more on this, see e.g., Fraser 2007.
- 26. A useful overview of the different uses of network is found in Knox, Savage and Harvey 2005. See also e.g., Monge and Contractor 2003; Cook, Cheshire and Gerbasi 2006; Degenne and Forsé 1999; Law 1992; Stalder 2006.
- 27. Among the sources for this historical account are: Jordan 2002; Cameron and Neal 2003; Power 2006; Rietbergen 2006; Sprout 1994; Wilson and van der Dussen 1999.
- 28. This model is partly inspired by the discussion in Knox, Savage and Harvey 2005.
- 29. See e.g., Chambers 2003; Habermas 2006b.

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Chapter 2

Uniting and Dividing

The European Public Sphere as an Unfinished Project

Hans-Jörg Trenz

The European public sphere can be defined as the communicative infrastructure used for debating the legitimacy of the project of European integration. The attempt to pin down the constitutive elements of a European public sphere is typically marked by ambivalence between normative and descriptive elements. In normative terms, the European public sphere is identified through the standards that should be used to assess the legitimacy of European integration. In descriptive terms, the European public sphere is identified through the actors, institutions and communicative processes that guide the practice of the collective self-understanding of the Europeans.

This chapter argues that the tension between normative standards and legitimating practice should be considered as constitutive for the emergence of a European public sphere. In light of recent attempts to define the European public sphere in purely descriptive terms, this implies the need to re-introduce the normativity of the public sphere as part of the dynamics of an evolving communicative space in Europe. I will begin this endeavour with a short conceptual history of the term *Öffentlichkeit*, which originates in German idealistic thinking and has been only reluctantly adapted into mainstream social science theorising. Conceptual history is also helpful for appreciating the difficulties of conceptualising the public sphere beyond the nation-state. In its second part, the chapter will reconstruct this alleged link between nation-ness and public-ness and examine how both notions can be kept separate. Instead of laying the blame on the methodological nationalism of social sciences, the chapter will scrutinize the arguments that have been put forward to defend the national research focus of public sphere analysis. The national public sphere is held up, first of all, by the particular kind of media economy found in Western societies. Secondly, a strong argument for the maintenance of the achievements of the national public sphere can be made by pointing out the intrinsic normativity of the public sphere.

It is only at this stage that the full potential of European public sphere research can unfold through the restoration of these normative expectations and applying them to a new institutional setting. The article will demonstrate how

the search for a European public sphere inevitably ends up with a diagnosis of public sphere deficits. The European public sphere is uniting and dividing the political space that is demarcated by European integration. It is in search of the unity of its *form*, which needs to be offset against its internal diversity and against the plurality of its *practices*. As I will argue in the last part of the article, it is precisely this practice of legitimation and delegitimation that makes the European public sphere thinkable as a (still unfinished) project and that accounts for its dynamic expansion.

A Short Conceptual History of the Public Sphere

The term *public sphere* is a rather flawed paraphrase of the German term *Öffentlichkeit*. Its use in English academic writing is still basically restricted to the reception of Jürgen Habermas' seminal work *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*, first published in 1962 and only translated a quarter of a century later under the title *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. This rather contextualised conceptual history is clearly an obstacle when it comes to turning the notion of the public sphere into a universal analytical category within social science. Inadequacies in translation have blocked an accurate understanding of *Öffentlichkeit* and, in turn, make it difficult for all those who have not enjoyed a German-speaking academic environment to appreciate its analytical value and normative impact.

Yet these difficulties in fixing the meaning of a new term should not be attributed solely to the poor translation. Closer analysis of the semantic use of the term *Öffentlichkeit* does not bring greater clarity. *Öffentlichkeit* is not part of the traditional social science vocabulary and cannot be found as an analytical term in the classical works of our discipline. In legal and political philosophy, the notion derived from German idealism and its ideal type of bourgeois public sphere which keeps the civic spirit of self-enlightened citizens alive. From there, the term *Öffentlichkeit* entered political and everyday language in Germany, where it is used with different and partly contradictory connotations. As an effect of national framing, it is most common, for instance, to speak of the public sphere as a collectivity or as an actor with stable preferences and expectations, able to express its own opinion. The vague and indistinct use of the term has become integral part of the conceptual history of the public sphere and it continues to determine its use in scientific and everyday language.

Habermas has somehow corrected the organic vision that equates *Öffentlichkeit* with a particular community. Confronted with the critique of his own previous conception of the bourgeois public sphere, Habermas (1992; 1996a) based his legal theory on a sociologically-informed notion of the political public sphere. As such, the public sphere has primarily an intermediary function between political rulemakers and those who are potentially affected by the exercise of political rule. Habermas explicitly stated that the former were not necessarily national governments and the latter were not necessarily national

constituencies. Public sphere theorising was thus principally applicable to new forms of governance and civil society beyond the nation-state.

In light of recent Habermasian theorising it is useful to recall what the public sphere is not: The public sphere is neither a socio-structural entity nor an institution or organisation that could be shaped by purposeful action. In similar terms, any connotation that links the public sphere to particular forms of collective action rooted within particular groups or collectivities is misleading (Neidhardt 2006). Rather the public sphere should be perceived as an open field of communicative exchange. It is made up of communication flows and discourses that allow for the diffusion of intersubjective meaning and understanding. As a realm of interdiscursivity, the public sphere is only loosely coupled to particular cultures and languages. Rather the public sphere opens up closed meaning systems and, through its intermediary structures, facilitates cross-cultural communication and interchange (Habermas 1992; Eder 1999; Trenz 2002; Kantner 2004).

Such an analytical understanding of the public sphere as a facilitator of communicative exchange in anonymous mass societies is useful when conceptualising the conditions for the emergence of a European public sphere. From such a perspective, the link between nation-ness and public-ness should not be seen as essential but as historically contingent. When in his historical account on the structural transformation of the public, Habermas described the transition from reasoning publics to the consuming publics of the mass media, he still had in mind a principally Westphalian-national infrastructure: a public sphere that mainly served a national constituency through national language and mass media. In the contemporary transnationalising world one might expect a second structural transformation to take place, one that also decouples mass-communication from this national organisational infrastructure (Eder et al. 1998). The public sphere would thus increasingly refer to a global media economy with new potential to address ever more dispersed audiences.

Towards a Transnational Public Sphere

In searching for evidence for the unfolding of a public sphere beyond the nation-state, the emphasis has been placed on the role of the old and the new media as amplifiers of political knowledge and information, which are increasingly de-contextualised from local spaces.

Identifying such instances of transnational communication is relatively easy. The Internet has developed into a powerful global communication tool that opened the first truly boundless communication space. Virtual communication anywhere is communication everywhere. The Internet gives everyone instant and affordable access to global information, but it also enables anyone (or everyone) to publish to the world. In addition, more traditional visual and textual media formats are also increasingly embedded in global communication networks. Through world-wide news broadcasting, political events are

re-contextualised within an emerging global space of meaning. Media analysts, for instance, have drawn attention to the structuring effects of so-called world events such as September 11, 2001, which are linked to parallel attention cycles worldwide (Urry 2002; Stichweh 2006). The emerging global newsroom also shapes public opinion and attitudes, shared concerns and problem perceptions and, for the first time, makes global citizenship and global identity possible (Gurevitch and Levy 1990). It thus becomes an integral part of the imaginary of the cosmopolitan society (Beck 2006).

Strong evidence for the impact of global communication flows can also be found in the research on world culture, which in an exemplary fashion, has shown how national and local cultures are embedded in global structures of the exchange of meaning (Hannerz 1992; Robertson 1992). Similar effects have been described in terms of the diffusion of world models of legitimacy, human rights discourse and democracy (Meyer 2000; Keck and Sikkink 1998). Even the history and collective identities of particular nations are debated within the world community, as was powerfully illustrated by the world-wide indignation at the formation of the first Haider-Schüssel government in Austria in the spring of 2000 (van de Steeg 2004; Risse 2004).

For authors like Ulrich Beck, this is sufficient evidence to postulate the overcoming of the national public sphere. Cosmopolitan society becomes thinkable through *Welt-öffentlichkeit* as a global sphere of responsibility and reflexivity that belongs to such a society. This is not a matter of value-based integration but of integration through growing awareness of risks and dangers. As Beck (2006: 35) writes: "world risk society marks an epoch in which coerced risk-cosmopolitanization mutates into a no less coerced emerging public awareness of the ongoing process of risk-cosmopolitanization. ... Instead of integration through national and universal values, the global character of dangers reflected in a world public entails a new dialectic of conflict and cooperation across borders".

The transnational scope of public communication is thus measured in the absolute amount of communication that factually and potentially transcends national borders. The world is perceived as an observatory space, in which communicative events are increasingly interconnected. This does not imply that world citizens necessarily enter into direct communicative interchange with each other, but their local chats and discursive forums are opened for observation and participation by others. The world public is as much a virtual public as is the national public. Most of the time, the public is rather inattentive and ill-informed about ongoing events, but what counts is its principal availability as an addressee of discourse. This has an increasingly contingent and unpredictable affect on those who defend discursive positions in the world community. The global public sphere is constituted by the principal availability of information from all angles of our shared world. From this perspective, there are indeed no spaces left that could not be spotted by Google Earth and about which information could not instantly be made available to the world community. On the other hand, the spread of world discourse is no longer comparable to the traditional notion of a discursive order, in which arguments

proceed in a consequential and rational way. Signs, symbols and images are often more successful in circulating than in sophisticated arguments. The world peace movement, for instance, operates most successfully through particular icons that allow identification beyond the barriers of local languages (Benford and Hunt 1992).

Should this then be considered sufficient evidence for abandoning the concept of the nationally-bounded public sphere altogether? I will argue that there are still at least two good arguments for not abandoning the narrative of the national public sphere too quickly. The first argument is empirical and refers to the media economy of advanced modern societies. As I will try to illustrate, there is sufficient empirical evidence to assume that, for the time being, so-called methodological nationalism of media studies is at least partially grounded in the mainstream nationalism of the news media. Evidence for the persistence of media nationalism can be found in a) the historical rooting of national media cultures and institutions that facilitate b) the synchronisation of media contents and c) confine the production and consumption of news principally to national (local) publics (notwithstanding the parallel process of a progressive concentration of media ownership). The second argument will bring the discussion back to the intrinsic normativity of the public sphere. I contend that critical standards of democracy are still indispensable for measuring the performance of existing public spheres as long as they represent the commonly-shared normative horizon of inter-communicating actors.

Methodological Nationalism or Media Nationalism?

A first obstacle for the conceptualisation of a transnational public sphere is what is commonly referred to as the methodological nationalism of media studies. The public sphere is first of all part of the imaginary of national democracy. The nation-state appears to be a kind of natural container of the public sphere, which holds a community of co-nationals together. From this nationalistic perspective, the possibility of a transnational public sphere is categorically denied. A shared language and shared cultural understanding, that is to say, the socialisation of the individual as a member of a particular political community, appear to be constitutive of the public sphere.

Methodological nationalism is manifested in the use of a contextualised knowledge in scientific research that claims universal validity. Our scientific vocabulary was developed within the nation-state framework (Beck 2003). Nation-states and nationally-bounded societies are our basic units of analysis and determine our established research routines. At a first look, public sphere research could be taken as a good example to illustrate the far-reaching effects of social sciences' methodological nationalism. In measuring the public sphere, one usually relies on underlying a systemic model of public communication that distinguishes between the inputs, throughputs and outputs of communicative systems. The integrative functions of such a system of mass communica-

tion depend, however, on some infrastructural requirements that are typically provided by the nation-state. They rely on a) the communicative performance of *national* (or local) governments (input); b) the intermediary capacities of *national* media organizations (throughput); and c) the opinions and attitudes of *national* publics (output).

One could thus easily jump to the conclusion that established research routines have prevented us from exploring the full potential of the concept of the public sphere as an unbounded arena of communication rather than as a closed system of mediation between established partners. A public sphere is constituted as an all-inclusive arena that is principally open to all kinds of communicative inputs and that unfolds through public discourse with the potential to reach virtually everybody. The search for a transnational public sphere is therefore seen by many as a way of achieving emancipation from these non-reflected and theoretically blind research routines (Kantner 2004; van de Steeg 2002). By looking out for instances of transnational communication, we will inevitably arrive at a notion of a cosmopolitan public sphere that communicates to the world society.

Can this charge of methodological nationalism of media studies be empirically sustained? In order to clarify some of these assumptions, it should be made explicit that the modern public sphere needs to be perceived as a media sphere. It is only by making use of the infrastructure of the mass media that anonymous mass audiences (the general public and the electorate) can be reached and included in politics. Within media studies of political newsmaking, the construct of global society or European society as a new reference point for empirical research and theoretical reflection has proven to be of little analytical value (Weischenberg 2000). The drawing of national geographic and economic borders between societies remains fundamental for categorising existing media communication within the realm of politics. Comparative media surveys thus always start and end with a typology of national media systems (Hallin and Mancini 2004).

We thus, need to acknowledge that methodological nationalism of media and communication studies is, at least partially, grounded in mainstream media nationalism. This national research focus of the discipline appears to be justified by the media economy of contemporary Western societies; in addition there are well-known historical reasons for this particular institutional connection among news media, national politics and national publics. Historical research has shown, first of all, the co-evolution of media and national culture. Mass media have always been the school of the nation forming the unitary national public (Anderson 1991). Even today, when confronted with the increasing fragmentation of media spheres, mass media continue to guarantee the symbolic integration of the nation as a community of communication that talks or “gossips” about the same topics of relevance.

There is also little or no evidence that the established institutional links between the media and the nation-state will be weakened. Trends in mass media development in Western societies are relatively clear-cut. On the one hand, we

observe a steady concentration of media ownership and a flourishing media industry that opens global markets to the promotion of similar products. The concentration of media ownership is, however, not necessarily linked to the synchronisation of media contents. The new character of the global media baron has little or no influence on the shaping of local news media (Herman and McChesney 2000). Rather experience shows that profit can best be maximised by maintaining the fragmentation of political news production and providing specific news formats that address national and local publics. The success strategy of single providers on the media market consists precisely in offering contextualised products to regional consumers. Even the Internet falls apart into national niches, in which consumers draw political information mainly from national and often purely local web pages (Norris 2001).

Globalisation theorists further assume that intensified foreign news coverage of so-called world events would lead to shared problem perceptions and the application of similar interpretative frames. However, this optimistic assumption about the penetration of the national public spheres by the effects of transnational communication is misleading. Qualitative content analyses point to a strong nationalistic and ethnocentric bias in foreign news coverage, and journalists tend to defend national interests over normative ideals of a just world order (Page and Shapiro 1992; Kevin 2003). Swedish anthropologist Ulf Hannerz (2004) has done research on foreign news correspondents as the possible heralds of cosmopolitanism, and his overall findings are negative. He concludes that, contrary to widely-held opinion, in our era of intense globalisation and increased global connectedness, foreign news coverage in many media channels has been shrinking recently. Rather than an enabling factor, the restricted scope of media communication should be considered one of the main constraints that cosmopolitanism faces today (ibid.: 23).

The European Union is no exception with regard to this parallel development of media concentration of ownership and the fragmentation of contents of political news-making. Within the European common market, the political news economy remains strongly nationalised, and there are no genuinely European newspapers or TV channels that could constitute a European newsroom. Whilst some existing newspapers with a transnational diffusion like the *Financial Times* are mainly used for the purpose of elite communication, foreign markets remain closed to mainstream national media products. Moreover, with regard to the Europeanisation of national news-making, findings do not point to an increased penetration of national media by European stories and debate. A linear relationship between growing competencies of the EU and growing public attentiveness to European integration has so far not been corroborated by empirical analysis. Only a few studies were able to observe the diachronic effects of Europeanisation over time, and those who did, ended up with mostly negative findings (Gerhards 2000; Koopmans and Erbe 2004). Only Brüggemann et al. (2006) conceded a slight increase of EU coverage in quality newspapers, which, however, did not translate into an increase in discursive interchange between national media spheres.

Any investigation into the transnationalising dynamics of public communication must recognise therefore that nationally confined media markets are already saturated, with only small niches left that can be occupied by European political communication. National journalists will continue to serve mainly national (or local) publics. The Internet had surprisingly little impact on this general pattern of national news production through mainstream print and audiovisual media. For the average Internet user, the main providers of political news continue to be the platforms of their favourite newspaper or television channel (Koopmans and Zimmermann 2007).

The Normative Mandate of the Public Sphere

While, in empirical terms, the public sphere is strongly reliant upon the infrastructure of national mass media, in normative terms, it is also dependent on the integrative functions of a national media system. In the history of Western thought, *Öffentlichkeit* has not been introduced as a diagnostic category. Rather it has primarily been introduced as a critical category with an interventionist ambition and with the intention of shaping the realm of discourse and communicative relationships among citizens. In practice, this means that the constitutive and distinctive features of the public sphere have always been defined 'ex-negativo'. Public sphere theorising has been pushed with the critical intention of detecting the deficits of ongoing communication processes. The public sphere is found to be always "under construction": its performance does not yet come up to the high expectations, and its outputs in terms of discursive rationality are still to be considered as provisional.

Descriptive accounts fall short as long as they fail to pay attention to this intrinsic normativity of the public sphere. Contrafactual normative assumptions about how public communication should be organised are of high relevance for reconstructing the ongoing discursive practice through which political information is made available. The identification of public sphere deficits creates a mutual obligation between communicating actors and journalists to overcome these deficits. Shared norms guide present choices of public communicators and give future orientation for public sphere building and expansion. This is best explained by the fact that the providers of quality news have internalised the normative premises of the bourgeois public sphere. The normative horizon of a shared sphere of understanding is used as the underlying script for the work of journalists.

All attempts to introduce the public sphere as a purely descriptive category need to take into account that the concept was originally meant as a contribution to a normative theory of democracy and as such, continues to shape discursive practice. Instead of discarding the intrinsic normative assumptions of the public sphere as invalid or replacing them by purely descriptive accounts, European public sphere research needs to delineate the particular kind of normative belief system, that is shared among Europeans. This will serve as a

basis for empirically analysing the particular ways of how normative contents inform political practice in the European Union.

A similar point has been raised in a recent contribution by Nancy Fraser (2007), who argues against globalisation literature and its eagerness to find the public sphere virtually everywhere. Her point is that the public sphere cannot simply be reduced to a mere infrastructure of communication. Searching for the conditions of the public sphere (either nationally or transnationally) is not simply about delivering a descriptive account of ongoing communication processes, but also about adding qualitative judgement. Rather we rather speak of a public sphere when communication is organised in a particular way and linked to particular qualitative criteria. Within the normative repertoire of liberal democracies, these qualitative criteria are relatively stable. We are used to speaking of a public sphere if communication is linked, in one way or the other, to processes of public opinion and will formation.

According to Nancy Fraser (*ibid.*), the transformation of public communication into public opinion and will formation is based on two preconditions. The first refers to the generation of *normative legitimacy*. It assumes that collective choices, which are the outcome of public opinion and will formation, are seen as more valid than individual choices or secret decisions. The second condition refers to *political effectiveness*. It requires that the collective will can also be instrumentally empowered and imposed upon the private will. The problem with these two preconditions is that they are first linked to an active or, at least, an attentive citizenry and second, to a sovereign power, which is both the executor and the addressee of the collective will of the people. A quick conclusion is that in order to meet these two conditions we need a) nationness and b) stateness. Through its intrinsic normativity the public sphere would then be closely related to the nation-state. To speak of a transnational public sphere would then sound like an oxymoron (*ibid.*).

Beyond the National Public Sphere

This dash overview of conceptual history leads to the conclusion that a transnational public sphere is, in normative terms, an oxymoron, and, from an empirical perspective, is little more than wishful thinking. Does this mean that we have to stick to the reality of present day, more or less, integrated national public spheres? I believe not, and the simple reason for my incautious jumping to an early conclusion is that there is as much uncertainty expressed in contemporary literature about the normative integrity of the national public sphere as there are doubts about its possible emergence at the European level. Two questions should be raised with regard to the possible localisation of the European public sphere along the template of the national public sphere: Firstly, the question of the adequacy of our criteria of measurement, and secondly, the question of the adequacy of the normative criteria derived from the legacy of the national public sphere as an integrated and well-functioning communicative system.

Adequacy of Measurement

The diagnosis of a European public sphere deficit is usually matched against the template of the national public sphere, the premises of which are more or less taken for granted. This raises the question of the adequacy of our measurement criteria. Friedhelm Neidhardt (2006) has raised this point in a recent survey, arguing that the national public sphere is very much a dummy alternative when it comes to determining the scope and the performance of transnational communication. The diagnosis with regard to the integrity and smooth-functioning of the national public sphere is discouraging. Existing spaces of communication are increasingly diversified. Media specialists from all Western countries send alarming messages about the lowering of news quality in traditional formats like newspapers and public broadcasting (McNair 2000; Meyer 2001). The disenchantment with the performance of the existing national public spheres is based on a variety of diffuse empirical observations:

- The fragmentation of existing media spheres is explained through ongoing processes of individualisation and a retreat of citizens from the public to the private. Classical sociological explanations refer to the functional differentiation of society: those who participate in the economic market and those who participate in the system of cultural reproduction do not necessarily share the same language. Different codes are used by the different sub-systems of society to construct social reality. Translations become necessary and incommunicabilities between different sectors of our social life increase (Luhmann 1996).
- The crisis of the unitary public sphere is further displayed in a new class segmentation of the political news landscape (Bourdieu 1996). Do the readers of the *Sun* and the *Guardian* really populate the same public sphere? One possible hypothesis is that the boulevardisation of newspaper and television formats reflects a particular pattern of media use of uneducated social classes and thus enhances information inequality (Schiller 1996). The few remaining quality news formats (mainly reduced to three or four newspapers and television programmes diffused nationwide) occupy ever smaller niches, which are mainly used by the political elites to communicate with each other.
- Thirdly, the breakdown of the national public sphere is manifested in a new territorial differentiation of the news spaces. Within the nation-states, particular regions or ethnic communities create their own, relatively closed and self-referential news worlds specialised in the reproduction of regional gossip, but no longer covering international or even national news (Hafez 2007: 98ff.).
- Last but not least, the acceleration of political news production contributes to the fragmentation of media markets. Attention cycles, through which political debates unfold, become shorter, and the rhythm through which

new events are introduced and old topics replaced by new ones gets faster (Baumgartner and Jones 1993).

In the past the fiction of a unitary national public sphere could still be upheld with some plausibility. Its symbolic expression can be found in the idea of the whole nation gathering around the television for the eight o'clock news. But how can we imagine a unitary national public if media users, instead of choosing between two or three tele-vision channels, get dispersed in cyberspace? New media formats create distractions, but only rarely attention. Public opinion formation, however, requires attentive publics. It is grounded in a world of shared news, in which the same topics are discussed at the same time with the same criteria of relevance (Habermas 1996b: 190).

The diagnosis of the dispersion of the unitary national public sphere as the locus of public opinion and will formation is, of course, related to the imminent concern with its diminishing capacities to support national democracy. This raises the question of the normative adequacy of the national public sphere as a template for the European public sphere, and intrinsically, as a template for the building of European democracy.

Normative Adequacy

Colin Crouch (2004) has recently proposed the term post-democracy to designate a qualitative change in the development of Western democratic societies. His argument is based on a generalised descriptive account that collects rather dispersed empirical indicators: (1) the decline of public authority, private governance, corporate domination and the commercialisation of citizenship; (2) individualised and fragmented societies and the disappearance of collective actors or stable coalition (e.g. class) that could substantiate the "rule of the people"; (3) the replacement of party politics by lobbyism and the rise of new parties as firms and advertisement machines; (4) the degradation of mass political communication exemplified by the growing personalisation of politics, media advertisement and images, which replace rational debates and discourse, and contribute to the lowering of news quality and the media staging of politics as show business.

The European public sphere deficit needs to be addressed as a specific case of this general malaise of democracy. Its recognition is based on normative premises, which – though widely shared among Europeans – lose institutional anchorage. The democratic functioning of the public sphere in Europe can rely on a consensual value system, but not on the infrastructural requirements for its own realisation. How can the adequacy of the normative standards of public sphere theorising be defended against the new structural transformation of the media spheres in Western societies? Normative political theory has come up with two answers: The first is to insist on the normative standards of the national public sphere against deficiencies in the existing systems of

mass communication. The second is to re-adjust the normative standards of the public sphere to the new fragmented media reality.

The diagnosis of post-democracy can first be turned into the political task of repairing the malfunctions of the public sphere and enhancing the news quality of the media. Proposals in this direction are mainly defensive. They do not aim at conquering new transnational spaces of mass communication but rather at safeguarding the national public sphere as a space of public opinion and will formation. The “dumbing down” of news quality in mainstream national media has, however, shattered faith in the self-regulatory capacities of the public sphere. Take, for instance, a recent article by Jürgen Habermas, published in one of Germany’s leading quality newspapers. His critique of the streamlined newspaper business very much resembles the diagnosis of the structural transformation of the public sphere, which he gave nearly half a century earlier. The normative conclusions and political recommendations, however, read strikingly different today. In their present form, the quality and the informative values of news can no longer be guaranteed by the self-regulatory dynamics of an autonomous public sphere. These values can only be guaranteed by state intervention. The state, therefore, has a duty to assure the population’s basic supply of political information. For that purpose, selected quality newspapers should be granted public legal status. They should benefit from public financial support to be able to provide the basic public commodity of information.

State assistance in fulfilling the democratic functions of the mass media could also be turned into a guarantee for fair and ample treatment of European politics in the media. Once such state guarantees of news quality are established, the European public sphere would be a question of political design. One could easily imagine an agreement on national quotas for the space for European news. One page of exclusively European news in a newspaper could be rewarded with a fixed amount of public subsidies. Ultimately, EU correspondents would be paid by public financing to write for a virtual, and still largely non-attentive, European public.

Secondly, the diagnosis of post-democracy can be used to re-address the normativity of the public sphere and to adjust its standards to a changing media reality. Applied to European integration, the concern is that the template of the national public sphere with its *telos* of unity, consensus and integration would lead to a normative overstretch in negotiating the diversity aspects that traditionally make up the European space. The over-emphasis on the unity of the public sphere might also reflect an implicit eurocentrism, not to mention the diversity of publics in other parts of the world (Nieminén 2007). To construct Europe as a unified political entity with correspondingly unified people is then not only to be considered a utopian, but also a dangerous one, because it does not respect the diversity of European cultures and traditions.

In dealing with this uncertainty about the applicability of the public sphere and democracy in a transnational institutional setting, political theory was concerned above all with clarification of the polity type that is constituted by the European Union (the so called “nature of the beast” question) (Risse 1996;

Eriksen and Fossum 2007). Testing the viability of different polity options is a helpful exercise for coming up with different reformulations of the normative standards on which a public sphere and democracy can be based in the European Union. The question of how to adjust public sphere theorising to the social and political realities of the “unity in diversity” of Europe is ultimately a political question that guides the social and communicative practice of an unfolding European public sphere. The new normative challenge of reconciling but not abandoning diversity in a plural and multicultural social setting is, at the same time, a question of political practice. It is also noteworthy that the European Union has internalised the idea of ‘unity in diversity’ as a mode of collective self-description of its expanding activities in all social fields. The political mandate to conserve and protect diversity becomes a new kind of normative standard of Communitarian policies. “United in diversity” has even been proposed as the official slogan of the EU, and as such it should be enshrined in the Constitutional Treaty as among the EU symbols.

The remainder of this chapter will give a different twist to this normative line of argumentation. Instead of assessing the ideal functioning and the normative adequacy of the public sphere in relation to the institutional-constitutional designing of a European political order, I will interpret the contrafactual normativity of the public sphere as the stimulus that is necessary for entering into discursive practice. The confrontation between unity and diversity is then seen as constitutive of the public sphere to the extent that it is reformulated as a “normative problem” that has to be dealt with collectively.

Uniting and Dividing

The European Public Sphere as an Unfinished Project

Theorising about the public sphere is about conceiving the unity of its form against the plurality of its practices. The topic of “unity in diversity” discovered by the European Union is therefore very much the same riddle that also underlies the constitution of the national public sphere. The public sphere is the space for organising societal diversity, by envisaging its possible, but still incomplete unity. As such, the “unity in diversity” dynamics of public communication are essential for staging democracy as the expression of popular sovereignty that recollects the plural voices of the citizens. Becoming engaged in public communication is a way to accept the common normative horizon of a discursive community, which is held together by the belief in the possibility of agreement, consensus and understanding. The collective will of the people is what Ernesto Laclau (2005) has called an empty signifier of democracy. It has the crucial function of simulating the unity of ongoing discursive practice. Although the consensus is still unachieved and the understanding is still incomplete, it can at least be talked about. The public sphere is then displayed through this unfinished project of collective will formation, which relates the multiple discursive positions within a unifying signifying practice.

An understanding of the unfinished nature of the public sphere is essential for conceiving the possibilities of a transnational opening of our communicative spaces. As noted by Armando Salvatore (2007: 48), publicity can be perceived as a critical movement, which potentially reaches beneath but also beyond the Westphalian sphere. There is thus a “fruitful ambivalence” in the original dynamic concept of the public sphere, which in its historic unfolding in the nation state framework, was viewed as “perpetually unfulfilled, unable to fully satisfy the criteria of rationality and universality that it entailed” (ibid.). It is this unfinished and unsatisfied nature of the project of the public sphere, which becomes the seed of its potential transnationalisation.

Conceptualising the public sphere as an unfinished project of collective will formation is also helpful in qualifying the status of normative political theory of European integration within the debate on the democratic reconstitution of Europe. Normative political theorists are neither the chief organisers of the debate on a European democratic project nor its neutral external observers. Academics and intellectuals are simply one of the many players in the public sphere (and probably not even the most central). They cannot be expected to provide solutions for the possible reconciliation of unity and diversity, but only *stimuli* for the continuation of this signifying practice. The unfinished search for a consistent normativity of democracy is manifested in modelling attempts that seek to maximise the different standards of democracy (e.g. participation and deliberation) and apply them to particular institutional-constitutional settings (Lord 2004). The models that are discussed in relation to a constituted EU polity (such as an intergovernmental Europe, a federal Europe or a cosmopolitan Europe) are different ways of reconfiguring the “unity and diversity” of the European space (Eriksen and Fossum 2007). Thus, their main function consists in de-paradoxisation: they negotiate particular trade-offs among the principles of democracy and, in doing so, allow for the continuation of democratic practice.

My proposal for a practical turn in the theory of democracy is thus based on a constructivist understanding of the public sphere. A theory of practice needs to spell out how the aspiration for an impossible reconciliation between unity and diversity is turned into discursive practice that structures the political field of European integration (Trenz 2008). Analysis of the structuring effects of discursive practice could, for instance, start with a mapping of the observatory positions that constitute the political field. The political struggle, dealing with the unity and diversity of the public sphere follows well-established ideological cleavages. In political programmes or party manifestos, unity and diversity are typically played off against each other. Communitarians put a strong emphasis on commonality and unity in the public sphere. Liberals propose a public sphere based on pluralism and difference. Multiculturalists propagate a diversity of units, which is represented in the co-existence of fragmented public spheres. Proponents of deliberative democracy aim at the reconciliation of unity and diversity through a higher discursive rationality. These political logics fall short in seeing that unity and diversity are not the foundational moment of the public sphere but rather products of discursive practice. Yet it is exactly this political

logic of perceiving unity and diversity as alternatives or as opposite poles that becomes the enabling condition for entering into discursive practice. The public sphere indeed does both: As suggested by the theme of the Helsinki conference for which this contribution was originally delivered: it is 'uniting and dividing' at the same time and through the same discursive practice.

Conclusion

This chapter has found an intrinsic tension between the contrafactual normativity of the public sphere and the reality of ongoing communicative practice. Instead of resolving this tension, it has been proposed that public sphere research should turn towards the ongoing practice of legitimation and delegitimation, which constitutes a shared sphere of communication and mutual observation. The still-open constitutional process of the European Union illustrates these interrelated dynamics of polity building and public sphere building. The unfinished nature of the European public sphere correlates with the unfinished nature of the EU polity and its aspiration towards the mythical finalité of the integration project.

Ultimately, the European public sphere deficit is found to be less exceptional than expected. Disenchantment with the quality of political communication is part of the history of the public sphere. This contrafactual normativity of the public sphere as an unfinished project of collective will formation must be kept in mind when searching for the possibilities for a European public sphere. The diagnosis of such a "deficit" is not only given by the European research community, it also guides the self-reflexive practice of European institutions in searching for the conditions to improve the dialogue with citizens (Commission 2006). For a sociological account, it is then possible to observe how the European public sphere materialises through the recognition of its own deficits (Trenz and Eder 2004).

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Chapter 3

European Public Spheres and the Challenge of Radical Pluralism

Kari Karppinen

Although the institutional reforms associated with deeper political integration in Europe are still contested, few if anyone oppose wider public debate as a means of strengthening the legitimacy of the emerging European polity. Often captured in the notion of the “European Public Sphere”, the role of communication and public debate has gained prominence in both political and academic discourse. Yet in political philosophy, the normative baggage associated with the very notion of the public sphere is highly contested, and there are different conceptualisations of the role and functions of public debate for transnational democracy.

Despite its popularity, the notion of a European public sphere has not brought consensus as to its definition or component parts. In empirical, media-centric studies in particular, the European public sphere constitutes a broad, highly elusive conceptual category, whose analytical force often remains unclear. In some contexts, the public sphere constitutes a normative god term of communication and democracy, referring to all things good. In more empiricist and reductionist usage, the public sphere is simplistically equated with media coverage, implying that the existence of the European public sphere depends on the perceived Europeanization of news agendas.

However, if the public sphere is to retain any critical potential as a normative concept, one should avoid, as Nancy Fraser (2007: 46-47) argues, both an empiricist approach, which simply adapts theory to existing realities, and an externalist approach, which invokes an ideal theory with which to condemn social reality (see also the chapter by Hans-Jörg Trenz in this volume). As Iris Marion Young (2000: 10) has argued, the ideals of critical political theory are neither descriptions nor blueprints and correspond neither to present nor to future reality. Instead, their value is in reflecting on reality from a distance, revealing deficiencies in contemporary political arrangements, and envisaging alternative possibilities. In this sense, theory is useful only to the extent to which it enables us to examine critically the claims made both by academics and by politicians.

In the absence of a European media system or a common political culture, the analytical value of the European public sphere can easily be questioned.

Yet the purpose of this article is not to assess the empirical viability of this concept; nor is it to assess whether anything like the European public sphere actually exists. Neither will I try to construct a new theory of the public sphere that would better fit the emerging transnational context. Instead, the focus is on the different normative assumptions and visions of democracy behind the current European debate. The assumption here is that it is important to engage with democratic theory, not only to highlight the gap between the ideals and the reality, but also to question critically the normative claims made in both academic and political debates.

The main tension considered here is that which exists between the frameworks of deliberative democracy and its radical-pluralist critics, and the consequences of this tension for conceptualising the European public sphere as a normative ideal. In academic debates, much of the discussion continues to lean upon the framework of deliberative democracy and the Habermasian concept of the public sphere as an arena of rational-critical debate. Yet reflecting on the broader emphasis on pluralism and difference in political theory, normative models of deliberative democracy and the public sphere have increasingly been criticised for overemphasising social integration, unity, and rational consensus. The emphasis on rational deliberation and consensus is seen to ignore relations of power, the depth of social pluralism, and fundamental value differences, thus offering a limited basis for democratisation – on either national or transnational levels.

In this chapter, radical-pluralist or agonistic theories of democracy refer to theories in which the public sphere is conceived as a site for political struggle and conflict, and not only as a site for the formation of the common will, common identity, or consensus. While such critique of deliberative democracy has recently gained prominence in political philosophy, few theories about the consequences for the debate on the European public sphere, let alone any institutional or concrete political questions, have been formulated. This has led many to doubt the practical relevance of the radical-pluralist approach. In fact, it seems that a lack of institutional proposals or of interest in concrete political questions is a widespread feature of various post-modern theories of radical difference and pluralism (McLennan 1995: 85). Instead, radical-democratic perspectives have been used more as oppositional discourses or to criticise the biases and flaws in the existing normative frameworks. In this chapter, some of the radical-democratic critiques of the deliberative approach are reviewed and an assessment provided of what prospects, if any, these perspectives might provide for the project of European democracy.

The Paradox of the European Public Sphere

Much of the debate on the European public sphere is characterised by a tension between commonality and unity on the one hand, and pluralism and diversity on the other. Reflecting the “unity in diversity” slogan of the European Union

(EU), the public sphere debate often combines the goals of enhancing social integration and establishing a political community or a European identity with acknowledging and fostering Europe's cultural and political pluralism.

Given the close connection of the European public sphere debate with the goals of further political and social integration, it is hardly surprising that the concept includes a strong emphasis on commonality and unity. For Habermas (2001b: 16), the European-wide public sphere is a key condition for the emergence of a European identity and a shared solidarity, which in turn are seen as requirements for further integration and harmonisation. In short, the notion of the public sphere is a central element of an imagined post-national form of social integration that no longer relies on national identity, but on the civic identity of "constitutional patriotism" (Habermas 2001a).

The goal then is to build a genuinely shared political culture that allows "different cultural, ethnic and religious forms of life to coexist and interact in equal terms" (Habermas 1998: 408). Based on a distinction between common civic identity and the particular ethnic or cultural identities of specific subcultures or nations, the notion of constitutional patriotism proposes that democratic citizenship no longer requires citizens to share the same language or the same ethnic and cultural origins. Citizens only need to be socialised into a common political culture based on liberal constitutional principles. (Baumeister 2007: 483-484.)

The notion of constitutional patriotism and the socialising function of the European public sphere can be seen as attempts to provide a solution to the solidarity gap arising from the lack of a common European identity. The public sphere as a theoretical concept thus implies both socialisation of citizens into a political community and the potential for collective self-government through discussion. In the debate on the European public sphere these two functions are often intertwined: the function of the public sphere is seen as the forging of a common identity that can serve as the basis for collective decision-making aimed at "the European collective good" (see, for instance, Eriksen 2005). In other words, the democratic process itself can now serve as a source of both legitimacy and social integration. This view seems offer a neat solution to the integration problems facing the EU.

Yet for many critics, the identification provided by constitutional patriotism is too thin and too abstract to generate a genuine sense of solidarity and belonging (Baumeister 2007). Furthermore, in a complex, large-scale polity such as the EU or even most nation-states today, the unitary model of the public sphere has given way to a more pluralistic and differentiated model of multiple public spheres. For reasons of both theoretical critique and empirical barriers, the public sphere theory in general has taken a marked pluralistic or anti-essentialist turn. Arguably, this has also contributed to a certain impasse in the debate on the European public sphere. While it has become commonplace to give up the unitary model of the public sphere and speak of public spheres in the plural, it can be argued that at some point the emphasis on diversity and pluralism runs against the basic imaginary presuppositions of democracy and

the public sphere theory itself. In other words, there is an inherent tension between pluralism and “publicness” (McLennan 1995: 92). Similarly, Chantal Mouffe (2000: 64) speaks of “the democratic paradox”: how to envisage a form of commonality strong enough to institute a *demos* but nevertheless be compatible with true religious, moral, cultural, and political pluralism?

While Habermas’s constitutional patriotism offers one possible solution to the democratic paradox, its sharp distinction between political and cultural integration is rather problematic. Instead, the “no *demos*” question often raised in European politics clearly points to questions of culture and identity. The paradox then refers to the viability of a European identity in a cultural sense (Tassin 1992; Stavrakis 2005). This, of course, is a central question for the European public sphere if its main problem is considered to be the lack of a “cultural substrate” required for collective will-formation (Eriksen 2005).

Aside from questions of European identity, however, the democratic paradox also concerns the presuppositions of democratic theory and the perceived political functions of the public sphere. In particular, the paradox will be approached here from the perspective of the tension between unity and difference in democratic theory. In many ways, problems associated with the fragmentation and differentiation of public spheres have become more acute on a transnational scale. If public spheres now overflow national boundaries and dissolve into networks whose publics no longer constitute a *demos* of political citizenry, what becomes of their critical function of checking governments and democratising governance? Furthermore, the tension is intensified by developments of media systems, given that national media have been accompanied by various sub-national and transnational niche media.

In effect, it has been argued that these processes of individualisation and pluralisation are eroding the social-structural conditions for political consensus, which until now have made collective political action possible, at least in the theoretical imagination. As summarised by Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim (2001: 29), with a multiplication of issues and fields of action, the closed space of the public realm no longer exists, and the public spheres are instead constituted from conflictual spaces that are individualised and defined in opposition to each other.

Without going into the debate on the consequences of general social pluralisation and individualisation, the above serves to highlight the background in which claims are made about the European public sphere. For given the social imaginary of increased pluralism and cultural decentralisation, attempts to accelerate Europe’s social and cultural integration from above are easily dismissed as either academic idealism or dangerous attempts at elitist social engineering.

In this situation, many have argued that the Habermasian ideal of rationalising democracy through public deliberation and constitutional principles is too utopian and too academic as a whole. Just as Habermas’s early work was criticised for ignoring the practical-historical limits that prevented the materialisation of the all-inclusive public sphere, so many critics see the present-

day advocacy of the European public sphere as hopelessly ignorant of such barriers as unequal relations of power, cultural heterogeneity, and differences in political traditions. Thus, many have argued that the role of public debate and criticism should be recast as a contestation of hegemonic power instead of rationalising decision-making. Hence, it is argued that transnational circuits of public debate and interest-negotiation can make transnational public powers more accountable and transparent without the need for an all-compassing notion of a universalistic public sphere (see the chapter by Hannu Nieminen in this volume).

It is in this context that the radical-pluralist approach has seemed to offer an interesting alternative to the conceptualisations of deliberative democracy. Given the normative critique and the empirical barriers to a European public sphere in the Habermasian sense, an approach that emphasises the aspects of contestation and dislocation of hegemonic powers (instead of the utopia of rationalising society through some universal principles) understandably seems attractive for formulating the theories of European-wide democracy.

From Deliberative Democracy to Agonistic Pluralism

In discussing the ideal of a European public sphere, most studies seem to take as their general point of departure the Habermasian conceptualisation of the public sphere. This probably has to do in part with Habermas's own active role in the European debate. While some still draw inspiration from Habermas's early work on the structural transformation of the public sphere, more often the notion is used more broadly as a general context for the interaction in which public discussion takes place, ideas are circulated, and the political order is criticised. In a very broad sense, it is relatively unproblematic to argue that democracy requires such a critical communicative space.

Yet there are crucial differences in conceptualising both the functions and the ideal forms of such communicative space. As the theoretical framework that has dominated much recent democratic theory, the idea of deliberative democracy characteristically tries to reconcile the aforementioned "democratic paradox" by making the discursive formation of the public sphere the essence of political community. In contrast to liberal-pluralism or communitarianism, the deliberative approach thus denies the pluralism of fixed differences (individual or community) that lead either to an aggregation model of individual interests or to irreducible community identities. Instead, the emphasis on difference is complemented, and qualified, by an emphasis on the strong public sphere of rational-critical deliberation (see, for instance, Dahlberg 2005).

The previously discussed notion of "constitutional patriotism" can be seen as a prime example of this belief in the integrating and socialising power of the public sphere and civic participation. For Habermas and his followers, the pan-European public sphere is thereby seen as the key solution to the solidarity gap caused by insufficient social integration. In line with Habermas's earlier work on

deliberative democracy and communicative reason, it presents the ideal of free and unconstrained discussion as the ultimate criterion of political legitimacy.

In approaches informed by deliberative democracy, the role of the European public sphere is then conceptualised in terms of the public use of reason by free and equal citizens. It provides a norm for rational-critical deliberation, which is inclusive, reflexive, and aimed at understanding and agreement. Since certain institutional arrangements apparently encourage this type of communication more than others, deliberative democracy has also provided an explicitly normative framework for assessing political structures and institutions, including the media.

The ideals of deliberative democracy, however, have not escaped criticism in political philosophy. For many, the rational-critical basis of the public sphere delivers an overtly rationalist conception, which fails to provide adequate theories about unequal relations of power. Drawing from many post-modern theorists, critics see that the deliberative emphasis on communicative reason inevitably leads to support for the *status quo* in terms of existing exclusions and inequalities. Such emphasis fails to acknowledge the normalising tendencies involved in the designation of a particular form of communication as the rational and democratically legitimate norm (see, for instance, Villa 1992; Fraser 1992; Gardiner 2004).

Furthermore, the emphasis on rational consensus is widely seen as underestimating the depth of societal pluralism and the fundamental nature of value conflicts, both in the sense of cultural differences as well as structural conflicts of interest. The general thrust of deliberative democracy is thus considered too dependent on the view that a benign social order must be grounded in the ideals of unity and consensus. While European social reality is increasingly characterised by diversity and pluralism, the insistence on rational consensus is seen as too idealised, too unrealistic, and too academic.

For many critics the type of identification provided by constitutional patriotism is too thin and abstract to generate a genuine sense of solidarity and belonging (Baumeister 2007). Slavko Splichal (2006: 701) has argued that just as *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* was criticised for ignoring the exclusionary tendencies of the historical bourgeois public sphere, so the project of a pan-European public sphere may also be used to justify the fabrication of “the fictional Europe of elites without citizens”. In short, the emphasis on consensus and the universal criteria of rationality is seen as leading to an over-centralised model of the public sphere that is incompatible with societal pluralism and inevitably ignores inequalities between social groups and their specific needs. Iris Marion Young (1997: 401) among others has argued that the defining characteristic of a public is plurality and that the public is irreducible to a single denominator. Therefore, a concept of publicity that requires its members to put aside their differences in order to uncover the common good is seen to destroy its very meaning. Or as Bauman (1997: 202) bluntly puts it: “Habermas’s ‘perfect communication’, which measures its own perfection by consensus and the exclusion of dissent, is another dream of death which radically cures the ills of freedom’s life”.

In light of the above criticism, the radical-pluralist, or agonistic, theories of democracy have recently emerged as one of the most prominent alternative imaginaries in democratic theory. Radical-pluralist theories of democracy typically maintain that civil society is neither harmonious nor unitary, but rather characterised by conflicts of interest and an irreducible pluralism of values. Consequently, any system of rational consensus is seen not only as utopian, but also as being dangerous and necessarily exclusive. If the theories of deliberative democracy have essentially tried to reconcile the tension between pluralism and commonality by placing emphasis on solidarity and agreement among rational inquirers, then the agonistic model of democracy can be seen in many ways as its counter-narrative. As a prominent advocate of “agonistic democracy”, Chantal Mouffe contends:

For a radical and plural democracy, the belief that a final resolution of conflicts is eventually possible, even if envisaged as an asymptotic approach to the regulative ideal of free and unconstrained communication, as in Habermas, far from providing the necessary horizon of the democratic project, is something that puts it at risk. (Mouffe 1993: 8)

While deliberative democrats conceive of the public sphere as an arena of rational and critical debate leading to consensus, many radical democratic theorists today argue that democracy should instead be conceived in terms of agonistic confrontation or contestation. Another central point in the agonistic approach is that the public sphere is conceptualised as a site for the formation and contesting of opposing social and political identities, not simply as a site for creating social unity. Consequently, the radical-pluralist approach has been used to criticise the rationalist politico-economic focus of mainstream European studies, for instance, and to promote a model of the public sphere that takes into account not only rational debate, but also emotions, passions, and identities (see Stavrakis 2005).

It must be admitted that even within the framework of deliberative democracy, theorising about the public sphere has taken a pluralistic turn. The most notable implication of this is the rejection of a universal or singular idea of the public sphere in favour of a plurality of public spheres, conceptualised as a complex field of multiple interconnected publics, a revision endorsed by Habermas himself. In this sense, it can be argued that much of the “radical-pluralist” criticism is arguably based on a rather simplified reading of deliberative democracy and especially of Habermas’s later work, which can be seen as advocating a much more pluralistic conception of public spheres (see Brady 2004; Dahlberg 2005). Thus, acknowledging the contemporary fact of pluralism and conceiving the public spheres as plural, rather than singular, no longer seems to be so salient a critique.

However, it can be argued that, despite acknowledging pluralism, Habermas continues to rely on rational consensus as a regulative ideal, which guides deliberation and legitimates the outcome of democratic procedures. Even

though genuine consensus is rarely attained, Habermas insists that participants must continue to assume that consensus is possible in principle; otherwise political disputes would forfeit their deliberative character and degenerate into purely strategic struggles for power (Baumeister 2007: 488). Therefore, despite developments in deliberative democracy, there remains a clear difference in emphasis between the concern with social cohesion and legitimacy and the radical pluralist emphasis on contestation and struggle. In this sense, it is at least partly useful to treat deliberative democracy and radical pluralism as two contrasting visions of democratic theory.

Pluralisation and Its Problems

As the idea of the European public sphere as a unitary and cohesive space becomes increasingly outdated, greater stock is being placed on various social movements and networks and the forms of political contestation and criticism they provide. Following the established critiques of the Habermasian public sphere, most writers now seem to regard the proliferation of segmented publics and counter-publics not only as a way of enhancing the participation of excluded groups, but also as a way of establishing new forms of transnational democratic accountability.

Similar to overall pluralisation of the public sphere theory, the attention in European debates has turned to the plurality of overlapping publics, which do not require internal cohesion, but which do collectively contribute to various processes of transnationalisation and the creation of European transnational publics (Splichal 2006: 709-710). The plethora of publics is seen to increase the information level and contestation of different viewpoints and thus improve democratic accountability. More publics mean more debate and critique, which means that fewer voices are excluded and more questions are asked. Mirroring the shift in Habermas's thinking, the public sphere is thus seemingly relieved of the burden of collectively solving problems or having to produce a rational solution to political questions. Instead, pluralised publics are seen as vehicles of democratisation in the sense that they contribute to deconstructing hegemonic truths and prevailing consensus – a goal that seemingly comes close to converging with the radical-pluralist approach.

The pluralisation of the public sphere, however, has not provided solutions to all problems. First, in terms of social integration, it raises the question of whether the variety of public spheres based on different identities does not also disrupt and fragment the political community so that it relapses into "identity politics" and the disruptive effect of groups demanding recognition for their difference (Eriksen 2005). Secondly, the existence of networks of communication or various sub-publics does not resolve the question of political influence or collective decision-making. As Eriksen argues, there is a missing link between general public debate and institutionalised decision-making. The problem is not so much the lack of public spaces, but the inability to translate various

expressions of public opinions into political decision-making (ibid.).

In this sense, the democratic paradox goes to the core of representative politics. As Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim note, the number of negotiation systems cannot grow indefinitely, and it is not possible to admit more and more actors and views into political power, because that would only multiply the number of arenas of conflict without increasing the potential for consensus. It thus becomes apparent that the politicisation of society does not readily translate into activation of politics. Instead, the increasingly fragmented political structure also weakens the potential of political societies for the integration and aggregation of various public opinions into collective decisions. (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2001: 28-29.)

As Fraser (2007) reminds us, from the point of view of basic normative criteria in the public sphere theory, communicative power generated in civil society must also translate into laws and administrative policies. If the participants in the public sphere no longer constitute a *demos*, how can public opinion be mobilised as a political force?

If the function of the public sphere is to control and constrain political power, where is that power? Which publics are relevant to which powers? And who are the relevant members of a given public? As long as the public sphere is conceived not only as an arena of self-expression but also as a “system of influence”, these kinds of questions are hard to avoid. No matter how multiple we imagine the publics, they continue to be charged with relations of power and hierarchies in terms of their capacity to influence politics.

The pluralisation of the public sphere has perhaps made the concept more empirically realistic, but from the perspective of deliberative democracy, it has not really solved any of the associated normative problems. Consequently, most writers who depend on the ideals of deliberative democracy keep returning to the root problem of the lack of collective identification. As long as deliberative democracy has at its heart an ideal of self-government through public deliberation, the question of lacking commonalities remains central. Although public spheres are treated as being plural, their function is still seen as bringing about a collective identity strong enough to support collective will-formation.

Therefore, is it enough just to add more subaltern public spheres to the mix? Although advocates of the European public sphere largely acknowledge as inevitable the fact of pluralism and the value-conflicts, they continue to depend on rational consensus as a universal regulative ideal that guides deliberation and legitimates the outcomes of democratic procedures. In other words, although the numbers of arenas and levels of public debate have multiplied, there continues to be but one public reason, one universal standard of rationality. Similarly, the problem of a democratic deficit is still one of bringing the system under the control of civil society by means of some universal standards of communicative rationality and establishing the institutional structures that guarantee this. By recognising pluralism, but retaining the regulative ideal of rational consensus and orientation towards the common good, it can be argued that the debate on the European public sphere has come to grips with the fact of pluralism

but not with “radical pluralism”, a view in which political life is characterised not by a search for the common standard but by persistent conflict between incommensurable interests and values.

According to the radical-pluralist view, the universal-rationalist public sphere approach underestimates the challenge social and cultural pluralism pose both (1) to the ideas of shared collective identity, all-encompassing political culture, and political consensus, and (2) to the possibility of common procedures or forms of deliberation that are purportedly value-neutral. While the revisions made by Habermas and his fellow deliberative democrats seem to address the first point to some degree, the second point remains a central issue of disagreement between the deliberative democrats and their radical pluralist critics.

As Mouffe contends:

The belief in the possibility of a universal rational consensus has put democratic thinking on the wrong track. Instead of trying to design the institutions which, through supposedly “impartial” procedures, would reconcile all conflicting interests and values, the task for democratic theorists and politicians should be to envisage the creation of a vibrant “agonistic” public sphere of contestation where different hegemonic political projects can be confronted. (Mouffe 2005: 3)

To clarify the argument, the main points of the radical-pluralist approach are briefly reviewed here in reference to Mouffe in particular. For one thing, radical pluralism must be distinguished from the naïve celebration of all multiplicity and differences. While Mouffe criticises the essentialism of the unitary and universal-rationalist forms of political theory that tend to fix social identities in a closed political community, she also criticises its opposite: a type of extreme post-modern fragmentation that puts exclusive emphasis on all kinds of heterogeneity and incommensurability.

While arguing for agonistic confrontation as necessary for democracy, Mouffe (2000: 103) acknowledges that there will always be a need for a certain degree of consensus in liberal democracy – hence, “the democratic paradox”. However, this need not and cannot be a rational consensus based on a common will envisaged by deliberative democrats. Rather, she stresses that every consensus is provisional and exists as the temporal result of a provisional hegemony, a stabilisation of power, and always entails some form of exclusion. What the deliberative models deny, she argues, are the dimensions of this undecidability and the ineradicability of antagonisms, which are constitutive of democracy (Mouffe 2000: 104-105).

In this sense, the key to the democratic paradox is that it is not soluble. For accepting the final truth would mean the elimination of conflict and contestation. In addition, if conflict and contestation were accepted as central to democracy, then its realisation in a reconciled way would mean the end of democracy. In other words, a fully achieved democracy is a conceptual impossibility, and for Mouffe, the substance of radical and pluralistic democracy is found in the

open-ended contestation of all normative principles, not in their final definition or actual realisation.

The radical-pluralist approach is thus best interpreted, not as praise of multiplicity as such, but as a call to recognise the aspects of power and exclusion inherent in all conceptions of the public sphere. For Mouffe, the key task for democratic politics is to make the relations of power visible so that they can enter the terrain of contestation. This then puts emphasis on political conflicts and choices among real political alternatives as the essence of democratic politics.

Some Implications for the European Public Sphere

The purpose of the above discussion is not so much to argue for the superiority of any given theoretical framework and even less to arrive at a revised theory of the public sphere or to offer a solution to the EU's democratic deficit. Rather, it can be argued that identifying and analysing the theoretical premises may help to illuminate some problematic assumptions in the current debate on the European public sphere and point to some less obvious questions.

Public sphere ideals are often dismissed as mere academic utopianism that offers no practical political guidance. However, with the naïve ideal of a rational-consensual public sphere, in which all Europeans deliberate as equals, losing its credibility, a more palpable danger today seems to be that the critical potential of the concept of the public sphere dissolves altogether as it is used more and more in European policy rhetoric. This complacency is only underlined now that the public sphere has surfaced as a rhetorical tool in the EU's communication strategies, such as the *White Paper on European Communication Policy* and *Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate*, both of which envision the creation of "a European public sphere" by means of better communication, use of new technology, and so forth. In line with national contexts, it is important to note that the investment of governments and public institutions in communication and public relations is rarely aimed only at genuine public deliberation. Rather, it aims at rhetorically producing an illusion of legitimacy and of uncontroversial or harmonious consensus (see Axford and Huggins 2001).

It is this sense that Stavrakis (2005) criticises the "complicity between mainstream European politics and academia". Both are characterised by a certain modernist standpoint that discusses European integration in terms of building consensus and unity without giving much attention to more radical aims. Similarly, perhaps the most important difference between the approaches of deliberative democracy and those of radical pluralism lies in their general tone, or ethos, of theorising. As Bonnie Honig (1993: 2) writes, a radical pluralist approach finds its justification above all as a critique of political theorists who measure their success by the elimination of dissonance, and conflict, and thus "confine politics to the tasks of stabilising moral and political subjects, building

consensus, or consolidating communities and identities". While much of the debate on the European public sphere, and the EU in general, has arguably been oriented towards the search for such "political closure" or stabilisation, the radical pluralist approaches explicitly endeavour to shift the emphasis of democratic politics to the processes of dislocation, contestation, and resistance.

Given the lack of radical proposals or modifications to the general European project in both academic and political rhetoric, it seems fair to question whether the aim of the European public sphere is only to shore up the EU's legitimacy or actually to envision new forms of democratic accountability or political contestation. It also seems relevant to ask whether too much emphasis is placed on communication and discussion, and too little on the democratisation of political institutions and other power hierarchies inherent in the integration process. For it is exactly due to this separation of the communicative realm from systemic spheres of money and power that John Dryzek (2000: 26), for instance, has concluded that, if Habermas's theory of deliberative democracy provides no sense of how political and economic structures should be further democratised, then it is difficult to regard it as a contribution to critical theory.

In this sense, it can be argued that the debate on the European public sphere requires further radicalising rather than yielding to empirical or political realities. Rather than bureaucratic attempts to educate European citizens into accepting the superiority of the European collective good, the radical pluralist approach puts emphasis on the need for more politicisation and contestation of official goals. In short, the focus of the radical-pluralist perspective would be to emphasise as the root causes of the lame public debate, not the lack of unity or insufficient social integration, but the lack of political alternatives and politicisation in general.

For Mouffe, an open conflict of interest and a vibrant clash of political positions are not only necessary for healthy democracy, but also can work as buffers against confrontations between non-negotiable moral values and essential identities. As a concrete example of the dangers of consensual logic, Mouffe (2005) recently discussed the rise of right-wing populism across Europe as a reaction to the lack of credible political alternatives in mainstream politics. It is tempting to apply the same idea to European politics and public debate in general. Perhaps the general indifference and even antipathy towards the EU can be taken as a sign that the EU itself is not sufficiently politicised. It has not succeeded in offering sources for opposing political identifications and passions. The problem is not insufficient social integration or lack of common will, but rather the lack of contestation of official goals and the lack of alternative political visions for the future of the EU.

A related problem in the mainstream debate is the assumption of a causal direction between the emergence of the European public sphere and the democratic deficit. For Habermas and others, the democratic deficit can only be eliminated if a European public sphere comes into existence. Yet the causal direction between democracy and publicness can easily be reversed. While Habermas and his followers suggest that the democratic deficit can be over-

come by establishing a European-wide public sphere, it can equally well be argued that it is the deficit in democracy that has generated the deficit in publicness in the first place (see Splichal 2006: 701). Problems in procedures and transparency of decision-making, a lack of genuine European political parties or opposition, and the lack of civil society's participation in the procedures of decision-making all seem to be clear contributions to the lack of politicisation and political passion on the European level. Altogether, it seems highly unlikely that an autonomous European public sphere would emerge as the result of enlightened journalism or sudden civic mobilisation. It remains important to note that barriers in the ways of the European public sphere have to do not only with culture, language, or identities, but also with institutional problems, such as technocratic decision-making, and a dearth of political alternatives or oppositional political structures.

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Chapter 4

A Cosmopolitan Temptation*

Philip Schlesinger

This chapter¹ considers the extent to which the development of the European Union has opened up the prospects of a European public sphere and a new cosmopolitanism.

The EU is a regional bloc of 27 European states, each with distinctive political, bureaucratic and judicial institutions. What makes the Union so interesting for social and political theory – as well as for empirical research into communication and culture – is that it is a unique experiment because it is a regional economic formation with a developed political superstructure. Its uniqueness lies both in its scale and the recurrently articulated ambition in some political quarters of the Union to create a federal political entity.

The theoretical challenge for thinking about the public sphere lies both in the EU's unusual status as a polity and in its unresolved nature – its ambiguities, its liminality. The Union is a supranational entity caught between two models – on the one hand, intergovernmental cooperation and on the other, a possible federalism. At present, it operates as a regulatory regime for its member states. Its ultimate federal vocation remains uncertain. In April 2007, the former German foreign minister, Joschka Fischer, pointed to the EU's present lack of legitimacy and stasis over institutional reform and cautioned against possible melt down. The impasse had come about in June 2005 when, in referenda held in both their states, the French and Dutch electorates rejected the process of ratifying a Constitutional Treaty for the EU. Only in December 2007 was a resolution found. The Treaty of Lisbon signed that month at an Intergovernmental Conference replaced the controversial draft constitution (and incorporated many of the original reforms). Subject to ratification by the EU's member states, the Lisbon Treaty will come into force in January 2009.

Why be concerned about the effort to produce a constitution? One key reason is that the developing Euro-polity has stretched received concepts of statehood and extended notions of citizenship and identity – however gingerly – beyond the nation-state. The full engagement of citizens in a European public sphere (or, much more probable, in an interconnected sphere of publics) would change the present balance of relationships between the Union and the member

states. Common action in a common space (or interlinked spaces) would have consequences for conceptions of collective belonging to the body politic.

Of course, this perspective is open to dispute, as from a theoretical point of view the EU is a screen on which different normative models are continually projected. It follows that the significance of much empirical work – including that on the role of media and communication in contributing to the possible construction of a European public sphere – is open to diverse interpretations.

A New Cosmopolitanism?

The Union's present trajectory has engaged major social theorists such as Ulrich Beck, Manuel Castells, and Jürgen Habermas. All – in different ways – have signalled the EU's cosmopolitan potential. Beck (2006: 3), for instance, has defined the cosmopolitan outlook as comprising a:

[g]lobal sense, a sense of boundarylessness. An everyday, historically alert, reflexive awareness of ambivalences in a milieu of blurring differentiations and cultural contradictions. It reveals...the possibility of shaping one's life under conditions of cultural mixture...

While in this conception Beck signals the general importance of ambivalence for a cosmopolitan *Weltanschauung*, in the case of Europe he is far too ready to try and resolve the contradictions. It is understandable that the creation and elaboration of a supranational political formation encourages reflections both on post-nationalism and transnationalism. However, there is a crucial difference between developing a critical awareness of the unconventional nature of the EU as a polity and seeing the Union as necessarily becoming a nascent cosmopolitan space that allows an escape from the prison-house of nationalism.

The “cosmopolitan temptation” of my title, therefore, concerns the detectable desire to over-read the EU's post-nationalist possibilities. We cannot deny that far-reaching new relations, which might transform the national instance, could emerge as the Union develops. Although the political imagination can and should be deployed to envisage a future good society it is dangerous to cast off the moorings of an analytical intelligence that pays careful attention to developments on the ground. To be sure, the cosmopolitan alternative is tempting, given the huge destructiveness of the dark side of nationalism in Europe during the twentieth century and continuing ethno-national struggles in the twenty-first. But acts of will cannot abolish the continuing significance of the national dimension.

We need to discipline our reflections about the possibility of cosmopolitanism by showing due analytical respect for the continued existence of the state system and the historico-cultural weight of the nation in thinking about the future of the public sphere in Europe.

Communicative Space

The idea of communicative space is central to how we think about the workings of the contemporary political public sphere. When used in this context, the spatial metaphor designates what must, in the end, be a bounded figure whose internal and external relations are in each case subject to a specific range of determinations. A public sphere is typically conceived as a domain constituted for the exercise of critical judgement, where writing, publishing, visualising, talking, listening and deliberating are means of engagement in matters of public interest. In the era of the modern state, the principal space of political communication has commonly been equated with the territorial limits of a national community. In Ernest Gellner's (1983) phrase, the state provides the "political roof" for a national culture. The mediated discourses of political actors have a key role in giving shape and texture to the public sphere.

Slavko Splichal (2006) has noted that the Kantian principle of publicity makes a universal claim that necessarily extends beyond a national or indeed, a European, political framework. In line with this, for cosmopolitans, public communicative space is precisely potentially global in scope. Consequently, states have become relativised as communicative spaces and containers of political action. However, it remains important to note that states have not been transcended as the principal controllers of citizenship, the purveyors of key collective identities, or the deliverers of a myriad of services and demands that shape the everyday lives and experiences of their inhabitants.

Thus, when it comes to conceptualising the public sphere, two broad perspectives – the statist and the global – are now the grand polar variants in play. This dualistic characterisation may simplify and dramatisé; but it does offer us a clear entry-point into arguments about the EU.

If "the state" and "the globe" describe distinct conceptions of political space, polities that are neither clearly the one nor the other offer a particular challenge to such categorisation. In a binary conceptual framework, their ambiguity simply cannot be resolved. The European Union is in this sense a conceptual anomaly. Less all embracing than the globe, it is also much more territorially far-reaching than the state. And it is precisely this ambiguous figuration that makes it so open to a cosmopolitan temptation.

As the political scope of national communicative communities in the EU is no longer completely defined by the member states' boundaries, to analyse emergent European communicative spaces, we need to shift our focus to the supranational arenas centred on Brussels and consider how these work for their constituent publics.

Is the European Public Sphere Manageable?

How are we to think of "publicness" in the multi-level complexity of the EU? Both national and "European" discourses and institutions co-exist. The EU's

policy making is a major constitutive part of member states' domestic political agendas and also of their legal and economic frameworks. Yet for most citizens the Union is still another place, a different political level and an external locus of decision-making more than it is an internal one. Political scientists' label for the widespread public alienation from the EU is the "democratic deficit". And there is now growing official recognition that this is accompanied by a "communication deficit".

Unease at the top was signalled by the European Commission's (2006) White Paper on Communication Policy. The Commission envisaged engaging recalcitrant publics via a "partnership" encompassing "civil society" across the member states. This entails an implicit theory not only of political communication but also of social communication. Civil society is only in part to be conceived as operating in the political domain. It is also a socio-cultural hinterland and a realm of everyday life. The territory of social communication encompasses "thick" social relations. To some extent this concerns the official world of political and other institutions. But more significant, perhaps, are our everyday attachments to localities, workplaces, associations, our shared tastes and pleasures, the familiar and the engaging. It is our routine situatedness that produces a sense of belonging and the emotional attachments that are still part of national life in European states. As contemporary debate about the future of multiculturalism amply testifies, the national public sphere is the terrain of considerable conflict. What matters for present purposes, however, is that rather than identify an emergent Europeanism with cosmopolitan potential, the EC's proposed approach to citizen mobilisation has gone with the grain of the nation and the state.

In fact, unbeknown to its progenitors, this social communications approach has at least a century-old pedigree. At the turn of the 1900s, the Austro-Marxist theorist, Otto Bauer (2000), wished to entrench national cultural autonomy in the multinational Habsburg empire. He conceived of the nation as linguistically and culturally self-contained, or at the very least, as tending towards communicative closure. But it could not be an autarchic space because it also operated within the wider political formation of imperial Austria-Hungary. This was an early statement of a social communication theory of the nation that has left its conceptual imprint on how contemporary theories of nationalism address the public sphere.

Take Karl Deutsch (1966: 19-20), an early theorist of European union influenced by Otto Bauer, who argued that nations and nation-states are strongly bounded by their patterns of interaction. To put it differently, social communication produces collective cohesion and identity – and invites us to share in a common fate.

This simple – but compelling – idea is reproduced in a number of influential theories of nationalism. In practice, Ernest Gellner's (1983: 37-38) view that culture is "the distinctive style of conduct and communication of a given community" and that it is "now the necessary shared medium" of the nation is, at root, a social communications theory of cohesion. For Gellner, the national education system is the key agency that diffuses a literate "high culture". Media

are seen as sustaining the political community, as providing it with its deep codes for distinguishing between “us” and “them”.

Similarly, Benedict Anderson (1991) has contended that the collective consumption of mediated communication (based on a common “national” language) creates and sustains a sense of common belonging. Michael Billig (1995) has also endorsed and extended this broad social communications viewpoint. As nationals, he suggests, we live less in a state of perpetual mobilisation than one of the banal assimilation of everyday symbolism and categorisation.

This variant of social communications theory is much challenged today when – precisely under conditions of multiculturalism – it is hardly so clear that all citizens’ cultural boundaries are defined by national public spaces. Moreover, all national systems of communication are influenced by what lies outside. National cultures are usually permeable, even when censored and controlled, and in the age of the Internet, mobile communications, social networking, and satellite broadcasting, such relative openness is necessarily greater than ever before.

Recognising this, contemporary cosmopolitans reverse the terms of the old Austro-Marxist conundrum. In his time, Otto Bauer tried to address nationalist demands from within the overarching framework of a multinational state. His problem was how to ensure more play for national culture within the carapace of the existing supranational state – in order to head off separatism at the pass. Current cosmopolitan writers, however, would wish to leave the as yet incomplete EU behind. Instead of playing within the boundaries, they emphasise the transcendent potential of the emergent European framework, the capacity to connect to a new global order that needs a public sphere to match.

But there are some obvious obstacles to the creation of a general European public sphere, whose installation could indeed be a major step on the cosmopolitan road. For instance, there is considerable linguistic diversity in the EU (currently, 23 official languages) and a fragmented intelligentsia (still largely bound to national cultural systems). As has been amply documented, the language question in Europe has generated both complex policies and baroque politics (Castiglione and Longman (eds.) 2007). True, English is emerging as an unofficial *lingua franca*. But arguably that process principally addresses functional needs rather than building a collective identity.

The EU’s actually existing cultural complexity is far-reaching. Indigenous regional or minority languages, often with supporting institutions and media systems, operate at a sub-state level, where particular publics are constituted on the basis of linguistic or cultural distinctiveness. Besides, continuing migration and diasporic links have ensured that, as elsewhere, further linguistic and cultural diversity – partly sustained by transnational media consumption – are part and parcel of the contemporary landscape of the member states. The politics of language and its relationship to media is central to this discussion (Cormack and Hourigan (eds.), 2007; Jouët and Pasquier, (eds.) 2001; Moragas Spà et al. (eds.) 1999).

To recognise such internal diversity as inescapable is one possible move; another is to try and close the EU’s door to further difference. Both of these

involve strategies of political management. How “unity in diversity” (aka minimal cohesion) is conceived will differ in respect of the stance taken towards new migration and existing multiculturalism.

Currently, debates about national belonging have centred particularly (although certainly not exclusively) on the Muslim presence in EU states. Alongside episodic media coverage of various forms of female Muslim attire, the high point of resonance came during the so-called Mohammed cartoons affair in 2005. Muslim religio-cultural identities have become enmeshed in contemporary struggles over post-Enlightenment secularism, where the battleground has also brought Christians and humanists into collision.

It is not surprising in a political formation such as the EU that national conflicts also resonate on the European plane. In the EU Constitutional Convention’s debates (from 2002-2004), there was extensive discussion of whether or not the Union should underline its Christian spiritual heritage as an integral part of its identity. The ensuing reactions showed that this project was of concern to Europe’s non-Christian minorities and to humanists.

It is a particularly moot question, given proposed Turkish accession to the EU. Other states on the European continent are waiting to join the club. Most are post-communist. However, that is not the case for Turkey, formally a secular state with a largely Muslim population. Turkey’s continued secularism is, at present, an object of acute political struggle. The country’s long-standing efforts to accede to the EU have focused renewed attention on the quite far-reaching divisions over what is meant by a “European” identity. The enlargement of the Union eastwards has reinforced the lobby that wants to emphasise Europe’s Christian heritage and embed that collective identity in a future EU constitutional treaty. One such attempt has already been made and there is no reason to think that this line of argument is *passé* in the discursive politics of EU boundaries and identities (Schlesinger and Foret 2006).

Ulrich Beck has described the identification of Europeanness with a particular religious heritage as a retrograde exclusionary tactic. But it plainly will not go away and has been raised with regularity by various EU politicians and in March 2007 by Pope Benedict XVI.

Do Political Institutions Matter?

The debate over spiritual values and religious heritage shows that we can’t escape from politics, high or low. That means we do have to take the EU’s institutions seriously. The European Commission, European Parliament, the Council of Ministers and European Court of Justice constitute an institutional nexus which needs to be taken into account in any conception of a European public sphere. On this score, cosmopolitans divide into two main camps: institutional and post-institutional.

Institutional cosmopolitans use the language of rights and duties. Habermas’s rights-based, supranational conception of the EU connects to a global perspec-

tive. He portrays the public sphere as potentially unbounded, as shifting from specific locales (such as the nation) to the virtual co-presence of citizens linked by public media. Habermas (1996: 373-374) argues that communicative space is to be understood in terms of “a highly complex network...[that] branches out into a multitude of overlapping international, national, regional, local and subcultural arenas”.

A European public sphere, therefore, would be open-ended, with communicative connections extending well beyond the continent. But what this leaves unresolved is whether or not convergent communicative practices might produce some kind of cultural cohesion, resulting – to use Bauer’s phrase – in a European “community of fate”.

Habermas’s response is to propose that EU citizens become “constitutional patriots”. This post-nationalist, rule-based form of identification implies an order of preference and at least some distinction between “us” and “them”. It carries inescapable echoes of an older, interstate, conception of political order. If a social communications approach to the public sphere insists on the “thickness” of the values and practices that sustain the political culture, constitutional patriotism presumes “thin” relations. However, it does also necessarily presuppose certain affinities with other patriots if only, say, in a common belief in the importance of the rules of the game. So, the EU’s cosmopolitan potential is still anchored in a web of affiliations.

That is why Habermas emphasises the importance of a European constitution. This demarcates a distinctive political space and provides “a common value orientation”. Constitutionalism remains central to how a European public sphere might be imagined: linked upwards to more general structures of governance and downwards to more particular ones.

Habermas (2004: 27-28) sees the “constitutive process [as]... a unique instrument of cross-border communication.” He stresses the key role of a “Europe-wide public sphere of political communication” and “the creation of a political culture that can be shared by all EU citizens”. Today, we might question whether the constitutional process – which ended in the 2005 debacle – was really an effective form of transnational communication. More striking was the national framing of the debate and how national considerations played into rejection of the Constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands.

Habermas’s attempt to navigate between the free flight of cosmopolitan potential and gravitational pull of institutions is akin to Manuel Castells’ (1998) approach. Castells sees the EU as a precursor to a new political order, to new forms of association and loyalty: the emerging Euro-polity epitomises what he calls “the network state”. The EU is imagined not only as a political-economic zone but also as a specific kind of communicative space. Castells focuses on how networks, facilitated by communications technologies, transcend borders.

He argues that the EU has different “nodes” of varying importance that together make up a network. Regions and nations, nation-states, European Union institutions, together constitute a framework of shared authority. They

define the boundaries of the putative European communicative space – and therefore the potential public sphere (Castells 1998: 330-331).

This approach implies that what Karl Deutsch once called “communicative complementarities” can emerge out of the informal processes of making the Union. The globalising pull of communications technologies is countered by emergent patterns of social interaction in the European Union’s space. Cosmopolitans are challenged to recognise the varying significance of particular fora (or public spheres) within such a network model.

Let us put the institutional cosmopolitan position in context. Over time, we may agree, the EU has developed a special interactive intensity that, in some sectors of public life, favours internal communication and creates an internally differentiated referential boundary, with stronger and weaker forms of institutionalisation. This may, and does, co-exist with global networking and the development of transnational governance. As a counterweight to cosmopolitan potential, however, in the present intergovernmental model national public spheres remain central to political life. There are indeed also transnational spaces of communication. But these are particular rather than general: political and economic elites and expert communities (including academics, by the way) tend to dominate these.

For Ulrich Beck (2006: 164), the EU’s struggle with its political future is actually an “institutionalized failure of the imagination” that does not live up to the cosmopolitan dreams of its founding fathers. The Union, he maintains, lacks political pragmatism and radical openness. The present tensions between the regulatory and federal models, which are actually of vital explanatory importance, are swept aside by Beck (rather oddly) as denying Europe’s diversity (2006: 171-172). Instead, Beck (2006: 167) argues, “The political union must be conceived as a cosmopolitan union of Europe, in opposition to the false normativity of the national”. The prospect held out is variously that of a “cosmopolitan state” or a “cosmopolitan cooperative of states”. But beyond these slogans it is not clear how power would actually be exercised, how post-territorial politics would function or how support for tolerant ethno-cultural diversity might be secured. There is certainly little realistic engagement with institutional politics.

For instance, according to Beck, the EU has inaugurated “a struggle over institutions with the aim of confronting European horror with European values and methods.” After World War II and the Holocaust, he believes, one of Europe’s most positive achievements is to stand for the protection of human rights. He further asserts that commemoration of the Holocaust is an institutional foundation for the EU’s identity and indeed for a wider Europe. However, Beck’s position takes no account of Holocaust denial, or how opposition to acts of commemoration is now connected to the politics of the Middle East, or of the differences between official acts and popular sentiment, or of the present-day competition over post World War II victimhood throughout Europe.

Gerard Delanty has taken a more radical post-institutional line (Delanty and Rumford 2005: 20), seeing Europe mainly as a space of possibilities for new

cosmopolitan attachments, where the challenge for the EU is to “create spaces for communication” (2005: 68).

Communication is judged to be valuable principally in articulating connections beyond the EU, rather than in building it into a political community or a collective identity. From this point of view, the European public sphere is not so much an institutionalised space that might democratise the Union – or deal with Europe’s past – as a post-institutional launching pad for a new orientation to the world that increasingly sheds its European cast.

Europeanised Political Communication?

Such unresolved tensions in social and political theory are also reflected in current debate about political communication and the public sphere in Europe. Because EU policymaking impinges increasingly on member states, it also impacts more and more on the agenda of the mediated political discourse of national polities. How should we interpret this?

The central issue is the extent to which political communication may be judged to have a formative impact on citizenship, collective identity and patriotism, shifting these from their longstanding and often exclusive alignment with the member states (and nations) into a more inclusive “European” citizenship, collective identity and constitutional patriotism.

The dividing line is over whether mediated communication is now leading to the creation of a European public sphere. What that means is itself a matter of debate. Is a European communicative space to be conceived as a single, general public sphere on the model of the nation-state? Or, given Europe’s complexity, is this better conceived as constituted by overlapping spheres of publics?

Some – Klaus Eder, for instance – have argued for a kind of spill-over effect, in which the dissemination of argument and diverse perspectives across national borders stimulates a wider, European level of political engagement through a collective learning process (Eder 2007; Trenz and Eder 2004). However, we might note pertinently that hopes placed in the educative content of the constitutional debate have not so far been realised.

In this connection, it is surely time to revise assumptions about the capacity of elite media, or of public service broadcasting, to operate collectively across the member states as instruments of enlightenment. Broadcasting systems are increasingly fragmenting under the pressures of economic competition and digital convergence. Newspapers are making a complex accommodation to the Internet as they work out new business models. Indeed, increasingly, the evolution of the Internet has posed fresh questions about the conditions under which traditional media reporting might evolve. For political classes everywhere, the challenge of credibly addressing general publics by way of generally accessible media is only likely to grow and is being made increasingly difficult by a generational shift in media consumption patterns among

the young. Splichal (2006: 703) rightly questions the negative impact of such trends on “media democratization”.

While media in the EU may address similar issues at the same time in different member states, this does not necessarily equate to the widespread distribution of a shared European perspective. And even if the distribution of media content were uniform that would not stop it from being diversely interpreted. In the member states, national editorial values continue to shape reporting and commentary on European themes (Kevin 2003: 179). Even at key constitutional moments, coverage is framed principally in terms of national politics (Gleissner and de Vreese 2005).

Consequently, if news agendas have become to a lesser or greater extent “Europeanised” across the EU, for national publics this has not so far been translated into an irresistible invitation to become European. The continuing national pull of journalistic practice and frameworks of reference explains the sheer difficulty of developing journalism for a Europe-wide general public. What pertains at the popular level also affects intellectual elites. No doubt, these now interact more as a result of EU-wide networking, encouraged and enabled by the Union’s institutions as well as by other Europe-wide bodies. However, as Abram de Swaan (2007) notes, this does not, as yet, add up to the formation of a European intelligentsia with its supporting cultural panoply.

Can the mediated public sphere and a convergent news agenda significantly “Europeanise” the EU’s constituent national publics in the long term? This might happen, but only – it would seem – given numerous ancillary conditions such as a common pan-European politics, a common foreign and defence policy, widely shared linguistic and cultural competences, and so forth. In short, by taking major steps towards federalism.

A Final Word

The development of a European public sphere is ultimately based in the interaction between EU-institutions and the transnational networks that institutional development has bred. Not all institutions have the same centrality; not all networks have the same intensity of interaction. A relatively weak, transnational public space has indeed evolved around policy-making actors in the EU institutions. But this does not constitute a general European public sphere. Nor indeed, does it yet constitute something much less cohesive, namely a European sphere of general publics.

In fact, states, nations and regions remain crucially important as locales for debate and as sources of identity. Europeanisation is itself a profoundly ambiguous process. Who now – and who in the future – will be permitted to be a “European” is an increasingly intense focus for struggles between inclusion and exclusion both within member states and at the borders of the EU itself. Because Europeanisation is a boundary-defining process as well as a transnationalising one, it does not of itself necessarily point to a cosmopolitan outcome.

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II. Media, Journalism and the European Public Sphere

Chapter 5

The European Union and Ideals of the Public Sphere

Shadows in Paradise

Tuomo Mörä

In this chapter the prospects of a European public sphere¹ are considered by comparing its normative ideals and conceptualisations with the realities of the contemporary European media landscape, the structures of governance, and citizen participation. The purpose of the chapter is to analyse how the interplay among institutions in the European Union (EU), its citizens and its media contribute to or restrain the public sphere at a European level. The main question examined is how the ideals of the public sphere will survive in a transnational environment. The chapter will also include critical evaluations of previous definitions of the European public sphere along with studies of its possible existence. In addition to research literature, interviews with twelve Brussels-based correspondents will be used.

The first part of this chapter analyses how previous studies have related to the nature of a European public sphere. The latter part of the chapter examines the opportunities and the obstacles in creating a European public sphere from a journalist's point of view. It is based on the author's empirical study of correspondents in Brussels.

“A European Public Sphere is Impossible”

Those who are sceptical about the realisation of a European public sphere tend to emphasise the lack of a common language among European citizens, the lack of a pan-European press, the lack of a genuine European civil society, and the lack of European identity, all of which are seen as preconditions for a democratic public sphere (Brüggeman 2005; Grimm 1995).

In the sceptics' view, communication and participation as basic conditions of democratic existence are mediated through language. In 2007 the EU recognised twentythree official languages and some sixty other indigenous and non-indigenous languages, which are spoken throughout the European geographical area. Almost every second EU citizen (44 per cent) admits not knowing any foreign language, and is unable to carry on conversation in a language other

than his/her mother tongue. In addition, language skills are unevenly spread: in some member states almost everyone is bilingual, while in Great Britain, for example, 62 per cent cannot speak a language other than their mother tongue. (*Special Eurobarometer* 2006.)

Even people who share the same language may have difficulties communicating with each other, because certain terms may have completely different meanings owing to historical, cultural and political reasons. As one German Brussels-based correspondent put it: "When I say 'federal', I talk about a totally other thing than a British person does. For the British, federalisation means centralisation; for me, the same word means quite the opposite. A pan-European debate or pan-European public opinion is simply not possible".

The problem with the lack of a common language is not only the lack of a shared medium for meaningful communication. There is also a strong connection between languages, cultures, collective identities and, in the end, ways of perceiving reality. From this basis it is hardly surprising if a sceptic asks whether it is meaningful to speak about a truly democratic public sphere based on rational and critical discussion if the majority of the "members" do not even understand each other's words. Or as Fraser (2006: 59) asks: "(I)nsofar as new transnational political communities, such as the European Union, are transnational and multilingualistic, how can they constitute public spheres that can encompass the entire *demos*?"

The second argument advanced by the sceptics is the lack of a genuine pan-European press, and consequently, a common European forum for debate and discussion. Attempts to create transnational European media (for example, *The European*, *Voice of Europe*, *Euro News*) have not been successful in terms of reaching large audiences or creating a pan-European debate. Some papers and magazines with a European emphasis, such as the European edition of the *Financial Times* and *The Economist* are read all over the Union, but the readers are mostly drawn from economic and political elites. Moreover, the journals' content does not conform to ideals of free public participation and citizen involvement. Access to these discussions is very limited, participation is not equal, and issues are predetermined (mostly economics and international politics). The purpose of the stories in these papers is obviously not a collective will-formation in a broad sense, but rather a promotion of liberal approaches to economics and society. As Eriksen (2007: 33) put it: "Even though there are spaces for the creation of collective identity through a pan-European press and English as a lingua franca, these still fall short of meeting the criteria of a public sphere".

Whether one considers print, radio, or television (commercial and public service), relationships to audiences have been built on some form of understanding cultural traditions and social responsibility within a national frame of reference. Media markets are still culturally and linguistically separated national markets (Slaatta 2006). In spite of the fact that ownership of the media industry has become more multinational, there are few signs that the national media order based on national cultural traditions, local language and regional

focus are being replaced by a transnational media order (see also the chapter by Hans-Jörg Trenz in the current volume). In these circumstances, how could media audiences in different EU countries deliberate together as peers?

Moreover, empirical cross-national studies indicate that media attention to European issues is low in comparison with global, national, regional, or local issues (Risse 2003). There is also quite a low level of public awareness of EU issues and little interest among citizens in following EU-level decision-making. Obviously, public demand for EU issues in journalism is not very high. Brussels-based correspondents tend to have difficulty in linking European events to the needs and interests of their audiences at home (Golding et al. 2007). This is also reflected in the structure of the press corps in Brussels: whereas public broadcasting companies tend to have permanent positions for correspondents in Brussels, commercial television news channels have full-time correspondent posts only occasionally (AIM Research Consortium 2007: 11). A similar division is observable in the newspapers: elite-oriented, nationwide quality newspapers tend to have correspondents in Brussels, while popular papers allocate their resources elsewhere. Using journalism to connect EU issues to the public's daily life has obviously not been very successful.

The lack of a collective identity is partly related to the lack of a common European language and collective media. Moreover, cultural heritages and collective memories are distinct, the sense of unity and belonging is limited, and there are no general agreements on common interests or values in different parts of Europe. All this makes collective opinion formation and coherent action unlikely. (See also Eriksen 2007)

In principle the Internet could provide a pan-European forum for the free flow of information, open debate, the formation of rational-critical public opinion, and consequently, a resource for collective action. Access is easier and the status of the participants is not as relevant as it is in traditional media. In an online public sphere the role of the "best argument" should be relatively stronger than in a traditional media environment where the formal status of the actors plays a more significant role. However, online debates are often fragmented, real interaction and debate are weak, discussion often involves like-minded activists, and activities tend only to touch upon limited subgroups and/or particular issues. Access clearly does not equate with interest. Naturally, the lack of a common language also restricts deliberation on the Internet. As Trenz and Vettors (2006: 3) have commented on the debates about EU issues on the Internet: "(I)n most cases only relatively small groups of mostly Brussels based organizations from civil society, involved scientists and a handful of EU-junkies get involved". Moreover, even if transnational forums, global networking, and opinion mobilisation are lively on the Internet, the mechanisms for transforming opinion into decisions and policies is highly limited (Dahlgren 2005).

One thus finds that tools and perspective for common/shared European view are lacking. A European identity and European civil society do not exist, at least not in the way they are perceived within nation-states. Media coverage of EU

issues is rather limited in comparison to coverage at national levels and a large proportion of citizens does not seem to know, or at least does not seem to be very interested in, what is going on in the EU. Thus, it could be argued that it may be more correct to speak of a European non-public sphere, or perhaps ironic quotation marks should be put around “European” and “public”.

“A European Public Sphere Already Exists”

While the “impossibility school” represents one end of the spectrum in the public sphere discussion, scholars at the opposite end claim that the European public sphere is not only possible but already exists. They say that the public sphere is not just a normative ideal, but is also an artefact that can be examined empirically. (Risse 2003; Trenz 2004)

Risse (2003) agrees with many of the observations of the “impossibility school”, but he reaches opposite conclusions. He labels arguments against the possibility of a European public sphere “conventional wisdom” to be challenged and he defines the conditions under which a democratic European public sphere would emerge. They are the following: if and when the same (European) themes are discussed at the same time at similar levels of attention across national public spheres and media; if and when similar frames of reference, meaning structures, and patterns of interpretation are used across national public spheres and media; if and when a transnational community of communication emerges in which speakers and listeners recognise each other as legitimate participants in a common discourse.

Risse argues that there is no reason why all Europeans should speak the same language and use the same media in order to communicate across national borders in a meaningful way. If citizens attach similar meanings to what they observe in Europe, they should be able to communicate across borders irrespective of languages and in the absence of a pan-European press. He compares Europe, in this sense, to multilingual Switzerland. For him, it is questionable to claim the absence of a public sphere just because people read different newspapers in different languages. In fact, he maintains, the opposite is true. A lively public sphere should actually be based on a pluralistic supply of media competing for citizens’ attention. As long as the media report on the same issues at the same time, there is no need for a pan-European press based on a common language.

Risse (2003) further argues that conventional wisdom seems to be based on an idealised picture of a homogenous national public sphere that is then transferred to the European level. Many national public spheres are fragmented, yet few would argue that people are unable to communicate meaningfully with each other for that reason. Similar frames of reference or meaning structures do not necessarily lead to agreement or consensus on an issue. Indeed, heated debates about political issues are a way to raise the level of interest in European matters.

However, this is not enough, Risse continues. Social mobilisation and the contestation of European politics is a necessary but insufficient pre-condition for a European public sphere. A “community of communication” is also needed, meaning that speakers should actually discuss with each other instead of just voicing opinions. At a minimum speakers should recognise each other as legitimate partners in a debate. A “community of communication” also requires a certain degree of collective identification with Europe (and the EU) and a denial of nationalist reactions. In Risse’s view these preconditions for a public sphere already exist in Europe. As an example he uses the so called Haider-debate², a media coverage of European reaction to the formation of an Austrian government in 2000 (see also van de Steeg 2004). Risse claims that actually there was a transnational community of communication in this case, which he sees as a kind of litmus test of an emerging European public sphere.

Trenz (2004), who analysed European quality newspapers, argues that the existence of a European public sphere is indicated by such evidence as the similarity of topics within European quality newspapers, with almost one third of the political news being related to Europe or the EU, and by the major agenda setters in quality newspapers being the institutions of the EU such as the European Commission, the Council of Ministers, and the European Central Bank. Even though Trenz pinpoints the absence of non-institutional, civil-society actors among agenda-setters as “striking” in his study, he concludes that “a European public sphere has come into existence”³ (Trenz 2004: 291).

While the European public sphere is often related to quality newspapers and political writing, Gripsrud (2007) emphasises the role of television and cultural identity. In his view television channels such as Eurosport and EuroNews have actually established a common European public sphere. He also argues that the practice of watching the same television shows in different parts of the continent contributes to that sphere, even if those shows came from outside Europe. For Gripsrud, television’s contribution to the European public sphere comes primarily from shared experiences of Europeans, a feeling of belonging to this continent and not to another.

It appears that those who argue that a European public sphere already exists tend to employ a rather narrow definition of a public sphere. For Risse (2003) and Trenz (2004), the public sphere is facilitated by (quality) newspapers, and its components are primarily the news of EU institutions or EU-related debates by politicians and experts. For Gripsrud (2007), the sufficient condition for the existence of the public sphere seems to be the ability to see the same television programmes in different European countries.

What these approaches have in common is the absence of active ordinary citizens, the essential element of original public sphere ideals. The ideas of Risse, Trenz and Gripsrud are mediacentric in the sense that they tend to conflate the public sphere with the media (see also Baisnée 2007).

“There Are Some Signs of a European Public Sphere”

Many studies of a European public sphere seem to fall between the two opposing camps reviewed above. The idea of the European public sphere is seen as being quite difficult to accomplish in reality, but signs of its emergence are visible.

The existence of the European public sphere has been questioned even among scholars who employ a narrow definition of the public sphere. Downey and Koenig (2006) examined the framing of Silvio Berlusconi's controversial address to the European parliament in “quality” media. In his speech Berlusconi compared the Social Democrat MEP Martin Schultz to a *kapò*, an auxiliary concentration camp guard. The data were drawn from six EU countries as well as the US, Canada, and Switzerland. Even though this speech was highly suitable for a European public sphere for historical reasons, Downey and Koenig could not find the same framings at the same time with the same intensity across Europe. Moreover, distinctly European framings in national public spheres were largely absent. The persons involved in the conflict were portrayed as representatives of ethnic nations rather than, for example, their respective political parties. Their conclusion was that “the data do not indicate a European transcendence of national public spheres” (Downey and Koenig 2006: 165).

When the popular press is included in media analysis, the existence of a European public sphere is an even more distant ideal. Machill et al. (2006) made a “meta-analysis” of seventeen media content analyses in different EU countries; their results indicate that the orientation of public spheres of the EU member states continues to exhibit a strong national bias. Overall, EU topics accounted for an extremely small proportion of reporting. Compared with national actors, the players at any EU level also featured in minor roles. The conclusion of Machill et al. is that “at best it is possible to talk about the first signs of a European public sphere” (Machill et al. 2006: 78).

Instead of a single European public sphere, many scholars prefer to talk about public spheres in the plural (see, for example, Schlesinger [1999] and the chapter of Hannu Nieminen in the present volume). Schlesinger (1999) does not believe in a single European public sphere, but rather in the growth of interrelated spheres of European publics. But just how these will evolve is open to question. Broad public engagement in European public affairs does not exist, but Schlesinger sees “European” media such as *Financial Times* and *The Economist*, as possible starting points. But “at best, some European elites have begun to constitute a restricted communicative space” (Schlesinger 1999: 276).

Nieminen (see his chapter in the present volume) writes that instead of arguing whether the European public sphere exists, we could think of Europe as consisting of a multiplicity of networks, which have a public sphere or spheres of their own. From this perspective, Europe has always existed – in the form of social and cultural networks. These networks range from kinship networks to religious, professional, and political networks. All of us “live our social and

cultural lives in and through these networks” says Nieminen. In this re-conceptualisation, the public sphere is understood as being spaces of negotiations between different networks, and public discourse is about negotiating different claims, that is to say, there are already areas and spaces where public spheres exist at a European level. What this conceptualisation misses from the original ideals of a public sphere is the link or relationship between the citizens and the executive and the relationship between political decision-making and networks. If there are numerous networks starting from networks of family members, how are these networks monitored and what are the mechanisms of taking debates into consideration when making decisions at the European level?

Sphere of Publics

The differences among the views, ranging from the belief that a European public sphere is impossible, that it is already in place or that there are some signs of its existence, can be largely explained by the way different scholars define “public sphere”. Eriksen’s (2007) conceptualisation is helpful in analysing these differences. Eriksen distinguishes among general publics, segmented publics, and strong publics.⁴ General publics refer to communicative spaces of civil society in which all citizens may participate on a free and equal basis. Segmented publics refer to public spheres emanating from the policy networks of the EU. These networks are constituted by well-educated experts with common interests in certain issues, problems and solutions such as academic communities, think tanks, and pressure groups.

Strong publics are legally institutionalised and regulated bodies in the polity centre. They range from hard-core decision-making units such as the European Council, the European Parliament (EP), the European Commission, and the European Court of Justice (EJC), via the nexus of expert committees, the Committee of the Permanent Representatives (COREPER), Comitology, the Conference of Community and European Affairs, Committees of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC) to the two Conventions of Constitutional Matters. (Eriksen 2007: 35.)

Members of the impossibility school seem to beckon to a general public when envision the public sphere. They emphasise the *legitimacy* of public opinion by questioning whether all citizens are really full members of the political public,⁵ and whether public discussions are unrestricted, rational, and accessible to all. The answers to these questions tend to be negative and the resulting opinions about the possibility of the European public sphere rather cynical.

Scholars who claim that a European public sphere already exists or that there are some signs of its existence tend to emphasise the role of segmented or strong publics. From this perspective, a public sphere is a space of institutionalised deliberation and consists mainly of experts, representatives, and official actors situated in formally or legally organised institutions whose discussions are mediated and commented upon in the media. Discussion among

the members of these institutions and citizens do not seem to be relevant, and the role of citizens is seen as rather passive, like spectators observing a panel of experts in discussion.

It seems that a transnational communicative space has indeed evolved around policymaking institutions and quality media in the EU. It would, however, be an overstatement to call this space a European public sphere. We should rather talk about a much less cohesive sphere of publics (see also Schlesinger 2007).

Strong Publics Dominate Media Content

Empirical studies of a European public sphere tend to be based on analyses of media contents. The author's own research on this topic is based on the analysis of media content *production*, i.e., interviews with twelve European news correspondents in Brussels.⁶ The selection of correspondents' interviews as an area of analysis was motivated by two factors: on the one hand, correspondents are rather influential gatekeepers of EU journalism in their organisations.⁷ On the other hand, correspondents are experts in their own journalistic culture and are able to evaluate the opportunities and obstacles that those who report on EU issues face in the contemporary journalistic climate.

The main research question in this chapter – “How do the ideals of public sphere survive in a transnational environment?” – is approached from a media perspective and employs two angles: 1) what kind of “public sphere” is constructed in journalists' discourses, and 2) how “European” is that public sphere?

Correspondents in Brussels seem to have internalised the necessity of some kind of European public sphere (although they seldom used the theoretical concept of public sphere) simply because a large part of the decision-making and legislative power has been moved from national institutions to the EU level. The journalists felt that it was their task to follow European decision-making and provide building material for informed citizenship. However, the variety of views on the nature and potential of a European public sphere broadly mirrored that of the academic community.

Practically none of the interviewees believed in citizen involvement on a large scale in discussions about EU issues in a European frame work, mainly because of the lack of a common language, common experiences, and common forums. The correspondents were also quite sceptical about the interest of citizens in taking part in such discussions. In other words, they did not believe in the strong role of the general publics. As one correspondent said:

I don't believe in a true social debate in which ordinary citizens participate – for many reasons of which one is that citizens are not interested in such a debate. They are concentrating on their lives, on their everyday lives: on earning a living, bringing up children or you name it, probably having fun, hobbies, watching TV in evenings and so on and so on. This is what they want to do; they don't want to participate in public debates.

Correspondents were also sceptical about the willingness of media organisations to provide a forum for such discussions. This problem was frequently mentioned by interviewees and was blamed on the public's lack of interest in EU issues or in journalism about the EU. This provides an interesting counterpoint to the lack of attention given this issue in academic literature on the public sphere and participatory democracy. It appears that many scholars take it as a given that participation is the nucleus of citizenship and that the problems of interest are quite automatically solved if citizens are provided with the means and opportunity to participate (Hirzalla 2007). This is, after all, quite a crucial question when one considers that interest is the fundamental criterion for the ideal public sphere – it is difficult to have an ideal public discussion if only a small minority of people is interested in taking part or even in following such an interaction.

The relatively low demand for EU news stories also has an influence on resources committed by media enterprises to European journalism. Many commercial television stations have closed down their bureaus in Brussels. For example, there is no longer any permanent representation by Finnish or German commercial television companies in Brussels. Reporters are sent to Brussels to cover large media events, but the daily follow-up of the news is mainly done by public broadcasting companies. In addition, tabloids do not seem to have the motivation to place permanent correspondents in Brussels. Common market trends tend to shift the focus of the news organisations towards national issues, and news coverage of the EU in Brussels is largely in the hands of “quality” papers and public broadcasting companies, automatically excluding a large part of the public.

The bureaus of small member states are working on especially tight budgets in Brussels. For example, the largest Finnish daily *Helsingin Sanomat*, routinely has only one correspondent in EU capital. The Swedish paper *Svenska Dagbladet* used to have three correspondents in Brussels, but during the research period (2006) there was only one. By comparison, the BBC had seven journalists and four producers in positions there, and the German station ARD had a studio and six journalists permanently based in Brussels. Consequently, there is a strong structural imbalance in national press corps in Brussels. Correspondents from Germany, the UK, and the Belgium make up one-third of the accredited Brussels correspondents while Estonia and Lithuania, for example, together represent less than half a per cent of the total. (AIM Research Consortium 2007: 10.)

The scant resources of Brussels bureaus partly explain the public's low interest in EU issues. Tight budgets force many correspondents to limit their coverage of routine issues fed by the information departments representing strong publics like EU organisations. Typically, correspondents do not have the means to make time-consuming and independent stories such as reportages or investigative journalism.

An Embryonic Public Sphere?

Those correspondents who defined the debates of the political and economic elites (segmented and strong publics) as a “Pan-European discussion” emphasised that a transnational discussion already exists.

It's not only possible, it's going on all the time. It's going on in institutions, in the Commission, in Council, in Parliament, it's going on in research organisations that this town is full of. They [the research organisations] also take part in and influence the policymaking here.

Occasionally, the correspondents used this kind of discussion as raw material for their stories, but the discussions were not systematically followed. Often the forums for these discussions were somewhere other than in the media. This interaction of politicians, officials, pressure groups, think-tanks, experts, and scholars and its role in EU decision-making also seems to be rather poorly analysed in the research on the European public sphere.

Another embryonic European or micro public sphere could be the interaction of and cooperation among correspondents in Brussels. Because of the lack of resources, the complexity of the topics, and the broad field, correspondents cooperate more than is normally found in journalistic communities. Correspondents, for example, exchange information and notes, help with contacts, and benefit from each other's good relations with national representatives or embassies. Moreover, they discuss with each other how to interpret policy issues or the topics of a particular press conference. This interaction may occur during the press conference or during the post-conference lunch. In addition, some also meet each other in more informal settings.

Discussions among the correspondents are also interesting from a theoretical point of view, because these discussions have many features that correspond to ideals of the public sphere: correspondents are interested and competent; preconditions for critical and rational discussions are good; debaters hold fairly equal status; access to the discussions is rather easy; and the role of the argument seems to weigh more than the formal status of the speaker. Correspondents also speak the same language (mainly English) and at a similar level of proficiency. These discussions do not necessarily influence the daily work of the journalists, but occasionally they seem to form some kind of embryonic pan-European discussion and contribute to the formation of collective opinion among the correspondents. In addition, correspondents usually follow the media of many different countries.

We communicate with other journalists and we try to read, not everything, but newspapers in other languages, and we read agencies... So our point of view is not only our ... point of view, and I think for this reason ... it's so interesting to be a correspondent because you are between national and

European... you are not really European but you are less national than your colleagues in (home country).

Perhaps this kind of micro public sphere is at least partly behind the often-made observation that correspondents seemed to have rather uniform opinions of the collective and relevant issues in Europe in 2006. These included such things as preoccupation with the constitutional treaty, the efficiency of an enlarged EU and worries about the gap between citizens and EU institutions. Correspondents were clearly part of the European *élite* who have communicative skills, easy access to the public discussion, sufficient background information, and both the interest and the ability to interpret EU issues and their alternatives as well as to participate in debate on the EU itself.

National Frames

The second research question posed here concerned how “European” the presumed public sphere might be. Correspondents were sceptical about the possibilities of creating a “European” frame or agenda when handling EU issues. All stated that they mainly chose topics of national interest and handled EU issues largely from a national perspective. That is what their audiences and superiors expected them to do, they said. As a rule, EU issues had to be domesticated to fit into the national talking points.⁸ In general, “European” journalism seems to be a system of national news agendas rather than a pan-European entity made up of the similar themes, frames of reference, meaning structures, and patterns of interpretation. However, the correspondents interviewed did mention some exceptions:

[L]et’s say, constitutional discussion in Spain, or in Hungary or in Germany, or in Scotland, there are a lot of similar arguments recurring. I really think we have a pan-European debate today in Europe, and it’s going to shape Europe. I think we’re not seeing it as much right now, but it’s going to have a big impact.

Another correspondent reminded the interviewer that even if there was no genuine pan-European discussion at that moment, there were grounds for a shared European identity and consequently the potential for common discussions in the future:

Although we are not very conscious of European identity, the debate about the European social model has just started, and I think it’s linked to the fact that over the years there’s something of a common identity that has developed. Not a single member state... applies a totally free market approach like the United States. All of these societies are aspiring some social counterbalance

to the free market, and no country is inspired by the communist or socialist model; that's over. So we have a common ground there. No European country – even if in Poland there was a debate looming – is bringing back the death penalty.

EU Issues Are Not Sexy

The correspondents interviewed also emphasised that, in light of the prevailing news criteria, many structural problems make EU issues less attractive than national politics. At a national level, the conflict between the government and the opposition creates drama and tension that attracts journalism. In the EU this tension is absent because of executive nature of the governing institutions (the European Commission and the Council of Ministers) and their relatively weak accountability to the European Parliament. With political questions deliberated and decisions made behind closed doors, not only are ordinary citizens relegated to the role of spectators or reactors to what the Commission and the Council produces, but also journalists are excluded.

At the national level, interpellations are a central way to bring political controversies into public discussion. In the EU the main actors and institutions are not elected and do not, therefore, have the same motivation or obligation to provide a rationale for their decisions as is required of national politicians and institutions. Neither do these actors have direct political responsibility to the electorate as do prime ministers and presidents, for example. Moreover, the aspirations of the EU Commission and the EU Council to speak with one voice and tamp down national differences illuminate the discrepancy between the operational logic of the EU and the news media.

From a journalistic point of view these features mean that the decision-making process in the EU is not “sexy”, a point reflected in the interviewees’ commentary. Responsibility for decision-making is spread across many different institutions, background discussions are hidden, and it is difficult to identify the people or parties who are liable for particular issues or decisions.

This is one of the problems when reporting from Brussels. Politics is sexy, because you have fights between different powers. This is what makes politics sexy on the national level.

It seems that the democratic deficit in the EU causes an interest deficit among both the media and the public. The media are not in the habit of systematically monitoring people or institutions that are not directly responsible to citizens.

Personally, although I'm in favour of Europe as an idea, I don't think the European Union deserves to have a big credibility or the love of the citizens today, because it is not a democratic institution, it is, say, still an élitist concept.

The media keenly follow national elections, but the role of EU issues seems to be rather marginal in member states. One reason could be that even though a large portion of legislation originates in the EU, taxation is still in the hands of national governments, and taxation and the allocation of taxpayers' money tend to dominate pre-election debates.

In addition, the party system at the EU level is vague and fragmentary, and this can also hinder political discussion. Rather than a genuine Europeanised party system, there is a rather loose system of cooperation among national parties. European parties are mainly coalitions of different national parties, and the logic of the alliances is different to that found in national party systems. Citizens do not necessarily know who or what kind of politics they are supporting when they vote and the situation can also make it difficult to have meaningful public political debates. Not only is it more difficult to follow debates in the European Parliament for those who are used to national party politics, but also the connection between the debates in the European Parliament and the actual decisions and legislature is much more complicated than at a national level. In sum, the European political culture is still rather undeveloped in comparison to national political cultures.

There is also another feature of EU topics that contradicts the prevailing news values: power in the EU cannot be personalised the same way as in national politics. The EU lacks an elected president, a prime minister, and opposition leadership on whom political goals or policy disagreements could be focused. The main power centres, such as the EU Commission or the EU Council are collectives that make decisions behind closed doors. There are usually no opportunities to connect certain views to certain people. The main actors, such as the President of the Commission, the commissioners, or the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, are obviously quite distant figures to most Europeans, especially as their backgrounds or personal lives are not widely known.

Whereas citizens have been able to follow their top politicians at the national level for years or even for decades, the top EU figures come from nowhere, influence EU decision-making for few years, and then disappear from European forums. Personalisation of power at a national level gives journalists the tools with which to make politics more attractive to an audience. People and human drama may interest people who would not otherwise follow politics, but on EU issues, the human aspect of politics is usually missing from journalists' accounts.

Personalisation is actually one thing that keeps journalism and the public sphere ideals separate. For the ideals of rational public sphere, personal aspects and emotions related to politics seem to be merely a fuss, whereas in journalism handling issues through individuals has become more and more salient.

Conclusions

Through the course of this chapter, aspects of the “European public sphere” and its relationship to the contemporary realities of the European media landscape, structures of governance, and citizen participation have been evaluated. In order to understand the diverse views of a European public sphere, two definitions should be made clear: what is meant by “public” and what is meant by “European”.

It appears that those scholars and journalists who claim that a European public sphere already exists tend to emphasise the deliberative role of the strong and segmented publics, i.e. the deliberation in institutional spaces: a European public sphere exists when politicians, officials, experts, and journalists from different EU countries conduct mutual discussions of European issues. This is a narrow definition of a European public sphere in the sense that it excludes the role of ordinary citizens. On the other hand, those who think that a European public sphere is far from being realised or is even impossible tend to have a more idealistic view. They emphasise the legitimacy problems of EU governance: the (lack of a) role of the general publics, the citizens outside the formal political system. They claim that a true European public sphere requires much more extensive citizen participation than there is now in the EU.

Another question is how “European” is the alleged public sphere. There is a strong nationalistic bias in EU journalism in each member state, and national angles tend to shape European reporting. Brussels-based correspondents may be the most “European” members of the journalistic corps, but whether they like it or not, their main task is to domesticate and construct a national frame around European issues. Political communication in the EU is not predominantly “European”, but rather a multitude of national points of views.

It is quite clear that the ideals of the European public sphere and the contemporary journalistic conventions do not fit very well with each other. While the public sphere ideals urge rational discussions of pan-European policy issues and promote citizen participation, news criteria tend to favour personalisation of topics, national points of views, and conflicts of élites. These criteria constitute a major component of journalists’ understanding of what journalism is all about, and this is unlikely to undergo major changes in the near future.

This study indicates that even if some signs of an emerging European public sphere are detectable, there are many features in journalism, EU governance and EU structures that hinder its genuine development. At present we should talk about a European sphere of publics rather than a European public sphere. The problems of the public sphere are much more extensive at the EU level than at the national levels and not only because of the oft-mentioned linguistic and cultural difficulties. At the moment the main challenges seem to be concentrated in the relatively low public and media engagement in European public affairs. A mismatch between journalistic logic, the nature of EU governance, and the ideals of the public sphere is a major challenge for democratic theory and practice.

Notes

1. "European public sphere" refers here to the public sphere within the European Union. This is not to naturalise the thought that only EU member states would constitute Europe. Rather, it stems from understanding the public sphere as "an intermediary system of communication between formally organized and informal face-to-face deliberations in arenas both at the top and at a bottom of political system" (Habermas 2006: 10). At the transnational European level, the only "political system" is the EU.
2. The Austrian government was formed from a coalition of the right-wing populist Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ) led by Jörg Haider and the Christian Democratic Österreichische Volkspartei (ÖVP) in 2000. There was a general outcry because some of the slogans used by FPÖ were considered racist. Before the official presentation of the new government, fourteen EU states insisted that Austria refrain from taking this step and threatened it with sanctions.
3. In the later text, however, Trentz seems to be more pessimistic about the existence of the European public sphere. Issues in the mainstream media are mainly nationally framed and periods of high media attention are short and linked rather to the corruption, mismanagement and conflict than decision-making (Trentz 2006).
4. Eriksen refers here to the concepts of a "weak" and a "strong" public by Fraser (1992). What Eriksen labels "general public" is close to Fraser's concept "weak public". Eriksen prefers the term general public "because it entails free and open access to opinion-formation processes, and has in many instances proven to be both 'strong' and powerful" (Eriksen 2007: 28).
5. See Fraser (2006) about legitimacy and efficacy of public opinion in transnational public sphere.
6. Empirical analysis is based on semi-structured qualitative interviews of 12 journalists. The criteria for the selection of interviewees were geographical and structural: they come from different parts of the EU, both big and small member states are represented and there are journalists from old and new member states. The original idea was to have a television journalist and a newspaper journalist from each country. In the case of Italy and Portugal this did not work out, and there was only one journalist from these countries: television journalist from Portugal and newspaper journalist from Italy. There were altogether six television journalists and six newspaper journalists interviewed. The interviews took place in Brussels in January 2006. The interviewed correspondents were Erika Bjerström, SVT Aktuellt (Sweden); Enrico Brivio, *Il Sole 24 Ore* (Italy); Rolf Gustavsson, *Svenska Dagbladet* (Sweden); Mark James, BBC (Great Britain); Rolf-Dieter Krause, ARD (Germany); Thomas Lauritzen, *Politiken* (Denmark); Konrad Niklewicz, *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Poland); Inga Rosinska, TVN24 (Poland); Jussi Seppälä, Yle (Finland); Michael Stabenow, *Frankfurter Allgemeine* (Germany); Antonio Steves-Martins, Radio Television Portugal; Petteri Tuohinen, *Helsingin Sanomat* (Finland).
7. "EU journalism" refers here to the journalism covering issues and topics that have links to the decision making processes of the EU.
8. Heikkilä & Kunelius (2006: 77) call mainstream EU journalism as "a nationally fundamentalist profession."

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Chapter 6

Beyond East and West

Alternative Spheres of Journalism, Capitalism and Public

Inka Salovaara-Moring

The entry of ten Eastern European countries¹ into the European Union (EU) on 1st May 2004, and Romania and Bulgaria in January 2007 was primarily seen within the EU as an achievement, namely, that of consolidating democratic values and practices on the Continent. Three years after entry the euphoria of finally “returning to Europe” has faded in many Central and East European countries. Having achieved membership, there has been no consensus in the ten new states as to the best direction for governments and societies in the region. The route leading towards the more stable and mature European democracies and free, accountable media has not proven to be the straight and narrow path to higher democratic standards that observers predicted. Rather, the cornerstones of institutions carefully developed during the past decade are starting to crumble under the pressure of increasing disillusionment and populist politics.² The latest Freedom House report, *Nations in Transit 2007*, reveals that eight of the ten Central and East European members have seen their democratic governance standards stagnate or deteriorate – as assessed by measures such as stability, accountability, transparency, and effectiveness – since achieving EU membership. As Goehring and Evenson (2007: 1) put it: “Overall, the sense of pride previously associated with achieving a consolidated democracy has dissipated, leaving many asking: Is this as good as it gets?” Eastern and Western Europe seemed to have their own particular and different understanding of the trajectories these countries would follow.

“Agency matters”, as trendy sociologists often say these days. The post-Communist elites – political, economic, and journalistic – in their respective societies have been in a constant flux during the last fifteen years. Only a decade ago, studies focusing on East Central Europe noted the visible inertia of these agents despite massive social change, repeating “*La plus ça change, la plus c’est la même chose*”. Path-dependence theorists have been especially active in arguing that those who were in high positions within media or politics before the transition, in most cases remained part of the ruling strata and thus defined the direction that media systems and societies would take. Whatever the defining variables have been, contemporary élites form a new type of so-

cial stratification that is visibly different from that found in Western European liberal democracies.

In order to understand social change in general, and changes of media systems in particular, it must be understood that some system features go beyond local contexts. The roles of different journalistic *agents*, the *positions* they take in various power constellations, and especially *the spirit or consciousness* which imbues them, are of paramount importance in understanding media, alternative capitalism and democracy in a broader, comparative European framework. Miklos Sükosd pointedly wrote (2003: 6) that it would be a mistake to suggest that Central and Eastern European media systems were ever “halfway” to some final media reform, which would find its end-state in the Western institutional pattern. In the new transnational constellation it is evident that such a final destination does not exist, and the relationship between democracy and media is also hampered by market logic in more mature democracies.

This chapter focuses on the new, evolving values and self-understandings of young Eastern European journalists from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Hungary. Theoretically, cultural change there, i.e. “*transition*”, can be captured as a “forgetting process”, which, in a subtle way, relates to the Habermasian “learning process” of developing a new set of practices for understanding what is the “public” (sphere) and how it should be served.³ The focal question is how new generations of media agents act in systems in flux, and how self-understanding is organised and produced by the situated discourses of the agents through domestication of “European” values. These issues are explored through the moment of shift when the new generation entered the field of journalism by describing how commodification and ideals of journalism clashed. The main qualitative data consist of interviews with journalists and foreign correspondents who started their careers after the transition.⁴ Additional data is drawn from policy documents, system data, and country reports on the countries studied, as well as interviews with regulators and civil servants.

The chapter argues that currently the transition can be captured in two parallel narratives: a) a “Transition Narrative”, which is politically correct and in which observed media systems and societies are “panoptized” and measured by the West or Western society against natural benchmarks, and b) an “Alternative Capitalist Narrative”, in which journalists and media managers are adapting systems to complex local surroundings, and negotiating between environments and Western ideals. These agent-based new systems look for equilibrium between the ideals and empirical realities within the evolving media systems.

Crafting Capitalism, Democracy, and Journalism

Eastern European countries can be considered social laboratories containing “media laboratories” that were forced to adjust to the overall development of changing societies. The phenomenon of transitional media systems has already been subjected to broad scholarly and political interests, and commentary. The

main approaches so far can be categorised as “transitology” studies illuminating the different phases of transition within media, economy, and regulatory systems (Jakubowicz 2007; Splichal 2001; Sparks with Reading 1998; O'Neill et al. 1998; O'Neill 1997; Paletz 1995). In addition, a growing number of regional case studies has been published, focusing on the specific regional features of media systems and “Europeanisation” from the national point of view (Balçitienė 2005; Sükosd and Bajomi-Lázar (eds.) 2003; Mihaly 2003; Kuzio 2002; Lauristin and Vihalemm 1997; Gross 1996). The specific nature of the social conditions of different agents within speedily commercialising media systems, their strategies, and the spirit or consciousness that imbues them is still a less explored area.

There are certainly differences between how Eastern and Western European journalists have seen their roles within society. Western journalists, intellectuals, and artists often see themselves as existing in a supra-cultural, free-floating intellectual cosmopolitan layer, unattached to national or linguistic boundaries. Or, as van Ginneken (1998: 56) put it, as “a sort of interstitial social stratum relatively free of interests or *parti pris*”. However, political press and advocacy journalism were part of the long process of European nation-state making, cultivating nationalism and seeing journalism as the glue between state-structures and cultural and social layers within Western societies.

Professionalisation, in terms of “objective” news reporting as a norm, started relatively late in Continental Europe as compared to the United States model of “objective” content production and news manufacturing for the market. The role of journalists as democracy watchdogs, however, demanded the cultivation of adversarial journalistic work. This tradition required that journalists do more than just publish facts. The investigation of each case is a trial, as textbooks of journalism would put it, of the extent to which the social consensus regarding ethical values functions and the extent to which these values are valid under the given circumstances. Professionalisation of journalism in Europe was a natural consequence of the marketisation of the systems.

In East Central Europe the role of the journalist has traditionally been regarded more as a political activity than as a content producer or manufacturer of “objective” news for the market. The traditional role of a journalist has been closer to that of an intellectual, artist, or writer – someone who spoke on behalf of the people and to the people.⁵ Typically, one layer within the journalistic cadre of post-Communist societies had a role in the intelligentsia through the time of resistance, a layer often working for *samizdat*, i.e. underground press (Aumente 1998; Hiebert 1998; Gross 1998; Školokay 1997; Splichal 1994). Those journalists who were part of the intelligentsia of East Central Europe have often been deeply divided by national dependence and need to foster a sense of responsibility for one's own nation, including the belief that the national progress mostly depends on the cultural level of the intelligentsia of that nation. Earlier, this self-confidence often led to the Eastern European intelligentsia fulfilling the role of a non-existent political opposition, the position taken by the intelligentsia always had significant consequences for revolutions or national liberation movements. Journalism in the European context literally gave

language to the nations, moulded the structures and culture, and enriched the semantic understandings of a common fate that was based on the common governance of the nation-states.

As Marju Lauristin and Peeter Vihalemm (2007: 4) described the development of Estonian journalism:

The role of journalism in the nation-building process of the 19th century was important. Journalists had been recognized as national opinion leaders and 'teachers' of their readers: their position comparable (and often adversary) to the pastors. The change of this paternalist position of traditional journalism, at first into political journalism (in the end of 19th century), and then into an Anglo-American type of politically non-partisan news-journalism had formed the basic concepts of the modern journalistic culture in Estonia. (see also Hoyer, Lauk and Vihalemm 1993; Lauk 1997).

However, during the transition period 1990-1995 a whole new generation of young journalists entered the field who lacked the traditional attachment to the political activity of resistance or to Western standards of journalism. Consequently, new journalistic cultures adopted different values in different systems, and these did not always imitate Western standards. Transitional practices formed their own place-specific adjustments and fittings, and brought elusive standards into the systems that did not always follow continental ideals of social responsibility or American, "objective" news journalism.

When the transitional media systems evolved, they took place alongside dimensions such as de-monopolisation and (partial) re-monopolisation of these systems; commercialisation and de-regulation; pluralisation and diversity in the media and its content; implementation of ideas prevalent in Western institutions (public service broadcasting) and internationalisation of ownership (Jakubowicz 2007: 8-9). These processes all intertwined to create systems in which working conditions for journalists were fairly different from the Western counterparts. Professionalisation of the new generation of journalists included rapid technologisation and new cultural requirements, such as linguistic and social skills. Transition demanded, or rather produced, a new type of journalistic agent.

The main result of these contradictory evolutionary patterns was that media became players in the market economy, and, through that, also within the political sphere⁶ of still weak economies (often within very small and highly saturated media markets) where yielding profit was one of their primary tasks. Good communication was profitable communication, and media started to serve their own purposes in many ways: through the selection of topics, distribution of concerns, framing of issues, filtering of information, emphasis and tone, and by keeping debate within the bounds of acceptable premises. That, of course, brought mixed motives into play.

What made the region unique in its media system change compared to earlier waves of democratisation in Eastern Europe was that systems of economy and

democracy were crafted simultaneously. Although democracy was the only game in town in post-socialist countries, the transformation itself has found its own time and place in relation to economy in each society. The straightest route to capitalism in Eastern European countries routinely excluded a “third way” between capitalism and socialism. “The third way is the quickest way, as Czech Prime Minister Václav Klaus put it – to the Third World”.⁷ The primary task in Eastern Europe was to create favourable and deregulated conditions for investments and corporations, and this in turn affected the formation and nature of evolving media systems.

Moreover, the speed of the change was much faster than that of Western media systems: new media technology was introduced more abruptly than in older systems; media policies have had to be adjusted immediately to the demands of a global market; and, whilst ideas of public services had to be rooted, the lack of resources forced media systems to adopt new types of journalistic and organisational solutions. The construction of new regulations had to be started from scratch, with East Central European legislators passing the first generation of media laws in the early 1990s to establish democratic and free media systems. These laws were generally liberal in character as, with memories of Communist rule not far behind, there was little sympathy for regulation.

Looking through *the double-contextual framework of communicative spaces* in East Central Europe, three different levels of action can be distinguished through which the new communicative spaces and the genealogies of the journalistic agents were formed in the regions. Table I contains some of the main characteristics of the media system changes that have taken place there during the last seventeen years.

Spatial and temporal *longue durée*, the long-term historical structures form the first layer modifying the different “transitional narratives” and affecting the ways in which a new generation reflected its position in the midst of social change. Structural time-space refers to the enduring geographical and historical features that produce more fundamental environmental constraints on social, economic, and institutional development for developing media systems and public spheres well as understanding nations and communities as historical processes, including, for example, traditions, the social memory of the people, national master narratives, and landscapes.

The formal and institutional structuring of communicative spaces works through political construction, different regimes, and enforcement of boundaries by generating specific political and/or economic “cores” and affecting how media institutions find their place in the political and economic fields and how interrelations between these two fields are organised. This mainly has an effect on how the systems are organised between state and private ownership (subsidies, public service broadcasting, et cetera), what accountability measures will be established, what collective bodies affect the power-relations (trade unions, transnational legal framework), and what ethical norms become commonplace (social responsibility, market liberalism, et cetera). In this new institutional context, a new generation built up companies and reconfigured organisational

Table 1. Spatio-temporal Contextuality of Communicative Spaces⁸

Level of Analysis	Temporal Context of Communicative Space	Spatial Context of Communicative Space	Context of Agency
Structural Level	Structural Time Rupture in <i>longue durée</i> ; from state-socialism to advanced capitalism, neo-liberalism and new modes of privatised production and economy; "crafted" democracy suitable for market economy; "new" spirit of capitalism(s)	Structural Space Changing geopolitical positions (East/West), open economic space attached to global market, globalisation; Europeanization; new urban-rural stratification; changing demographic patterns; new forms of capital condensation	Structural Agency Generational shift; from oppression to freedom of speech, different modes of remembering and dis-remembering, new narratives of national and common fate
Institutional Level	Institutional Time Change in ownership; Commercialisation of the systems, deregulation, crisis of public service, new values attached to journalism(s); marketisation of content; weak role of trade unions, lack of institutional norms and tacit knowledge of 'Western' journalism	Institutional Space Deregulation and saturation of (media) market space; capital condensation in urban centres, advertisement market; many public sphere(s); digitalisation and convergence; citizens and non-citizens; de- and re-monopolisations, western colonisation of markets and institutions, spaces of capital and journalism intertwined	Institutional Agency New agent -based systems of institutions, co-evolution of different values and moral(s) of journalistic work, flexible negotiation with cultural, economic, and political "markets", pragmatic detachment from institutional structures, professionalisation
Inter-actional Level	Inter-actional Time Clash of generations and values, requirements concerning new types of cultural and material capital, new linguistic, electronic and social forms of interaction, mobile communication, eroding old type of 'nationalisms', new strategies, individualism over collectivism	Inter-actional Space Informal transnational communication networks; transnational space through foreign owners; new spatial patterns of communication and interaction; mobility and flows of ideas, imageries, and topographies of social and emotional featured; abilities to transgress borders	Inter-actional Agency Co-evolution of patriotism, Europeanisation and cosmopolitan outlook, self-organised criticality of agents, coping with complexity and searching for equilibrium within changing systems

structures of the previous era. Professionalisation required new types of cultural capital such as language and interpersonal communication skills.

The local spatial and temporal inter-actional dynamics affected the informal and formal networks of personal communication and the inter-actions that transcended formal boundaries and facilitated processes of diffusion and imitation of different norms, values, and ideas concerning the business, the craft and professional reflections. That mainly affected individual trajectories and strategies of journalists: how they modified their relative freedom within institu-

tions and markets. New journalistic agents were seemingly able to foster both patriotism (nationalistic sentiments) and European and cosmopolitan outlooks as part of their evolving strategies in the new situation.

This contextualised approach seeks from the very beginning to interpret individual, collective, and institutional activity in all spheres within the context of time and space. Therefore, all activities aimed at producing knowledge about the world are necessarily formed under existing structures and conditions of thought. In turn journalism as well as knowledge, all ideas and practices adjust to their surroundings and are “bound to a location” to different degrees, within the social structure and historical process.

In the next section I will explore the transition “moment” of journalism through the afore-mentioned institutional and individual levels, using an example of how commodification of journalism is seen through the experiences of young journalists and how this affects how they understand their role vis-à-vis power politics and their public(s).

New Agents of the European Communicative Space(s)

I can say that during this 15 years of independence there is already a new generation which graduated from university and started their working careers as a journalists already in a free Lithuania. (Lithuanian journalist, Brussels)

In common with the institutional changes, the new generation of journalists began their careers in the midst of this clash between Western values and local realities. Whether people or structures change first is one of the eternal questions concerning the nature of exogenous and endogenous features of social change. However, the fourfold processes of socialisation affect journalists everywhere.

Primary socialisation of journalists generally leads into a historically specific culture and sub-culture (nationality, ethnic group, class, and gender). Secondary socialisation leads into a professional sub-culture, with all its norms and codes, both written and unwritten. Tertiary socialisation leads into a specific organisation, with its own goals and rules. (Ginneken 1998: 65). These are institutional forms of socialisation that are embedded in cultural, social, and economic structures of a given society. In the case of post-socialist journalism there was a fourth dimension of socialisation that led into the formation of a new “ideological” or social consciousness with a set of strategies to adjust to the new contexts.

As a brief background to the structural transformation we can state that in the context of post-socialist countries, change in journalistic cultures was both abrupt and revolutionary. Before the transition of 1989, media had only educational and propaganda functions and represented a means of transmission for authoritative reality.⁹ After the transition, some old forms of media remained in place.¹⁰ It was difficult to replace a generation of journalists, conditioned over

decades to support the party line, with a new generation who had fact-based reporting skills and investigative zeal. In some countries the old journalists who worked under Communism were even regarded as enemies of the new democracy. (Hiebert 1998: 80-111).

Earlier ideological standardisation caused a sudden diversity of political and ideological divisions within the public sphere, and the economies of the region were not strong enough to support independent media. Emergence of private radio and television channels followed the boom of print media. Television especially became the strongest media in the post-socialist countries. That brought new agents into the field, such as businessmen buying newspapers and broadcasting channels with the desire to affect political discussion and, thus, protect their assets. Commercialisation of the systems also required a new type of understanding of media as a business. Good journalism had to be profitable journalism in order to survive.¹¹ The media market concentrated, and growing competition amongst media companies continued until markets became highly competitive and saturated. Foreign capital entered the market in strength and “product improvement” in terms of print and broadcasting media took place.

These foreign proprietors had less interest in the political situation but, instead, sought to gain a foothold in the new media market by securing monopolies in advertising shares. In many cases, the result was a relatively de-regulated media landscape, and neo-liberal laws took a firm grip on journalism.

After the restoration of independence in the post-Communist countries, major changes in the political and economic environment set in motion corresponding changes in the media system and popular use of media. During the liberalisation of the press (1991–1994), subsidies and state ownership were abolished, most newspapers were privatised, and hundreds of new periodicals were established. At the same time a new generation of journalists entered the labour market. (Vihalemm 2006: 18; Lauk 1997). A well-known Estonian journalist for the country’s largest daily pointedly described the new era as “getting rid of the Soviet burden”:

Yes, they just wanted to get rid of old journalists; there was almost a superstitious belief among the younger people. I was completely fresh from university and I was hired with high hopes and a big salary in hopes that I would come to reshape the Estonian journalism, which I wasn’t prepared to do. I was 22. I felt that I would need someone who would be smarter than me and from whom I could learn; but that wasn’t the case. The editor-in-chief at the time was younger than I. (Estonian journalist, Tallinn)

Many of the old journalists are gone. If they themselves didn’t understand that they had to leave, then they were removed. The world was so different during the Soviet times that they couldn’t have adjusted to these new rules. Think about my father; he worked according to five-year plans in the state-owned factory. There is a big leap from there to becoming a Western capitalist and entrepreneur. (Latvian journalist, Riga)

In Hungary, if you are a journalist, you are usually between the ages of 20 and 30. If you call someone who works for the television or who is sitting at a press conference making notes, so many, many journalists, maybe the majority, are very young – between 20 and 30 or 35/40. (Hungarian journalist, Budapest)

The new generation of journalists were “unmarked by the experience of the Soviet era” nor did they have their older colleagues to serve as role models. Western norms and professional codes were quickly accepted and harsh market conditions that required marketisation of the content and entertainment as part of the media output were regarded as normal. Many of them entered the field accidentally: “Well, I became a journalist by accident really. I was a PhD student in Britain and a good friend of mine who lived in London at the time was freelancing for Radio Free Europe when Radio Free Europe had an Estonian service”. Most of them were yanked out of university when the system changed.

When the change came there were suddenly dozens of newspapers and television channels, and everybody just decided to become journalists because they were needed everywhere. Easy as that! We did not have any education or experience, and it was called children’s journalism or baby journalism. Like children were playing to be journalists and journalists we became. (Latvian journalist, Brussels)

The tragedy of Estonian journalism, or maybe its blessing, is that they hired very many very young journalists back in early 1993 like myself. I had graduated but many had not; they were offered responsible positions and good salaries, and they started working basically 24 hours a day and didn’t have time to complete their education. These people, they didn’t speak languages; they have educated themselves through the work but they weren’t really able to cover foreign affairs because they didn’t have the knowledge. (Estonian journalist, Tallinn)

Newspaper privatisation took place at the beginning of the 1990s on a case-by-case basis, with the government agreeing that it should no longer be involved in newspaper publication. In most cases, newspapers were privatised through a management and/or staff buy-out. A few years later, however, most of the original shareholders had sold out to core owners, drawn either from among local publishers or from abroad. Thus, by the end of the 1990s, the number of journalists who were also shareholders in their newspapers had fallen considerably. During the 1990s foreign owners entered the market along with, for example, Russian, German, and Nordic capital. The harsh realities of a free market economy and democracy led to a development whereby media was seen predominantly as a business and a share of the media market drove editorial policy.

It's very interesting. You know, Lithuania's a small country, and I think it has too many media [*laughs*], it has too many TV stations, too many radio stations and too many newspapers, which compete with each other. For example, we have five nationwide TV channels covering the whole country – five! Including the Public channel, but we are also fighting for advertising in this share. We are mixed, we are public, we are partly funded from the budget – we don't have fees because it's not possible to introduce actually – so we have funding from the budget and we have the right. . . it's restricted but we have some right to income, advertising income. So, besides us there are four other commercial channels covering the entire nation, fighting for the same advertising pie. (Lithuanian journalist, Brussels)

Our owners are Norwegians, and they don't pay much attention at all; I think they don't really know what is going on here. In our case the manager of the publisher is the problem. He is basically the one who decides everything, and he doesn't know foreign affairs. He interferes very heavily in editorial policy, is a former journalist himself, a former KGB man as well, not a big secret in Estonia. He wrote nasty articles about dissidents years ago when the last court case of an Estonian dissident was held. He is a Soviet propagandist; he didn't say that they are bad, but he just ridiculed them skilfully. He is a smart person and at times he has been good as a journalist. (Estonian journalist, Tallinn)

Cultural traditions that had more to do with Western journalism were adopted by the young journalist generation who were able to see communication as a profitable business as much as part of democratic practice. As former Moscow correspondent and expert in foreign issues, Kadri Liik, described the neo-liberal law of the new journalism: "As fast as possible, as much as possible, and as entertaining as possible". Commercialisation of the journalistic field also started to blur the borders with other commercial fields of communication such as public relations. Journalism no longer paid off as a sole profession.

Reporters here are young in every medium, because there was a really big changeover in personnel in every newsroom in Latvia; the pay is not good and people are moving to other media, moving to PR and losing interest in reporting. There is no stable staff of reporters with good backgrounds, with journalistic standards in every newsroom in this country. (Latvian media specialist, Riga)

Young people are more interested in advertising and PR and not so much in journalism because everyone knows that salaries are better there; journalism sounds like a hard work. (Latvian professor of journalism, Riga)

The problem with journalists here is that they are young free-lancers and do other things as well, like PR and stuff that is better paid. (Hungarian media specialist, Budapest)

Young journalists were also purposefully hired in order to keep the product close to the target audience:

We intentionally hire very young journalists. In that way we secure access to the world of the young. We understand their desires and needs better. (Managing director of an Estonian daily, Tallinn)

The understanding of reporting, norms of journalism, and the roles of the media within society naturally varied within the region. Journalism as a profession, for example, was no longer seen as a vocation but as (often poorly) paid work alongside many other jobs. Also the motivation of young journalists was sometimes more on the side of self-expression than that of serving the public and acting as “watchdogs” of political systems.

I want to be on television, on the screen; I want to express myself, I really like it when they recognise me on the street, so, it's not just...mostly it's about this. But I don't want to do journalism just for the money and if I have to earn money or...it's not that my journalistic ideals are costing me my life, in the quality of life. (Hungarian journalist, Budapest)

Journalism was a business, and one that produced content to be sold on the market. The paternalistic tradition gave way to new news values (emotive storylines and dramatic pictures), eloquently described by a Lithuanian journalist as follows:

A newspaper is a commodity. If you are convinced that you have to educate and inform the reader, then perhaps it is better to be an instructor or philosophy teacher, but you may publish a newspaper only when you acknowledge that the reader, no matter how knowledgeable he or she may be, is always right. (Lithuanian journalist, Vilnius)¹²

Our news is often boring; it is lacking drama and suspense. Perhaps we should learn about Russian journalism and not be so politically correct. Russians are telling the story and although they are not always so strict with the facts, they are at least entertaining. (Latvian journalist, Riga)

Our priority in the newspaper is to find scandals, find our own news and find scandals. That is why journalists make things look like scandals that are not really scandals – really minor things. They didn't believe that when we created scandals, people would not believe us anymore when a real scandal strikes. Politicians can't take us seriously. (Estonian journalist, Tallinn)

On the other hand, as a result of the microscopic size of the market, newspapers were not financed solely by advertising but also by readers, often making prices relatively high; or by owners, an arrangement that inevitably led to

speculation as to their influence on news content and the selection of interviews by readers and researchers. Selling the content was the most obvious flaw in the financially vulnerable media landscapes. The products of journalism were partly judged by their value from an advertiser's point of view, as a profitable commodity, but many young journalists were also critical of the hardening of competition between media and the changes that these attitudes brought to journalism. (Vihalemm 2006: 18).

Some of the journalists get money, some get travel or products, some get an office when they need it. (Lithuanian journalist, Vilnius)¹³

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

[Agreements] depend on what kind of customer you have. If it is a politician, the payments come from the party budget. If it is a private person or company that needs to be advertised, then there are a lot of ways to earn money or provide discounts. (Lithuanian journalist, Vilnius)¹⁴

In the midst of changing structures, new agents, and clashing ideas, institutions as well as individuals were adapting to their changing surroundings as flexibly as they could. Although the counter-narrative of the young, pragmatic, and sometimes even cynically sounding journalists seems beyond the Westernised ideals of “good journalism”, – beneath it lay a clear understanding of the co-evolution of different values: the normative ideals and those that had to be accepted under the prevailing economic realities.

Young journalists refuted the simplified understanding of “transitional journalism” as a bus stop on the way to “Wall Street Journal journalism” and replaced it with adaptation and mutation within the changing local structures. This, however, did not mean that young journalists could not be self-critical. The shift in character from the role of national “priest or teacher” into that of a border-transgressing and mobile mediator within saturated markets was clear, at the same time this role embraced explicit understanding of limiting factors under which the professional tasks were carried out. As a Hungarian journalist working for the commercial television channel stated: “We have a silent agreement with the owners. I don’t touch certain issues and they leave me alone”. However, the inward – turning media landscape concerned many young journalists who had adapted more European outlook.

I wish the state media would do more, but I think if the politicians and decision-makers would understand that foreign coverage and good journal-

ism are important, then they should pour more money into the state media. They should have good correspondents in Brussels. Then the commercial media would become envious and send their own correspondents. Even the politicians have been discussing the idea that the state could support the foreign news coverage, because it is important to national security. (Estonian journalist, Tallinn)

People should get more information about what is going outside this country. But what do people see, they see their own government. They don't understand that larger structures will start to affect their lives. (Hungarian journalist, Brussels)

I would like to write more about how people really live in other parts of Europe. That is important – important that they would learn to understand other cultures, get to know habits and ways of life. That is what Europe is like – not domestic politics all day long. (Lithuanian journalist, Brussels)

According to young journalists and foreign correspondents living in Europe, the new power-constellation required a broader understanding of changing imageries and alliances – one that nation-based journalism had proved unable to comprehend.

After Revolution: Social Imageries for the Future

“A revolution only lasts fifteen years, a period which coincides with the effectiveness of a generation”, as Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset (1930/1996:43), aptly stated. Revolutions might be the highlights of political history, but very seldom do historians write extensively on the tedious and tiring reconstruction of democracy, governance, and media systems. As a young Estonian Foreign Ministry officer put it: “People here are tired. The pace has been fast, and men can take only a certain number of change at a times”. What comes after “transition” requires adjustment, hard work, and persistence from the people involved. A certain nostalgia may set in. As Zbigniew Brzezinski (2002: 197) described the aftermath:

Many people, I think, would have liked to have combined the benefits of freedom of thought, freedom of movement, freedom of choice and other benefits of the competitive consumer society with the stability, security, and predictability that the grey communist system offered. Most people like to have their cake and eat it. But that's understandable. Nostalgia is part of the human condition: the past always looks less bad than it did when it was not the past, but the present. On a deeper level, however, there is the question of whether in the longer run Central Europe, which is really becoming now a normal Europe, will find satisfaction in the things I have mentioned as the

definition of what life is about. Here there is a big question mark. Do people need some grander law, some motivating imperative, to move them forward, to make them sacrifice, to help them transcend themselves?

In this chapter I have focused on the reflections of young journalists who entered the field during the mid 1990s. The main claim here is that there are different generations working in the field: struggling and negotiating norms and values and, in broader terms, determining media's role in society. The post-Communist system offered a unique social structure for the task because it was able to absorb liberalised globalisation, the "invisible ideology of the West" whilst shedding the old structures of Communism almost overnight. This invisible ideology effected how democracy and media systems were designed. Its freedoms and markets became the main staples of the ideological landscape of East Central Europe and also had an effect on speedily commercialised journalistic cultures. However, it can be claimed that emerging systems and journalistic cultures are bypassing stages that older democracies were forced to take and are already forming new types of media systems and forms of journalism linked to advanced capitalism. This also has had an effect on how journalists see their roles and what sorts of strategies of adjustments are used in evolving systems.

The post-Communist transition is often captured in the "Transition Narrative" by Western observers. It is politically correct, teleological, and based on the single-trajectory fallacy in which evolving societies and media systems are expected to find their end-state in the "Western" model. In this discourse the observed media systems and societies are "panoptized" and measured by West or Western society against their natural benchmarks as stated above, and preferred development is measured by external observers or new intellectuals who use the vocabulary preferred by an international community. The "Alternative Capitalist Narrative" is more common among agents that live and work within the changing structures and values. As seen earlier in this chapter, journalists and media managers are adapting systems to complex local surroundings, and negotiating between environments and Western ideals. These agent-based new systems look for equilibrium between the ideals and the empirical realities within the evolving media systems.

Young journalists do have historical, institutional, and individual strategies through which they adapt to the changing environment. At the historical level, remembering the journalistic past with resistance and testing the limits of censorship by older generations is kept alive when young journalists modify their own practices and professional roles. Perhaps more importantly, the new generation is moulding history for its own purposes by re-remembering "the occupation" as something that prepared them for hard-nosed capitalism.

Institutionally, young journalists are forced to negotiate with the markets, and their employers and often to redefine personal ideological attachments that may be contrary to the owner's interests. Pragmatic detachment from institutions would perhaps best capture the aloof mentality through which individuals are

embracing the “flexible managerialism” of the time within the transformative systems. At the individual level, there is also a new type of co-evolution between patriotism and Europeanisation in the new generation. Young journalists are equipped to cope with the complexity of different levels of political and territorial changes (globalisation, Europeanisation, transnational ownership, et cetera). These individual strategies emphasise mobility between cultures and across linguistic borders. The above-mentioned individual strategies also foster co-evolution of different values and moral(s) of journalistic work. Young journalists negotiate flexibly within cultural, economic, and political “markets”, through pragmatic detachment from institutional structures, and in what “professionalisation” means in their immediate contexts.

Thus, the Marxian statement that “people don’t make their own history as they please but under circumstances directly encountered, given, and transmitted from the past”¹⁵ applies to transitional systems but should perhaps be phrased anew: People don’t make their own *future* as they please but under circumstances directly encountered, given, and transmitted from what is *now*. This rephrasing partly levels off the determination of a path-dependent explanation of the societies and agents studied.

As Mannheim (1936:26) has noted, making sense of the world is, from the outset, a co-operative process of contextualised group life, in which everyone unfolds his or her knowledge within a framework of a common fate, a common activity, and the overcoming of common difficulties. At times a particular group can have fuller access to the understanding of a social phenomenon than other groups, but no group can have total access. Ideas are rooted in differential locations in historical time and in the social structures of their proponents so that thought is inevitably perspectivistic. This idea was aptly captured by Estonian journalist working in Brussels:

The core is, in a perverse sort of way, what I would paraphrase; I think it was Marx or Lenin who said, “The proletariat does not know a country” or doesn’t have a country of origin. I’m in a, I’m not proletarian but, I’m in a position where I don’t really know the fatherland. I mean I’m Estonian, I don’t want to emigrate, I don’t want any other passports, but I’m not Estonian in a very basic sense I’m interstitial – I fall between the different tectonic plates that make up the world. I mean I’m not alone in this, of course; it’s probably a condition that’s becoming more and more common among our generation: people travel, people live abroad, people become alienated from their...from where they come from without necessarily acquiring a new, fast identity – tying them to another place. (Estonian journalist, Brussels)

Thus, the social and ideological structures through which an individual’s ideological and cultural consciousness is formed can be conceptualised as a trajectory through “spaces” that are differentially stratified, differently exclusive, or inclusive, but firmly embedded in particular societies as well as in changing geopolitical constellations. Individual trajectories are created by moving through

these “spaces” and modifying appropriate sets of strategies to adjust to the new situation. These trajectories modify both institutions and the consciousness (or spirit) of these agents. All in all, these evolving strategies of the younger generation form a counter-narrative to the “Transition Narrative”, which quite often has been colonialist in character.

Therefore, the way in which young journalists see their roles, work, and societies is not without epistemological significance. According to Hans Gadamer, different ways of representing reality are always productive, that is, producing reality by representing it. In every representation the original object is born anew. In this process the ontological enrichment of “reality” takes place. The different spatial practices modify the representation produced in a certain context. These new ways of seeing and representing reality also affect socialisation, democratisation and economisation on a larger scale. New ways of how time and space take on meanings further the changes in conceiving and representing political space, forming the public and acting as political subjects.

Far too often the Western “Transitional Narrative” of changing systems is explicitly based on normative ideals and teleological thinking about how the relationship between media and society *should* work – and not how it actually is working. This external narrative is based on a “single-trajectory fallacy” in which the East is “catching up” to the West; it leads to the renouncement in understanding of a multiplicity of systems, individuals, collectives, and social change in general.

However, the new generation of journalists is more accustomed to the co-evolution of different systems and their requirements, where the line between politics and markets is thin and elusive. According to them, advocacy journalism should embrace larger spatial formations and global issues and go beyond nation-states and old-fashioned nationalism where the fear of extinction has been a driving force that should be replaced by a more mobile and cosmopolitan outlook. New Europeanisation may be based on staple skills where personal contacts, networks, and knowledge of cultures are emphasised. Different generations may make this distinction between various systems of ideas, but there is the probability that all ideas, even “truths”, are related to, and hence influenced by, the social and historical situations from which they emerged. The very fact that each thinker is affiliated with particular groups in the society – that he occupies a certain status and enacts certain social roles – colours the intellectual outlook.

Is there a word like “adaptable?” – people who can adapt to situations easily, make adjustments easily to situations: it has something to do with flexibility. Not “hardworking” but devoting lots of time to their work; there are lots of people who don’t have anything but work. They work, sleep, and travel – to work and back. I think that there are hundreds of thousands of people without any spare time. I think that unfortunately but understandably they are politically very passive. (Hungarian journalist, Budapest)

Based on this data, changing societies obviously require new journalistic skills of coping with complexity, searching for equilibrium, and a steady flow of information about markets, people, and audiences and their needs and desires. Going one step beyond the Habermasian normative position, modern media practices can be described as technologies of public(s), political subjects, and their desires.¹⁶ Distinctive institutional and symbolic forms media may emerge in response to a set of imperatives constructed in changing markets in order to govern the habits, desires, fears, and passions of dispersed populations. New media practices can be seen as part of post-capitalist governmentality that leans towards an image of flexible political reason striving to adapt. The new situation apparently calls for different thinking, theories, and openings in order to understand the “capitalisation” of cultural systems like journalism and how multiple spatio-temporal, country-specific constraints modify systems in globalising contexts.

They call it “Run Baby” mentality which you get, nowadays, you get it already in kindergarten. We got this from a stupid English song where there is a sentence, which is repeated and repeated and repeated, and basically it tells how we are, we Baltic people; we simply run. It’s not taught in school that you have to have a proper balanced life, you simply have to be very competitive; you have to run all the time because people after you will be younger, will even be more clever, they’re actually taught more languages than we used to be. (Latvian journalist, Brussels)

Notes

1. The largest enlargement occurred on May 1, 2004 when ten new countries joined the European Union. Those countries were Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia
2. Wrong Turn by Jeannette Goehring and Kristie Evenson, Transitions Online July 2, 2007.
3. This state-of-the-art chapter is part of a larger research project: “Beyond East and West: Comparing Media Geographies of New Europe” funded by the Academy of Finland (2007-2009). Five different European media systems (Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, and Finland) were selected all of which (a) have a history of residing in the East/West borderland, (b) represent both old and new EU member states, and (c) have economic and cultural differences. Empirically, the whole study builds on thematic interviews carried out with leading politicians, media managers, and journalists as well as representatives of relevant journalist unions. The system analysis builds on statistical data and policy documents. *The comparative system approach* analyses changes that constrain media performance, define the freedom of journalistic cultures and affect media policies. The study is based on four methodological fundaments: it is *comparative*; the method for studying cultural grammar is inspired by *discourse analysis*; the system analysis leans on *cultural reading of interviews*; and it makes pragmatic use of theories within the *critical tradition* in the interpretation of the politico-economic change.
4. Currently the qualitative data consist of 46 interviews. The interviews with young journalists are contrasted to their senior colleagues and interviews with media specialists, civil servants, and media regulators in the region.
5. Romanian scholar Cosmina Tănăsioiu (2008: 81) describes the roles of Eastern European intellectuals in general as “fire upholders”, charismatic, and respected by the rest of society, “an

independent, external force located in the realms of cultural values, and outside the political system entirely controlled by the state.” However, although the development that led to the changes of 1989 was mobilised by the elite layer of the society, since then, admittedly, this segment seems to have lost its moral authority and public credibility and become increasingly marginalized in many countries. Nevertheless, their views are expressed in public and disseminated through the media.

6. Privatisation of media companies often led to businessmen buy-outs. See for example Aukšė Balčytienė, “Types of State Intervention in the Media Systems in the Baltic States and Norway,” In *The Baltic Media World*, 40-57. Ed. Richard Bærug (Riga: Flēra Printing House, 2005)
7. In Laar (2002: 80).
8. The table is adapted from Grzegorz Ekiert and Stephen Hanson “Time, Space and Institutional Change.” In *Capitalism and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe*, pp-pp. Eds. Grzegorz Ekiert and Stephen Hanson (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2003) where they present more general spatio-temporal framework for transitional societies and the different geographical and historical layers.
9. According to Lenin, the press was the Communist Party’s sharpest of weapon of the party. National, regional, and local radio and television channels were directly controlled by the Communist Party and/or the State (Splichal 1994: 27). Although severe restrictions were in place on the contents of the press in the Soviet period, high readership numbers were encouraged by the State which heavily subsidised costs.
10. Prior to the fall of Communism the press and broadcasting were under the strict control of the Communist Party. The State was the sole owner of the press, and private newspapers were illegal. Censorship was conducted in major national newspapers through a body called *Glavlit*, but journalists learnt to write so that people could read between the lines. That was part of the Communist Era “double-speak” and camouflage strategies of resistance.
11. The position of the press weakened with the political changes of the early 1990s. The emergence of private radio and television channels followed the boom in print media, and television soon became the strongest media in post-socialist countries. The third phase in the media transition was the privatisation of the media: in many cases journalists purchased the dailies during the transition period, but foreign capital also entered the market.
12. This quotation is from Richard Bærug’s study “Hidden Advertising and TV Journalism in the Baltic Countries and Norway.” Ed. Richard Bærug *The Baltic Media World*, 60-92 (Riga: Flēra Printing House, 2005).
13. Ibid. 60-92.
14. Ibid. 60-92.
15. Marx 1867/1968: 97.
16. See Clive Barnett *Culture and Democracy: Media, Space and Representation*. (Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh, 2003)

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Chapter 7

A European Public Sphere

Media and Public Opinion

Claes H. de Vreese & Hajo G. Boomgaarden

This chapter empirically addresses two interrelated issues regarding the concept of the European public sphere. It first takes up the assumption that if a European public sphere is to be found at all, it will be in the *national* media. To assess the scope and quality of the public sphere as an arena or “a system of communication where issues and opinions are being gathered (input), processed (throughput) and passed on (output)” (Neidhardt 1994: 8), most scholars have – rightfully – turned to the media. The media and communication play a key role in the interplay between a polity’s institutions, civil society, and citizens’ attitudes and behaviour and are therefore taken as the best “proxy” for expressions of the public sphere.

Three strands of research on the European public sphere can be distinguished (see de Vreese [2007] for an overview): One group of studies has concentrated on the necessity and prerequisite for a truly European public sphere. A second group of studies has focused on specific cases in which a European public sphere is or has been in existence. A third group of studies has focused on the indicators and extent to which Europeanisation of the *national* public spheres can be identified. Knowing of the non-existence of a single mono-lingual media environment in which matters of European interest are discussed, *national* media are the place in which public spheres Europeanise. This is also where we focus our attention in this chapter. Secondly we consider the degree to which citizens engage in discussions and debate about European issues, which is an important and overlooked component of a Europeanised public sphere.

Subsequent to reviewing studies that indicate developments towards a certain degree of Europeanisation of national public spheres and their compatibility, this chapter focuses on campaigns for European Parliamentary (EP) elections. These are decisive moments for European integration, and arguably at these times in particular indications of a Europeanisation of national public spheres are most likely. Moreover, this same event is discussed at the same moment in time with very similar relevance to citizens in different member states. The chapter addresses both vertical and horizontal Europeanisation (Koopmans and Erbe 2004). Vertical Europeanisation refers to national actors addressing

European actors, national actors addressing European issues, or European actors partaking in national debates on European issues. By contrast, horizontal Europeanisation refers to national media covering issues in other EU member states and national political actors addressing issues or actors in another EU member state. We show that during the campaign both kinds of Europeanisation exist to varying degrees in the different national media systems.

Finally, the chapter discusses the *consequences* of Europe in the news. Arguably, the media are more than just a forum for discussion. The media actually provide information that is capable of influencing citizens' cognitions, attitudes and behaviours. For a European public sphere to emerge, a first but fundamental step involves European citizens discussing transnational and European affairs. The chapter concludes with the observation that the emergence of the European public sphere cannot be separated from the study of the media's impact on public opinion.

A European Public Sphere

Elsewhere we have discussed different notions of what a (European) public sphere is (de Vreese 2007). There are good (and practical and valid) reasons almost to equate the media and their contents with the public sphere: media enable public communication when speakers are unable to reach their audience, and democratic political entities need mechanisms to link the political arenas. The media function as "glue" for the segmented public spheres (Erbe 2005). Indeed most of what citizens experience about politics involves media to some extent; the media represent an organised and confined space in which speakers and actors can provide input for and take up public discussions. News media are an arena in which political actors, civil society, and (even) citizens can express views and make announcements. In the European case, the media are important locations for manifestations of the public sphere. Very few people have direct experiences with EU politics, and many policy competences of the EU do not spark interpersonal discussions without being prompted by the media. In sum, when studying the public sphere the media are an inevitable component as they can be seen as a marketplace of ideas, statements and images of Europe, nations in Europe, and the process of European integration.

As stated above, in the literature of the past two decades we can observe a shift from focusing on a "public sphere heavy" notion of a singular, pan-European public sphere to focusing on a "public sphere light" notion of co-existing national public spheres in regard to European politics. The by-now largely rejected notion of a singular, supra-national, pan-European public sphere was conceptualised as communicative space requiring a common language, a shared identity, and a transnational media system (Kielmansegg 1996; Habermas 2001; Grimm 2004). Theorists were quick to acknowledge that a European public sphere is nearly impossible owing to communication barriers imposed by such realities as different languages. As later acknowledged by Kielsmansegg (2004)

and critics of this notion of a European public sphere (e.g., Schlesinger 1999; de Vreese 2002), the European Union “is not a community of communication, hardly a community of shared memories; it is merely, and in a limited sense, a community of shared experiences” (Kielsmansegg 2004: 58). The notion of a monolithic, singular, and pan-European public sphere has also been largely discarded in light of the failure of attempts to create pan-European media (including, for example, the newspaper *The European* and the heavily subsidised *Euronews*) (de Vreese 2002).

Other research has distinguished *segmented transnational public spheres*, which have been conceptualised as issue-specific communicative spaces, largely dominated by political and economic élites (Eder 2000). Even though the EU can have communicative spaces at the level of national media, these will centre on specific topics and in specific segments, defined as “elite quality newspapers”. Ultimately, élitist national newspapers and a handful of commercial news outlets with a global outreach and a significant European audience, such as the *Financial Times*, have a limited, elitist readership that makes it hard to speak of a *public* sphere (de Vreese 2002, 2003; Koopmans 2007).

The final strand of research focuses on one or another version of Europeanised public spheres. Different distinctions in Europeanisation can be made. One important difference is between news about the EU, its policies and institutions on the one hand and news about events and issues from other European countries. This distinction has been called *vertical* and *horizontal Europeanisation* (Koopmans and Erbe 2004).

The notion of Europeanised national public spheres has found most resonance in large-scale comparative studies of the media’s coverage of European integration. The media coverage of European affairs is in lieu of a constant flow of news and is best described as cyclical, with occasional peaks and long periods of little news (de Vreese 2002; de Vreese et al. 2001; Peter and de Vreese 2004). Key events, such as national referenda and EU summits, can take up a substantial part of the news (de Vreese and Semetko 2004; de Vreese and Boomgaarden 2006), but most of the news is seen through the prism of the nation-state.

European Elections and the European Public Sphere

Elections for the European Parliament arguably constitute an opportunity for the emergence of a European public space or compatibility between national spheres as well as their Europeanisation. The first elections in 1979 were virtually absent from the European media agendas until the final week before the elections (Siune 1983). Twenty years later, in 1999, when a comparative study was conducted of the news coverage of the campaign in the two weeks prior to the EP elections in the then 15 countries of the EU, it was found that the elections received about 7% of the time in national television news programmes (de Vreese et al. 2007). There was low visibility of European actors in the news,

and there were few references to either the debates in other countries or the European character of the election. As summarised elsewhere in many countries, “the European elections were given low priority in the news, they rarely made the opening of the news bulletins, the coverage was domestic in nature with most stories taking place in the home country and addressing issues with implications for the home country. Only a few representatives of EU institutions made it into the news and these EU actors were rarely quoted and they were evaluated less favourably than other actors” (De Vreese et al. 2007: 129).

In this chapter, we extend the previous research in two ways. First, we look specifically at the European elections that took place in June 2004 after ten new countries joined the EU in May of that year. This gave an impulse to the integration process and allows us to look for a Europeanisation of the public spheres in both new and long time member states. Second, we specifically investigate the effects of being exposed to news about the elections on engaging in discussions about European politics with family, friends, and colleagues. We relate some of the fundamental assumptions in classic two-step theories of communication to suggest that engaging in interpersonal discussions is a prerequisite for the emergence of a public sphere.

The Study

To address the points set out above, we draw on a content analysis of news coverage of the 2004 election campaign and on the European Election Study 2004 post election survey. Utilising these data sources allows an assessment of the relationship between exposure to news about the European Parliament elections and interpersonal communication about the campaign.

Content Analysis

News coverage in all 25 member states of the EU (in 2004) during the campaign for the EP elections was analysed by means of a quantitative content analysis. Per country the two main evening television newscasts (one public and one commercial) and three newspapers (one tabloid-style and two broadsheets) were analysed for a period of two weeks before Election Day. For newspapers only front pages and for television the entire newscasts were included (N = 8280 and 9339 respectively) (for more information on the sample and coding procedure, please see de Vreese et al., 2006).¹ For this study we are primarily interested in the *visibility* of EP election campaign news coverage and the Europeanisation of the coverage. We look at visibility as this is a rudimentary indication of the existence of a Europeanized public sphere. Practically speaking, each news story was coded for *topic*. News about European elections was designated with a range of codes that enabled us to identify when a story was about the elections. We also examined the *domestic versus the European* nature of the story in order to tap into references to European debates and references

to other EU countries. For this we relied on the coding of actors in the news. An actor is defined as a person (e.g., MEP candidate), a group of persons (e.g., political party), an institution (e.g., national parliament) or other organisation (e.g., the Red Cross) that is featured in a news story. Coders first identified the main actor (in terms of importance) and then other actors in order of appearance. Actors have been classified as EU actors, domestic political actors or other actors. EU actors include EP candidates as well as the EU president and EU commission members. Domestic political actors are members of the government, spokespersons for government agencies, or members of opposition parties. This includes all members of national parliaments. The category of other actors includes journalists, celebrities, ordinary citizens and others who do not fall into the EU or domestic political actor categories.² Among all the news stories a total of 19,851 actors was coded. In addition we used a measure of the *location* of the news to assess the degree of vertical and horizontal Europeanisation. Each story was coded for location, set either primarily the country of the news outlet, in another EU member state, at an EU institution, or outside the EU.

Survey

Relying on the post-election survey of the European Election Study 2004, we were able to assess whether exposure to EP campaign news was related to talking about the EP elections and thereby contributed to building a public sphere. The survey was held among representative samples of populations in the member states – by then, 25 – in the period after Election Day. Respondents were asked how many days per week on average they watched or read specific news outlets, which partially constitutes our main independent variable. Furthermore, respondents stated how often they talked with friends or family members about the EP elections – our dependent variable (not available for Lithuania and Sweden). The model to test the relationship between exposure to EP campaign news and talking about the elections included a number of control variables that were also expected to explain interpersonal communication about the elections. We controlled for respondents' age, gender, level of education and general level of political interest. Furthermore, specific interest in the EP campaign, a measure of European identity, and general support for the EU were included in the model. All question wordings and descriptive statistics are provided in the Table 2 (see Appendix to this chapter).

Analysis

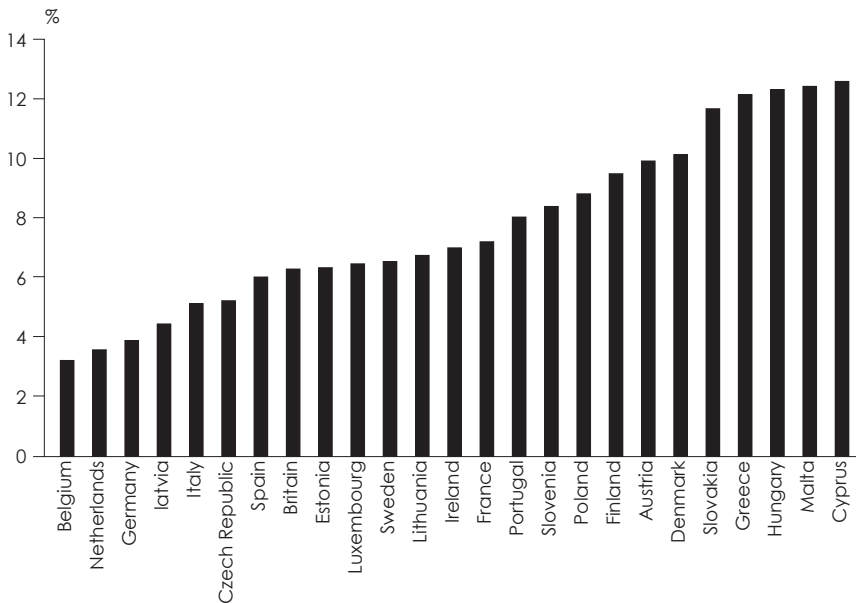
We first provide descriptive information regarding several aspects of news coverage in the 25 member states in a cross-country perspective. Subsequently, we integrate findings from the content analysis into the survey data in order to make a convincing link between exposure to EP campaign news and interpersonal communication. Respondents' exposure to news outlets that were

content analysed was probed in the survey. This allowed integrating the visibility of EP campaign news into exposure measures, so that respondents who reported being exposed three times a week to a news outlet that featured a great deal of EP news received a higher score on the independent variable than a respondent exposed three times a week to an outlet hardly featuring EP news at all (no detailed news exposure measures were available for Belgium, Lithuania, and Slovenia; and therefore, these countries are excluded from the multivariate analysis). We drew on an OLS regression model to assess the impact of EP campaign news exposure on interpersonal communication about the elections.

Results

Before turning to the explanatory analysis, we provide descriptive information regarding different aspects of campaign news coverage and the amount of self-reported talk about the election compared across countries.

Figure 1 Visibility of EP Campaign News Coverage



Note: The figure displays the percentage of all news stories in television newscasts and on the front pages of newspaper that dealt with the EP elections.

As shown in Figure 1, the visibility of the campaign differed considerably between the member states. Whereas in some countries, such as in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany, less than four per cent of all news stories dealt with the EP election (campaign), this was more than twelve per cent in Greece,

Hungary, Malta, and Cyprus. On average, 7.63% of all news stories dealt with EP election news across the 25 countries. It should be noted that the results also showed considerable in-country variation, with EP campaign news being more visible overall in broadsheet newspapers and on public television newscasts (see de Vreese and Boomgaarden [2008] for factors explaining variation in visibility). Such in-country variations raise the question of whether the information diet about the EP elections that was available to audiences of different news outlets is related to how involved – in terms of talking with others about the elections – different audience members were, a matter addressed in subsequent analysis.

Figure 2. Actors in EU News Stories in Old and New Member States

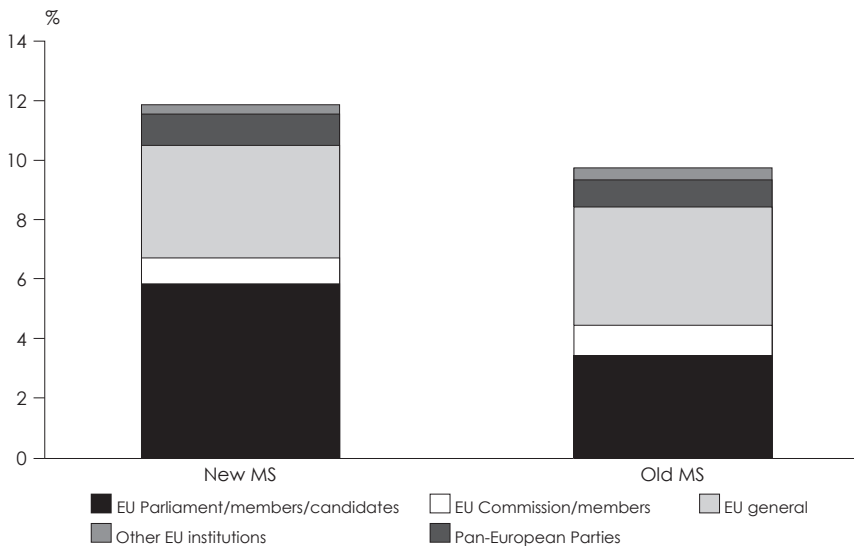


Figure 2 shows that the news coverage was clearly dominated by non-EU actors (who tend to be national political actors). Less than 12% of all actors appearing in EU news stories in the “new” member states and 10% in the “old” member states are EU actors. The share of EU actors in news about the EU ranges from around 5% in Portugal, Hungary, and Italy to more than 15% in Malta, Germany, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia. Compared to 1999, changes were evident in 2004 (de Vreese et al., 2006). While the coverage was still focused on domestic actors, there was an overall increase in the proportion of EU actors. Therefore, while we see that EP election news coverage still predominantly featured domestic political actors, there was an increase since 1999 in attention paid to EU actors compared to 1999. Finally, there were slightly more EU actors in the news in the new member states compared to the old member states.

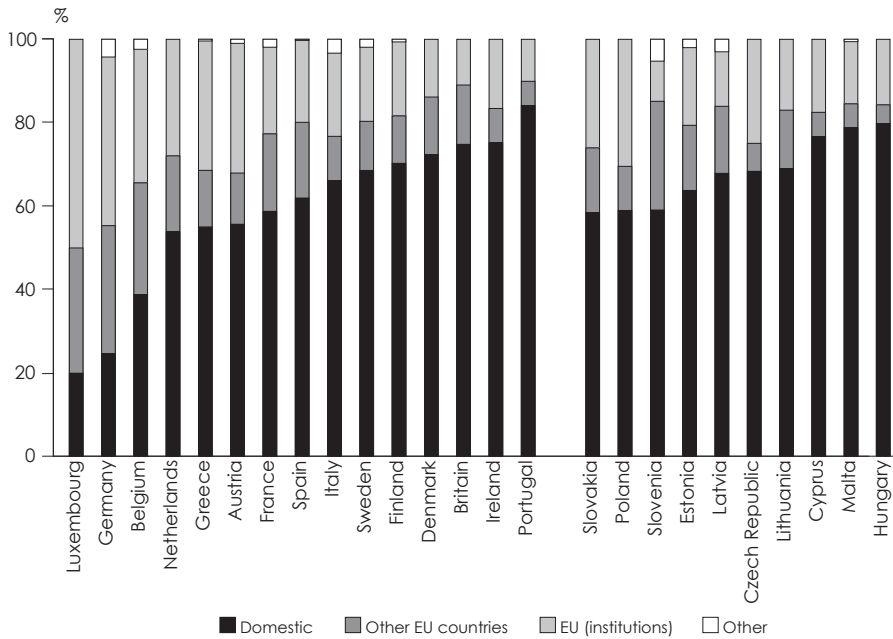
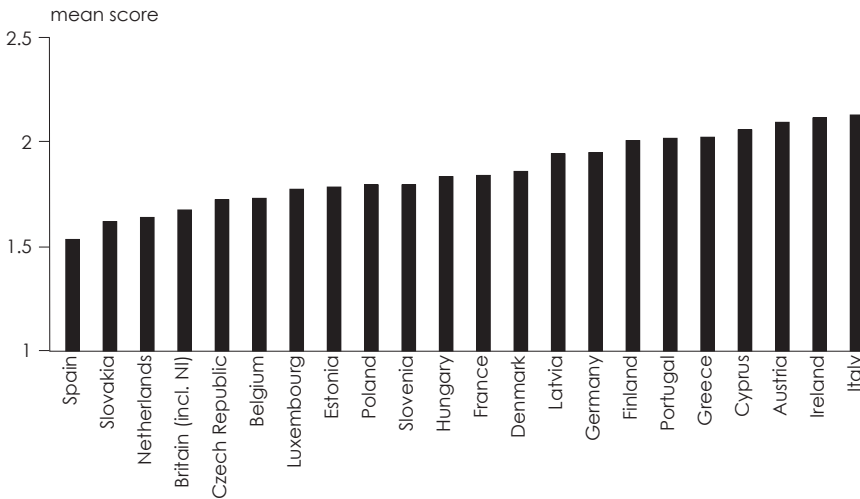
Figure 3. Location of EU News by Country (television and newspapers)

Figure 3 shows that news in Luxembourg, Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands – in terms of the location of the news – showed a considerable degree of Europeanisation of EU news stories. In Luxembourg 30% of the EU news stories took place in another EU country, while 45% of the news came from Brussels and the EU institutions. This is in contrast, for example, to Portugal where more than 80% of the EU news was located in Portugal. The old and new member states did not differ systematically in their degree of vertical or horizontal Europeanisation of the news.

Figure 4 displays the country variations in the mean scores of discussion with others about the EP elections. Here too the results reveal considerable differences. In particular in Cyprus, Austria, Ireland, and Italy people talked a lot about the elections; there was clearly less talk in Spain, Slovakia, or the Netherlands. The overall mean score for all countries was 1.84, well below the mid-point of the scale (“I sometimes talk about EP election campaign”). The bivariate country level correlation between the visibility of EP campaign news and talking about the EP elections was low, $r = .25$, indicating that if we find a relationship between EP news exposure and talking about the elections, it would be due to outlet-specific characteristics of coverage, rather than to country-level variation.

Table 1 shows the results of an OLS regression model explaining variation at the individual level in talking about the EP election campaign. Expressing interest in the campaign and being generally politically interested were by far

Figure 4. "Talking about the EP Elections": Mean Scores

Note: The figure displays the mean score per country obtained from the question "How often did you talk about the European Parliamentary election with friends or family?" Owing to restrictions, data are missing for Malta, Sweden, Belgium, Lithuania, Slovakia.

Table 1. Explaining Interpersonal Communication about the EP Elections

	Beta	SE
Intercept		.034
Age	-.029 ***	.000
Gender (female)	.057 ***	.010
Education	.015 *	.001
Political interest	.163 ***	.007
Considers oneself an EU citizen	.063 ***	.007
EU membership considered good	.001	.008
Interest in EP campaign	.248 ***	.008
Exposure to EP campaign news	.060 ***	.000
Adjusted R-square	.144	
N	15,772	

Note: Cell entries are OLS beta coefficient and standard errors.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

the strongest explanatory factors. Exposure to EP elections campaign news, however, had a substantial positive impact on the dependent variable. Apparently, the more people see or read about a campaign, the more they talk about it. Furthermore, it emerged that older people tended to talk less about the campaign; females talk somewhat more, while higher education is weakly related to more talk. Last, whereas respondents who consider themselves EU

citizens talk more about the elections, general support for EU membership is unrelated. Overall the model is satisfactory and explains some 15% of variance in the dependent variable.

Conclusions

Our main claim here has been that if we are to find traces of a European public sphere then we need to turn primarily to the *national* news media and look there for evidence of Europeanisation of national public spheres. We focused in particular on the media coverage of European elections as the place to investigate Europeanisation. Focusing especially on visibility, actors, and the location of the news, we found significant cross-national variation in the degree of Europeanisation. In short, the 2004 European Parliamentary elections – like the previous elections – did not represent a *single* European public sphere, in the sense of a pan-European debate taking place in pan-European media. However, there were signs of a substantial degree of the Europeanisation of national debates, which suggests that a European public sphere “light” in the form of Europeanised national debates is gaining ground. We also noted that the evidence of Europeanised public spheres is increasing to the point that the elections in 2004 showed more traces of Europeanisation than previous elections.

A second and quite significant element of the notion of a public sphere was also addressed in this chapter. We suggested that the media’s coverage is not only an important expression of and arena for the public sphere but also an antecedent of and impetus for public discussions about and deliberation of issues of European integration. We contend that such discussions provide a crucial, but generally overlooked aspect of the public sphere, and our results showed that exposure to news about the elections prompted discussions.

On a final note, we stress that systematic and comparative empirical assessments of the Europeanisation of national public spheres are necessary conditions for viable future research into the composition, change and significance of a European public sphere. In addition, we plea not only for linking the theoretical literature of the European public sphere to such investigations of media content but also linking it to public opinion and electoral research in a way that can provide indications of the public sphere as a living concept, expressed in discussions among the citizens of Europe.

Notes

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2. It should be noted that a difference in coding during the 2004 study necessitated classifying actors into main protagonists (actors who were the primary focus of the news story) and others (actors who were mentioned in the news story but were not the main focus).

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Appendix

Table 1. Question Wording and Variable Descriptives

	Range			M	SD
	Min	–	Max		
Weighted index exposure to EP election campaign news	0		369	50.78	56.42
How interested are you in politics? (not at all/ somewhat/very much)	1		4	2.44	0.88
How old were you when you completed your full-time education? (in years)	7		50	19.20	5.00
Do you think that your country's membership in the EU is a good thing? (a bad thing/ neither/ a good thing)	1		3	2.4	0.72
How interested were you in the European Parliamentary election? (not at all/ somewhat/ very much)	1		3	1.57	0.68
How often did you talk to friends or family about the election? (never/ sometimes/ often)	1		3	1.84	0.69
How often do you think you are not only a [country] citizen, but also a European citizen? (never/ sometimes/ often)	1		3	1.73	0.74
Are you ...? (male/ female)	0		1	0.52	0.50
How old are you? (years)	17		104	50.22	16.93

III. Multiculturalism and the European Public Sphere

Public Spheres and Multiculturalism in Contemporary Europe

Charles Husband & Tom Moring

It is a fact that in real terms the nation state is no longer unambiguously capable of comfortably holding together the governance of its people, the management of its economy and the social regulation of a national culture within its territory in a cohesive and coherent way. The linkage between territory, identity and governance that was the taken-for-granted ideal of the nineteenth century nation state is an increasingly dubious aspiration. In relation to their political sovereignty and governance, for the twenty-seven European countries their membership of the European Union has significantly qualified the political autonomy of their elected Governments in regulating the economy and social conduct within their state.

There is, therefore, something of an irony that in this context of the fraying powers of the nation state, neo-nationalism, a political and emotional assertion of a natural bonding of national identity with residence within the territory of the state, has enjoyed a significant resurgence in many European states over the last two decades. This is not only in relation to “far-right” extremist movements (Cheles et al. 1991; Harris 1990), but also in the increasingly xenophobic and populist nationalism of mainstream national political parties and governments.

The emergence of new neo-nationalist sentiments and politics across Europe sits uncomfortably with the reality that across Europe states are *de facto* multi-ethnic. Through historical absorption of independent nations, through movements of peoples under past European empires and through historical flows of immigrants European countries have for centuries, rather than decades, been multinational and multi-ethnic. However, the global flows of migrants and refugees in the decades since the end of the Second World War have seen an extraordinary transformation of the demography of European states. (Geddes 2003; Castles 2000; Extra and Gorter 2001) This phenomenon has changed the ethnic profile of European states permanently. But, at the same time, it has created a backlash in anti-immigrant sentiments that has fed on and revitalised racist sentiments and nationalist xenophobias that have their roots in the specific histories of nation building, and past encounters with difference (Wrench and Solomos 1993).

Faced with the erosion of their powers and legitimacy by the processes of globalisation, and seeking to govern an anxious but demanding electorate, the state's efforts to re-establish certainty through reasserting the *alleged* homogeneity of the nation clashes with the de facto diversity that is the current reality. The emergent social consequences of a mixture of *laissez-faire*, or inadequate, management of diversity have after five decades across Europe produced a political concern with the large concentrations of minority ethnic citizens, and denizens (here denoting residents without citizenship), who are only partially integrated into the opportunities and civic life of mainstream society. *Social cohesion* is now a central policy concern within the European Union and across European states. (Buck et al. 2005; Spencer 2005)

It is primarily within individual nation states that multicultural policies are developed and implemented. This fact is contrasted with a development towards higher orders of international organisation in the form of European integration. Thus, this integration process has been augmented by accompanying measures to manage diversity beyond the scope of the member states, for example in the policies and practices of the European institutions. Such policies have been more robustly developed in the policing of EU and national boundaries, and in regulating immigration and asylum seeking, whilst proactive policies towards managing multicultural equity have remained rather more persuasive than mandatory (Busch and Krzyzanowski 2007). The European Union itself remains operative in its official languages and reflects and privileges its perceived *European* cultural and religious heritage (as in the preamble to the Constitution for Europe), leaving further actions to meet the demands of multiculturalism to its member states in the name of "subsidiarity".

In this chapter we will explore how acknowledging ethnic diversity within the state has policy implications which impact directly upon the operation of a viable public sphere. The arguments developed here will provide a critical discussion of how states may develop policies for managing ethnic diversity and we will outline a framework under which a multi-ethnic public sphere might be expected to flourish.

In pursuing this task we will explore the conditions which must be in place in order to facilitate a viable, and more comprehensive, European public sphere. In highlighting the role of an active public sphere as a necessary check upon the powers and operation of the state and the economy within democratic liberal societies we will examine the paradoxical role of the state as a guarantor of the conditions under which a public sphere may effectively flourish. Given the ethnic diversity of contemporary European states, we will challenge the adequacy of a universalist politics of liberal equality and advance a conceptual framework of differential citizenship. For, as van Dyke has argued in relation to the processes of discrimination and marginalisation:

The discrimination was in a sense impersonal; it was not that a given person was to be denied certain opportunities and thus be excluded and kept down; it was rather that the whole community was to be kept in its place. The re-

ciprocal of this is to take compensatory action for the whole community and to let individual members benefit even if they have not personally suffered discrimination. (van Dyke 1995: 50)

Thus we will argue for a system of polyethnic rights that would facilitate a policy environment capable of nurturing a diverse public sphere.

The Public Sphere

As Nieminen (2006) has pointed out, the public sphere is typically conceptualised in relation to the functioning of an individual nation state. Our concern with a multiethnic European public sphere requires an engagement with a European context. In a move which somewhat arbitrarily forecloses on a debate about what and where is Europe, we will in this paper focus strategically upon the European Union and its institutional operations, as defining the terms of our analysis.

Fraser (1993: 14) has argued that a situation of “contestation among a plurality of competing publics” may be the necessary and appropriate form of fragmented public sphere that is capable of challenging the hegemonic reproduction of social and economic inequalities frequently encountered in contemporary states. And Young (2002: 171) notes the positive role of “subaltern counter-publics” in enabling the development of viable identity politics that in a complementary way function to facilitate counter strategies to exclusionary state and economic forces.

This is exactly the paradox that we wish to address throughout this chapter. The state as the, more or less, legitimately mandated system of institutions, law and political practice must, in fulfilling its commitment to democratic processes, actively enable the creation of a viable and diverse public sphere that must be expected to expose and challenge the social and economic inequalities that the same state has brought into being or systematically nurtured. In aspiring to the promotion of a European public sphere we may legitimately expect the EU to provide an external role in this process.

Identity Politics and the Fragmenting Public Sphere

If ethnic diversity is now an established reality in the contemporary nation state, the political response to diversity is shaped by relatively recent significant changes in how diversity is experienced and politicised. From the 1960's onwards there has been a progressive development of social movements addressing the identity claims of specific interest groups.

Charles Taylor (1992) has expressed the significance of this transition clearly and eloquently in his discussion of the movement from a “politics of equal recognition” to a “politics of difference” (Taylor 1992: 36-38). The politics of

recognition reflects an understanding of identity formation and of the importance of mutual recognition and respect. Thus, the politics of equal recognition affirms a universalist claim to a common humanity and equal worth and treatment. However, in the emergence of the politics of difference Taylor (1992) identifies a significant and fundamental shift. He argues that:

... the development of the modern notion of identity, has given rise to a *politics of difference*. There is of course a universalist basis to this as well, making for the overlap and confusion between the two. Everyone should be recognized for his or her unique identity. But recognition here means something else. With the politics of equal dignity, what is established is meant to be universally *the same*, an identical basket of rights and immunities; with the politics of difference, what we are asked to recognize is the unique identity of this individual or group, *their distinctiveness* from everyone else. The idea is that it is precisely this distinctness that has been ignored, glossed over, assimilated to a dominant or majority identity. (Taylor 1992: 38)

Within the politics of difference there lies a strong critique of the de facto consequences of the universalist principle of treating everyone equally. It is the assertion that in reality, in diverse societies, treating everyone equally ends up in practice as treating everyone the same: with the nature of the sameness defined by the majority (see Young 1989). The politics of difference insists that instead of reducing equality to identical resources and provision care must be taken to identify the particular needs and priorities of specific interest groups. Thus, “the politics of difference in effect insists that if you want to treat me equally, you may have to treat me differently” (Downing and Husband 2005: 199).

Western liberal theory and practice has traditionally defended the rights of the individual. European enlightenment and its translation into European political philosophy have contributed to a legal structure that is uncomfortable with recognizing group; or collective rights. The French tradition of secularism¹ (Hargreaves 2007) is a very particular expression of a state’s unwillingness to recognize collective identities that challenge the state’s commitment to the individual citizen. This raises the question of the role of the state in guaranteeing the conditions under which a viable multi-ethnic public sphere may exist. If the state cannot formally acknowledge ethnic diversity in its policy formulation, it then inevitably must produce universalist policies. When specific interest groups then seek to pursue their own priorities through their own interpretation of such policies they may come into conflict with the dominant values that were explicit or implicit in the government policy formulation.

Additionally, a multiculturalism that is founded on the majority’s “tolerance” of the difference of minority ethnic communities is inevitably challenged by minority ethnic communities, imbued with the ethos of the politics of difference, insisting upon their rights. A majority that defines its multiculturalism through affirming the majorities’ tolerance expects the minority ethnic beneficiaries of

this policy to be grateful. Minority ethnic communities, in claiming the full expression of their formal citizen rights, as substantive citizenship (Marshall and Bottomore 1995), feel no need to beg to have their distinctiveness recognized. (See Husband 2003)

Post-modern analyses have emphasised the intersection of multiple identities into unique syntheses as individuals construct and inhabit *hybrid* identities: in which ethnicity, language, region, gender, sexual preference, age and class, amongst others, are uniquely woven through individual biographies (e.g. Hall and du Gay 1996; Georgiou 2003: 13). And, least it is assumed that such hybridity may be contained within the territorial domain of the individual nation state, the concept of diaspora has insisted upon the critical significance of past migration and continuing identification with historical roots in shaping transnational social, cultural and political life spaces. All this has profound implications for the construction and use of the public sphere. (See Bailey et al. 2007)

The Media and a Viable Public Sphere

Multiple and complex identities generate multiple and distinct networks, interest groups and channels of communication; each with their own infrastructure and dynamics. It can be seen in the current challenge faced by the “national mass media” as multiple specific audiences build and attract their own distinctive media systems. The notion of a unitary public sphere wherein all citizens participate is increasingly mocked by the diversity of identities and interests; and their attendant communicative networks. In Gitlin’s (1998) terms, we should perhaps no longer talk of a public sphere; but rather of relatively autonomous *sphericules*. In his words:

... does it not look as though the public sphere, in falling, has shattered into a scatter of globules, like mercury? (Gitlin 1998: 173)

“National” television and radio channels have had to diversify and create additional channels and programming schedules in their attempt to tap a mass audience; now located in quite distinct audiences. Satellite, cable media and the web have extensively extended the territorial landscape across which individuals may pursue their own interests. And, in terms of minority ethnic communities we have ample evidence of the growth of media infrastructures which directly reflect the identity politics of specific communities. (Moring 2007) In specific countries a mixture of nationally based, owned and targeted media are complemented by transnational, diasporic media, which draw on editorial and production resources overseas in targeting nationally located minority ethnic communities (Bailey et al. 2007). If the politics of difference now powerfully frames individual and collective understandings of the nature, and political implications, of their hybrid ethnic identity; we may safely assert that there are increasingly likely to be diverse communicative networks through

which they may rehearse and articulate their identity politics. However, for recent global migrants who still constitute new and relatively small minority communities, or who represent populations that do not carry a global media network, their communicative environment may be severely limited. Also communities targeted by “diasporic media” may find such media less sufficient in meeting their cultural needs (Georgiou 2005; Robins 2006). Nieminen’s (2006) depiction of the European Public Sphere as a network of networks is revealed here as a highly complex system; within which there may be closely overlapping networks; and others that run as effectively autonomous entities.

The concept of *sphericules* may seem to imply an infinite population of independent and autonomous networks. And indeed, post-modern hybridity has created a condition in which multiple, quite specific networks have developed. If we think of popular music, we can see the very many different sub-cultural forms which exist and the quite particular media and social networks that are attached to them. At the same time, hybridity points to complexity and the many different identifications any one individual may seek to negotiate. Thus, participation in one sphericule certainly does not necessarily exclude participation in many others.

We have indicated above that in multi-ethnic Europe there is already frequently an extant infrastructure of media and communication networks that provide the basis for active ethnically-hybrid sphericules. They have emerged through a mixture of pressure group politics, individual agency and commercial interest. Research has directed attention towards the fact that, generally speaking, the media tend to favour majority culture (Innis 1951; more particularly, Busch 2001; Moring and Husband 2007). The attempts by majority ethnic media to address the needs of minority ethnic audiences have typically been partial and inadequate in supporting minority ethnic identities. The critical presence of autonomous minority ethnic media in defining and addressing specific audiences is now an essential element in national and European contexts.

Multicultural Europe and a European Public Sphere

Any attempt to address the construction of a European multiethnic public sphere must necessarily engage with the contemporary ethnic diversity of European states and the political policy framework that has evolved to manage this diversity. To state that a country is multi-ethnic is to point to a more or less incontestable sociological and demographic fact. Multiculturalism, however, as a policy for the management of ethnic diversity within a nation state, is frequently contested in its definition, and problematic in its implementation. (Goldberg 1994; Kelly 2002)

The apparent assimilationist drift in the policy of many European states towards managing their ethnic diversity has fractured any comfortable consensus about either the desirability of, or the feasibility of multiculturalism as a core policy of contemporary nation states. This makes the issue of addressing the

guaranteeing of a diverse multiethnic public sphere problematic. (Lorenz 2006; Cheong et al. 2007)

If we are to engage with the complexity of contemporary ethnic diversity within European states, and the European Union in particular, we must recognise the quite distinct histories that have shaped current ethnic demographics, and the politics which initiated, and were consolidated, in the context of ethnic diversification. Whilst the efforts to establish robust statistics in this regard, for obvious reasons (such as lack of data in some states, the varying legal status of immigrants, and the eroding validity of criteria for immigrant status, see Extra and Gorter 2001: 13) have not been rewarded with success, some figures can be given. According to EuroStat statistics, in 24 EU-states there are 22.5 million inhabitants who are not citizens of the country in which they live². The number of immigrants has been rapidly growing, particularly due to a growing immigration from non-European countries (Extra and Gorter 2001: 13). The number of persons belonging to traditional (language) minorities in EU states remains significant; the amount of indigenous languages were in 2005 estimated to 60, and these languages were regularly spoken by 46 million people (Working Document of the European Parliament 2005).

The historical, and contemporary, processes of nation building and of migration have created quite particular politics of diversity within contemporary states. Thus, for example, Castles (2000: chapter 5) provides a review of the multiple forces shaping migration and minority ethnic dynamics in contemporary Europe. Geddes (2003) also makes distinctions within the patterns and forms of migration that have shaped multiethnic Europe and examines the emergent politics of ethnicity and nation in specific states. Similar and complementary analyses have been offered by Wrench and Solomos (1993), Heckmann and Bosswick (1995) and Koopmans and Statham (2000).

More recently Brubaker (2004) in exploring the linkages between ethnicity, migration and statehood, has noted the powerful differences in ethno-politics that follow from diversity arising from the migration of ethnic communities across borders, "immigrant ethnicity"; as opposed to "the movement of borders across people" (Brubaker 2004: 148), "territorial nationality", where extant populations become subsumed in the territory of state formation. Echoing Kymlicka (1995) he argues that the claims that can be made in the name of ethnicity differ in the two cases. With immigrant ethnicity it is probable that claims to recognition, resources, and perhaps immunities and exemptions may result. In the case of territorial nationality the claims for national self-determination, for territorial autonomy or other forms of recognition of their national state-bearing credentials, may result. These differing demands constitute different challenges to the individual nation state.

Thus, in the arguments to be developed below there can be no assumed, comparability of circumstances or political context. References to generic immigrant or ethnic minority politics assume a commonality of historical experience and contemporary political context that cannot be justified (Keith 2005). This consequently tends to favour an analysis of the multiethnic public sphere confined to

the level of the specific nation state. At this level the general argument we wish to develop below can be operationalised sensitively and appropriately.

The Role of the EU in Facilitating a Multiethnic Public Sphere

The emphasis upon the particularity of national experiences of the development of diversity does not preclude the EU as a supra-national entity having a significant role in facilitating nationally diverse public spheres and encouraging a wider European multi-ethnic public sphere. Whilst there is not the space here to go into the framework of international law that provides a legal and administrative basis for EU intervention in this policy area we can note that the EU at least indirectly, through instruments developed under the framework of the Council of Europe, does possess such powers. As Akermark (2007) has noted judicial practice within the aegis of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities has increasingly moved to incorporate democratic decision making and political participation as an explicit platform in its consideration of minority protection.

At the same time we must recognise that as the EU developed there has been a clear dynamic tension between developing a supranational authority and a necessary recognition, and even strengthening, of the authority of the nation state (Milward 1992). In reviewing the subsequent expansion and institutional development of the EU, Brubaker (2004) concluded that:

What has been occurring is a complex unbundling and redistribution – upwards, downwards, and in various oblique directions – of previously tightly bundled powers and competencies. The resultant “multi-level” or even “neo-medieval” polity does not look much like a supranational superstate: ... (Brubaker 2004: 156)

As we shall see below the concept, and policy operation, of subsidiarity continues to shape the flexible linkage between EU policy and member state practice. This at least will allow us below to demand greater clarity, and stronger implementation, in the development of relevant EU policy. Subsidiarity still operates in relation to a framework of EU principles; and in this respect the EU must move to be as assertive in promoting a multi-ethnic public sphere as it has been in facilitating a robust and cohesive border policy.

Thus in the analysis below we will pursue an analysis of the dual role of the state, as territorially bounded legitimate governance, and the EU, as a supra-national organ of collective policy formation. The EU may be seen as providing a policy framework against which individual member states may be judged. It may establish shared policy aspirations and provide a basis for comparative judgement of national performance. And it may, as it has to a certain extent done in the past, engage in assertive action through financial support (Nic Shiubhne 2001).

The State and Openness to Diversity

The development of “social citizenship”, the guarantee of welfare and security independent of a person’s status or wealth, has been central to the building of collective solidarity and the legitimation of the state’s power (Marshall and Bottomore 1992). However, such a contract between the state and its citizens results in a pernicious concern with who will be included in this contract – traditionally by becoming citizens; and amongst those who are *legal* citizens, who are the *real* citizens. As Hobsbawm (1990) indicated different routes to nation building left a legacy of quite different underpinnings for recognizing the common identity of “citizen”. In some cases the “nation” became defined through lineage and blood; which left immigrants and settled minority ethnic populations as intrinsically excluded from the “imagined community” of the nation (Anderson 1991). In other instances a common cultural heritage emerged as the defining criterion of entry into the nation and access to legitimate citizenship status. History and recent events have shown that although conceptually fluid, socially constructed and dynamic; in reality, culture as expressed through nationalism has also proved itself to be capable of generating rigid and essentialist identities. The liberal ideal of the nation as a contract between free and independent citizens devoid of any identity politics has proved to be remarkably elusive. As Bauman (1990) has phrased it:

National states promote ‘nativism’ and construe their subjects as ‘natives’. They laud and enforce the ethnic, religious, linguistic, cultural homogeneity. They are engaged in incessant propaganda of shared attitudes. They construct joint historical memories and do their best to discredit or suppress such stubborn memories as cannot be squeezed into shared tradition. They preach the sense of common mission, common fate, common destiny. (Bauman 1990: 154)

The real history and demography of contemporary European states concretely reveals the inherent dangers of such naïve nationalisms. An example of this is Turkey. The Turkish experience in managing multiculturalism in recent decades might be characterized as a policy of enforced similitude rather than as a policy of difference. An enormous richness of different cultural and linguistic layers has existed in informal networks and community formation under a surface of common Turkishness promoted by the state. Not always, but sometimes, this has been a reason for severe clashes and acts of terror. With the negotiations for membership in the European Union Turkey has been challenged to open up its ethnically multi-layered society. (See the chapter by Yonca Ermutlu in this volume)

In contemporary Europe the mass media have been an essential force in the production and reproduction of such nationalist agendas. A routine element of nationalist politics is the judicious definition of a nation’s “significant others”. In this process a range of discourses, including racist ones, may be strategically employed. (EUMC 2002; Ferguson 1998; Downing and Husband 2005)

The Emergence of “Counter Narratives”

Not surprisingly, given the scenario sketched above, we have seen across Europe a retreat from a positive and plural multiculturalism. States such as Denmark, Holland and the United Kingdom, for example, that developed in different ways have retreated extensively from their liberal and progressive vision of multiculturalism. There is a European-wide Governmental shift to assimilationist strategies and a shared conviction that multiculturalism has been a flawed and failing political initiative. Not only the harsh voices of the European “Far Right” assert this to be so; but so too the quiet voice of “concerned liberals” repetitively assert that “things have gone too far”. Counter-narratives to assertive multiculturalism reproduce discourses that rehearse the privileging of minorities at the expense of majority citizens and the abuse of majority tolerance by minority ethnic communities (Hewitt 2005). Thus the repressive anti-immigrant and asylum policies of individual member states are supported by comparative reference to the practice of other member states. In this respect EU policy establishes a zeitgeist which is counterproductive to the promotion of a viable multiethnic public sphere (Busch and Krzyzanowski 2007).

The recent and current demands of the European Union that accession states should be able to demonstrate their commitment to European principles of equality, non-discrimination and human rights sits uncomfortably with the increasingly harsh border policies of the existing member states and the growth of intolerance towards the acceptance of cultural diversity within the state. We may point to the specific politics of nation building of states such as Estonia and Latvia (for an example, see the chapter by Epp Lauk and Valeria Jakobson in this volume), following their emergence from Soviet dominance; whilst simultaneously the current examples of policy towards diversity in Denmark, Holland and the United Kingdom (and, indeed, France and Germany as well) clearly indicate that the process of constructing and sustaining national identities is an ongoing process.

Multiculturalism as a national political philosophy and social policy practice requires a definition and recognition of diversity; and clarity about the rights and obligations which are to be negotiated through this policy. For this reason alone a vital and viable public sphere is essential to the sound operation of governance in the multi-ethnic state.

However, multiculturalism must always be a specific expression of the political values, form of political institutional practice, and the foundational beliefs defining (national / supranational) identity. The viability of the nation state is dependent upon the willingness of the populace to be governed; and a key element in sustaining this relationship has been the social contract between Government and citizens that the state would address the needs of the population.

The resistance to granting citizenship status to minority ethnic residents and the denial of recognition as substantive equals of those minority ethnic persons who are legal citizens, has been and remains a major political reality that must

be confronted by any credible model of multiculturalism. A rhetoric of equality and tolerance that is accompanied by processes of political and economic exclusion of segments of society must necessarily confound attempts to promote an open multiethnic public sphere. A public sphere that is a hegemonic vehicle of the interests of the majority ethnic population(s) cannot adequately serve the interests of a multiethnic state.

The European Public Sphere in the Context of Ethnic Diversity

Having examined the contemporary context of ethnic diversity in Europe we may now fruitfully explore issues regarding the possibility of an ethnically diverse population participating in a European public sphere.

The famous anecdote tells of the traveller who asking “How do I get from here to Dublin” was given the reply “Well, if I was you I wouldn’t start from here”. We might equally say that in addressing the challenge of promoting a multi-ethnic European public sphere this is not the best time or place from which to start. At the same time, the fraught nature of ethnic relations briefly sketched above also suggests that creating a viable public sphere is more critical than ever. Nieminen (2006) has proposed a distinction between two levels of the public sphere:

Firstly, there is the realm of social imaginary or shared background understanding, assumedly common to all European educated citizens. Secondly, there is the public sphere proper, which is actual, media-related or media-constructed and working on a daily basis. (Nieminen 2006: 7)

In drawing out our conclusions from the context sketched above we will explore the implications of these two levels independently.

A Common Social Imaginary

A viable European public sphere is not dependent upon cultural homogeneity. A vital and vibrant European public sphere is almost certainly dependent upon diversity. Of course, if the dominant political regime of any European country is committed to reproducing a supposedly unchanged, and unchangeable “national culture” then an open and vital public sphere in multi-ethnic nations, and multi-ethnic Europe, is unlikely; and the political regulation of the public sphere will be presented as essential and reasonable “in the national interest”. As Nieminen (2006: 3) acknowledges:

... the main obstacle in the way of the European Public Sphere is the historical anchoring of the public sphere to the narrow and limited frames of European nation states. (Nieminen 2006: 3)

The political and institutional structures of the European political entity, the European Union and the European Commission, whilst being experienced as impacting on individuals' lives are both more distant and more ambiguous. For many national citizens the European Union of twenty seven states is self-evidently full of foreigners. For example, most British citizens could probably not locate Estonia, Latvia or Bulgaria on the map. This foreignness is defined not only as spatially distant, but also by limited, or minimal, historical connectedness. There is too the possibility, and reality, of certain member states being seen as culturally alien. The desire to communicate with this community of fellow citizens, and the potential content of messages, is likely to differ substantially from the equivalent "national" public sphere.

Additionally, the European Commission as the political instrument of the European Union *is* perceived as impacting upon individual's lives and as being relevant to their interests. However, frequently this is perceived as being intrusive and outside of democratic control. In this context it is frequently the national government that is seen as the primary target for dialogue; in the belief that they are the best hope of fighting for the "national interest". However, where special interests feel that their concerns and rights are being marginalised or denied by their national government then the powers of the European Commission to give grants, and the powers of European Courts to bring in judgements which impact on national governments, gives the European Union relevance. In this way NGO's representing identity politics have sought to actively lobby in a European space (see, for example, Keck and Sikkink 1998, re. "the boomerang effect").

All cultures seek to solve the common human challenge of survival and meaning. They have norms and mores governing reproduction, nutrition, family coherence, work and leisure. They may not share a "European social imaginary", but they possess the cognitive and affective skills to identify and begin to enter into an unknown cultural context. European migrants after all have engaged in a reverse process of emigration for centuries. Migration and settlement is always a stressful and challenging experience. But all migrants possess a communicative capacity, developed within their home society.

Given the global migrations of recent decades that we have noted above, it may also be the case that there are relatively recent minority ethnic populations who have no historical or cultural links to the countries in which they now find themselves resident. But, they themselves come with an intact cultural repertoire. The challenge for receiving societies is to facilitate the migrants' ability to begin to engage with their new cultural context, while still retaining the integrity of their historical and cultural identity.

Given the role of national political players, of the state and NGOs, as "primary definers" of national news media and given the concern of national broadcast and entertainment industries to claim their audience against the competition of international media production and distribution, it is not surprising that the media in any state have a predisposition toward privileging a "national" agenda in topics, style and values. Additionally, given each populations sense of the immediate impact of national, regional and local government upon their lives

it is unsurprising that the audience too should show a disposition toward national cultural values, and issues specific to the territorial state in which their citizenship rights are rooted and experienced. As a communicative domain between the state and economy a national public sphere, however constituted, is politically, experientially, and structurally over-determined: it makes sense. This does not exclude the presence of “the imagined space of Europe” as a constituent part of an individual’s understanding of the negotiation of personal and national interests in the context of a globalized world.

We have, however, also seen above the extent to which the media environment of very many Europeans routinely transcends their national territorial space. In addition to more traditional media produced for minorities within a nation state (such as Swedish media in Finland, Finnish in Sweden, Welsh and Scottish Gaelic in the UK, or Russian in Estonia and Latvia, for examples, see the chapter by Epp Lauk and Valeria Jakobson in this volume or Moring and Husband 2007), new media techniques allow television to spread world wide. In a European mapping, made by the European Media Technology and Everyday Life Network (EMTEL) in 2003, more than 60 transnational satellite channels in some 15 languages in the service of diasporas were listed (Georgiou 2003: 48-51). New media on the internet add a multitude of locally based but globally available media outlets. Diasporic minority ethnic communities generate communicative networks with kin and friends across Europe. Whilst this development still leaves many ethnic communities unserved, more sizeable or resource-rich communities are targeted by a multitude of media (Georgiou 2003: 64-66). In ways that would have been unthinkable a generation ago the individual nation states no longer can assume that the communicative practices of their citizens are predominantly confined within their national territorial borders. The European territorial space is increasingly a zone of multiple and different communicative activity.

Whilst individuals and specific communities may enter the European public sphere with quite particular engagements within their national public sphere, and with differing social imaginaries, there is no *a priori* basis for assuming that a European public sphere could not have relevance for all European citizens. In terms of the European *meta* public spheres shaping policy, the European public sphere clearly already exists and has a potential impact upon the life world of all European citizens (e.g., van de Steeg 2002).

European States and Supranational Frameworks

If there are no necessary cultural exclusions to participation in a European multiethnic public sphere we may ask what socio-political frameworks may be anticipated to be developed within, and by, European states in order to facilitate the development of a viable public sphere.

The power of individual states to recognize, or ignore, the linguistic, cultural and political rights of its ethnically diverse population is in the context

of Europe framed by a number of international instruments which seek to guarantee such rights. Thus, for example, the current wish of Turkey to enter the European Union has allowed the existing member states to demand adherence to a range of civil liberal requirements. (Noticeably the states that are invoking these principles to assess the merits of Turkey are not necessarily themselves good examples of their virtuous implementation). But for itself, the European Union has not developed robust policies for requiring member states to adhere to the implementation of such policies. This, we argue, has left a blind spot in the construction of a European public sphere, which apparently is not addressed in those new initiatives that have been raised with regard to the “democratic deficit” of the EU.³ Thus, current preparatory work in this field, such as the European Commission’s contribution called *Plan-D (for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate)* presented by the Commission in 2005, or the *White Paper on a European Communication Policy*, presented by the Commission in 2006, effectively omit any commitment to pro-active multi-ethnic policies of the European Union itself, beyond the acceptance of its multi-national structure. Additionally, policies that would be inclusive in regard to Europe’s ethnic, linguistic and religious complexity are left to the discretion of the nation states.

The Potential of the European Union as a Source of Multiethnic Policy

The development of the European Union has seen a continuous dialogue between the pragmatic economic imperatives of creating an efficient and competitive economic entity and the political ambition of building a unified European identity. From the Treaty of Rome, to Maastricht to Nice these tendencies have been differentially advanced by some member states and not others. The initial success of advancing “economic” Europe, especially through the free movement of labour, proved to be the Trojan horse that inexorably raised issues of the social and political rights of those who were the human agents of the economic policy. Events such as the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet regime provide a new, more favourable, context for those who wished to pursue European integration: resulting in the Maastricht Treaty. With the expansion of the EU the dynamics have changed and the question of the democratic deficit in the operation of the EU has provided a further impetus to make membership of the EU meaningful to EU *citizens*. This too has contributed toward developing the social agenda of the EU and the production of a draft Constitution (later revised to the Treaty of Lisbon).

The political intrusiveness of EU membership in the lives of national member state citizens has made the popular legitimacy of the EU institutions a recurrent source of anxiety and contention. Thus, the EU of the single market has inevitably become recurrently, and necessarily, embroiled in the project of building a viable European identity. In the context of these contested politics

a European public sphere where these issues can be aired across national boundaries ought to have relevance: should exist. And indeed, minority ethnic NGOs have been amongst those to recognize this reality.⁴

The Treaty of Rome's focus was upon economics and it specifically established free movement within the Union as a right. However, it was the European Court of Justice which had been established to ensure that the treaties were interpreted and applied correctly, that was central in defining the emerging significance of EU treaties. In Maas' words:

The Court concluded that the community constituted a new legal order, the subjects of which were not only states but also citizens. It followed that Community law "not only imposes obligations on individuals but is also intended to confer upon them rights".⁵ The resulting principle of direct effect meant that Community law could grant individuals rights, which needed to be respected by governments (vertical direct effect) and by other persons (horizontal direct effect). (Maas 2007: 26)

The implications of this ruling were further consolidated when in 1964 the Court ruled that the Treaty of Rome had created its own legal system which "became an integral part of the legal systems of the Member States and which their courts are bound to apply". And that the member states had "limited their sovereign rights ... (and) created a body of law which binds both nationals and themselves".⁶

Through rulings such as this the European Court of Justice was central in framing an incipient European citizenship and in bridging the economic and social agendas of the continuously developing European Union. As recent events have shown, the failure to ratify a European Constitution, and the current quasi-democratic subterfuge of reintroducing its core as a treaty, the member states remain conflicted in formally acknowledging a supranational authority in the form of a European constitution. And yet, the reality in 2008 is that the 1963 and 1964 rulings were merely the opening phase of a process which has extended the direct effect of European law within member states. There is, in other words, a realistic basis for our claim that appropriate EU legislation and policy could fruitfully contribute to – and even requires – establishing the conditions for a viable European public sphere. Significantly, the European Union and its institutions, perhaps particularly the European Court of Justice and the Ombudsman, have given the European Union a democratic political relevance; that may have gone some little way to counter the democratic deficit that has routinely tarnished its image with the national publics. Thus, Maas (2007), whilst acknowledging the limited impact of the EU in regard to EU social rights, nevertheless concludes that:

But in the field of social *regulation*, the progress has been so remarkable that some EU rules exceed the most advanced national measures in the level of protection they afford, causing social rights activists to pursue a European

rather than national strategy because they expect European citizenship to enhance social rights. (Maas 2007: 64)

In this context it is noteworthy that a recent review of European legal practice in relation to minority rights has conclude that in relation to minority protection the earlier justifications for the logic of minority protection, namely conflict prevention, preservation of cultural diversity and protection of human dignity, have had added to them a new fourth dimension: the principle of democracy and democratic participation. Akermark argues that:

This argument emphasises two reasons why minorities should be included in democratic decision-making. First of all, there is a right to participate in public affairs and in matters affecting minorities, for example, in Article 25 of the international Convention on Civil and political Rights, Article 15 of the Framework Convention, in many other international instruments, and in numerous constitutions. Secondly, in order to have all the necessary information and all possible options available in the democratic decision making process, the views of minorities must be heard and be taken seriously. This improves the quality and legitimacy of the decisions. (Akermark 2007: 45)

It is exactly this form of European jurisprudence that provides the necessary, if not entirely adequate, basis for the intervention of the EU as a major agent for the promotion of a diverse multi-ethnic public sphere that we are arguing for here.

Thus, given the potential relevance and efficacy of EU institutions and policy there is a rational basis for nurturing a “European” public sphere that might transcend the interests and policies of nation state governments. This is a participatory corollary of the thinking behind the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (proclaimed by the EU as a recommendation in 2000); namely that:

The rights that individuals have by virtue of EU citizenship must be more than simply human rights, or EU citizenship would have little meaning. (Maas 2007: 98)

Put somewhat bluntly, the legitimacy of EU legislation on human rights (and other matters) requires a popular identification with a shared European identity. Reciprocally, identification with the project of EU citizenship requires there to be a perceived and tangible added value arising from membership of the EU. Where citizens of member states seek recourse to Europe to remedy their marginalisation and discrimination in their home country, it does little for their civic attachment to their national citizenship; but it may enhance their identification with their European citizenship.

However, so far the EU has bound itself to policies that would do little more than provide encouragement and assistance to national efforts in the field of a

multicultural policy that would reach down to the minorities within its member states. It has also – in spite of recent more positive signals in some policy documents – remained passive in involving these minorities in the public sphere that is formed around itself. As noted above, robust policies have been developed in the policing of EU and national boundaries, regulating immigration and asylum seeking, whilst proactive policies towards managing multicultural equity have remained rather more persuasive than mandatory. And the EU has not remained unaffected by the counter-narrative discourse that has evolved in many of its member states. This state of affairs clearly calls for a new and pro-active approach of the European Union with regard to policies in this field.

Differentiated Citizenship and the Multiethnic Public Sphere

In order to develop our argument we will now outline a framework against which to judge what should be regarded as a reasonably minimal infrastructure; and what should be the role of the state in guaranteeing it. In doing this we would wish to invoke the international instruments, mentioned above, to which most European states are signatories, and which defend the communication rights of their citizens. And, we would additionally note the developing relevance of European jurisprudence in extending the application of extant instruments to issues of participation and democracy.

Given the contemporary circumstances and the implications of the politics of difference, discussed above, it is necessary to make a specific socio-political claim which will move our argument beyond the individualism at the heart of classical liberal theory. Thus echoing the perspective of van Dyke (1995), quoted above, we start from a recognition that in contemporary Europe individuals are victimised and disadvantaged by the operation of ethnic exclusion, racism and xenophobia not as individuals; but because they are members of specific groups.

We are explicitly indicating a movement here from a reliance on individual rights to a recognition of the necessity of recognizing collectivities as a basis of legal protections and specific social policies. We can see in legislation to protect the rights of women, the rights of the young and the rights of the disabled, the expression of citizenship rights informed by a politics of difference. It is exactly this principle of *differentiated citizenship* that we wish to invoke in seeking to guarantee the conditions under which a multi-ethnic public sphere could thrive.

Recent judgements in the European Court strengthen our ability to pursue this mode of argumentation; where for example in the case of *Thlimmenos versus Greece* the court said:

The Court has so far considered that the right under Article 14 not to be discriminated against in the enjoyment of the rights guaranteed under the Convention is violated when states treat differently persons in analogous situations without providing an objective and reasonable justification...

However, the Court considers that this is not the only facet of the prohibition of discrimination in Article 14. The right not to be discriminated against in the enjoyment of the rights guaranteed under the Convention is also violated when States without an objective and reasonable justification fail to treat differently persons whose situations are significantly different. (European Court of Human Rights 2000: paragraph 44)

Kymlicka (1995) in outlining a model of multicultural citizenship provides a valuable outline of an appropriate system of rights and related policies. Reflecting the different histories of nation building and migration discussed above, Kymlicka distinguishes between *multinational states* and *polyethnic states*. Multinational states arise from the historical incorporation of previously self-governing territories into larger single states by either federation or conquest. Polyethnic states, on the other hand, are characterised by cultural diversity that has arisen as a consequent of migration. Clearly, contemporary European states may include both multinational and polyethnic characteristics.

These different routes to the construction of diversity within contemporary states are seen to provide the basis for recognising different forms of contemporary rights. Thus, Kymlicka (1995) argues that national minorities should be allowed *self-government rights*; which would typically apply to jurisdiction over specific territories within the state. Thus, for example, forms of self-government rights can be seen in Belgium, Switzerland, the United Kingdom (Scotland, also Wales), Finland (the Åland Islands) and Italy (South Tyrol), where the unified state operates as a single politically entity on the European and international stage; whilst negotiating degrees of differentiated citizenship policies and practices internally.

In proposing polyethnic rights as necessary to the equitable operation of multiethnic states, Kymlicka (1995) proposes a form of group-differentiated right which he defines in terms of financial support and legal protection for practises associated with particular ethnic or religious groups. Thus, for example, subsidies for the operation of media, and commitments of national public service broadcasters to address minority ethnic audiences would be expressions of this principle.

Kymlicka (1995) proposes a further group-differentiated right in *special representation rights*; which he sees as necessary in order to address the reality that majority interests are routinely dominant in state, and many civil society, institutions. Thus, minority ethnic communities should be guaranteed representation within such bodies; just as feminism has challenged the patriarchy of government departments and commercial board rooms. Thus, for example, the presence of a Swedish member on the board of the Finnish broadcasting company (YLE), or the Head of Sami Radio on the board of the parent NRK organisation in Norway helps to raise the profile of Swedish and Sami perspectives respectively within the whole organisation; rather than it being marginalised within a subordinate 'ethnic' organisation (Markelin 2003; Markelin and Husband 2007).

Thus, echoing Chambers' (2002) argument above we are arguing here that a viable multiethnic public sphere, at the national level, requires the state to actively intervene in order to guarantee the infrastructure of production and distribution capacity that can facilitate an ethically diverse media. And, the state must in a complementary manner provide a legislative framework that both facilitates free and open communication and guarantees minority rights. (See Husband 2000; Downing and Husband 2005) In a comparable manner the European Union through regulation, funding and supportive initiatives has a complementary function in ensuring ethnically diverse media systems, and access to ethnically appropriate communicative networks for all within a framework of differentiated citizenship principles. At both the national, state, level and within the EU structures the active involvement of civil society and NGOs will be essential partners in policy formulation.

If states are to engage meaningfully with their perverse commitment to nurturing an active public sphere that recognizes the diasporic, hybrid and transnational consciousness and interests of their citizens it is reasonable to expect that an explicit framework of policy emanating from within the EU will be a necessary element of a supportive political structure. However, if such a policy framework is to have any meaningful relevance the EU must abandon its routine practice of hiding behind subsidiarity and *actively and specifically* address the communicative rights and freedoms of its populations. If member states are to retain their own political legitimacy they must enable a public sphere that recognizes the diversity of their population, in terms of class, gender, ethnicity and interests. Sphericules are a certainty in the 21st century: facilitating dialogue across identities of interest asks new and novel questions of national media policy operating within a European media environment.

Notes

1. At least until a mentioning of regional languages as part of France's heritage was included in the French Constitution in 2008.
2. The statistics are based on data from various years (between 2000 and 2005), and some states (France, Estonia, Cyprus) offer no data at all. See http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?_pageid=1090,30070682,1090_33076576&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL (on-line document accessed 10 June 2007).
3. Whilst the concept was coined in the late 1980s as part of a debate relating to frustrations among members of the European Parliament (see Dunn 1988), we use this concept in a wider sense, to mean the full and equal access to deliberation within a European public sphere.
4. See, for example, the European Network Against Racism, ENAR (www.enar-eu.org); also the European Bureau for Lesser Used Language, EBLUL (www.eblul.org); and in the fields of education, legislation and the media, the three Mercator centres (www.mercator-central.org).
5. Case 26/62: Van Gend en Loos v Nederlandse –Administratie der Belastingen (1963) ECR 1.
6. Case 6/64: Flaminio Costa v Enel (1964) ECR 585.

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Chapter 9

Pleasing the Crisis

Anxiety and Recited Multiculturalism in the European Communicative Space

Gavan Titley

Much like other irritating subjects of the times – postmodernism, globalization, and terrorism, among others – the very idea of *multiculturalism*, the ideology, disturbs out of proportion to what in fact it may be. The reality is that the world in which many people suppose they are living is actually plural: worlds – *many of them*, through which we pass whenever we venture out of the doors of what homes we may have. Yet, strangely, in a time like the one prevailing since the 1990s when a growing number of people began to profess *the* multicultural as a way of *thinking* about the worlds, their professions are often greeted with dismay. Anthony Elliot & Charles Lemert, *The New Individualism* (2006: 137)

Multiculturalism, whatever it may be, is avowedly in crisis. Lived multiculturalism and social diversity may be the unremarkable fabric of urban life in Western Europe, but difference is also the focus of resurgent anxieties concerning the political coherence and ethno-racial character of nation-states, and it has become tangled up in an intense set of debates concerning the character of European identity and “European values”. The “war on terror” has recast racialised migration to Western Europe as a security issue, and subjected “Europe’s Muslims” to instrumentalised questions of allegiance and attachment. Various nation states are experiencing very public expressions of being disturbed by multiculturalism, and in political utterance and journalistic comment, domestic events are insistently related to a vision of shared European turbulence. How can this apparent European crisis of multiculturalism be understood? Elliot and Lemert’s reframing of multiculturalism’s power to disturb invites a critical appraisal of how the crisis of multiculturalism is *mediated*, and that is the focus of this chapter.

In a “five minute interview” with the Irish national newspaper *The Sunday Tribune*, the British journalist Julie Burchill (2008) completed the half-sentence “I wish people would take more notice of...” with the rejoinder “Heroic people who are warning us all that Islam is the new fascism, such as Ayaan Hirsi Ali”. Burchill’s casual racism *du jour* is interesting because of the by now routine

associations it makes. Name-checking Hirsi Ali, the former parliamentarian of the Dutch Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie who collaborated with the murdered Theo van Gogh on the film *Submission*, indicates how widely an iconic series of events in Western Europe over the last seven years have come to suggest a general condition that transcends national particularities. Several commentators, including Sandro Mazzadra (in Bojadžijev and Saint-Saëns 2004), have noted how the events surrounding the murder of van Gogh and the subsequent reaction to it in the Netherlands have acquired a convergent, European dimension. In other assessments, events in the Netherlands are linked with terrorist atrocities in London in 2005 and Madrid in 2004, the *Jyllands-Posten*'s cartoon controversy in 2005, and the uprisings in Clichy-sous-Bois in Paris in 2005 to produce a narrative of shared crisis (Grillo 2007; Wirtén 2007).

Notwithstanding contextual particularities, an emergent narrative constructs these events as moments in a process of political reorientation, whereby an era of liberal multiculturalist near-hegemony is simultaneously being dismantled in such countries as the UK, Denmark and the Netherlands, with significant implications for unravelling practices in Germany, Belgium and to some extent, France. What Bodemann and Yurdakul (2006: 4) call the "retreat of multiculturalism in Europe" may be profoundly imbricated, in the retreat of the welfare state, tightening migration and asylum regimes, and general macro-economic uncertainty, however it is predominantly framed as a cultural politics. Multiculturalism, the failed social experiment of a broadly conceived left, is argued to have undermined social cohesion by encouraging the growth of "parallel communities", to have emphasized difference over commonality, cultural particularity over social cohesion, and an inchoate cultural relativism at the expense of common values variously coded as national, European, liberal and/or universal.

What the British Prime Minister Gordon Brown has described as the "golden thread of shared values" must be sown back into the tattered fabric of fragmented societies, it is argued, through a resurgent emphasis on "integration" (Kundnani 2007, Vasta 2007). Integration discourses have a special interest in "those in but not of Europe"; the common perception of Muslims as culturally incompatible yet demographically and politically empowered is variously seen, in the war on terror era, as requiring a clearer articulation of "the liberal minimum" of European nation-states (Joppke 2004), a compulsory socialisation in "shared national values", a wider consolidation of European identity in narratives of Enlightenment and /or Christian heritage, or – in more extreme if hardly marginal articulations – as constituting a state of cultural warfare (Jenkins 2007: 1-26).

In prising a critical gap between realities of lived multiculturalism in late capitalist migration societies and the discourses which powerfully construct diversity as a retractable problem, Elliot and Lemert's (2006: 137) insight points to the ways in which multiculturalism is mediated in what can, in this instance, be meaningfully termed European communicative space (see the chapter by Philip Schlesinger in this volume). Multiculturalism is debated with some ferocity

both in the realms of normative social and political theory, and in wider public engagement. However, little attention is often paid to how multiculturalism is produced discursively, the networks in which it is produced, and the implications of dominant frameworks for the shape of public debate. Multiculturalism is a famously “fuzzy” and over-extended term (Grillo 2007), stretched between varying descriptive and prescriptive senses (Watson 2000). Moreover, it acts as a porous conduit for a complex set of questions concerning identity, belonging and legitimacy at this particular political-economic juncture (Grillo 2007). Detailed analyses of policy initiatives and political discourse in crisis-wracked countries suggest that it is difficult to examine recent social history and discern anything coherently approaching a “multicultural project” in any of the contexts in question (Entzinger 2006; Kundnani 2007; Wink 2007).

Contemporary dismay at the “multicultural fantasy”, then, must be analysed in relation to a wider, more inchoate backlash against the conditions which produce the “plurality of worlds” referenced by Elliot and Lemert, and the media processes which render fuzzy multiculturalism into a solid object of continental consternation. This chapter cuts into the mediated crisis of multiculturalism by considering recent analyses that explore aspects of the mutually referential nature of contemporary debate in different countries, and through a detailed study of how media discourse in Ireland – a country experiencing a significant increase in inward migration since the mid-1990s – has shaped a vision of failed European multiculturalism and its salutary lessons. The cumulative mediation of a shared European crisis, while polyvocal and contested, nevertheless suggests some points of reflection for discussions of the European public sphere, and these are offered in conclusion.

If not Unity in Diversity, Unity in Fragmentation: Narratives of Multicultural Crisis

The massed ranks of controversies and perspectives which have been refracted through multiculturalism render it a hopelessly opaque term, yet this opacity is central to its ubiquity. Rather than offer an inevitably partial summary of normative debates, it is more productive in this context to assemble dominant senses of multiculturalism through a consideration of prominent public critiques. At a foundational level, multiculturalism proposes recognition of ethno-cultural difference within the nation-state and a consideration of the implications of this recognition of difference for the substantive equality of – differently defined – minorities (see O’Cinneide 2004). This politics of recognition has been broadly operationalised, Ralph Grillo (2007: 987) argues, as either *strong* or *weak* multiculturalism:

(“weak multiculturalism” implies)...cultural differences recognised (to varying extent) in the private sphere, with acculturation in many areas of life and assimilation to the local population in employment, housing, education, health

and welfare (and “strong multiculturalism” implies) ...institutional recognition for difference in the public sphere, with special provision in language, education, health care, welfare, etc, and the organization of representation on ethnic/cultural lines.

Grillo further observes that “it is ‘weak’ multiculturalism which has characterized practices across Europe, yet critics assume it is always in its ‘strongest’ form,’ that is, for many critics, “multiculturalism is always already ‘unbridled’” (2007: 987). This is an assumption which supports a functionalist, causal minimalism in explorations of contemporary European social change. This minimalism is particularly acute in seeking to explain events which have come to symbolise the “failed experiment” of multiculturalism in Europe and its erosion through the cumulative pressures of supposedly unreconciled and irreconcilable Muslims. The following extract from an article by Flemming Rose (2006) – the culture editor of *Jyllands-Posten* – in *Der Spiegel* in the aftermath of the globalised reaction to the newspaper’s caricatures of the Prophet Muhammed, summarises the prevailing narrative of recent history:

And yet the unbalanced reactions...unmasked unpleasant realities about Europe’s failed experiment with multiculturalism. It’s time for the Old Continent to face facts and make some profound changes in its outlook on immigration, integration and the coming Muslim demographic surge. After decades of appeasement and political correctness, combined with growing fear of a radical minority prepared to commit serious violence, Europe’s moment of truth is here. Europe today finds itself trapped in a posture of moral relativism that is undermining its liberal values. An unholy three-cornered alliance between Middle Eastern dictators, radical imams who live in Europe and Europe’s traditional left wing is establishing a politics of victimology.

What is of relevance here¹ is the ways in which Rose’s summary provides a heuristic example of the crisis narrative which has emerged in political discourse and journalistic comment that weaves events and processes in different western European countries into a synthetic account. In this vision, “unbridled” multiculturalism extends the political recognition of ethno-cultural difference to material and philosophical extremes, instigating regimes of special privilege which disenfranchise majorities and nurtures cultural “backwardness”. Resultant ghettos and impenetrable cultural communities provide a fractured symbolism for the “anything goes” ethical relativism held to stem from the dynamics of the recognition of cultural difference. Rose’s distinctly integralist take is at one with the millennial literature of civilisational anxiety – Bruce Bawer’s *While Europe Slept* (2007), Melanie Philips’ *Londistan* (2006), Bat Ye’or’s *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis* (2005), Orianna Fallaci’s *The Rage and the Pride* (2002), among others – that posits a strong version of multiculturalism as an incubator and self-doubting appeaser of implacable Islamic enemies within. As the columnist Mark Steyn (2005) wrote in the aftermath of the 2005 London bombings in *The*

Daily Telegraph, "...the real suicide bomb is multiculturalism". However this narrative of recent history is discernable across a spectrum of political opinion and modes of journalism; to take a routine example, the journalist David Rieff (2005), in *The International Herald Tribune* in the aftermath of the London bombings, references the familiar iconic events as evidence that "Europeans are waking up" to the "eclipse of the multicultural fantasy in Europe".

It is this set of routine associations as a social fact that is of interest in this study. In *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Michel De Certeau examines the assembly of mediated orthodoxies: "Society has become a recited society in three senses; it is defined by stories (récits, the fables constituted by our advertising and informational media), by citations of stories and by the interminable recitation of stories" (1986: 186). For De Certeau the power of recitation involves the production of social truth through narrativisation and repetition, where the story powerfully organises subsequent understandings of social events and processes, and where, midst a "forest of narrativities...stories have a providential and predestining function" (1986: 186). The European crisis of multiculturalism narrative is marked by the constant circulation of stories from elsewhere, which through their citation evidence something about there *and* here, and by extension, a European reality. In other words, this process of comparison has become a process of recitation, of framing (predestining) events and antagonistic social processes within a unifying, and ultimately self-affirming narrative, very often to the exclusion of other modes of analysis and implicated voices. The general comparison of contexts and situations is uncontroversial, what is at stake here is the status of the knowledge recited, and the lessons it is assumed to propose.

In a European communicative space often regarded as lacking in significant forms of synchronous and interconnected coverage of common issues (Risse 2003), this mediated narrative stands as a significant exception. This essay concentrates on how citations of elsewhere have a significant impact on the framing of and dominant understandings of domestic questions. The significance of the "interminable citation" of stories from other European contexts as a way of making sense of developments in the national polity is illustrated by Harald Bauder in a recent study of media coverage in Germany. Between 2001 and 2004, a proposed immigration law shifted in orientation from a ground-breaking assertion of Germany as an "immigration society" to what he terms a "rather conservative piece of legislation" (2008: 95). Bauder tracks the modes of discourse employed to understand the significance of immigration and notes, in the mode he terms the "danger topos" the intense association of immigration and immigrants with danger and terrorism in reportage where "...external events were discursively linked to migration", in particular in the months following the bombings in Madrid in March 2004 (2008: 108).

A more discursive illustration of recitation is Maria Stehle's (2006) study of narrations of Europe through constructions of "the ghetto" in *Der Spiegel*. Comparing coverage of "emerging ghettos" of guest workers in the 1970s and of ghettos in Berlin in 2005, Stehle (2006: 50-54) notes how 1970s discussions

were framed in terms of fear of “Harlem-symptoms”, whereas coverage of multiculturalism following the riots in Paris approaches predominantly migrant areas as “internal borderlands” where similar violence may be inevitable. Stehle’s analysis notes how the point of comparison is far more than a stimulus for domestic analysis; it also provides a teleological vision of migrant presence and its consequences. The ghetto is a mobilizing metaphor that reduces the complexity of migrants’ lives and that strips social processes of their historical and political specificities. The power of the external point of national comparison is that it in fact produces an interiority, a European reality signified by the shared objectification of spaces in but not of Europe:

The attempts to ghettoize what is not supposed to be European reveals a series of paradoxical structures that are crucial for the emergence of new racisms: Europe is defined via the space that should not exist, the space of failed ‘integration’ and the ‘other’ space where rights and freedoms need to be restricted. The European ghetto is both feared and needed; it shows both the importance and the impossibility of ‘integration’; it is the location of the threat to Europe and the space where the ‘other’ needs to be restricted and violence needs to be contained. (Stehle 2006: 62)

Ghetto-spaces are the evidence of a failed multiculturalism, one of the facts that the Old Continent must face. The citation of France’s *banlieues* evidences the essential realities of German cities, the common excess of diversity and the common failure of prodigal generosity, and the common tendency of recalcitrant migrants to “abuse our multicultural love” (Ahmed 2008: 3). It is a commonplace of critical social thought that border regimes produce their outsiders; here internal outsiders are cited as evidence of economic and cultural problems not of their making, and held responsible for not integrating into a racial order dependent on “recognising” their difference. The macro-context of these reflexes is discussed in the next section.

The Fantasy and Anxiety of “Plural Worlds”

The substantive claims of the crisis narrative require exploration before turning to a further consideration of its mediation. As Étienne Balibar has noted (2003), the specificities of national variants of anti-Muslim politics must not be lost in the diagnosis of and opposition to European Islamophobia, and the same attention to national contextuality must inform fine-grained considerations of the supposed retreat of multiculturalism. This narrative of convergence rarely pays attention to power, and in particular, to power in postcolonial societies. The collapse of specificity strips social processes of their history and political dimensions, and hence of responsibility, agency and political possibility. This is paralleled by inattention to more productive ways of understanding the synchronicity of national anxieties. A consideration of empirical evidence

constitutes only a limited dimension of the critique of such a narrative, however it provides a way into reading the performative power of this tale of convergence. It is sufficient in this context to briefly refer to some indicative routes in this empirical questioning.

In the case of countries widely regarded as having avowedly multicultural policies, such as the UK, the Netherlands and Denmark, recent analysis questions the existence of cogent policy regimes or elite political consensus. Maarten Wink (2007), for example, has examined the “piecemeal” development of anti-discrimination and group-based policies in the 1980s in the Netherlands and the subsequent shift from the 1990s – and not, as is often narrativised, post 9/11 2001 – to an emphasis on “Dutch norms and values”. The misdiagnosis for multicultural consensus, he argues, can be attributed to its prevalent use in a descriptive rather than normative sense, and where initiatives aimed at the preservation and valorisation of cultural identities existed they were significantly informed by a “...pragmatic strategy aimed at preparing guest workers for return to their countries of origin” (2007: 345). With regard to Denmark, Lex, Lindekilde and Mouritsen (2007: 5-7) explicitly counterpoint the public backlash against multicultural ideology with the almost complete absence of policy initiatives in any of the key loci of multicultural activity.

In the case of the UK, a significant amount of research has provided a substantive critique not only of the vicissitudes of what is routinely taken as the house ideology of multiculturalism, but of the supposed impacts of multiculturalism’s cultivation of Petri-dish cities of segregation and extremism (see Kundnani 2007 for an overview). The association of a multiculturalist era with what former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder called “lawless zones or parallel societies” is an article of faith in crisis narratives. This gained public currency in the wake of the Cantle Report into the riots in northern England in 2001, and intensified following the terrorist attacks of July 7th 2005 and subsequent comments by Trevor Philips, Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality, concerning the UK “sleepwalking to segregation”. Yet, as Danny Dorling (2005), the noted human geographer argued subsequently, segregation data for the UK in the period 1991-2001 fell for every ethnic minority group with the highest rates attributed to “black and other Asian origin” (and rising over the same period only in Northern Ireland). Building on an examination of how segregation along ethnic lines can be understood less as ethnic recalcitrance/multicultural mismanagement and instead through a social history of “industrial decline, ‘white flight’ and institutional racism,” Arun Kundnani notes how the widely mediated thesis of a “...slippery slope from segregation to extremism to terrorism” is hugely inconsistent with the biographies of British-based Islamic terrorists (2007: 124), an observation similarly made by both Ian Buruma (2005) and Olivier Roy (2005) in relation to the murderer of Theo van Gogh.

These snapshots of empirical disturbance are not intended as a mechanistic correction of mediated narratives, but instead to open up the possibility of a theoretical explanation for crisis narratives that goes beyond any attempt merely to relate these social mythologies to the political agendas of proponents. How,

if multiculturalism has been so diffusely conceived of and patchily implemented, has it attained this degree of explanatory power and continental hostility? Sara Ahmed, in a response to the public contention by Slavoj Žižek (2008) that “liberal multiculturalism is the hegemony”, reworks this to argue that “...*the hegemonic position is that liberal multiculturalism is the hegemony*” (2008: page italics in original). If Grillo (2007) suggests that a mythologised strong form is routinely taken to pass for the reality of administered multiculturalism, Ahmed goes further in arguing that the view that multicultural values of recognizing and celebrating difference are hegemonic is based on a tendency to accept forms of social self-presentation in late capitalism at face value. The commodity value of difference in consumer societies and a widespread institutional commitment to visions of diversity are what Ahmed terms *non-performative*; expressions of value that do not bring into being what they name. Her argument deploys Žižek’s critique of postmodern authority – authority that extends authority through the simulation of friendship – to re-frame multiculturalism as a “...fantasy which conceals forms of racism, violence and inequality as if the organisation/nation can now say: how can you experience racism when we are committed to diversity?” (2008: 2).

This reading opens up important ways of framing the crisis of multiculturalism narrative, not only by focusing on the elision of the experience of racism through the widespread public valorisation of essentialised cultures, but by reminding us – contra the insistent suggestion² that multiculturalism is a product of consensus on the European left – that the culturalisation of “the problem of difference” was consistently critiqued and resisted by anti-racist activists and thinkers as a form of incorporation and control (Lentin 2004). Notwithstanding the critique of culture as a classificatory/explanatory concept that leaves race-thinking latent (Goldberg 2002; Lentin 2004), in the practice of Western European multicultural settlements cultural recognition can be read less as the celebration of difference than as its political reduction and containment by majority political groups from across the conventional political spectrum (Krebbes 2006; Kundnani 2007). As against claims by such authors as Joppke (2003) who see the backlash against multiculturalism as in part a reaction against over-generous recognition by state majorities, the act of majoritarian recognition has long been critiqued as a potentially oppressive optics, where recognition has the power to fix, essentialise, control and marginalise in a relationship of unequal power. The turn to integration, in proclaiming the need for binding national/ European values as an antidote to too much cultural diversity or too much diversity of the wrong kind, does not deconstruct this multicultural logic, rather it further reifies and contracts it. Culturalised migrants and minorities are seen as requiring cultural re-programming; the overwhelming response to the crisis of multiculturalism is a renewed insistence on locating culture as the prime response to political antagonism.

What George Yúdice has termed “the expediency of culture” in globalised societies – where “...culture is invoked to solve problems that previously were the province of politics and economics” (2003: 25) – has an intensified import

for the politics of multicultural rejection and integrationist embrace. The disparity noted in the introduction, following Elliot and Lemert (2006), between alarm at the idea of multiculturalism and the plural worlds of lived multiculturalism can be read as a product of culture's significance as a solace for the unsettling anxieties of hegemonic economic globalization. The chorus of voices and agencies calling for integralist projections of national values and "our way of life" in a period characterised by political-economic uncertainty (Bauman 2008; Kirby 2006) invites a consideration of multicultural crisis in terms of a wider form, as Arjun Appadurai incisively notes:

Given the systemic compromise of national economic sovereignty that is built into the logic of globalization, and given the increasing strain this puts on states to behave as trustees of the interests of a territorially defined and confined 'people', minorities are the major site for displacing anxieties of many states about their own minority or marginality (real or imagined) in a world...of unruly economic flows and compromised sovereignties. Minorities, in a word, are metaphors and reminders of the betrayal of the classical national project. (2006: 43)

For Appadurai the latent danger of the national ethnos of the nation-state is irrigated by political-economic conditions – of obviously varying extremity – which simultaneously demand the mobility of capital, finance, labour, and information with the performance of control over "...the cultural field...the main one in which fantasies of purity, authenticity, borders and security can be enacted" (2006: 23). The idea of fantasy recurs in the work of Ahmed, Appadurai, and in an important intervention, Ghassan Hage (2003) as a way of examining the mediation of wider anxieties through enactments of control over migrants and problematised minorities, the "needed but unwelcome" (Appadurai 2006: 44). Under conditions of profound and precarious individualisation (Bauman 2007; Elliot and Lemert 2006), the performance of a cohesive nation has a particular importance, for, as Appadurai notes, "The nation-state has been steadily reduced to the fiction of its ethnos as the last cultural resource over which it may exercise full dominion" (2006: 23). Migrants and problematised minorities, matter out of place, symbolise incompleteness while offering a fantasy of future completeness through their "if only-ness"; *if only* they would integrate, *if only* they would respect our ways of doing things. Hage formulates the importance of this fantasy in an era of accelerated globalization in striking terms:

The more the nation moves into becoming the non-nurturing social reality of neo-liberal policy, the more this hope for a good motherland becomes unrealistic, with no connection to the immediate empirical reality of the subject. That is, rather than the imaginary of the motherland becoming articulated as a reality that needs protecting, it becomes an increasingly hollow imaginary that needs to be protected from reality...the defensive mechanisms of the fatherland are no longer directed towards ordering and protecting the

nurturing motherland from internal and external threats; instead their task is to defend a fantasy of the motherland against the reality of the motherland. (Hage 2003: 96)

Thus human matter out of place can be held accountable for conditions where place is unsettlingly altered, for separatism in societies of “plural worlds”, for dis-integration in an era of individualisation and privatisation, and for embodying insecurity in an “age of uncertainty” (Bauman 2007). In this reading of the conditions which underpin the crisis of multiculturalism, it is possible to see contemporary migrants as doubly displaced; on the move, and subject to the displacement of common social anxieties which find expression in an apparent realisation of a European moment of truth.

Getting it Right: the Sureties of Recited Multiculturalism

Ireland makes a particularly interesting site for media analysis, as the period during which varying events have come to symbolise and mobilise a narrative of crisis are synchronous with Ireland becoming an in-migration destination. During a period of significant economic growth widely dubbed “the Celtic Tiger”, labour migration has been central to the key growth sectors of construction and services, and for labour-fraught industries such as agri-business. The needed have not automatically been unwelcome; Polish and Baltic States migrants arriving from May 2004 have been undoubtedly stereotyped in predictably negative ways, however they have also been routinely celebrated economically and culturally³. Moreover, the general intensity of cultural diffusion through migration has come to symbolise a wider sense of cosmopolitanism and modern arrival, mythically contrasted with a pre-Celtic Tiger Ireland of insularity and stagnation (see Titley 2009).

Nevertheless, an abstracted idea of migration and a vision of migration embodied by various racialised populations has been a central topic of public concern. Through a consideration of opinion and editorial articles in broadsheet Irish newspapers in 2005-2007⁴, this study examines how the narratives of European multicultural crisis have been incorporated into public debate. During a period in which ways of understanding the significance of migration have been contested in the mainstream public sphere, events and views from elsewhere have been taken to constitute a warning from history. Migration is constructed as a teleological process of implacable fragmentation and conflict, and Ireland is advised to bypass the pincer movement of liberal political correctness and Muslim cultural intransigence by opting for the forms of integrationism widespread in Western Europe.

Comments and editorials are influential in this regard, as opinion pages have expanded in Irish newspapers in recent years, and both the projected incisiveness of comment and the public personae of commentators have become important to newspapers positioning themselves in a crowded market pressed

not only by the challenges of digitalisation but by the particular pressures of UK-based titles in the Irish mediascape⁵. This study approaches opinion pieces, following McNair (2000: 30), as instrumental in providing "...the dominant interpretative frameworks within which political events are made sense of". Kunelius and Eide (2007: 5) view opinion and commentary as "...indicator(s) of the range of culturally acceptable social imagination on the issue" that map "the terrain of legitimate public controversy". In this study, the repetitive framing of debate in Ireland through the evidence of elsewhere suggests that *mapping* the terrain of controversy involves a active process of inscribing rather than merely describing interpretative frameworks.

In part this is due to the speculative nature of developments in Ireland as a migration society. The narrative of multicultural crisis, however, posits an uncomfortable prediction: "The year in Ireland is not 2005. It is about 1965 in terms of the French and British experience of immigration" (Myers 2005a). In this kind of argument, migration is a teleological process, dependent on resurgent notions of the "non-western" migrant as fundamentally incompatible, of migration as inexorably leading to conflict, and thus of the urgent need for Ireland to bypass the failed experiment of western European neighbours. Here, as with the ghetto metaphor, the riots in Clichy-sous-Bois are cited as evidence of the disintegratedness of migrants, a social disposition of asocial immutability which is rarely related either to the capillary intermixture of what Paul Gilroy (2004) calls lived multiculturalism or the shifting dynamics over time of what Werbner (2005) describes as multiculturalism in history (2005). This path-dependent vision of migration societies regards Ireland as having a honeymoon period in which to "get it right". Getting it right involves a rejection of the strong multiculturalism of apparent European orthodoxy:

Let's make this as down to earth as possible. If a guest comes into your house, you will make every effort to make them feel as welcome as possible. But how would you react if the guest suddenly demanded that you throw out the drinks in the cabinet, remove the holy picture from the mantelpiece, and that your wife covers up her shoulders? (Quinn 2007)

This metaphor recalls Ahmed's analysis of the crisis of multiculturalism being represented as an abuse of generosity and multicultural love, and it is significant that the imagined guest is an imagined Muslim, not only facilitated in their aggressive particularity by strong multiculturalism, but through their extreme actions held responsible for its unbridling. This picture of (Muslim) migrant demands is a key trope in crisis narratives, which negatively configures integration through a focus on its apparent absence and fracture, as Mathew Hyland points out in an incisive summary of the logic of recitation:

First a fact is invoked that lays claim to the utmost moral gravity (the diaspora of Oriental bombs in Western metropoli being the obvious but by no means the only example), followed by some observations on the dis-integration of

cultural behaviour (preferably a fusion of anecdote and dislocated statistics, as in: “only x per cent of Muslims born here think of themselves as British, and in parts of town nobody speaks English”). The necessary causal relation between one set of phenomena and the other is presumed to be too obvious for statement, and the Expert moves straight on to consider what, in particular, should be done in order *to induce self-identification with ‘society’ among culturally dis-integrated subjects* (2006: 4, italics in original).

The citation of Muslims in Europe is a key focus of crisis discourse in Ireland; the rejection of strong multiculturalism is not just about domestic forms of cultural settlement, but part of a wider commitment to a European way under threat from Islam in Europe, the constitutive – interiorised – outside required by the inside to recite itself. The journalist and historian Ruth Dudley Edwards (2006), in an article entitled “Dangers of ghettos born out of multiculturalism”, links emerging debates in Ireland on mass immigration to the lessons of a “terrified Europe changing course” where “...there is an increasing realisation that Western freedoms are under threat from Islamism” to the need for surveillance of Ireland’s tiny and hugely diverse Muslim population (2006). In the more politically charged opinion pieces in this corpus a rhetoric of Western values, European values and European Enlightenment is deployed, as Ian Buruma argues, as a shorthand for a “new conservative order” defined against “aliens and their values” (2006: 36). The obvious rhetorical certitudes provided by discourses of European liberal/universal values are rehearsed in this form of argument:

Muslims across Europe have reacted furiously (to the *Jyllands-Posten* cartoons), but there is a very simple solution: if you’re a Muslim and you don’t want to live in a society where cartoonists and writers can produce their work with impunity, then simply leave Europe and go back to where you will feel more comfortable. Because we can get on just fine without you. (O’Doherty 2006).

In Irish debate, one could contend that the integral focus of crisis narratives on Muslim populations legitimates an intolerance pre-sanctioned by wider European debates, a supposedly understandable intolerance that leaves fantasies of European generosity and innate tolerance intact (Blommaert and Verschueren 1998). The essentialised homogeneity of Muslims, their local seclusion and diasporic/global orientation means that Muslims in Ireland can be automatically understood in the terms of debates from elsewhere. The Europe of “our societies” is important as an *ethnos-by-proxy*, particularly in contexts such as Ireland where forthright statements of national character and particularity are rendered difficult by recent political history. It is also a form of racial performativity – as Howard Winant argues, race is routinely mobilised in contemporary European debates as a “stigmatizing signifier” of disorder and subversion, located in the spaces, practices, and bodies of the needed but unwelcome, and cited in the culturalised narratives of incompatibility in the “racial system of the Global North and West” (2004: xv):

Muslims reject the laws of democratic societies and insist on their right and duty to impose their own laws wherever they are. Muslims leaders are either complicit in this arrogation of authority or powerless to prevent it. And there is no such thing as a 'moderate' Muslim. In other words, we have incubating in our societies cultures utterly at odds with our values and laws (Waters 2006a).

Multiculturalism's failure is to have consolidated the alien wedge: it compromises values inimical to an otherwise integrated Europe and, in more extreme if far from isolated commentaries, has committed cultural suicide and become Eurabia. The temporary eclipse of cultural verities is widely attributed to multiculturalism's political correctness, that is, the recited reduction of a wide spectrum of politically countervailing and deconstructive projects, and their equally variegated organisational expressions, to a vision of default cultural relativism and moral cowardice. Thus the problem for Ireland is not only matter out of (European) place, but the danger of going with the multicultural drift and ignoring the elite import of "Dogmatic Europhile Multiculturalism". The invisibility of power differentials in crisis narratives is evident in the way in which political expression is parlayed into the trope of victimhood, or as John Waters expresses it, "Muslim victimhood, albeit expressed in the language of hate and rage, is the virus that threatens to collapse European civilisation, because liberals cannot resist a victim, even one seeking to destroy them" (Waters 2006b). It is this widely mediated sense of an orthodoxy of strong multiculturalism – despite the fact of its acknowledged retreat – that produces a logic of inverted victimhood:

When I see a woman shrouded in full burqa in the centre of Dublin, my heart does not race with pride at the multiculturalism we are importing, for this is an aggressive and monocultural intolerance, in a studied and disdainful rejection of our ways. The burqa proclaims its wearer's modesty, and is an insulting and explicit declaration of the immodesty of women who do not wear it. (Myers 2005b)

This piece of strategic deconstruction is itself imported from national debates in other European contexts (see Buruma 2006; Tévainien 2005), yet more fundamentally it speaks to the fear of small numbers so eloquently theorised by Appadurai (2006). Opinions such as this one are not representative in their mode of expression, but indicative of the ways in which the recitation of social realities through the figurative combinations of the crisis narrative provide powerful interpretative frameworks for public discourse on migration. At the time of writing, the request of a secondary school principal to the Department of Education for guidelines on wearing the hijab in schools has instigated a debate on how Ireland should handle this emblematic European "test". An editorial in *The Evening Herald* on 28 May 2008 rehearses the now routine interpretative framework:

...Muslim immigrants bring with them cultural practices and even dress codes that are totally different to our Irish way of doing things. So where do we draw the line between respecting their traditions and asking them to adapt to ours? We don't have to look very far to see that the consequences of getting this wrong could be disastrous. For 50 years the rest of Europe has followed the social policy known as 'multiculturalism', which basically means allowing separate religious communities to develop independently alongside that of their hosts. Today the evidence is overwhelming that this policy has failed. Because the countries made little or no effort to integrate their new citizens (*sic*), they created ghettos that became breeding grounds for violent extremists. In recent years we've seen the long-term results in the shape of race riots in France, the assassination of the controversial politician Pim Fortuyn in the Netherlands and the 7/7 bombings by British Muslims in London...Ireland doesn't have these problems – yet.

In recited multiculturalism the mis-attribution of Fortuyn's murder to Islamic extremism is not the point: citation, in De Certeau's terms, is the process of establishing the real, and the inter-related stories which comprise the narrative of crisis have become the commonplaces on which much debate now builds.

Conclusion: European Crisis and the European Public Sphere

A simplified and flattering narrative of multicultural crisis absolves Europe of thinking through the problem of difference in terms of histories of exploitation and interdependence. Étienne Balibar's (2003) challenging description of migration regimes and "European apartheid" draws attention to the disavowals of power and responsibility that underpin the racial marking out of internal non-Europeans, the dis-integrated whose excessive diversity must be surveyed and controlled. The stance of abused generosity is a manifestation of what Perry Anderson (2007) termed Europe's contemporary mood of "apparently illimitable narcissism"; a narcissism prepared once more to stigmatise and other entire populations in the often anxious representation of a collective imaginary. As Gerard Delanty (1995) argues, the idea of Europe has always been ambivalent and shaped through exclusions, and its obscurantist relationship to a "mystique of civilisation" supports, as Irish discourse attests, a chauvinistic ethno-cultural inflection as easily as a more considered articulation of liberal heritage.

This is but one among many overlapping narratives of Europeanness circulating in the networks of European communicative space, but it is far from marginal. It points to a significant problem for thinking which locates, as Philip Schlesinger notes in this volume, cosmopolitan potential in an emergent Europeanness. The citation index of European crisis may be transnational, but in many cases the consolidation of national sureties through European verities can be regarded as anti-cosmopolitan, or as providing a sanitised ra-

cial register. Similarly, the prevalence of a narrative of crisis unfurled around shocking events in European countries may fulfil some of the indicators postulated for versions of a European public sphere, however it is hard to see this convergent dissemination of a recited multiculturalism as the kind of discourse envisaged in normative speculation. Thomas Risse, for example, suggests that a European “community of communication” can be discerned when similar issues get similar levels of attention in national public spheres, within similar frames of reference – “agreeing what the problem actually is” – and patterns of interpretation, and where the mutually granted legitimacy of participants frames issues as “common European problems” (2003: 9). The crisis of multiculturalism has been debated in intensely synchronous exchanges in many European countries⁶, and the analysis presented here suggests a significant degree of agreement, if not consensus, on what constitutes this common European problem. For European communicative space to retain and cultivate an antagonistic and countervailing character, it may be necessary on issues such as this to work for dissimilar frames of reference, and a far more pronounced disagreement with the diagnosis of “what the problem is”. That is, to move from a recited multiculturalism of fantasy and simplification to an incited multiculturalism that attests to racial reconfiguration in a period of anxious globalisation.

Notes

1. The publication of the cartoons has been assessed in the context of resurgent Danish state and cultural racism (Lex, Lindekilde and Mouritsen 2007) and in a transnational research project which has examined the production of press discourses of free speech in Danish and other newspapers (Kunelius et al 2007)
2. In fact a striking dimension of European intellectual debate is the “new realism” of many self-identified leftist commentators who explicitly relate the need for unapologetic re-assertions of liberal values in multicultural societies with a justification for “liberal interventionism” in Iraq and Afghanistan. See Kundnani (2007) for a discussion and the Euston Manifesto for a prominent exposition of this line of argument in the UK: Geras, Norman (2006) ‘Introducing the Euston Manifesto: why we have written a new statement of principles for the left’, *The Guardian*, Thursday April 3 2006. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2006/apr/13/introducingtheeustonmanifesto>
3. At the time of writing there are no published studies of media coverage of post-EU accession migration to Ireland; the point is based on observation.
4. The analysis presented is based on a discourse analysis of opinion page articles in *The Irish Times*, *The Irish Independent* and *The Sunday Independent* between March 2005 and March 2007 that dealt with immigration to Ireland, multiculturalism and political correctness.
5. The launch of an Irish edition of *The Daily Mail* in 2006, for example, was designed to build on existing sales of the UK version. Controversial op-ed was one of the stated orientations on launch.
6. In early 2007 signandsight.com instigated a vigorous debate on the “liberal apartheid” of multiculturalism and the integration of Muslims which was widely reported in European newspapers in January and February 2007, and which stemmed from a polemical attack by Pascal Bruckner on Timothy Garton Ash’s review of Ian Buruma’s *Murder in Amsterdam*.

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Chapter 10

Contextualising the Public Sphere

Freedom of Expression and Diversity in the Turkish Media

Miyase Christensen

Questions of freedom of expression, media pluralism, and tolerance of diversity have been paramount in discourses – both in Turkey and internationally – surrounding EU-Turkey relations and Turkey’s possible EU membership. Coming after an intensive period of parliamentary reforms to improve democratic and pluralistic ideals in accordance with the EU *acquis*, the tragic murder of the Armenian-Turkish journalist Hrant Dink in January 2007 marked a turning point, refocusing international and national attention upon the degree of freedom of expression in Turkey and the ability of the Turkish media to contribute to a healthy public sphere. The murder also led to massive public demonstrations in Istanbul, with tens of thousands taking to the streets bearing signs reading, “We are all Armenians, We are all Hrant Dink”. The demonstrations in turn triggered intense public debates on questions surrounding both the initial court case against Dink and his subsequent murder.

Another high-profile incident added further impetus to heightened concerns about the state of Turkish democracy and freedom of speech. Following the publication in April 2007 of an article in *Nokta* (a weekly political magazine) on the relationship between Turkish military authorities and selected civil society groups, other media outlets and the military picked up the story, and a public debate ensued. The article in question was (seemingly) based on confidential information provided by a military official, and, one week after its publication, the *Nokta* offices were raided by Turkish Anti-Terrorism Unit personnel under the authority of a search warrant issued by a public prosecutor. All of the *Nokta* computers and documents were seized and searched, and the magazine was later closed down by its owner, who was quoted as saying that he could no longer endure the pressures and defamations (*Radikal*, 21 April 2007).

This chapter offers critical reflections on freedom of expression and diversity in the Turkish media, with the Dink and *Nokta* cases as examples, based on in-depth interviews with journalists from the independent and minority sectors of the Turkish press—in the sectors most prone to freedom of speech violations. This article is part of an ongoing research project, and the interviews conducted fulfil a dual role: they provide first-hand accounts of media practice in Turkey

pertaining to both the legal impediments and routine practices within the media; and they reveal journalists' own opinions, beliefs, and imaginaries about the sociopolitical and cultural milieu in Turkey in addition to the media and the media outlets for which they themselves work. This combination allows for a more nuanced discussion of the current media environment in Turkey and the confines of the Turkish public sphere.

While in both the international media and academic literature significant attention has been paid to the legal framework related to democratic rights and freedom of speech in Turkey, the role of other social actors (such as mainstream media) and deeply-entrenched structures of thinking and historically-contingent norms and practices within public culture as parts of the power geometry (Massey 1994) that shape the contours of a public sphere have been neglected. My interviews with journalists,¹ many of whom hold key positions in their respective institutions (managerially or in terms of influence) point to the central role played by the mainstream media as social power brokers and to a deep-seated patriarchal relationship between the state and military authorities and the public.²

Theoretically, the aim of this chapter is to offer a number of analytical delineations and insights into the public sphere in relation to questions that surface within the Turkish context. In so doing, my goal is not to invoke a methodologically nationalist, homogenising approach or to reiterate some extensively scrutinised, yet inert understanding of the public sphere within a firmly Westphalian mind-frame. Nor is it an attempt to gauge empirically to what extent the current media scene in Turkey affords "rational-critical" public debate. On the contrary, as much as such frames contribute to vibrant debates on the public sphere and give way to further critique in the related domains of academic literature, I would argue that remaining blindly faithful to certain idealised suppositions regarding the public sphere engenders normative rigidities that both constrain theoretical rigour and curtail the capacity to pinpoint within a given social reality emergent elements that do not conform to existing doctrines. This said, I should also note that the alternative is not, as Fraser (2005) rightly warns, "an empiricist approach that simply adapts the theory to the existing realities, as that approach sacrifices normative force" (2), nor is it to abandon territorially, nationally specific understandings of the public sphere at a time when nationally contained public debate and communicative action still has primacy.

With the hope of putting a humble diacritical mark on a universal question, I would argue here for the need for contemporary accounts of the public sphere to be informed as much by the time and space-based particularities (language, political and public culture and media structures, historic trajectories, and conjunctural factors) of a given territorial framework as by universalistic tenets.³ Overall, the goal of this article is to reflect upon the prospects of exploring nationally specific public spheres and to engender new directions by way of contextualising or, to use Fraser's (2005: 4) term, "repoliticizing" public sphere theory.

Topographies of Change in Turkey

In the last two decades Turkey has gone through fundamental transformations. These transformations have taken place both internally, through structural changes that have dramatically reshaped its economic, social, and cultural landscapes, and externally, in terms of its politico-economic status in Europe and internationally. In the EU context, questions relating to Turkey's ability to orchestrate a sustainable economic, political, and civic transformation and to consolidate its democracy to meet "European" standards, have often been mentioned in the same breath as the problems associated with other transitional democracies: fellow EU candidates who are today's new members. The structural switch to a market economy in the mid-1980s not only redrew the boundaries of the state and private sectors and reshuffled the power balances therein, but marked the routinised domains of everyday life with the rise of commercial media (and high-levels of media consumption), consumerist life styles, and, not least, the emergence of a public sphere in which questions formerly considered taboo (the Kurdish question, ethnic minorities, etc.) gained visibility (for further discussion of the transformation of the Turkish media sphere in the 1990s, see Aksoy and Sahin 1993; Christensen 2004). The deregulation/privatisation of the state sector gave way to the rise of a class of *nouveaux riches* and increased income disparity. As a result of a combination of factors that emerged during this transitory period, the Turkish economy suffered from triple-digit inflation and emergency financial measures, thus making the economy the priority on both the policy and public agendas. While Turkey's human rights record and issues related to freedom of expression were regularly in the international spotlight (and a source of concern nationally), and despite strides made to amend a legal framework considered to be an impediment to further freedoms, a great deal remains to be addressed within the legal domain. The press and media sectors in Turkey, and questions arising in relation to external and internal pluralism vis-à-vis the legal impediments, have also been thoroughly scrutinised.

However, in relation to the particular questions of media pluralism and diversity, a scholarly tendency has been to problematise these questions within the broad framework of globalisation and corporatisation of media and to associate the problems of censorship and prosecution with the lesser democratic public sphere traditions of Southern and Eastern Europe and Latin America. Although these broader paradigmatic scopes of political economy and normative groundings of the classical Habermasian (1989) public sphere do provide entry points for addressing similar problems in Turkey, and elsewhere, understanding temporal and spatial specificities (and resulting phenomena) necessitates further contextualisation, not only of political, economic, and social dynamics but also of factors surrounding specific incidents such as the Dink and *Nokta* cases. The general problems faced by journalists in Turkey are the result of a combination of factors, namely, hyper-commercialisation, clientelism, and a patrimonial relationship between the media and the state (Christensen 2007: 184). While the transition from state-dominated to commercial broadcasting

systems at the start of the 1990s provided an initial window for a more inclusive and versatile public sphere to foster in Turkey – and has, in fact, contributed to much greater diversity compared to the former environment⁴ – the prevailing commercial logic along with historically dominant relationships among the public, state, and military remain as hindrances to the embedding of tolerance and freedoms within the Turkish public sphere.

The Theory and Practice of Pluralism and Freedom of Expression in Turkey

The start of Turkey's relationship with the EU/EEC goes back to 1963 when the Association Agreement was signed between Turkey and EU/EEC. December 1999, when Turkey officially became a candidate country, marks the start of a transitional period during which a number of reform packages affecting both the legal frameworks and structural elements in political and economic domains were adopted.⁵ Until the 1990s, the main actor in the debates around the freedom of the press and expression in Turkey was the state. Restrictions were primarily based on Articles 141 and 142 (criminalising communist and socialist propaganda) and Article 161 (preventing Islamist propaganda). "All these and other provisions really made doing journalism in Turkey like walking in a mine field", comments Haluk Sahin who has been in the profession since the early 1970s (personal interview). Since the start of the 1990s, particularly after Turkey applied to become a candidate for EU-membership, there has been a gradual change. During this transformation, while the state assumed secondary status as an obstacle to freedom of expression, ethical and professional problems arising from conflicts of interest within journalism arose with the emergence of the corporate media and of different capital power blocs within the media sector. The military, however, continue to have considerable influence on political matters, and public commentary by high ranking military officials on national and international political issues is not uncommon. More recently, there have been a number of attempts on the part of some members of the military – by way of criticising certain views and opinions – to interfere with academic research and public debate, particularly on questions concerning national security and minority rights.

A number of noteworthy amendments were made to the Criminal Code of Turkey in relation to human rights issues, such as the ratification of Protocol No. 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Although a variety of issues (including such sensitive topics as the Kurdish question or minority rights) have been openly debated in the media, there have been prosecutions and convictions – some of them highly publicised such as the Hrant Dink case – for the expression of views and opinions considered to be violations of specific provisions of the Criminal Code, particularly Article 301.

Article 301 on Insulting being a Turk, the Republic, the organs and institutions of the State reads [sic]:

(1) A person who explicitly insults being a Turk, the Republic or Turkish Grand National Assembly, shall be imposed a penalty of imprisonment for a term of six months to three years.

(2) A person who explicitly insults the Government of the Republic of Turkey, the judicial bodies of the State, the military or security organisation shall be imposed a penalty of imprisonment for a term of six months to two years.

(3) Where insulting being a Turk is committed by a Turkish citizen in a foreign country, the penalty to be imposed shall be increased by one third.

(4) Expression of opinions with the purpose of criticism does not require penalties. (Haraszti 2005: 10)

Although the new Press Code issued a few years ago was welcomed positively since it did not involve any imprisonment, “the inclusion of 301 in the new Criminal Code *with* the approval of the EU constitutes serious problems” (Sahin, personal interview). As noted by various country reports, the number of prosecutions increased between 2005 and 2007. Although an amendment to Article 301 (along with certain other provisions and the anti-terror law) has been on the national and EU agendas for a number of years, no significant progress has been made.

The general scope of the current Criminal Code, particularly in light of the recent incidents of persecution and attempts to impose censorship, illustrate the inadequacy of the legal framework for ensuring a healthy public sphere and the right to freedom of expression. Kurkcu, from BIA-Net (the Independent Communication Network⁶), surmises that

although we can say that there has been major progress in the legal framework over the last twenty years, since these changes are not made to accommodate the right of the public to more freedom of expression but to conform to the international and EU criteria, the scope in essence remains the same, even though it seems as if changes have taken place (personal interview).

However, the fact that Article 301 and other restrictive provisions are only invoked in certain cases and against certain individuals and institutions (in conjunction with biased reactions by the mainstream media) points to the need to contextualise these questions further and examine other aspects that encourage intolerant acts and attitudes. The educational system is the key in this regard. Although substantial reforms have been undertaken within the last decade to bring Turkish education in line with contemporary Western standards, in the realm of educational and language rights of minorities a considerable degree of improvement is clearly needed. Currently, in relation to the largest minority group in Turkey, there are four local TV and radio stations broadcasting in Kurdish together with the newly added Çağrı FM (March 2007) broadcasting in Kirmanchi and Zaza

Kurdish. Although all Turkish citizens are regarded as equals before the law, the recognition of “minorities” as constituting only non-Muslim groups – Greeks, Jews and Armenians – in accordance with the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923 does not allow for the fostering of an environment in which further solutions to identity-related issues can be sought. While on a positive note the requirement to fill in the “religious orientation” section on Turkish identification cards was eliminated by a new amendment adopted in November 2007, recent violent attacks against non-Muslim individuals (such as the killing of three Christians working for a publishing house in Malatya) added to concerns. Although these events cannot be seen as representative of the general attitudes and sentiments in Turkish society towards minorities and/or non-Muslims, provocative publications in some factions of the media can be said to contribute to the intolerance observed in certain conservative circles in the public domain.

Inside the Media

Although the legal framework with its restrictive provisions is seen as the primary agent constraining press freedom in Turkey – and this is the common perception, particularly in Europe – attitudes and norms within the media themselves, and historical contingencies that give way to deep-rooted social peculiarities and sensitivities, remain much less explored. Redressed as righteous patriotism and a dutiful allegiance to the state and its republican history, an ever-present patriarchalism that shadows the public sphere is also often invoked by the media, particularly in relation to highly sensitive issues such as Kurdish identity, the highly controversial question of the Armenian genocide, military power, and minority rights and languages. The modes of framing routinely used in the media in relation to such issues ultimately determine the outlines of what is discursively tolerable in the mediatised realm of the public sphere in addition to shaping the public imaginaries associated with such discourse.

Concerning the coverage of one such “sensitive” issue, the Kurdish question, Andrew Finkel notes, for example, that “reporting on Kurdish issues has been circumscribed as much by a conservative public opinion that simply does not want to confront certain issues, as by official pressure” (Finkel 2000: 147). Finkel, a foreign correspondent based in Turkey for almost two decades, was himself put on trial for defaming a public institution, the military; his career at *Sabah*, a popular daily, was terminated due to a column he wrote about PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan’s flight to Rome in 1998 (personal interview, 2008).⁷ On his experiences as a journalist who faced both legal prosecution and professional persecution, Finkel (2000) observed

These experiences led me to take a somewhat different view from NGOs concerned with freedom of press issues and other human rights bodies, many of whom rallied to my defence. Organisations like the Committee to Protect Journalists or Journalistes sans Frontières illuminate with admirable tenacity

the very real difficulties Turkish journalists have in doing their job. My court case appeared in these organisations' annual country reports, alongside other far more grievous instances of intimidation against media organisations and their journalists. The overall impression left by those reports is that other self-appointed guardians impede the press in its role as guardian of the public realm. The assumption is that if the press does not speak out more openly, it is because it is confronted by an antediluvian statute book and the deep-seated illiberality of the Turkish establishment. At the end of my ordeal, I came to the rather different conclusion that newspapers were failing to protect their own professional standards and as a result were exposing journalists to unacceptable risks. I was less disenchanted with the legal system which tried me under a bad law, but fairly, than with my own newspaper which did not cover the case at all.

Finkel further notes that his "mistake" was one of timing and that similar opinions had appeared in the Turkish press at less sensitive times, leading him to believe that he was fired at the request of someone outside the newspaper (*ibid.*). The case against Finkel was dropped in 1999.

When it comes to independent or minority newspapers, different mechanisms can be enacted to avoid conflict and pressure. For example, the current editor-in-chief of *Agos*, the weekly Turkish- and Armenian-language newspaper, explains the situation thus: "Since we have the desire to keep *Agos* alive and since there is particular pressure on *Agos*, we implement technical auto-censorship, meaning we say what we have to say but change the way we say it". Hrant Dink was charged for voicing his opinions on other sensitive issues: the question of the Armenian genocide and Turkish-Armenian relations. In an article he wrote for *Agos* (of which he was the founder and editor-in-chief) on 13 February 2004 Dink reflected on these issues and suggested that unless both the Armenians and the Armenian identity could overcome an obsession with the Turks, neither the people nor the identity would be emancipated. His ironic style in the article and a number of expressions he used were taken out of context by some media and framed as "degrading Turkishness". Following publication of the article, a private citizen filed a lawsuit against Dink, invoking Penal Code Article 301. After a lengthy process of trials and fervent public debate – and despite the efforts of those in legal circles and the liberal media who pointed out that his words were taken out of context – he was charged and sentenced to six months in jail. The court decision read: "This is disrespectful to the Turkish ancestors, martyrs, and values that form a nation". The court also pointed out that values differ from one country to another. Dink decided to appeal the verdict by going to the European Court of Human Rights, but was murdered on 17 January 2007. As he expressed via the media and his newspaper, what Dink found unjust was that he was charged with a crime he did not commit, that his words were deliberately taken out of context and publicised by the media over and over again, causing him to become a target of hatred and violence and that he was the only person to that point to

have been convicted under Article 301.⁸ This led him to proclaim that as much as he could not imagine living elsewhere, unless the verdict was reversed he would have to leave the country.

The primary incident, however, that attracted major media and public attention to Agos and Hrant Dink was a news article he published on 6 February 2004 (“Lady Sabiha’s Secret”) in which it was suggested that Atatürk’s adopted daughter, Sabiha Gökçen – also the first Turkish female pilot and thus a cultural symbol – was in fact an Armenian girl taken from an orphanage. The article included interviews with those who were purported to be Gökçen’s Armenian relatives. The story erupted into a public controversy when it appeared on the front page of the most popular daily, *Hürriyet* (with a circulation of around 600,000) on 21 February 2004. In the subsequent two weeks many columnists from a variety of media outlets made both positive and negative comments about the story, and other factions also made public statements. The most noteworthy of these was the following statement from the Head of General Staff (the Commander of the Turkish Armed Forces): “To open such a symbol to public debate, for whatever reason, is villainy against national unity and social peace” (in *Radikal*, 20 January 2007).

Although Dink’s murder was protested by tens of thousands on the streets of Istanbul and condemned by many in the media, the role played by a number of media outlets in creating a negative image of Dink (in relation to his articles and opinions) led a number of journalists interviewed for this article to see the reaction on the part of some mainstream media as disingenuous and two-faced. As one informant commented, “The way the mainstream media covered the issues related to Armenians and Hrant Dink was twisted, and they acted in a way that legitimised the hate towards him and the attacks on him” (personal interview). Cases brought against journalists, public authorities’ interference with press freedom, and pressures placed on academics for expressing certain views have all contributed to an environment in which the right to freedom of expression has been undermined. As Kurkcu suggests:

The way this legal framework is operationalised constitutes a major obstacle to safeguarding freedom of expression in general. Any citizen can file a complaint to start a lawsuit against a private person or institution based on one or more of the legal provisions through a public prosecutor. The prosecutor after examining the complaint can open a case after obtaining approval from the Ministry of Justice (personal interview).

The problem, Kurkcu continues, is that while prosecutors have the option of disregarding these complaints, they often initiate the legal process:

When I asked a prosecutor why they have to take these seriously if they don’t think there is actually a violation, he replied that “if I don’t do so, they might put pressure on me later”. So there is a chain of pressure mechanism in play and if one prosecutor doesn’t take the case, another will.... Con-

servative factions in Turkey abuse the framework, particularly the ambiguity of 301. ... There are “mobile complaint teams” on duty, so to speak. A kind of fascism that manipulates the judicial system as a tool has started to pose a threat to writers, intellectuals, critics, scientists and academics in Turkey. What happened to Hrant Dink should be looked upon in light of this situation (personal interview).

The police raid of the offices on the political weekly *Nokta* following a story the magazine ran about the relationship between the military and some civil society organisations (and the eventual closure of its publication by its owner) added substantially to this negative atmosphere. The editor-in-chief of the publication, Alper Gormus, outlined the event:

Let me explain the process in detail, as different and inaccurate versions appeared in the media as to what happened. We published three important articles, all cover stories. The first, in the beginning of March, was based on a General Staff document revealing that Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) categorised journalists as pro and con TAF. This was beyond an accreditation problem – as you know, there was already a vetting process in place in Turkey for who was admitted to TAF press conferences and who was not. But since this document we referred to categorised journalists as “pro” and “con” TAF, when we published the story, it made a big impact. And one of the biggest newspapers claimed, on the front page, that this story couldn’t have been true. But the General Staff itself made a proclamation shortly after and confirmed that the news story was true.

The second article came out towards the end of March and was a news story based on the diaries of the former Admiral of Naval Forces, Ozden Ornek. In this story it was revealed that two coups were planned in 2004, but that these plans could not be realised for a variety of reasons. This story raised a lot of controversy. And a week after that came our third cover story, and I think this was the most important of the three. It was the end of March or beginning of April and a week before the first of those famous Republican rallies would take place.⁹ As someone who read all the diaries of Ozden, I came to believe with certainty that after they [the military] realised that having a coup or a similar intervention was impossible – and this is in the diaries – they decided to do the next thing, which was to work in cooperation with civil society organisations and pursue politics through them, therefore developing a new political intervention model. This was very clear. Moreover, there was a document issued around the same time in 2004. So in our story I also added my comments along the lines of “in the light of these, how much trust can we have that this civil rally is really a civil rally?” (personal interview).

The day the third cover story was published, Gormus received a call from a prosecutor from the General Staff who asked whether he would be willing to release the document that constituted the basis for the third story along with

the other document revealing that the TAF categorised journalists as “pro” and “con”. To which Gormus replied, no. A few days later, a team of about 50 came to the *Nokta* offices and produced a search warrant from the Istanbul Bakirkoy Attorney General certifying their right both to seize all documents and to copy all materials from the office computers. The search lasted three days and nights; about ten days later the owner of the publication announced his decision to close down the newspaper (personal interview).

In relation to the *Nokta* incident, Mahcupyan suggests that “what happened to *Nokta* was clearly a violation, of course. And if we consider the event they publicised, it was the most important event in recent Turkish political history: that there was a military coup attempt and that this aspiration was pursued consistently” (personal interview). Regarding the reaction of the mainstream media to *Nokta*, Mahcupyan commented that “the monopolistic structure of the mainstream media does not allow for real journalism, and they don’t like those who do. Apart from the question of auto-censorship, we are talking about a clear pressure and threat imposed by some part of the media on the other”. Some, however, viewed the case from a more nuanced angle. Kurkcu, for example, suggests that

it seems like the only intention on the part of the owner of the magazine was to publish those documents rather than pursue journalism in a dedicated manner. The fact that he got rid of the magazine that easily shows this. So, I think in a way that the magazine was used by its owner as a tool in the ongoing process of political struggle in Turkey. But, apart from that, of course, this should be no problem legally, and in terms of journalism I think that our journalist friends there have published these documents they acquired through the ownership of the magazine and helped enlighten the public. ... We also see military involvement in a case that totally belongs to the civil domain. This incident goes to show not only problems related to freedom of expression but also the dual-headedness of the judicial system (personal interview).

Overall, both the interviews and the analysis in this section suggest that there is a correlation between incidents of public persecution (of individuals or institutions) and the ways in which these issues are covered in the media.

On the State, the Public, and the Public Sphere in Turkey

As noted by others (e.g., Bek 2004), the 1980 military coup marked the start of a systematic and intensive depoliticisation process in which left-leaning politics in particular was discouraged within all social and cultural spaces and replaced by an imposed allegiance to banal national fixtures (e.g., the flag, Atatürk statues, ceremonial/military symbols, et cetera). Throughout the 1980s, endorsing popular culture, sports, religion, and other forms of “depoliticised”

activity was encouraged as a substitute for political involvement and public debate on politics.¹⁰ Media discourse and routine everyday mediations of mundane statism and nationalism have played significant roles in this process, and the rapid tabloidisation of newspapers in the 1980s and commercialisation/deregulation of the media in the 1990s generated a tendency toward sensational news journalism that marks mainstream media in Turkey today.

This, of course, is not to suggest that in Turkish social reality popular culture and politics constitute two disparate domains. On the contrary, politics and covert political deliberation found diverse avenues of articulation in the various forms and spheres of popular culture (from popular film to comic magazines). As such, popular culture has contributed a great deal to the survival of public debate, particularly during these times of intense state surveillance. However, the popularisation of mainstream media content and sensationalisation of news discourse coupled with a historically patriarchal relationship between the public and state domains have contributed to a shaping of the current milieu of national media discourse in which emotional tones, flag-waving sentimentality and, at times, a celebration of unconditional commitment to statist/nationalist conservatism – packaged as “common-sensism” and patriotism – override journalistic ideals of objectivity, impartiality, and neutrality. Gormus suggests

...when you look at the legal framework, OK, there are some problems, but it's also generally quite pro-freedoms. The same goes for press and media freedoms. But in practice, journalism cannot be pursued freely in Turkey because of, on the one hand, the 'no-nos' of the state rule and the discourses it develops based on those, and, even more importantly – I always emphasise this particularly because that's my real problem – because of the public, the media, the general mentality, and the pressures arising therein. Of course, I'm talking about freedom in the real sense of the word. ... Just like there is a problem with the public in the sense that the kind of freedom of expression that is internalised is not a real one, but a *soi disant* freedom of expression, the same goes for those who work within the media. Although things are changing and this is a process, the kind of freedom of expression that is adopted, internalised at the moment, is not a real one. There is a tendency amongst journalists to see the authorities over them as legitimate: one is state authority, the second is financial authority, that is, their bosses, and the third is government, and so on. So, since the kind of freedom of expression they have internalised is not a real one, since there is a problem in their own mentality, there is a tendency not to perceive the pressures coming from these various levels of authorities as pressure. Therefore, they do not tend to assume a combative position against these pressures (personal interview).

In addition there are the contingencies brought about by the political economic structure of corporate media and temporally-enacted/enduring forms of relationships of interest present therein. As Mahcupyan notes:

The legal framework is of secondary importance in Turkey. There are some deficiencies, but since the start of the republic, Turkey has been devising its laws in accordance with the European scope. But there are two things: one, depending on how these laws are legitimised, these legal frameworks generate certain taboos, and when one touches upon those taboos, that legal framework can abruptly turn into a national restriction. Secondly, in practice, this framework can take a different shape, depending on the conjuncture. And there are the media themselves: their monopolistic nature, the ideologies therein, the fact that they don't pursue journalism in the real sense. When we look at the media, we see that very little of what really happens is reflected in the media (personal interview).

Universally speaking, the media motivate certain issues and agendas and give these visibility in the public sphere, and not all that takes place in social reality is covered. In that regard, Turkish media are no exception. What makes the Turkish mainstream media sphere problematic, however, as expressed by the journalists interviewed for this article, is a general tendency towards drawing lines around issues for the purposes of shaping public opinion rather than abiding by journalistic commitments to impartiality and providing a plurality of voices. This has to do, in large part, with deep-rooted commercial/institutional commitments and a journalistic milieu in which news reporting is secondary – and mostly sensational – and where there is a heavy dependence on columnists. There is great variety in the views, styles and ideological/political inclinations represented by a diverse swathe of columnists who write for the press, some of whom also appear on syndicated TV channels. And these columnists do indeed exercise a degree of autonomy, independence, and influence and contribute to a vibrant environment of public debate. As I argue elsewhere, news discourse, particularly discourse generated in newspaper columns, contributes to public discourse on crucial issues, and there is a close relationship between journalistic texts and social imaginary. Political discussions started by columnists around Turkey's Eurovision Song Contest victory in 2003, raising questions ranging from Turkey's EU bid and cultural identity to Turkey-Greece-Cyprus relations, is a salient example of how, at times, the media in Turkey fulfil a far-reaching communicative role (see Christensen & Christensen 2008).

It should also be noted that there is room for diversity, even within the same media groups. The biggest media mogul, Aydın Dogan, for example, owns both *Hürriyet*, the centre-right daily with a high circulation rate nationwide (around 600,000), and *Radikal*, the centre-left daily considered within the domain of "quality press" and home to a number of columnists known for their bold commentaries and sharp socio-political critiques. On the first anniversary of Hrant Dink's murder, one of the most outspoken columnists, Perihan Magden, who writes for *Radikal*, openly attacked *Hürriyet* (and its editor-in-chief) for making Hrant Dink a target through discursive strategies:

My readers know: Since I returned to *Radikal* I have penned dozens of “insult letters” (if that’s the way he wants to take it) about Ertuğrul Özkök here. ... He didn’t utter a “Peep”. ... This Round Table Knight does and will tolerate SILENTLY the “insults” that are thrown at HIM.

...

He has his hand even in the murder of Hrant Dink by way of the headlines/provocations/target-markings of the newspaper of which he is the Admiral Thingamajig (I wrote this many times).

Hostility towards Orhan Pamuk/the fact that he became a target is all thanks to you.

You are, in and of yourself, the baking powder of nationalism of the worst sort (not that there are any good sorts).

You are more royalist than the king, more militarist than the Military. Many things that go wrong in Turkey, many misperceptions that coil up our feet and psyche are personally your makings. My opinions about you, Özkök, are more terrible than what you read here!

In her column on 17 January 2008, in the same sarcastic tone that has become her trademark, Magden referred to *Hurriyet* as “*Hurriyet*, the Institute for the Creation of Scapegoats, and its Brain-trust” (Magden 2008).

On the subject of external pluralism, one way to look at the Turkish media scene would be to consider the availability of diverse sources. On this Sahin comments:

I am very hopeful of the diversity that exists in the Turkish press in general. There are 32 nationally circulated newspapers in Istanbul today. If you look at each separately, each might be lying, but you also see that each is trying to expose the fallacies of the other. In that regard, the Turkish press, to me, displays an ideological pluralism. There is a healthy chaos (personal interview).

There are about 5,000 periodicals, 1,200 radio stations, and some 200 TV channels in Turkey. However, for those in the countryside or within smaller local/independent media, it is more difficult to combat legal hurdles, to be heard, and to seek support the cases of violating freedom of expression and other rights. The form of pluralism present in the Turkish media sphere can also be seen as mirroring the polarised nature of the public and political domains. National mainstream media, with the widest reach, function as gatekeepers for a public discourse in which certain ideas and imaginaries are more welcome than others.

Reconsidering the Public Sphere on a National/Post-National Axis

At present, it is difficult to talk about the existence of a holistic public sphere in Turkey in the form that Habermas had originally construed: free from domination, abiding within the confines of the nation-state, and facilitating rational-critical debate on the state machinery and performance. After all, each outlet preaches to its own choir, and is seen as questionable by the opponents of the views which that particular outlet represents; there is little room for critical-rational discourse in “news-reporting” as such, and the more prevalent form of journalistic texts—columns—embody the personal, political/ideological, popular/populist, and, not least, the emotional as part and parcel of the rational. Thus, if we are to take the classical premises of public sphere theory as benchmarks, it would be a stretch to suggest that a public sphere as such, with all of the original theory’s presuppositions actualised, currently exists in the Turkish context (if in fact it ever existed anywhere or at all).

To what extent it would be realistic to aspire to resolve objectively the institutional and normative ideals of a public sphere theory alongside the bounds of tempora-spatial specificities remains to be explored and certainly goes well beyond the scope of the discussion here. Yet few would argue that a major benefit to be derived from sustaining/reviving the public sphere is a democratising function, and, as such, a normative outlook remains crucial. Although Habermas’ prediction that the current mediated environment would return to feudalistic displays of power rather than provide room for genuine communicative action is more relevant than ever, the principles on which the original doctrine rests necessitate reconsideration, first and foremost, on the basis of the historical/social particularisms that exist in given settings.

For one, in Habermas, privately constituted changes in individual subjectivity led to the macro-level transformations observed in the public domain. Apart from the problems inherent in such a dichotomisation of “private” and “public”¹¹, the public and private domains (and publicly permissible aspects of identities) were overtly structured by the republican state in Turkey and, thus, are unique products of historically and culturally structured social formations. This is not to suggest that other subjectivities or autonomous forms of private identities (in the fashion of the European Enlightenment or otherwise) did not exist outside this state-public realm, but rather to point out that state formation had a distinct character, and while some patterns overlapped with similar processes in Western Europe, others did not. An effort on the part of the Turkish republican establishment to construct a public in the exact image of its state rather than allowing a public space for co-existence was a distinctive feature. During the republican era, certain social imaginaries – in every domain of public life – were motivated in relation to what constituted the new republican state and its subjects: the modern, secular public with an indisputable homogenous identity. These imaginaries were abruptly ruptured with the rapid rise of the commercial media in the 1990s with their new, controversial, formerly taboo

imaginaries, making it difficult for the state/military establishment to sustain its preferred discursive constructs. Hence, ties were rapidly established between the corporate media, state, military and industry powers in the 1990s, and a variety of niche outlets, each aiming to address a specific public and safeguard agendas therein, mushroomed.

On a universal level, forces of globalisation, transnationalisation, and (in the European context) enlargement and integration processes also necessitate such rethinking. In addressing the latter question, Habermas (2006) points to cosmopolitanism and post-nationalism as vital resources in generating better understanding. The questions in relation to the implications of a powerful reign of market-driven globalisation for the autonomous political practice of democratic citizens and the potential of global forces (as they are embodied in local contexts) to undermine the solidarity of the public together with the political influence potential of public discourse in constitutional democracies (*ibid.*) have a great degree of relevance in the Turkish case alongside the issues arising from historical/social particularities. Similarly, Fraser (2005), in relation to public sphere theory, points to the “ideals” posited in the original theory and questions their applicability in the current milieu: “In [public sphere] theory ... a public sphere is supposed to be a vehicle for mobilizing public opinion as a political force. It should empower the citizenry vis-à-vis private powers and permit it to exercise influence over the state” (Fraser 2005: 1). As she convincingly argues, a number of structural changes in the current global conjuncture challenge the foundations of public sphere theory.

Fraser’s observations provide various points from which to approach the Turkish case: state sovereignty is no longer unified in a single institutional locus and sovereignty is disaggregated; nationally-based production has become a fiction due to the globalisation of economies and financial markets; what characterised the subject of public sphere communication, the national citizenry, has substantially changed (due to multiculturalism and transnational flows); public sphere theory’s presupposition of a single national language, the linguistic medium of public-sphere communication, no longer maps onto the state; literature, the medium for the formation of national identity, is undermined by the rise of visual culture; and, finally, communication infrastructures are denationalised (*ibid.*). In the new shape which the social power geometry has taken in Turkey with the de-scaling of the state in the economic domain, the rise to political influence of an expanding private sector, continuing influence of the military, and the splitting into sphericules of the once homogenously envisioned public (and public sphere), the centres of gravity have shifted. Here the media, in addition to providing a communicative arena, albeit polarised, serve as keystones to the geometry by way of power brokering.

To sum up, the mediated public sphere in Turkey via the communicative space enabled through the mainstream media is characterised by polarisation, a deep relationship (based upon common interests) between the media owners and state and business élites, and journalists’ own political agendas. The forms of extremism prevalent in the public domain (Islamism and national-

ism/ultra-nationalism, in particular) could also be attributed to a decades-long failure by the politics of both the centre-right and left to provide acceptable standards of living, to respond to the needs of a politically and culturally diverse public, and to alleviate state corruption. This has led to a process of soul-searching within certain factions of Turkish society, and formerly marginalised extremisms such as ultra-Islamism and nationalism have managed to mobilise conservative political agendas and find resonance in the national public sphere. Mainstream media did not respond well in this process. Rather than providing a much-needed public forum based on quality journalism, the media responded pragmatically by conforming to the new sentiments and the political agendas of those new power nodes and did so at the cost of corroding their own prestige and credibility. Nonetheless, it is important to note that there was an unmistakable increase in diversity following the liberalisation of the media sector. In Turkey, there are multiple communicative spaces and networks operating through multiple outlets, public spaces, and political communities – territorially contained or transnationally connected. Conceiving of a contemporary public sphere theory that captures the current picture more accurately necessitates understanding of public sphere (simultaneously) as a post-national site comprised of interlinked multiple communicative spaces and networks,¹² and as a historically and socially specific formation containing and generating national discourses.

Notes

1. Interviews were conducted between January and March 2008, with Andrew Finkel (freelance correspondent, columnist for *Today's Zaman*); Haluk Sahin (*Radikal* columnist, Press Council Supreme Board member); Alper Gormus (former editor-in-chief of *Nokta*); Ertugrul Kurkcu (editor-in-chief of online BIA-Net [Independent Communication Network]); Erol Onderoglu (BIA-net columnist, legal advisor); Karin Karakasli (*Agos*, columnist); Etyen Mahcupyan (editor-in-chief of *Agos*; columnist for *Taraf* and *Zaman*).
2. Of course, not necessarily a conceded or welcome patriarchy on the part of the public/s, but nonetheless present by way of being engraved in the urban landscape (statues, monuments, etc.), orchestrated in the public domain during national ceremonies, invoked by the mainstream and nationalist media, and, at times, imposed through legal sanctions.
3. And by this I mean not a geographically demarcated territory, but one that takes into account both externally imposed *and* self-imagined versions of such territoriality, interacting dialogically through a complex web of transnational communicative spaces. While in the conservative communicative spaces of Europe the territorial (geo-political and cultural) confines of Turkey are automatically conferred exteriority, such European disavowal is countered by a national public imaginary that relocates Turkey – all the way back to the Ottoman times – not only as *belonging* to Europe but as having actively *co-produced* Europe through centuries of presence therein. On the other side of the national spectrum there are those social/political factions (radical Islamist and ultra-nationalist primarily) who react to European exclusionist discourses by promoting a self-exclusionist discourse that locates Turkey in the Islamic world or aspires to revive its Central Asian roots. It should also be noted that temporally and spatially contingent particularities in a given geo-political and linguistic context (in this case, Turkey) may precede, run parallel to, or even succeed nation-state generated practices, institutional structures, and ideologies/social imaginaries. There are also distinctive features,

- or what Nilufer Gole labels “homegrown practices and idioms” adopted by each distinct nation-state building project producing differentiated notions of “public” and “private” and distinct subjectivities.
4. See Aksoy and Sahin (1993), Oncu (1995, 2000, 2004), Christensen (2004).
 5. Accession negotiations started in 2005.
 6. See http://www.bianet.org/index_eng_root.htm for information on this independent journalism and public education initiative.
 7. In this article, Finkel interpreted Ocalan’s flight to Europe as a sign of the PKK’s weakness rather than as evidence that he enjoyed European support, which was the common reaction to the issue at the time. Finkel further commented that what Turkey really needed was to recover the damage to its democratic institutions resulting from years of fighting the PKK; the PKK was a lesser threat in comparison, he said. He was dismissed from *Sabah* the next day, and the paper’s principal rival, *Hurriyet*, started attacking his coverage of the Ocalan incident on CNN (Finkel, 2000).
 8. Although lawsuits were pursued against numerous people (primarily journalists and writers), the charges were dropped and no one was convicted, making Hrant Dink the first, and further, leading him – and others – to question against whom and under what circumstances the legal scope is operationalised.
 9. In 2007, when the then foreign minister in the AKP government, Abdullah Gul, was nominated to be President, there were public protests against having a president with an Islamist profile. A number of public rallies (with hundreds of thousands participants) were arranged in cities to protest the decision. It was suggested by some media outlets that the rallies were orchestrated and the public was provoked by the Military against the current government.
 10. Religion took on a particular role and courses on religion were made compulsory at schools after the 1980 coup. The discursive space that opened up as a result of this “tactical” encouragement of religion by the state/military dictate helped open the floodgates for the eventual rise of political Islam, which, ironically, was a most unwelcome intervention for the military/state elite.
 11. See Calhoun (2000) for a detailed discussion of this question.
 12. See Habermas (1996) and Baker (2003).

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Chapter 11

Minorities, The Process of European Union Integration, and the Minority Media in Turkey

Yonca Ermutlu

Turkey enjoyed a relatively successful process of modernisation from the 1920s onwards in a rapid transformation from a multinational, multilingual, religion-based empire into a secular nation-state. Nevertheless, as Keyman and Öniş argue, although the state-centric, top-down reforms of early modern Turkish history established the basis for a modern nation-state based on secularism, parliamentary democracy, positive law, and citizenship, the nation's leaders failed to secure language rights and other democratic principles necessary for a multicultural society (2007: 9). Keyman and Öniş claim that this democracy deficit is the main reason behind the crisis of modernity in contemporary Turkey, a deficit that manifests itself through the resurgence of Islam and the descent of some Kurdish independence groups into terrorism (Keyman and Öniş 2007: 17). According to Baskın Oran, Turkey's current integration process into the European Union (EU) can be seen as a second wave of westernisation that builds upon the linguistically, ethnically, and culturally homogenising Kemalist Revolution of the 1920s (2007b).

In 1999, the European Union recognised Turkey as an official candidate state at the Helsinki European Council under the condition that it fulfils the Copenhagen criteria by the end of 2004. In particular, Turkey was required to address the stability of those institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and the respect for and the protection of minorities before the candidacy process could even begin. Amongst the many reforms leading to Europeanisation, the problem of minorities has proved to be the most challenging. In Turkey, minority politics is not only about recognising some citizens as members of a minority group, but also it is about fear of segregation, territorial integrity, terrorism, cultural identity, human rights, freedom of speech, and democracy. The EU candidacy process brought all of these important issues, which Turkey had previously avoided, directly into the Turkish public sphere as well as into the European public spheres. In the EU it has led to intense discussions as to whether it is appropriate for Turkey to be accepted into the union at all (Koenig et al. 2006; Aissaoui 2007).

This chapter considers the differing perspectives on minority groups and minority media in Turkey vis-à-vis the EU. The main focus is on the changes that have affected the use of minority languages in the media in Turkey due to the EU accession process. The chapter provides a partial mapping of the existing minority media in contemporary Turkey.¹ In addition to material from secondary sources, it draws upon information from interviews with representatives from the minority media conducted in the autumn of 2006 in Istanbul.

The discussion begins with some background to the ethnic and religious minorities in Turkey. In order to answer the question of “who are the minorities in Turkey”, the meaning of the term “minority” will first be placed within a historical framework and next, current research on representations of other cultural identities in the national press will be introduced, followed, after a brief description of the general media landscape, by a description of the existing minority media landscape in Turkey with reference to recent legal changes due to the EU accession process. Additionally, this second part will discuss the importance of having alternative means through which minorities can attempt to make themselves heard in an otherwise restrictive conventional media environment. The third and final part focuses on EU requirements for human rights and the protection of minorities, before offering the reader the different perspectives held by Turkey and the EU on the issue of minorities.

Minorities in a Turkish Context

The ideology of a unified, homogeneous nation-state is one of the fundamental principles of the current Turkish state. This makes it problematic, and even unacceptable, to mention minorities in an official way. Today, when the term “minority” is used in Turkey, it has to be kept in mind that for historical reasons the term has a specific official meaning, one that refers to non-Muslim communities only that were historically seen as a threat to state unity.

Due to this historical baggage, some of the population in Turkey, such as some members of the Roma, Kurds, and Alevi people,² do not wish to be called or defined as minorities.³ They tend to take the term “minority” as an insult and a threat to their full citizenship. Instead, they consider themselves to be part of the indigenous population and a founding nation of the Turkish Republic. However, none of the so-called minority groups is homogenous; for instance, some Alevis seek specific religious minority rights from the state, whilst some Kurds ask for cultural, linguistic, and political minority rights such as the right to produce their own media, the right to education in their mother tongue, and territorial autonomy. Whereas some groups deny being minorities, others struggle to be officially recognised.

The debate as to whether some sections of Turkish society form minority groups has been fuelled by the European Union accession process over the last several years. On the one hand, Turkey insists that everyone who is a Turkish citizen is Turkish, regardless of religious, linguistic, or ethnic background. On

the other hand, the EU wants Turkey to recognise all of its minority groups, especially the Kurds and Alevis, and provide them with protection and minority rights. This requires that Turkey make a fundamental change in its monolithic approach to its cultural and religious diversity and reconsider the definition of the term minority.

Historically, the Ottoman Empire (1299-1923) was based on a *millet* system that identified membership in a particular religious group. Under this system, minorities enjoyed self-rule with little interference from the Ottoman government. *Millets* established their own laws and collected and distributed their own taxes while being loyal to the sultan. The rest of the Ottoman population was considered to be a single *millet* ("*Millet-i Hakime*", the dominant millet) gathered under Islam independent of ethnic background, mother tongue, or the particular Islamic tradition to which they belonged.⁴

In 1923 the Turkish Republic was established on the legacy of the multinational Ottoman Empire. The 600-year-old Ottoman Empire lost 85 per cent of its territory and 75 per cent of its population within a period of only fifty years, between 1870 and 1920 (Mahçupyan 2004). The remaining population consisted of indigenous Anatolians and a mixture of immigrants, many of whom had been driven from their homes in the violent breakup of the Empire. During this period, both Muslim and non-Muslim parts of the Ottoman Empire declared their independence. Some groups became the enemy by allying themselves with other states, such as Armenians with Russia and France, or Greeks with Greece and the United Kingdom. The massive forced migrations of Armenians in Eastern Anatolia in 1915,⁵ where most of the Ottoman Armenians perished, the exchange of people between Greece and Turkey in 1923 based on the Treaty of Lausanne,⁶ and the deportation of Istanbul's Greeks in 1964 can all be interpreted as consequences of this paranoia. The trauma of disintegration and suspicion of non-Muslim groups persists today and is reflected in government policy towards minorities (Oran 2004).

The Treaty of Lausanne is the founding Treaty of the Republic of Turkey. It defines minorities on the basis of religion. This treaty is still in force and is the key document that both determines that non-Muslims are the national minorities of Turkey and that obligates Turkey to protect its minorities. The Treaty of Lausanne gives non-Muslim national minorities such important rights as the same civil and political rights as Muslims, equality before the law, the right to use freely any language in private intercourse, commerce, religion, the press, or publications of any kind or at public meetings. It grants to all Turkish nationals of non-Turkish speech the right to use their own language before the Courts (Treaty of Lausanne 1923). However, the implementation of these rights did not truly succeed in the subsequent development of the new nation state.

After the disintegration of the Empire, the leaders of the new republic endeavoured to unify the country culturally and linguistically by applying the then prominent European nation state ideologies. The new Turkish state was established on the ideology of one nation, one language, and one religion, in line with French Republican ideology. Yet in the Treaty of Lausanne, as Dilek Kurban

explains, the founders "...were practically compelled by the Western powers to grant minority status to Turkey's non-Muslim population" (Kurban 2006: 343). In the meantime, the rest of the population were defined as "Turks" and had to go through a strong Turkification process. According to Kurban, "inherent in this dichotomous legal regime was a trade-off between minority status and full citizenship: non-Muslims have had to pay the high price of 'second-class citizenship' in return for the minority rights they have been accorded, and various ethnic groups have been compelled into an implicit agreement to suppress their cultural differences in return for 'full citizenship'" (Kurban 2006: 343).

Today there are certain standards for minority group rights in several international agreements and conventions.⁷ According to these standards, a minority group is based on objective criteria rather than relying on a national government or a constitution that states who is and who is not a minority (Kaya and Baldwin 2004). In 1979, the U.N. Special Rapporteur for the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Francesco Capotorti, defined a minority from an objective, legal point of view as a non-dominant people who possess ethnic, religious, or linguistic characteristics differing from those of the rest of the population, being fewer in number, and being a citizen of the state of residence. Capotorti added to his definition a subjective criterion whereby minorities are people who have a sense of solidarity vis-à-vis preserving their culture, traditions, religion, or language (Capotorti, cited in Çavuşoğlu 2005: 189). High Commissioner Max van der Stoep's definition of minority (1994) includes both objective and subjective criteria:

The existence of a minority is a question of fact and not of definition. First of all, a minority is a group with linguistic, ethnic or cultural characteristics, which distinguish it from the majority. Secondly, a minority is a group which usually not only seeks to maintain its identity but also tries to give stronger expression to that identity.⁸

If these international definitions are taken as a reference point, the following three broad minority groups emerge in Turkey:

a) Non-Muslim groups: In accordance with the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey officially recognises only non-Muslim groups as national minorities. However, in violation of the Treaty, it only recognises Armenians, Greeks, and Jews, excluding other non-Muslim minorities, such as Assyrians, Chaldeans, Bulgarian Orthodox Christians, Yazidi, and Maroni. The number of non-Muslims in Turkey has decreased drastically over the years due to a number of specific events and policies (Güven 2005; Aydın 2005a; Yumul 2005; Dündar 1999). Amongst non-Islamic groups, Armenians, Greeks, and Jews enjoy certain national minority rights such as having their own schools, newspapers, cultural, and religious rights. Nevertheless, full rights as guaranteed by the Treaty of Lausanne have not been met and legally these groups have been treated as aliens in their own country. Examples of discriminatory activities include the military conscription of non-Muslims liv-

ing in Istanbul in 1941; a disproportionate wealth tax levied on non-Muslims in 1942; systematic confiscation of properties belonging to community foundations of non-Muslims after a High Court judgement in 1974 (Oran 2004; Yumul 2005; Kurban 2006), all in addition to violent pogroms conducted against non-Muslims in 1934 and in 1955 (Kurban 2006; Güven 2005).

b) Muslim groups of a different ethnic origin: Turkey does not recognise as minorities other Muslim groups, who ethnically do not identify themselves as Turks or do not speak Turkish as a mother tongue. These include the Abkhaz, Albanian, Arab, Bosnian, Circassian, Laz, Persian, Tatar, Chechen, Uzbek, Lezgi, Kirghiz, and Kurds. As mentioned above, some of these peoples migrated to the Ottoman Empire around the beginning of the nineteenth century. They either fled from war in their homeland (for example, Caucasians fleeing the Russians), or the Ottoman rulers resettled populations as a tool in their different wars against disintegration (as happened with the Circassians). Today, according to interviews Suavi Aydın conducted in 2005, – some of these people, when asked, express gratitude to the Ottoman Empire for providing them a new home; they see themselves as founding members of the Republic of Turkey based on their services in the war of independence (Aydın 2005a). On the other hand, there are Muslim people, such as some Kurds, who do not wish to deny their own identities, who reject being called Turks, and who claim minority rights.

*c) Other Muslim groups:*⁹ Other groups that Turkey does not recognise as minorities are the non-Sunni Muslims such as the Alevis, Caferis, Nusayri, and Bektaşî (Kurban 2003).¹⁰ These distinctive forms of Islam permeate through ethnicities but, as a secular country, Turkey recognises the Sunni-Hanefi sect of Islam as the official religion of the country.

Minorities in the Mainstream Media

The nationalism that prevails in Turkey's mainstream media generally excludes the country's ethnic groups. In fact, the mainstream media firms seem to have internalised the discourses of the nation-state by promoting one language, one people, and one nation.

According to studies of Kurds in the Turkish national press (Sezgin and Wall 2005) and of nationalism (Yumul and Özkırmımlı 2000), the Turkish press takes nationalism for granted without even questioning its legitimacy. According to Arus Yumul and Umut Özkırmımlı (2000), the daily press is constantly re-defining the nation through internal and external enemies. According to Michael Billig (1995), this reinforces "banal nationalism" by maintaining that the nation is the source of all political and social power, and loyalty to the nation overrides all other allegiances.

Banal nationalism, states Billig (1995), refers to national identities being rooted within a powerful social structure, which reproduces hegemonic relations of

inequity. He argues that nationhood is reproduced constantly through such banal symbols as flags, national colours, or the small words that daily newspapers and politicians use such as “we”, “us”, “ourselves”, and “here”. Billig calls this the “flagging of nationhood”; through small, everyday, banal things a textual flag of the nation is created. Referring specifically to the national press, Billig shows how an implied togetherness is created: “The newspaper addresses ‘us’, its readers, as if ‘we’ are all nationals of the same state: it tells ‘us’ of ‘home’ news” (1995: 175). Yumul and Özkırımlı support Billig through their survey of 38 Turkish newspapers on a randomly selected day. They conclude that Turkish newspapers are literally full of nationalist discourse. However, Yumul and Özkırımlı are also aware that as long as there is no alternative political organisation to a state, nationalist discourses will prevail (Yumul and Özkırımlı 2000).

Dilara Sezgin and Melissa A. Wall concluded their content analysis on “*Constructing the Kurds in the Turkish Press*” with a grim picture in which “coverage has been discriminatory towards Kurds and used a degrading tone in describing them. It suggests that their culture is not worthy of respect and even constructed an image that it is arguable whether their language and culture are real entities” (2005: 795). Representation of ethnic communities in a suspicious and degrading manner, with “them” being different from “us”, has long been a focus of research in media studies. Downing and Husband confirm that the media can “act as vehicles of the majority ethnic communities’ self-interested hegemonic program” (2005: 194); they suggest that the minority media may enable minorities to reproduce and preserve their own culture and cohesiveness.

When the majority media insist on promoting stereotypes and representing minorities as others, it becomes important for minority groups to have their own media to create opportunities for self-representation and to keep their culture and language alive. However, most minorities do not have the legal rights or resources to start and maintain their own media. Tom Moring and Charles Husband argue in their chapter in this volume that in order to guarantee a viable representation of cultural diversity, the state must take an active role in supporting the infrastructure of production and distribution in addition to providing a legislative framework that guarantees minority rights.

The following sections will give a general picture of the situation of the minority media in Turkey from both a legal and a practical perspective. Before mapping out the minority media in Turkey, it is necessary to give an overview of the national media landscape. For reasons of space, this overview will not deal with current market forces or other national and international dynamics that also affect the media sector in Turkey.

An Overview of the Media Landscape in Turkey

The population of Turkey is around 72 million. According to Ruken Barış, the total number of newspapers currently circulating in Turkey is estimated to be 2,124. Of these newspapers, 40 are national; 23, regional; and 2,061, local

(Bariş 2006). The national press is commercial; there are no direct subsidies from the state to support national newspapers. Local newspapers, to a certain degree, depend on the income they receive from government advertisements; however, in principle, they are independent.

The state-owned Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) was established in 1964. TRT legally held the monopoly on broadcasting as a public service company until 1994. The monopoly nearly came to an end when developments in telecommunications technology at the beginning of the 1990s made it possible for the first private commercial television channel STAR 1 to begin broadcasting via satellite to Turkey from Germany. Within a few years there were some 100 local commercial television channels and 500 local radio channels broadcasting without licenses. According to Bariş, in theory, the channels broadcasting from abroad were not breaching the law that banned broadcasting from Turkey by private agents. Finally, in 1993, the parliament lifted the monopoly on television and radio broadcasting by amending the related article in the Constitution. Following the constitutional amendment, a new Broadcasting Law came into force in April 1994. At present, there are 24 national, 16 regional, and 215 local television stations (Bariş 2006). The period of broadcasting via satellite from Germany brought some crucial social problems, such as the Kurdish issue, the Alevi issue, and homosexuality, into the Turkish public forum for the first time. Television stations broadcasting in Kurdish via satellite from neighbouring countries and Europe also started during the first half of the 1990s.

Bariş states that there are approximately 1,100 private radio channels currently broadcasting in Turkey. There are 36 national, 102 regional, and 950 local radio stations. TRT has four national radio channels and ten regional radio stations. In addition TRT's international radio service Türkiye'nin Sesi / The Voice of Turkey broadcasts in 26 languages (Bariş 2006).

As the number of channels and newspapers listed above indicates, the local media in Turkey are plentiful. Those citizens with alternative political inclinations and ethnic groups have found a voice through private, mostly local, newspapers and magazines (mostly in Turkish due to language restrictions). However, owing to legal restrictions it was not possible for non-governmental organizations, associations, foundations, and ethnic groups to establish radio and television channels before 2004. Now, due to the European Union accession process, the Radio and television Supreme Council (RTÜK) has made new legal adjustments that allow broadcasting in other languages.

Mapping of the Minority Media in Turkey

a) The Media of National Minorities

In the mid-nineteenth century, multilingualism became increasingly important, both in everyday life and in official matters, in the Ottoman Empire. The Em-

pire was already shifting towards a modern state model in which citizenship was gradually replacing the concept of the subject. The first official newspaper of the Ottoman Empire, *Takvim-i Vekayi*, was first published in 1832 in five languages: French, Arabic, Persian, Greek, and Armenian. Between 1832 and 1922, for example, in Istanbul alone there were 442 publications in Armenian or Turkish written in the Armenian alphabet (Köker 2005). Most regional papers were published in at least in two languages according to the languages spoken in their area. In 1869 in Diyarbakır, for instance, the official newspaper *Diyarbakir Vilayet Gazetesi* (*The Diyarbakir Regional Newspaper*) published 1,500 copies weekly in Turkish and 500 copies in Armenian. There were also plans to publish it in Arabic (Atalay 2006). According to Talip Atalay, who has conducted a content analysis of *Diyarbakir Vilayet Gazetesi*, Armenians were depicted as normal Ottoman citizens: tailors, weavers, ironsmiths, goldsmiths, doctors, pharmacists, villagers, and criminals (Atalay 2006). Other common languages in the printed press at the end of the nineteenth century were Greek, Jewish (Judeo-Latino or Ladino), Arabic, French, and Italian along with Armenian and Ottoman Turkish.

Today the situation is rather different. There are very few minority newspapers left, and all are based in Istanbul. The officially recognised minorities in Turkey – the Greek, Armenian, and Jewish populations – have newspapers in their mother tongues. These are the dailies in Greek, *Iho* and *Apoyevmatini*; the Jewish weekly *Shalom* in Ladino and Turkish; the Armenian language dailies *Jamanak* and *Nor Marmara* and the weekly *Agos* in Turkish and Armenian. In 2006, the bilingual *Agos* had the largest circulation, with 6,000 copies per week.¹¹ Other newspapers were printed daily with between circa 500 – 1,500 copies. The potential readership for these publications is estimated to be 4,000 Greeks, 25,000 Jews, and 50,000 Armenians.¹² The decreasing populations of national minorities seem to be the main influence in the lessening number of national minority language newspapers since the formation of the Republic of Turkey. In Mustafa Ünlü's documentary film *The Old Town's Newsmen* (2006), the editor in chief of *Apoyevmatini*, Mihail Vasiliadis, says that *Apoyevmatini*'s circulation has dropped to 400 copies a day whereas during the 1920s and 1930s, it was the highest selling daily in Istanbul when the population of Greeks in Turkey was estimated to be 300,000.

In addition, the newspapers *Shalom*, *Nor Marmara*, and *Agos* have Internet pages, making them available to wider national and transnational audiences. For instance, the websites Bolsohays, Hye-Tert, and Lraper¹³ provide news and discussion forums for Armenians in Turkey and across the world. The Internet has become an important space for minorities, enabling them to create transnational links and forums.

According to their editors (Dink 2006; Vasiliadis 2004; Levi 2004; Haddeler 2004), the main problem for national minority newspapers, apart from limited readership, is financial, because there are no official subsidies for minority media in Turkey. These newspapers are not even supported by official state advertisements which are the main source of income for other local newspa-

pers. The Greek-language *Apoyevmatini* came close to closing down many times: at one point only 80 copies were being printed a day, distributed door to door by the newspaper editor himself (Şahin 2006). The editor-in-chief and founder of *Agos*, Hrant Dink jokingly remarked that “minority papers survive on mainly the money they get from the obituaries” (Dink 2006). Dink estimated in 2006 that *Agos* had about 1,000 Turkish readers in Turkey; about 2,000 copies were posted to people in the Armenian Diaspora, and 3,000 were distributed to subscribers and to newsstands in Istanbul.

The owner of *Nor Marmara*, Rober Haddeler (2004), gives several reasons for the decline in his readers. He says that most of the young people today do not know Armenian well enough to read it. Additionally, it is not easy to find journalists who can write well in Armenian. He says the young people prefer to follow the Turkish media and, since *Nor Marmara* cannot compete with the rich and diverse Turkish offerings, the younger generation seeking popular culture does not subscribe. Haddeler does not see an immediate solution to this problem, but he strongly believes that a newspaper like *Nor Marmara* will continue to be published in Turkey. He says that the people in the Armenian Diaspora remain interested in Turkey, and he believes that *Nor Marmara* provides a bridge between Turkey and the Armenian Diaspora.

Sbalom is the only newspaper in Judeo-Spanish (Ladino). Today the newspaper has only 16 pages, of which only one page is in Judeo-Spanish. The editor, Tilda Levi, says that the paper’s language gradually became Turkish as people started using Turkish more and more in their daily lives. Today, most young people do not speak Judeo-Spanish, and it is one of the world’s endangered languages (Levi 2004).

According to Etyen Mahçupyan, a prominent Turkish-Armenian journalist, the younger generation is much more comfortable using Turkish than their mother tongue. Mahçupyan himself writes his newspaper articles in Turkish and not in his mother tongue although he is equally fluent in both languages, and says that the language he writes in presents no problem for him (Mahçupyan 2006). For Mahçupyan, language is only a tool; the content and the act of communication are more important. Clearly, the younger generation use Turkish as their first and strongest language; as Hrant Dink explained: “they somehow learn their mother tongue in the family and in the school; however, they don’t have much chance to use it in their everyday lives, other than at home and in the church” (Dink 2006). Even in the office of the bilingual newspaper *Agos*, the main working language is Turkish.

Hrant Dink considers publishing in the Turkish language besides Armenian to be necessary in order to reach the larger audience, the Turkish-speaking people (Dink 2006). The aim of *Agos* according to him is to contribute to society by bringing out the perspectives, arguments, and experiences of the Armenian people of Turkey.¹⁴

b) Broadcasting in Local Languages

The use of local languages other than Turkish in the media was prohibited until relatively recently. As has been demonstrated, nation-state ideology together with minority and language policies prevented the development of media in local languages apart from those of recognised national minorities. Özlem Eraydın Virtanen, a researcher of language policy, states that although the Law on Publications and Broadcasts in Languages other than Turkish (Law No. 2932, adopted in 1983) was annulled in 1991 and publishing in non-official languages became legal, the constitutional basis for such prohibitions remained. The Political Parties Law, the Law on the Founding and Broadcasts of Television and Radio, the Foreign Language Education and Teaching Law, the Law on Fundamental Provisions of Elections and Voter Registries, and the Provincial Administration Law all include articles restricting the use of non-official languages (Eraydın Virtanen 2003: 23).

Senem Aydın Düzgit (2006), who criticises the EU for failing to respect the principles of equal treatment in its relations with Turkey, claims that Turkey undertook substantial democratic reforms to fulfil the requirements of the EU between 1999 and 2005. In October 2004, the European Commission concluded that Turkey had sufficiently fulfilled the Copenhagen political criteria. Indeed, with regard to language policy, in October 2001, two important articles prohibiting the use of non-official languages in publications and in the expression and dissemination of thought were deleted from the Constitution (Eraydın Virtanen 2003).

In 2002, an adjustment to Law No. 3984, the Law on the Establishment and Broadcasting of Radio and Television, enabled non-official languages to be used in broadcasting. However, it was only the state-owned Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) that could produce these programmes initially; the programmes could only be for adults and had to concern either news, music, or culture. There could be no broadcasting for children or to promote the teaching of non-official languages. There were also restrictions on the duration of the programmes: 45 minutes per day for radio and a total of four hours per week; for television, 30 minutes per day with no more than two hours per week. Television broadcasts had to be accompanied by subtitles and radio programmes had to be followed by a Turkish translation. However, broadcasting did not start in 2002 because TRT and the Radio and TV Supreme Council (RTÜK) fell into a dispute over the regulations requiring an adjustment to Law No. 3984. Finally, on 7 June 2004, TRT launched the programme called “Our Cultural Richness”, which is still broadcast both on television (each weekday between 10:30 – 11:00 a.m. on TRT-3) and radio (each weekday at 06:10 a.m. for 35 minutes on TRT-Radio 1) in Arabic, Bosnian, Circassian, and two dialects of Kurdish, Kurmanji and Zazaki (Timisi 2005).

According to Nilüfer Timisi (2005), in 2004 the use of minority languages in the media still suffered considerable restrictions, particularly in the private sector and in representing the variety of languages spoken in the country,

because the new law required private channels to apply for permission from the Radio and TV Supreme Council. In March 2004, Gün TV in Diyarbakır applied for permission to broadcast in Kurmanji. Once the station had struggled through the bureaucratic obstacles and various restrictions for about two years, television programmes began being heard in Kurmanji on 24 March 2006 (the 45-minute programme *Dergûşa Çande* – “Cradle of Culture” – is broadcast on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 21:00). In addition to Gün TV, there are three other private local companies that broadcast in Kurdish: Söz TV in Diyarbakır, Medya FM in Urfa, and as of 2007, Çağrı FM in Diyarbakır.

The former executive editor of Gün TV, Cemal Doğan, in an interview given to *express* magazine (Doğan 2006a), explained the difficulties in implementing the legal procedures. According to Doğan, there is a big gap between the new media legislation and the will of state organs to apply it. The changes in legislation face resistance from different sectors of society, including state bureaucrats.

Doğan listed some of the restrictions in making programmes under the current legislation:

- Local radio and television stations cannot produce language programmes that teach Kurmanji and Zazaki.
- The stations are not allowed to make children’s programmes.
- Radio stations can be on air for a maximum of 60 minutes a day and five hours a week.
- Television stations can broadcast 45 minutes a day, four hours a week.
- All programmes must be translated into Turkish or be subtitled.

Doğan stated that because of the obligation to provide translations, it is impossible to broadcast a live programme (Doğan 2006b).

These restrictions breach international standards guaranteeing freedom of expression as a fundamental right of every individual. For example, the guidelines of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) on the use of Minority Languages in the Broadcast Media (2003) recommend, in Article 12, that minority language broadcasting should not be subject to the imposition of undue or disproportionate requirements for translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation, or subtitling. Moreover, Article 17 of the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child state that children have the right to reliable information in the mass media and that the state should “encourage the mass media to have particular regard to the linguistic needs of the child who belongs to a minority group or who is indigenous” (November 1989).

c) Alternative Ways of Being Seen and Heard

There are alternatives to conventional media for minorities to make their voices heard and to become visible. As telecommunications technologies and personal computers become less expensive, and reach wider popula-

tions, the number of Internet sites, personal web-blogs, and web-based radio programmes make communication increasingly transnational. In the case of the minorities in Turkey, it is already possible to find many Internet sites in such languages as Laz, Circassian, Assyrian, Tatar, Albanian, and Kurdish. The dominant characteristics of these sites are that they are mostly transnational and multilingual, although a few of them are only in Turkish. If we consider the Kurdish language, for instance, it is possible to find numerous Internet sites emanating from many different countries dedicated to Kurdish issues. Established Kurdish newspapers with discussion forums such as *Dema Nû* and *Azadiya Welat* and newspapers dedicated to Kurdish issues in Turkish such as *Yeni Özgür Politika* and *Toplumsal Demokrasi* are all available on the World Wide Web. There have been three Kurdish news agencies operating through the Internet: *Dicle Haber Ajansı* (DIHA), *Fırat News Agency* (ANF) and *Mesopotamian News Agency* (MHA). The last was first based in Germany, but it was closed down by the German authorities upon complaints from the Turkish state that the news provider was a mouthpiece for the Kurdish terrorist organisation PKK.

National and cultural minorities in Turkey are very active as members of cultural associations that publish newsletters and magazines in Turkish. The main purpose of these magazines is to preserve the cultural identities of association members. In the case of the Circassians, there are numerous cultural associations; for example, one of the best Circassian dance companies in the world (The Istanbul Kafkas Dance Company) is situated in Istanbul. In the case of the Armenians, there are numerous choirs; Mahçupyan observes that “if you take 100 Armenians, 70 of them are probably singers and 50 of them are theatre artists” (2006). The Alevis and Kurds are also known for their strong folk music and dance traditions. The Laz people started campaigning for the survival of their language through using it in music, while an increasing number of recorded Ladino songs are helping to preserve what was a dying language. The folk music ensemble of the University of the Bosphorus, “*Kardeş Türküler*”, collects, arranges, and performs songs of Anatolia in a variety of local languages such as Roma, Greek, Armenian, Circassia, and Arabic. In their concerts the group actively makes political statements promoting “unity in diversity”; indeed the name of the group translates as “Songs of Brotherhood”.

These alternative ways of expressing identities can be seen as a cultural dimension to the minority media. John Downing, who is the founder of *Our-Media*¹⁵ – a global network of activists, practitioners, and academics promoting alternative media and citizens’ journalism – says that we need to envision media that give room to imagination and feelings. In his opening speech at the Istanbul International Independent Media Forum, Downing stated that from graffiti to dance, the understanding of the media should be changed; it should be possible to find the details of life in the media (Istanbul, 3-5. 11.2006). Following John Downing’s ideas, one may claim that all expressive artistic activity also constitutes the media. After all, all kinds of communication are important for our self-understanding and identity. In that sense, alternative media in all

their forms fulfil the need for communication on a more casual basis, from daily life to political perspective.

The ethno-cultural activities, such as folkdance festivals, concerts, theatre and other activities, by marginalised groups can be criticized as creating a cultural zoo, and condemned for making themselves into an exotic product of the politics of multiculturalism by exhibiting their traditional culture through folk costumes and music. On the other hand, these activities can also be interpreted as a way of keeping the ethnic identities of these marginalised people alive by showing the rest of the population that they exist in all their vibrant difference. Ayhan Kaya and Turgut Tarhanlı argue that non-dominant groups of people, who cannot make their political, economic, and cultural problems heard through legitimate modes of participation tend to use cultural, ethnic, and religious discourses to make themselves heard from the margin in order to become visible within the public sphere (2006: 20). In that sense, the upsurge of multicultural festivals around Europe that celebrate cultural diversity through exotic folkloric performances begs the question of when it will be possible to see as much cultural diversity in the main stream media and the parliaments of the European Union countries as in these festivals.

Turkey, the EU Requirements for Human Rights and the Protection of Minorities

When minority rights are discussed within a European context, in general, what is meant are the basic human rights such as freedom of expression, the right to education in one's mother tongue, and equal rights for the disadvantaged of society. Cultural diversity and multilingualism have become important cornerstones of building the European Union in recent years, and the European Commission requires that the Union protect and promote the rights of minorities.¹⁶

However, the EU mainly recognises the national languages of the member states as the official languages of the Union and does not officially recognise many of the minority languages. The European Communication Policy – the White Paper – presented by the Commission of the European Communities in 2006, introduced the idea of creating a European public sphere through “Democracy, Debate and Dialogue”, which has been the basis also for a previous action plan called Plan D. Within this White Paper, citizens of Europe are invited to participate in the decision-making process through national and local discussions; they have freedom of speech; they are considered equal under the law regardless of their social and cultural backgrounds. However, the White Paper only addresses member states and their citizens through official languages from a supranational level, excluding minority languages and leaving the problem of minority issues and languages to the mercy of national governments. The inconsistent treatment of minorities in different EU countries and the lack of a clear definition of “national minority” lead to constant negotiation and political struggle between minority groups and majorities over who can be officially

recognised as a national minority and who can not. Senem Aydın Düzgit argues that the conflicting interpretations of the term “minority” in different member states of the EU gave Turkey reason to doubt the sincerity of the EU towards Turkey, especially when some member countries such as Greece and Latvia still do not comply with those requirements of the Copenhagen criteria that are being required of Turkey (Aydın Düzgit 2006).

In the Regular Report on Turkey’s Progress towards Accession, the EU required Turkey to broaden its minority policy to cover and respect the rights of all Turkish citizens (Commission of the European Communities, 2006). According to the last report published in 2006, Turkey had made little progress towards ensuring cultural diversity and promoting the respect for and the protection of minorities in accordance with international standards. Turkey was urgently asked to make reforms concerning the religious freedom of the Alevi, the education and property rights of the Syriacs and Greeks, the political rights of the Kurds, and cultural rights in general for all minority groups (ibid.) The report recommended that Turkey continue dialogue with the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in areas such as minority education, minority languages, the participation of minorities in public life, and broadcasting in minority languages (ibid.: 20).

Turkey has not yet signed the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities¹⁷ or the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of the Council of Europe for fear that extended minority rights will eventually accelerate separatist movements.

To Conclude: A Multicultural Nation-State?

If you are part of the majority, it is your language and culture which monopolizes public space and which is a precondition for access to jobs and professional advancement, and every important political decision is made in a forum in which you form a majority. If you are part of the minority, you are faced with political disempowerment (i.e., no important decisions are made in a forum where you are the majority), cultural marginalization and long-term assimilation. (Kymlicka 2003)

The nation-state ideology of Turkey in the 1920s aimed at modernising and secularising society and integrating people from diverse religious, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds into a common national identity. However, in the rapidly changing contemporary world, globalisation and internationalisation have brought new challenges to nation-states. Turkey, too, is searching for its place and its identity in a globalised world, and it is struggling with the problems of how to accommodate diversity within its borders. The EU is also trying to find solutions to the questions of cultural diversity, foreign labour, immigration, and refugees.

Will Kymlicka argues that in Western democracies, the minority issue is assessed in terms of justice. There is a trend towards accepting the legitimacy of minority nationalism and towards accommodating it through some form of territorial autonomy. By contrast, in the post-communist countries of Eastern and Central Europe, minorities are seen as a security problem, and minority nationalism is considered both illegitimate and a threat to territorial unity (Kymlicka 2003).

It could be argued that, in the case of Turkey, minority nationalism is also interpreted as a threat and thus is a security issue. The trauma of foreign interference and sovereignty, suspicion of its non-Muslim population, and fear of separatism have made Turkey's minority policy more a security issue than anything else. Ironically, instead of Turkey approaching a rights -and justice-oriented way of thinking about minorities, after the terrorist events of 9/11, London, and Madrid, the EU has begun to move towards the Turkish way of thinking by seeing Muslim groups and cultural diversity as a threat to national security. Citing examples from Europe and the USA, Isin and Turner claim that "Multiculturalism is in crisis, because most liberal governments are retreating from open commitment to cultural diversity, emphasizing instead security, cohesion and integration". (Isin and Turner 2007: 11).

The situation is such that in Turkey everybody wants full citizenship; at the same time at least some people want to preserve and enjoy their cultural, linguistic, religious, and traditional differences in addition to their Turkish citizenship. There are two theoretical questions to be addressed here. The first is whether a nation-state structure that idealises homogeneity can be frankly open to diversity and heterogeneity; the second, complementary question is, who belongs to the nation and who does not, since no nation in the world has so far managed to avoid cultural essentialism (Anderson 2001) and achieve full cosmopolitanism (Calhoun 2003, 2004). It seems that the terms *majority* and *minority* are merely political and functional terms derived from the birth of nation-states and useful so far in governing multi-ethnic nations by defining who has what rights (or who does not).

It may sound naïve or idealistic, but today, even though *minority* means having positive rights in Europe (Çavuşoğlu 2001), if one aspires to a truly multicultural society, these terms should be discarded. Instead, every group in a society should feel themselves to be an equal part of the system – equal participants able to participate fully in the public sphere without being discriminated against due to colour, religion, or language. As long as society is mired in the terminology of *majority* and *minority*, the very wording implies that there is a ruling majority with the right to make the rules for the rest of society. Instead, perhaps one could search for better structures than nation-states offer and better terms that would describe all groups as equal elements of society. Perhaps the increasing demands for minority rights in Europe and in countries around the world may lead to different models of governance for multi-ethnic societies in the future.

Yumlu and Özkırımlı (2000) argue that under present circumstances nationalistic discourses prevail under nation-state structures. Thus *minority*

becomes clearly a political term, in the sense that it functions as part of the political struggle to gain certain rights in present political structures. And to be realistic, if there is no change in nation-state structures in the years to come, it may be wise to continue struggling for minority rights as under the present circumstances. However, in the case of Turkey, for example, where *minority* is a negatively loaded term, finding another word may provide a neutral base for public debate. *Türkiyeli*, meaning being from Turkey, is one of the terms that has been suggested because it refers to being from the geographical area of Turkey. As Baskın Oran argues, *Türkiyeli* seems to make room for the multiple identities of Turkey and recognises everybody as belonging equally to the same country (2007a: 54-61). Nevertheless, just a change of term would not be sufficient unless it leads to a lively public debate that results in structural changes for a democratic, plural, and multicultural society and a reconsidering of the definitions of the terms minority, citizenship, and nation.

This chapter was intended to provide an understanding of the present situation of minority policies and the minority media in Turkey. To have equal access to public discussion and decision-making, people need to have equal rights and equal access to public spheres to make themselves heard. Democracy and freedom of speech are the cornerstones of equal access to public debate. Even though on its own, freedom of speech may not be enough – there has to be the will to listen to what is said as well as to participate in negotiation, or as Husband (1996) states, people need to have “the right to be understood” – freedom of speech is still the first step towards a pluralist democracy. In Turkey, there have been some positive steps taken towards democracy and freedom of speech. However, although changes in legislation may appear promising, in practice there is still much more to be done.

Notes

1. This study covers the media of national minorities, partly Kurdish media, and the broadcasting of TRT in local languages. Owing to lack of time and resources, it has not been possible to map out the media of other minority groups, religious minorities, and legal and illegal immigrants and refugees. Nevertheless, the case of the national minorities of Turkey, which are also referred to as Lausanne minorities, is very important in the Turkish context and can be seen as a key in the transformation of Turkey towards a more inclusive democracy.
2. Alevi is the name for the second largest Islamic denomination in Turkey, after Sunni-Hanefi.
3. Comments of some Alevis, Roma, and Kurds in newspapers; ‘*Aleviler’den AB’ye tepki: Azınlık değiliz’* (Reaction of Alevis to the EU: We are not Minorities) 2004 in Hürriyet Gazetesi, ‘*Edirne’li çingeneler: Azınlık değiliz’* (Gypsies of Edirne: We are not Minorities) 2005a in Milliyet Gazetesi, ‘*Kürtler’de değişmeli’* (Kurds should change, too) 2005b in Milliyet Gazetesi.
4. All were considered Ottoman subjects, only divided into “Millet-i Hakime”, the Muslim citizens, and “Millet-i Mahkume”, the dominated millets, i.e., the non-Muslim citizens. According to Über Ortaylı, the Ottoman millet system cannot be compared to minority nations in colonial empires or to federal structures. The Millet system protected the religious, if not cultural, identities of groups (Ortaylı, 2004). The non-Muslim millets of the Ottoman Empire were the Greek Orthodox (e.g., Serbian, Greek, Bulgarian, Rumanian, Jacobites), Armenian Gregorian

- (e.g., Armenians, Nestorians, Jacobites) Jewish (e.g., Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Karaite), Roman Catholic (e.g., the Lebanese Maronites, Melkit, Assyrians, Georgians, Armenians, Chaldeans, Copt Catholics, Catholic Jacobites), Protestants (ibid.).
5. The Armenian Diaspora and the Republic of Armenia regard the forced migration as genocide and campaign worldwide for it to be recognised as genocide. The Turkish state, on the other hand, insists that the forced migration was an act of protection, and it was not planned as genocide, but as a resettlement. This is an extremely sensitive political issue in international relations of Turkey with Armenia, some European countries, and the US. In Turkey, it has long been a taboo to talk and write about what happened to the Armenians in 1915. A few public figures have had the courage to talk about the genocide openly including the journalist Hrant Dink, who was murdered on 17.01.2007 by an ultra-nationalist young boy, and the Nobel prize winner Orhan Pamuk. Talking publicly about the genocide is considered insulting to Turkishness. Prior to his death, Hrant Dink was prosecuted three times on charges of “insulting Turkishness” under Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code. Orhan Pamuk was also taken to court by being charged with the same Law article and similar accusations.
 6. The Treaty of Lausanne was signed between Turkey and the Allied Powers (the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Greece, Romania, and the Serb-Croat-Slovene State) at the end of the Turkish independence war on 24 July 1923, 28 LNTS 11.
 7. The key texts that set out international minority rights standards are listed in Kaya and Baldwin (2004, 4) as The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, 1992; Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; The concluding document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE, now the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE] 1990); The General Recommendations of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities; The Council of Europe (CoE)’s Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, 1995.
 8. The High Commissioner’s keynote address on National Minorities at the opening of the OSCE Minorities Seminar in Warsaw in 1994; <http://www.osce.org/hcnm/13022.html>, webpage visited 07.05.2007.
 9. The media of other Muslim groups are not within the scope of this study; however, it should be mentioned here that there is a vivid and strong religious media environment in Turkey, for example, the newspaper *Zaman*, which is associated with the Islamic Fethullah school, is one of the biggest national dailies in the country.
 10. These are the four Shi’a schools. They differ from each other in their interpretation of the Shi’a denomination of Islam.
 11. *Agos* was printed in 35,000 copies on 26.01.2007 and distributed all around Turkey after its editor-in-chief Hrant Dink was killed on 17 January 2007.
 12. In addition to the number of Armenian people of Turkey, it is believed that there are approximately 15,000 Armenian guest workers in Turkey.
 13. Please see the reference list for the Internet addresses of these websites.
 14. ‘Armenians of Turkey’ are the indigenous Armenian population that lived in Anatolia for generations, whereas ‘Armenians in Turkey’ include also the Armenians that come from Armenia.
 15. <http://www.ourmedianet.org/>
 16. For example, see article 14 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, CETS no. 005 by the Council of Europe, <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/005.htm> (webpage visited 07.05.2007), and Articles 21-22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/human_rights/doc/charter_364_01en.pdf (webpage visited 07.05.2007).
 17. Andorra, France, Monaco, and Turkey are the only countries of the 47 member states and non-member states of the Council of Europe that have not signed the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

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Armenian

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 Bolsohays – İstanbul Armenians: <http://www.bolsohays.com/>
 HayClub-Forum – İstanbul Armenians: <http://www.hayclub.com/forum/default.asp>

HYE-TERT Istanbul Ermenilerine Haberler: <http://www.hyetert.com/anasayfa.asp>

Lraper: <http://lraper.org/main.aspx>

Marmara Daily: <http://www.normarmara.com/>

Organization of Istanbul Armenians of Los Angeles OIA: <http://www.oia.net/>

Assyrian

Süryaniler.Com: [http://www.suryaniler.com/İDEM – İstanbul Süryani Ortodoks Metropolitiği Haber ve Kültür Dergisi: <http://www.reyono.org/default.aspx?s=13>](http://www.suryaniler.com/İDEM – İstanbul Süryani Ortodoks Metropolitiği Haber ve Kültür Dergisi: http://www.reyono.org/default.aspx?s=13)

Circassian

Uzunyayla.com, interaktif kfkas portalı: <http://www.uzunyayla.com/>

Nartajans: <http://www.nartajans.net/nuke/>

Kafdağı internet portalı: <http://www.kafdagı.net/>

Waynakh Online: <http://www.waynakh.com/>

Crimean

Kırım Türkleri Kültür ve Yardımlaşma Derneği: <http://www.kirimdernegi.org/>

Georgian

Chveneburi.Net: <http://www.chveneburi.net/>

Jewish

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Kurdish

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Laz

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Lazuri.com: <http://www.lazuri.com/Notes>

Chapter 12

Challenges of Integrating Ethnic Minority into the Public Sphere

The Estonian Experience

Epp Lauk & Valeria Jakobson

Estonia is a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society, where besides the ethnic Estonian majority, representatives of about 120 nationalities reside.¹ European diversity policy expects ethnic minorities to participate in the national public sphere in various ways. Among other conditions, the Copenhagen Criteria require that any EU member state should have institutions that guarantee respect towards, and protection of, the interests of ethnic minorities. Through the Constitution, general laws and special legislation (such as the Cultural Autonomy Law 1993) and ratification of the Framework Convention for the Protection of Minorities in 1995, Estonia fulfilled the basic conditions of the Copenhagen Criteria and became a member state of the EU in 2004. The following year, however, a lack of dialogue between the minority and the majority via the media was identified by the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention, claiming that in Estonia “further efforts are needed to counter excessive division in the media environment between the media consumed by the majority population and that followed by the minority population” (Advisory Committee Summary 2005).

In Estonia, the Russophone² population constitutes the largest minority group (29 per cent in 2007) of whom 82 per cent are Russian whilst the remainder is made up of russified Ukrainians and Belorussians who use Russian as their everyday language. Other ethnic groups are much smaller, constituting less than four per cent of Estonia’s population (see Table 1).

As a result of the Soviet migration and national policy during the post-Second World War decades, two linguistically and culturally separated communities (Estonian speaking and Russian speaking) formed in Estonia, whose members had little in common. Furthermore, the first Citizenship Act in 1992 (a re-enactment of the 1938 Citizenship Law) divided the society into Estonian citizens and some 475,000 non-citizens who had settled in the country during the Soviet period. The division between citizens and non-citizens runs along ethnic lines: nearly all ethnic Estonians automatically became citizens, while in 1992-1993, 85 per cent of the Russophone population were non-citizens (Lauristin 2008: 55). The citizenship issue became a constant source of tensions during the ensuing years.

Table 1. Ethnic Structure of the Population of Estonia 1897-2007 (in percentages)

	1897	1922	1934	1959	1979	1989	1995	2000	2007
Estonians	90.6	87.7	88.2	74.6	64.7	61.5	64.2	67.9	68.6
Russians	4	8.2	8.2	20	27.9	30.3	28.7	25.6	25.6
Ukrainians	–	–	0.01	2.5	3	2.7	2.2	2.1	2.1
Belorussians	–	–	–	1.7	1.8	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.2
Germans	3.5	1.7	1.5	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
Finns	–	–	0.1	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8
Other									2.7

Sources: Ainsaar 1997; Estonian Encyclopedia XI; Estonian Human Development Report 2007.

Sociological surveys carried out in the 1990s, indicate the existence of a model of “two societies in one state”. Both Estonian and Western sociologists (e.g. Brubaker 1996; Kirch & Kirch 1995; Laitin 1996, 1998; Vihalemm 1999) have warned that, in the event that socio-political integration is not successful, this model might become dangerous for Estonia, both in terms of social stability and state security.

Preconditions for the advancement of integration include both effective communication between the majority and minority groups and unimpeded participation of all groups and individuals in the public sphere. In Estonia, the quality of communication has clearly been insufficient. Several institutions (the Presidential Round-Table on National Minorities, the Public Understanding Foundation and the Non-Estonians’ Integration Foundation) have been established for dealing with the problems of the ethnic minorities. Integration policy practices, however, have not been inclusive, and the Government has been avoiding mutual discussions. For example, during the first six years of its existence, the Government and Parliament did not consult the Presidential Round-Table (established in 1993) in the process of preparation, adoption or amendment of the laws concerning ethnic minorities. The first political statement on Estonian minority policy was issued only in 1998, seven years after independence. In this statement titled “Integrating Non-Estonians into Estonian Society: Setting the Course”, the Government defined integration as a central political goal and declared that a governmental programme for supporting the integration process would be developed and financed (Heidmets and Lauristin 2002).

In 2000, the Estonian Government adopted the state programme “Integration in Estonian Society 2000-2007” to function as a framework plan for governmental agencies and other institutions. The aim of this programme was to ease tensions between the two ethnic communities and to promote the formation of a common national political, social and cultural space. In reality, the results of this programme did not live up to expectations. According to a sociological survey conducted in the summer of 2007, 52 per cent of Estonians and 69 per cent of non-Estonians expressed their dissatisfaction with the official integration policy (Pettai 2007). On the other hand, other surveys reveal that a certain degree

of spontaneous integration is taking place. According to several criteria (such as living standards, cultural and political orientations, levels of consumption, etc.), majority and minority groups are gradually moving closer to each other (Lauristin and Vihalemm 2005).

The main deficiency of the 2000-2007 integration programme was the inadequate attention paid to the issues of legal-political and socio-economic integration. The programme emphasised Estonian-language teaching, but did not offer any elaborated communication strategy that would promote the involvement of non-Estonians in nationally important issues. Each communication act in the public sphere needs to overcome certain barriers. There are still a number of barriers that impede non-Estonians from full participation in the social, economic and political life of the Estonian Republic. An insufficient knowledge of the official Estonian language and problems with acquiring Estonian citizenship are the most frequently recognised issues, but a number of serious problems have also emerged in connection with mutual distrust, fears and prejudices of both ethnic groups about each other. Surveys reveal that only 13 per cent of Russophones believe that as an ethnic group they have a good reputation among Estonians. The majority (81 per cent) perceive themselves as “second-class” people and believe they have fewer rights than Estonians. Three-quarters of them fear that they are under threat of assimilation and will be forced to give up their native language and culture. Two-thirds of Estonians consider the Russophone population to be a danger to Estonian national durability (Pettai 2007). Therefore, the encouragement of dialogue between these two communities and the promotion of participation and active involvement in the public sphere of a large minority group remain as important as ever.

In this chapter, the opportunities for Russophones in Estonia to participate in the national public sphere and ways the media contribute to the dialogue between the majority and the minority groups will be discussed. Some historical and cultural issues concerning the emergence of the large Russophone community in Estonia will be addressed. Then the main channels of communication and the factors that determine the ways of communication between the two main linguistic communities will be outlined.

A Glimpse into History

The way the large Russophone community historically emerged largely explains the complicated nature of interethnic relations and the difficulties confronting the social and political integration of Russians into Estonian society.

Before 1940, Estonia was almost a mono-ethnic country, with the ethnic Estonian population then at 88.2 per cent, ethnic Russians 8.2 per cent and other ethnic groups 3.6 per cent. The Russian ethnic group that had its historical roots in Estonia consisted of two subgroups. First, there were 73,000 peasants and fishermen who lived in the Pechory district and the villages along the shore of Lake Peipsi. Some of them were the so-called “Old Believers” who

settled in Estonia in the 18th and 19th centuries. These were people who were persecuted by the Tsarist authorities because their religious beliefs and rituals differed from the officially accepted ones and who subsequently found refuge in Estonia. The other group numbered 8,000 political emigrants who escaped from the USSR in 1918-1919 and their descendants (Isakov 1996). In addition to the Russians, there were three more, relatively large minority communities in Estonia in the 1920s-1930s. Second in size, but the wealthiest and best organised was the German minority (1.4 per cent of the population). Nearly 8,000 Swedes had populated three little islands (Ruhnu, Vormsi and Osmussaar) and portions of the Western coast since the Middle Ages. The fourth minority by size was Jewish (making 0.4 per cent of the total population in 1934).

The rights of the minority groups were protected according to the standards of this period.³ The Cultural Autonomy Law adopted in 1925 granted national minorities with a minimum of 3,000 members the right to have both local government and education in their native language. Germans and Jews established cultural autonomies according to this law, whereas the Russians and Swedes had territorial local governments and did not use the right to establish cultural autonomies.

All these ethnic groups published their own newspapers. Russian political groupings, cultural organisations, entrepreneurs and private individuals published sixty-seven different newspapers and magazines in the Russian language during 1918-1940, most of them appearing in Tallinn and Narva. The German press in Estonia had very long historical traditions, as the first periodical publications that appeared in Estonian territory (1675, 1689) were in German. During the independent Estonian Republic, two German daily newspapers with various supplements appeared regularly. In addition, there were also some weekly newspapers, magazines and transactions of various scientific associations in German. Although the Jewish community was rather small, the number of its periodical publications was remarkable. In 1922, for example, twenty Jewish newspapers and magazines in Yiddish, Hebrew and Russian were published (Lauk 2000).⁴

Soviet Colonization and Russification

The Soviet regime used both forcible and voluntary migration as the tools of occupation and colonization, which brought about a dramatic change in the composition of the Estonian population.⁵ Large so-called all-Soviet strategic industrial enterprises in Estonia only employed immigrant workers. New districts were constructed for immigrants in all the bigger cities. The industrial cities in north-eastern Estonia that were destroyed in the Second World War were rebuilt and repopulated, mostly by people of Russian origin. Until the late 1950s, the authorities forbade Estonians to resettle in Narva, an Estonian-Russian border city. As a result, around 80 to 90 per cent of the population of the north-eastern Estonian cities speak Russian. Almost half the inhabitants of the capital, Tallinn, are Russophones.

The colonization policy was supported by the concept of the Soviet Union as a homeland for all Soviet people. "For Russians, the territory that constituted the Soviet Union – unlike the classical empires of Britain, Portugal or even France – had long been considered as an integral and largely undifferentiated part of Russia" (Smith 1999: 47). The Soviet state made considerable effort to promote symbolic and institutional association in the Russian mind-set between Russian nation building and the Soviet Union (Smith 1999: 48). "My address is neither a house nor a street, my address is the Soviet Union" was a popular song serving this purpose. These words were quite true, because irrespective of where Russians lived within the borders of the Soviet Union, the state provided them with schools and mass media in their native language. Because Russian was the lingua franca all over the Soviet Union, Russians faced few obstacles to social mobility (Smith 1999: 48). In 1986, over three-quarters of Russians in Estonia identified themselves as "Soviets"; their Soviet identity was stronger than their ethnic one. They felt comfortable speaking only Russian and never had a serious need to socialize with the indigenous Estonian population. Their language and culture were used as the cement for Soviet identity (Laitin 1998: 194).

Mass media in the Soviet Union served the same purposes. The sole owner and the only controlling authority of the media was the Communist Party, and the main task of the media was to support its power and ideology. The most important national dailies – the organ of the Communist party and the organ of the Communist Youth League Komsomol, and Tallinn's newspaper – were published in both Estonian and Russian. Estonian Radio's and Television's programmes were in Estonian, but they also contained a certain number of broadcasts in Russian, for instance, the main news broadcast from Moscow – *Vremja (Time)*. The media had a prominent role in forming and strengthening "Soviet" values, norms, ideology and identities. They created a picture of the Soviet Union as the strongest and most progressive and developed state in the world. Soviet citizens were the bearers of the most progressive ideology; they were happy and hard-working, living in harmony and building the Communist future. For Russians, the media produced an illusion of being included in the local cultural context, which symbolically united them with Estonians on the basis of their joint labour and mutual economic interests (Jakobson 2002). The historical truth about the occupation of Estonia and its consequences certainly did not belong to this picture.

Furthermore, Soviet migration policy was accompanied by Russification, which achieved its peak in the late 1970s with the forcible imposition of the Russian language in every sphere of life in Estonia. By that time, Russian was already used as the dominant language in official settings as well as in many spheres of daily life, including public transport, banks and post offices. Competence in Russian among Estonians was improving and was encouraged in all possible ways. A special journal called *Russian Language in Estonian Schools* was established. At the same time, the Russophone people had no motivation whatsoever to learn Estonian, as they managed perfectly without any knowledge of Estonian. According to a 1990 survey, 65 per cent of all Russians in Estonia

reported that they communicated exclusively in Russian, and 21 per cent reacted positively to the statement, "It is senseless to start learning Estonian" (Vihalemm and Lauristin, 1997). As a result, Russian language dominated the common space of the two ethnic communities in the public sphere, and Estonians sensed a threat that their mother tongue would become a "kitchen language". As Estonian has always been an important part of the national identity of the Estonian people as well as a means of maintaining this identity, Estonians perceived Russification as a clear danger to their national survival, and this indeed did not contribute to mutual communication and understanding.

Different Interpretations of History as a Source of Tension

Additional sources that created misunderstanding and mistrust between the two main ethnic groups, both before and after independence, were the different interpretations and understandings of Estonia's history. Historical memory constituted an essential element in Estonians' national feelings and their national identity. Therefore, the Soviet authorities purposefully destroyed and distorted this collective memory. They fabricated an official, and the only accepted, version of Estonia's past, especially of the years of independence in 1918-1940 and the Soviet *coup d'état* in 1940. The highly controlled official history effectively shaped the immigrants' knowledge of Estonia's past. Most of the people who settled in Estonia after 1945 had hardly any idea of what had happened to the country and its indigenous people.

The Russophone media amplified the core idea of the official history that the only choice for Estonia was, is and would be development within the USSR. The surveys in the early 1990s showed that about one-third of Russophone people still believed that independent Estonia was a bourgeois, authoritarian regime with features of fascism; that the incorporation of Estonia into the Soviet Union in 1940 was through the will of the Estonian people; and that the Soviet years were a period of positive development (Ruutsoo 1997). They believed that the mass deportations in 1941 and 1949 by the Soviets were aimed at the "liquidation of enemies of the nation and socialism" not the destruction of the lives of over 30,000 Estonians, mostly women and children. In a survey carried out by the Department of Journalism and Communication of the University of Tartu in 2005, 63 per cent of Estonian respondents admitted that their family members had been persecuted by the Soviet authorities in one way or another (Lauristin & Vihalemm 2005).

In his book *Mind as Action* (1998), James Wertsch demonstrates the ways in which Estonians developed their "unofficial" interpretations of history and how they used them to avoid the Soviet version of Estonia's history. Estonians "made a clear distinction between knowing an official history and not believing it, on the one hand, and knowing and believing an unofficial history, on the other" (Wertsch 1998: 158). The immigrant population did not have such historical consciousness as a part of their identity.

The different interpretations of Estonia's history are a continuous source of social tensions, largely used by Russian anti-Estonian propaganda. The so-called Bronze Soldier, the monument in the centre of the capital Tallinn to the Soviet soldiers who perished in the Second World War is a prominent example of conflicting interpretations of history. For Estonians, the statue symbolised the Soviet occupation and its crimes. For the Russophone population, the Bronze Soldier represented a hero who liberated Europe from fascism, and they often gathered at the monument to lay commemorative wreaths and flowers, especially on Victory Day, 9th May. After Estonia's independence, these celebrations often became anti-Estonian demonstrations. The Government decided to move the monument from the city centre to the war cemetery at the end of April 2007. There were, however, no attempts to communicate and negotiate with the Russophone community, as the Government acted from a position of power. As a consequence, largely in Tallinn, but also in other towns with a dominant proportion of Russophone residents, violent anti-Government riots took place, in which several hundred rioters and scores of police were injured, and one young Russian man was killed.

A sociological survey conducted in June 2007 revealed that Russians and Estonians interpreted the reasons for the riots in completely different ways. According to Estonian respondents, the riots were inspired and instigated by Russian propaganda through the Russian mass media. Non-Estonian respondents did not consider the role of Russia substantial, but saw the failure of the Government's minority policy and insufficient communication with the Russophone population as the riots' main cause (Vihalemm 2008).

Given the historical, political and cultural conditions described above, the two communities, Estonian and Russophone, coexisted in the same territory, but communicated with each other only in spheres in which it was unavoidable. The prejudices, ignorance and misunderstandings that emerged and gradually grew, owing to the lack of adequate information about one another, also fed the fears of both parties after the recent independence. Thus, contact between the two ethnic groups occurs mainly at an everyday level and is quite occasional. A survey in 2007 revealed that two-thirds of Estonians and one-third of non-Estonians have minimum or no contact with the other ethnic group. Nationality-based networking that occasionally overcomes national boundaries is common to both groups (Korts 2008: 73-74).

Two Communities Facing New Challenges

Independence, indeed, had different meanings and different importance for the two ethnic communities. A radical reappraisal of the official history and breakdown of the Soviet myths in the early 1990s was a bigger shock for non-Estonians than for Estonians. Estonians saw this reappraisal as a restoration of justice: the crimes committed by the Soviet regime and its henchmen were finally and publicly revealed. Non-Estonians were confused. Their positive

interpretation of history was destroyed and their Soviet identity undermined with nothing available to instantly compensate for that loss. The future seemed insecure and uncertain.

In the 1990s Estonians started to rebuild their national state as a legal successor to the Republic of Estonia (1918-1940).⁶ The Estonian currency *kroon* was introduced. Several new laws, such as the Constitution, the Language Act, the Aliens' Act, and the Cultural Autonomy Act, were adopted in the early 1990s, with the pre-war legislation acting as a model in many cases.

The same events had a different meaning for the Russophone community. The change of status from the dominant state majority in a multinational Soviet Union to a minority in a national state was extremely traumatic for Russians.⁷ They found themselves given the status of "illegal residents", "occupants", "immigrants" and a "minority", which they felt to be offensive and insulting, and which left them with no right to participate in determining Estonia's future (Smith 2003: 12). Legal conditions for acquiring Estonian citizenship seemed unfair and too difficult to follow. Among the post-Communist countries, only Latvia and Estonia did not automatically grant citizenship rights to all ethnic minorities. The official reason for this is legal and constitutional. The Baltic States were occupied by the Soviet Union in 1940, and all those who settled in the country since that time are in principle illegal immigrants (Kolstø 2000: 87). Although the principles of Estonian and Latvian citizenship policy have been internationally criticised in many respects, "there can be no doubt that the underlying motivation behind the inflexible... position on the citizenship issue is a deeply felt concern about the countries' ethno-demographic makeup: The citizenship laws are intended to safeguard the indigenous culture by marginalizing the Russophones politically" (Ibid.). As a consequence, Estonia has a disproportionate number of citizens of the Russian Federation in the population (over 88,000, which constitutes about 24 per cent of non-Estonians). Surveys made in Estonia during the 1990s confirm concerns that the immigrant population would be a source of insecurity. Two-thirds of Estonians were of the opinion that Russians were not loyal to the Estonian state and dreamed of restoring the Soviet empire (Kruusvall 1997; Kirch, Kirch & Tuisk 1997; Haab 1998; Raid 1996). In 1999, the daily *Postimees* commented: "A fear of Russians is an essential part of modern Estonian society...as there are few states, where two communities nearly equal in size live side by side, yet are practically segregated from one another. The bigger part of Estonian society still hopes that they will leave" (*Postimees*, 17.04.1999). However, between 1991 and 1998, only about 100,000 Russophones left the Baltic States and returned to their former homelands (Smith 1999: 83).

Estonians found it difficult to accept that as state majority, they had become responsible for the destiny of the minority who considers Estonia its home. This was also reflected in the Estonian press up to the late 1990s, where the discourse of exclusion and separation of "others" was rather frequent. Analysis has revealed (Kõuts 2002: 23-26) that articles in which non-Estonians were depicted as a source of instability were predominantly based on emotion and

a deep-rooted Estonian “fear of Russians”. Towards the end of the first decade of the 21st century, this discourse has gradually lessened and positive interpretations of the Russophone population as an economic and cultural resource are more prevalent. In the Estonian press, however, the Russophone population is frequently regarded as a source of “cheap labour” occupying positions that are unpopular among Estonians. Furthermore, the economic value of non-Estonians is related to the question of loyalty. Their economic benefit is ample ground for bringing them into the political system.

Similarly, in the Estonian Russophone press, the political acceptance of non-Estonians is advocated through emphasising their economic and demographic utility. The Russophone press values Russian entrepreneurs and their contacts with other countries and does not consider them to constitute Russia’s “Fifth Column” – a position entirely contrary to that found in the Estonian press (Kõuts 2002: 27).

In the representation of the Russian-speaking minority by the Estonian press, three essential ways, based on the discursive formation of similarity or difference, have been distinguished (Tammpuu 2002: 32-35). First, the local identity of the Russian-speaking people is constructed through emphasising their connectedness to Estonia. Russophones are presented as perceiving themselves as “local Estonian Russians” with more similarities to Estonians than to Russians in Russia. In connection with the younger generation, the fact that they are born in Estonia and see their future in Estonia is often emphasized. The Russophones are also depicted as members of the political community, by stressing their willingness to become Estonian citizens and their sense of being a citizen. The local identity construction is also based on the importance of knowledge of the Estonian language and on the sense of belonging to the Estonian communication and cultural space. An essential element in the identity construction is naming. In reinforcing the local identity of the Russian speakers, names like “Estonian Russian” (*eestivenelane*), “home Russian” (*koduvenelane*), Estonian “compatriot” and “co-citizen” were used in the Estonian press.

Second, Russian speakers are seen as being outside Estonian society or the state as “foreigners” or “others”. This discourse relates the Russophone minority to Russia and stresses their similarities to Russians in Russia. To emphasise the socio-cultural distance, the so-called mentality of a great nation is referred to as something essentially Russian. In this discourse, the Russian-speaking people are labelled “mono-lingual co-citizens”, “compatriots of the Eastern neighbour” or “new immigrants” (Tammpuu 2002: 35-37).

Third, the Russophones, according to the Russian-language press, are related, not to Estonia or Russia, but to Europe in general. Russians do not want to commit themselves to Estonia, but prefer to live in some other European country. This discourse appears specifically in connection with the future of young people (Tammpuu 2002: 37-38).

Integration Problems and Social Inequalities

The Government integration programme, within the framework of the EU accession process, focussed mainly on teaching Estonian to Russian-speakers. Although knowledge of the state language is one of the most important pre-conditions for active involvement in public life, this alone is not enough for successful integration and for access to education and better career opportunities. Several other factors need to be taken into consideration, primarily the creation of the conditions and socio-psychological atmosphere in which the un-integrated element of society would be motivated to integrate.

Although the proportion of those people with undetermined citizenship has decreased from 32 per cent in 1993 to 13 per cent in 1998 and then to 10 per cent in 2006 it is a fact, that among non-Estonians, the proportion of people without citizenship still makes up one-third of the population (CMB Yearbooks 2003 & 2006). According to the June 2007 sociological survey, the value of Estonian citizenship among non-Estonians has decreased remarkably. This is because, in practical terms, being Estonian citizens they do not experience equal opportunities with Estonians for achieving success in professional careers or being appointed to senior management positions (Kallas 2008).

Some economic processes, especially privatisation in the early stages of independence, developed a real gap between the professional employment spheres of Estonians and non-Estonians. In the course of the privatisation process, Estonians became company owners and shareholders twice as often as non-Estonians. While among Russophones with Estonian citizenship the proportion of specialists is equal to that of Estonians (23 per cent), the proportion of managers and owners is still about half that of Estonians (Lauristin & Vihalemm 2005). The unemployment rate is also higher among Russophones than among Estonians.

The average income of Russophones compared to Estonians is lower, even if they occupy social or professional positions similar to Estonians (Pavelson 2002). The biggest difference in income between Estonians and non-Estonians is in the 20 to 29-year-old age group. Only 9 per cent of Russian-speakers versus 29 per cent of Estonians in this group have a monthly income higher than 340 EUR per family member. The proportion of those with less than 100 EUR per family member is almost twice as high as among Estonians (13 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively). The higher the income levels, the greater the gaps between Estonians and non-Estonians: 17 per cent of Estonians surveyed had a monthly income over 341 EUR per family member, while this applies to only 7 per cent of non-Estonians (Lauristin and Vihalemm 2005). There is not, however, a direct correlation between income and possession of citizenship. A complex of conditions, including fluency in the Estonian language, education, age, social status, profession, etc. play a role in getting well-paid jobs.

The Russophone Media in Estonia and its Role in Informing the Russian-Language Audience

European minority policy presupposes that minorities should have equal possibilities for participation in the national public sphere, including access to information and mass communication channels. Equally important is that the minority groups would have as diverse opportunities to receive and transmit information as the majority population. Here, a question naturally arises about the real possibilities of the minorities for being informed. It is just as important to ask about the ability to be heard in the decision-making processes. In the following paragraphs, the focus is on the Russian-language media in Estonia from these viewpoints, based on data in the survey *"Me, the World and the Media 2005"* carried out by the Department of Journalism and Communication at the University of Tartu in 2005 (see Lauristin and Vihalemm 2005).

It is possible to talk about a quite comprehensive Russian-language media system in Estonia. During the period between 1988 and 1991, the number and circulation of newspapers and magazines grew enormously, both in the Estonian- and the Russian-language press. During 1995-2000, 65 to 67 publications in the Russian language were published, and since 2000 their number has increased by about 20 (cf. Jakobson 2004).

A Russian-language press system has emerged with newspapers aimed at various target groups of different political and cultural orientations and backgrounds. In January 2007, the Russian-language press consisted of three daily newspapers (with circulations between 6,000 and 12,000 each), three weeklies (12,000-16,000), one business paper (5,800), one free newspaper (24,000), one advertising weekly (10,000) and five regional newspapers (1,500 – 13,000).⁸ Some Estonian newspapers also publish parallel issues in Russian (e.g. the largest Estonian daily, *Postimees*; the business daily, *Äripäev*; the regional daily, *Põhjarannik*; and the Tallinn city paper, *Linnaleht*). In addition there are a number of irregular, small in-house newspapers of factories, organisations, companies and also some bilingual papers of political parties.

Interest in the press among Estonia's Russophone population in general is rather small. The two largest dailies are subscribed to by less than one-fifth of the potential readership, which is estimated between 125,000 and 155,000 (Jakobson 2004).

In 2007, there was one public radio channel (Radio 4) broadcasting in Russian around the clock and for several hours per month also in Ukrainian, Belarussian and Armenian. Radio 4 has studios in Tallinn, Tartu and Narva and local reporters in several other towns across Estonia. In addition, three Russian-language commercial channels are broadcasting in Tallinn and Narva and their surroundings, received by 54 per cent of the Russophone population; a further 44 per cent listen to public channel Radio 4. Listening to Russian radio channels is especially popular in north-eastern Estonia. Only a small proportion of Russian speakers listens to Estonian radio broadcasts. These are young people with a better grasp of the Estonian language who live mainly in central and southern Estonia.

The most popular television channel, serving the information interests of the Russian population in Estonia, is the *First Baltic Channel* (*Pervyi Baltiiski Kanal*), broadcasting from Riga. It broadcasts daily news programmes separately for Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, and also Tallinn city news on Sundays. The remaining content is the same for all Baltic countries. Within the framework of the so-called new policy towards compatriots, adopted by the Russian Government in 2002-2006, the *First Baltic Channel* gradually occupied the empty niche of a special "Russian" view of events in Estonia. The news broadcasts of the *First Baltic Channel* have become more popular than the news in Russian on the public service Estonian TV.⁹

Estonian public service television broadcasts news in Russian 15 minutes daily, plus some irregular talk shows in both Estonian and Russian. Moreover, three Russian-language cable channels operate in Tallinn: STV, Orsent TV and TVN. One cable channel (Narva TV) operates in Narva. About one-third of Russian speakers watches local news on these channels. Viasat Plus broadcasts entertainment programmes in Russian, and a Christian channel, Life TV, has operated since 1995.¹⁰

Ninety per cent of the Russophone population, however, regularly watches television broadcasts from Russia, which are easily available via cable TV networks in the towns and via satellite outside the cities. Many people also watch the Russian-language versions of the Western TV channels. Discovery, Travel, Animal Planet, National Geographic, etc. are popular among 55 per cent of Russian speakers; international film channels in Russian (such as Hallmark) are watched by 46 per cent and Euronews in Russian by 42 per cent of Russian speakers (Lauristin and Vihalemm 2005).

The number of active Internet users among non-Estonians is approximately the same as among Estonians (32-33 per cent). Yet some years ago, about ten per cent more Estonian-speakers used the Internet than Russian-speakers. This difference has now almost disappeared, owing to ease of access to the Internet, and the Internet has become an important channel of communication and information for the Russian speakers. The Russian-language version of the news portal Delfi (www.delfi.ee) offers, in addition to news and opinion, a discussion forum and the opportunity to comment on articles anonymously. After the riots in April 2007, the public service television ETV launched a 24-hour news portal, both in Estonian and Russian (ETV24). The sports channel Kalev TV and its web-page (www.kalev.ee) also offer news and entertainment in Russian.

The media environments of Estonians and Russians are still very different and have little in common. Estonians overwhelmingly watch, listen to and read the national media,¹¹ forming a national media space that stands apart from the Russophones' media space. Three-quarters of the local Russian population do not watch Estonian-language media or do so only occasionally. Even bigger is the share of Estonians who do not watch any local Russophone or Russian media (92-93 per cent). This clearly indicates that a common communication space has not emerged, and it will not emerge only on the basis of the Esto-

nian language. In 2007, 84 per cent of Russian speakers and 67 per cent of Estonians supported the idea of launching a public service television channel in Russian (Vihalemm 2008). To develop a common media space is probably possible using the Estonian Russophone media. The problem, however, is that only a relatively small part of the Estonian Russophone media has a positive attitude towards integration.

Media scholars at the University of Tartu distinguish three groups within the Russophone media according to attitudes towards Estonia and minority issues (Vihalemm 2008: 80). The first group consists of the media, that largely cover attitudes and opinions of the Russophone population that are critical of Estonia's policies, but in a relatively balanced way. This group also publishes viewpoints of pro-Estonian Russian public figures who support the Estonian government's integration policy. In general, these media follow an editorial policy that is neutral and loyal to Estonia. They include, for example, the public radio channel in Russian Radio 4, local cable-TV stations, the dailies *Molodjozh Estonii* (*Youth of Estonia*, 5,400 copies) and *Postimees* in Russian (21,000) and the weekly *Denj za Dnjom* (*Day by Day*, 15,000). The second group is the populist commercial media, which in general avoids political viewpoints, but favours publication of ironic and scandalous materials about Estonian politics and politicians. This group consists of commercial radio stations, the newspapers *Vesti Dnja* (*News of the Day*, daily, 9,100 copies) and *MK Estonija* (weekly, 12,000). The third group is the media that openly represent the Russian viewpoint and support Russia's positions on the main political issues. These are the TV channel *Pervyi Baltiiski Kanal* (PBK) and *Komsomolskaja Pravda in Northern Europe*, Estonia's issue (2,000 copies distributed in Estonia).

The question remains concerning the efficiency of the Russian-language media in informing their audience. Surveys and opinion polls demonstrate that the Russian-speaking audience thinks that they are less and more poorly informed about the political, social and economic issues in Estonia than are Estonians. In 1999, only one-fifth of Russophones claimed to be well informed; in 2000 only one-third. In 2002-2003, approximately 52 to 63 per cent of non-Estonians and 60 to 74 per cent of Estonians thought that they were well informed about various aspects of life in Estonia (Jakobson 2004: 223). There is, however, a growing number of groups among the Russophone audience who are interested in the Estonian-language media. They are relatively well-integrated people in the age range of 45 to 54 who live in environments in which Estonian is the dominant language together with those in the age range of 15 to 19 who are in the sphere of education. People with secondary education who are oriented towards successful careers and personal welfare and whose average monthly income per family member is above 4,000 kroons are also regular consumers of Estonian language media in addition to following local Russian language media actively (Jakobson 2004: 231).

Establishing a Russian-language public service television channel as a part of national broadcasting would be an important step forward in providing the Russophone population with adequate information about their country of

residence and in representing their views on minority issues. The Government, however, has consistently postponed taking this step, although none of the Russian media channels is able to represent the local Russian-speaking population's problems and everyday concerns, let alone give an adequate picture of Estonia's reality.

Conclusions

Although there have been some positive developments, the fact is that every government coalition since 1992 has underestimated the potential of the Russophone community and its media in contributing to building the new democratic society. Non-citizens who form the majority of the Russian media's audience are only very occasionally contacted through their press or broadcasting. As a result, this portion of the population receives their information mainly from Russophone politicians and partisan Russian journalists. This information, however, remains fragmented, biased and insufficient, and contributes to the alienation of the Russophone people from state institutions and also from the mass media. The agendas of the Estonian- and Russian-language media still differ and still seem to be situated in different 'spaces'.

The dramatic events of April 2007, connected to the removal of the 'Bronze Soldier' (the monument to Soviet war heroes) from the centre of Tallinn to a war cemetery, the protests among non-Estonians and the subsequent riots are instructive in many ways. They very clearly demonstrated that the integration policy had been much less effective than was believed; some even claim that there was a failure of the whole policy. The strength of the barriers and the prejudices that impede understanding once again became obvious as did the sensitivity of society to certain issues. The episode also demonstrated that the potential of the media as mediator has not, so far, been sufficiently used and that a carefully planned and executed Governmental communication strategy is vital in order to build bridges between the different groups of society and ensure that the minorities will not only be informed, but will also participate in meaningful dialogues as equal partners.

Notes

1. Research for this article has been supported by a research grant No 7547 "Changing Journalism Cultures: A Comparative Perspective" by Estonian Science Foundation.
2. 'Russophone' – a speaker of the Russian language either as a mother tongue or by preference.
3. The Constitution of 1920 granted everyone the right to preservation of their ethnic identity. The Language Act of 1934, which established Estonian as the state language, also granted three main national minorities – Russians, Germans and Swedes – the right to apply to state institutions in their native languages and use those languages in court. Native languages could also be used in the work of local municipalities, self-governments and administrations.

4. The next two sections are partly extracted from Lauk 2001.
5. According to the census in 1989, the proportion of Estonians had decreased to 61.5 per cent while the proportion of Russians had increased by 30.3 per cent and the other ethnic minorities, by 8.2 per cent.
6. The idea of reconstruction also included a territorial aspect, which meant the restoration of the Republic of Estonia within the 1939 borders including two regions incorporated into the territory of the Russian Federation in 1944 and presently populated by Russians. This fact is hindering the signing of the border agreement between Estonia and the Russian Federation today and increases political tensions between both sides.
7. According to the Citizenship Act, only those non-Estonians who were Estonian citizens before 16 June 1940 and their spouses and descendants were given Estonian citizenship by birth. Citizenship was also granted to approximately 24,000 non-Estonians, who supported the restoration of Estonia's independence in 1990-1991. Altogether they made up about 10 per cent of non-Estonians. The remaining 400,000 were supposed to apply for naturalisation or residency permits. Between 1998 and 2002 several amendments to the Citizenship Law were accepted, which eased naturalisation for children born after 1992 and for handicapped people. The special requirement that candidates in local and Parliamentary elections must have a knowledge of the Estonian language has been dropped.

30 June 2002, the Estonian language exam in primary school as well as the exam at the professional level open to all are considered the naturalisation exams. Since 14 January 2002, the Constitution exam in primary school is also considered part of the citizenship exam. The Estonian state offers free language training in Estonian to medical workers, policemen, emergency service personnel, prison officials and teachers in Russian schools.

8. The circulations in January 2008, data provided by the Estonian Newspaper Union, <http://www.eall.ee/tiraazhid/index.html>
9. According to the survey "Me, the World and the Media 2005", 66 per cent of Russian speakers watched the *First Baltic Channel* and 49 per cent watched the news in Russian on Estonian TV (Lauristin & Vihalemm 2005).
10. Launched as a branch of TBN Christian TV. Since 2007 also broadcasts for Eastern Europe, Balkans, Israel, Turkey. <http://www.lifetv.ee/Ru/znakomstvo.html>
11. According to data in "Me, the World and the Media 2005", 98 per cent of Estonians watch ETV (Estonian Public TV) and listen to the most popular national radio channels. A minimum of 95 per cent sometimes read the most popular national weekly *Eesti Express* and two dailies.

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Chapter 13

A Diverse and Inclusive Communicative Space in the Making?

The Case of Finland

Camilla Haavisto

Democracy theorists engaged in debate on issues concerning ethnic minorities and communication frequently express concern over the disparities in minority participation in public debate (e.g., Benhabib 2004; Young 1998). They maintain that ethnic, cultural and religious minorities are seldom allowed to participate on equal terms with the majority population.

The mainstream media, being one forum for public debate and identity construction, has the potential to enhance ethnic and cultural diversity, but can also be held partly responsible for creating a homogenous and narrowly defined “we” – an imagined community that does not include individuals or communities of minority origin.

On a pragmatic level, scholars doing research on minorities and the media (e.g., Cottle 2000; Tufte 2003; Downing and Husband 2005) often articulate their concerns in terms of frequent under-representation or even misrepresentation of immigrants and ethnic minorities. Three different but closely related issues tend to be involved: firstly, their criticism targets mainstream media texts, accusing the media of providing biased and stereotypical representations of ethnic minorities, secondly, criticism focuses on discriminatory employment practices applied by media companies; and thirdly, their criticism targets institutions and policymakers, such as the European Union (EU) and state authorities, not thought to be sufficiently supportive of minority media production or multicultural initiatives.

On a European level, these criticisms have – at least to some extent – been dealt with. Trans-European media monitoring initiatives by such EU agencies as the Agency for Fundamental Rights and policy papers such as the *White Paper on European Communication Policy* by the European Commission, call for a more inclusive and ethnoculturally diverse media environment. On a member state level, many public broadcasting companies (e.g., the BBC in Britain, SVT in Sweden, and YLE in Finland) have developed strategies for serving ethnic and linguistic minorities and other groups with special needs. There are also – both on the member state level and the pan-European level – a significant number of campaigns to raise awareness together with journalistic awards to

recognise programmes that affirm the benefits of interacting with minorities. These efforts, can however, be seen more as symbolic acts than as strategies that ought to be implemented.

Yet, attempts to generate a communicative space accessible to minority individuals and communities on equal terms with the majority population from a “top down” perspective – through élite initiatives articulated in policies – do not automatically guarantee that an ideal communication situation actually takes form.

Hence, the overall purpose of this chapter is to consider critically the realisation of the normative goals posed in academic writings and policy documents and, together with other articles in this book, join in the discussion about the obstacles hindering the advancement of a diverse and inclusive communicative space.

To achieve this purpose, first the ideal communicative space is discussed on a theoretical level. This is done by articulating, comparing and further developing ideas presented by scholars concerned with the public sphere and with diversity in general (Habermas 1998 [1962]; Fraser 1995; see also the chapter by Hannu Nieminen in this volume) and those concerned with media and multiculturalism in particular (e.g., Downing and Husband 2005; Cunningham 2001; Gitlin 1989).

Next, the question of whether this ideal is found in policy papers, either at the EU level or at a member state level, is addressed. Thereafter, our attention turns to the case of Finland. Here results from a set of studies conducted between 1999 and 2007 are presented with a focus on print, audiovisual, and minority media (Kivikuru 2007; Raittila and Vehmas 2005; Horsti 2005, 2008; Roos 2004; Haavisto 2007, 2006; Kauranen and Tuori 2002.)

After these conclusions, a few suggestions are presented to show how individuals and institutional agencies could, by means of increased input, contribute to a more diverse and inclusive communicative space.

Sphere, Sphericule or Network of Spaces?

To support these pragmatic suggestions and present a sound argument, we must be explicit as to what is meant by communicative space, inclusiveness, and ethnocultural diversity. Here, we can draw upon viewpoints put forward by political philosophers in general, and by feminist, anti-racist and multicultural critiques of the public sphere in particular.

A claim often posed in the literature concerns Habermas's (1998 [1962]) neglect of public spheres other than the male bourgeois sphere. John Keane (1984), for example, suggested more than twenty years ago that, rather than a singular entity, we need to envisage three different types of public spheres; the micro-, meso- and macro-public spheres. Another oft-cited critical commentator on the unitary model of the public sphere, Nancy Fraser (1992, 1995), argues for the existence of “subaltern counter-publics”; “parallel discursive arenas

where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter discourses" (ibid., 1995: 29).

Todd Gitlin (1998: 173) follows this line of argumentation, stating that communicative environments that appear to be as rich and diverse at first glance might in fact often be constructed of semi-autonomous public spheres, or sphericules, as he describes them, at least where ethnic, cultural and/or religious diversity are concerned. The idea of the communicative environment consisting of sphericules as defined by ethnocultural and/or linguistic characters of their publics has been further developed by Stuart Cunningham (2001: 132-139) and by John Downing and Charles Husband (2005: 210-211).

The argument put forward in this chapter supports the idea of the sphericule being a useful notion for illustrating a communicative situation in which minority individuals and/or communities mainly engage in public debate with others who share the same ethnic, cultural, or religious background. Since identities are seldom clearly defined but rather tend to be multiple and controversial, the notion might not necessarily have a great analytical impact on a pragmatic level. In addition, in situations of complex and hybrid identity formation, the notion might even indicate too narrow and too essentialising an understanding of identity construction.

European Islamic students might, for example, participate in some public debates, on the Internet, and identify themselves in this context as "young European Muslims", but they might at the same time participate in other public debates as "university students", as "women" or as "young environmental activists". Thus, it is not always cut and dried as to which communicative environments can be perceived as being ethno-specific and which cannot. The strength of the notion, however, lies in the fact that it very graphically, albeit roughly, describes a communication situation in which linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and/or religious minority groups mainly communicate "inwards".

In Sweden awareness of this kind of communicative situation developed in relation to an investigation of crises communication conducted in the aftermath of a conflagration in a nightclub in Gothenburg in which a large number of youngsters of immigrant background were killed or injured. The results of this extensive investigation of communication flow showed that the existence of entire minority media systems was widely unknown to researchers and authorities (Asp and Molin 1999; Camauër 2005.) Not just one, but several minority language sphericules existed without any links to the more mainstream communicative spaces, thus hindering the flow of communication from the authorities to those who needed to be informed.

In Finland a similar kind of awakening, although less dramatic, took place when a controversial issue in a minority language sphericule suddenly became a matter of mainstream public debate. In 2004 a group of conservative men of Somali origin blamed a theatre play entitled *Always someone's daughter* for demeaning Somali culture and Islam. In their minority language radio show on *Radio Warsan*, the men verbally threatened the main actress who was of Somali origin, and the director of the play. The issue was reported in the main newspa-

per (*Helsingin Sanomat*, 20 October, 2004) thanks to an extensive network of actors and agents: community members recording the broadcast, linguistically-competent individuals translating the text, and people having close connections with journalists working in the mainstream daily newspaper. In this particular case, the sphericule had thus been linked to a more mainstream communicative space, making it possible for issues to flow from one space to another.

Taking these grassroots examples back to a more theoretical level offers an opportunity to reflect on what is really meant by an ethnoculturally diverse and inclusive communicative space. Does an ideal communicative space build upon a particular notion of giving recognition and communicative rights to minority groups by providing support to minority media and enhancing self articulation? In the name of an ethnoculturally diverse and inclusive communicative space, can claims be made, for example, for a complete minority language media system for the Russian-speaking minority in Finland? Or shall the ideal, diverse, and inclusive communicative space be envisaged as a unitary environment (on either a national, a European, or a global level)?

The idea of having endlessly multiplying sphericules as the ideal form of a diverse and inclusive communication environment raises concerns that these may lead to linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and/or religious ghettoisation. The unitary ideal is challenged as well since, according to the critiques of the Habermasian¹ public sphere, communicative spaces cannot be accessed on equal terms by everyone. Power relations in society will always, to some extent, reflect the perception of those whose voice is most important.

So then, on a theoretical level, how can one envisage the ideal, ethnoculturally diverse and inclusive communicative space? In this chapter, I suggest that the ideal ethnoculturally diverse and inclusive communicative space – as per Hannu Nieminen's commentary on the European public sphere in this volume – can be envisioned as a network constituted of (and constituting) both ethno-specific sphericules, mainstream communicative spaces, and other types of mediated and non-mediated environments in which communication takes place.

This network type of communicative space is imagined as being held up by institutional, mediated, and human actors who – horizontally, vertically and in circular movements – distribute issues across a variety of different spaces. These issues can either be exclusively rational in nature – claims made on a variety of social and political matters – as in Habermas's theory (1998 [1962]) or more cultural in alignment, as for example, McGuigan (2005) has proposed.

In line with this understanding, the network type of communicative space is not referred to as a public *sphere*, since the notion of the *multi-ethnic public sphere* (Downing and Husband 2005) risks being perceived as a tautology by scholars reading Habermas in an orthodox way when it is taken into account that a crucial characterisation of the original Habermasian public sphere is precisely its open and diverse nature. Secondly, in using the notion, one should be able to define which mediated presentations and messages fit the pattern of fully-fledged deliberation and which do not – a task too broad for this chapter.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that in the more recent writings of Habermas (2006), his ideas concerning the public sphere in relation to mass communication do not differ significantly from the network space envisioned here. Habermas (2006: 415) talks about mediated (political) communication as “circulating from the bottom up and the top down throughout a multilevel system (from everyday talk in civil society, through public discourse and mediated communication in weak publics, to institutionalized discourses at the centre of the political system)”. And here the network type of communicative space is seen through a quite similar lens: a space intended for and constituted of communication taking place in different “sub spaces” – in concrete arenas such as the media or in more abstract fields of discourse.

In light of this consideration of the ideal communicative space as a network, one can at this stage ask then what makes this space particularly ethnoculturally diverse and/or inclusive?

To avoid misinterpretation, we must state the obvious: if the purpose of the research is to discuss the communicative space in its diversity and its inclusiveness of other subordinated groups in society (children, women, the disabled, sexual minorities, etc.), then the word “ethnocultural” could be removed, but the idea would stay the same. Here, where the focus is placed on ethnic minorities and people of immigrant origin, we can speak of an ethnoculturally diverse and inclusive communicative environment. The word “ethnocultural”, which cannot stand alone in this context, could in this chapter be replaced by “multi-ethnic” or any other abbreviation signifying ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity.

In order to apply the theoretical ideal to the interpretation of the empirical findings, the notion of ethnocultural diversity is, in this context, mainly, but not exclusively, interpreted as referring to visibility, and inclusiveness mainly refers to the opportunities to participate in and have access to information, although not exclusively.

Having said this, one can state more specifically that ethnocultural diversity is seen in this chapter as more than just observable ethnic and cultural variation. A truly ethnoculturally diverse space also enhances diversity in beliefs and values. On a more pragmatic level, for example, one can state that employing an African news presenter is seen here as a symbolic (and a political) act, but not as “compensation” for narrow perspectives and biased representations in media content. Likewise, even though employing minority professionals as journalists and programme presenters enhances their visibility, for a truly diverse communicative space, minorities should be seen at all levels of media society: as news sources, as public figures, as members of management boards in media companies, and so forth.

In this line of thought, the inclusiveness of the communicative space does not refer solely either to the opportunities to participate (to have “a voice”) or to guaranteed access to information.

For a truly inclusive communicative space, the opportunities to participate do not exist only in relation to “soft” topics (talent shows on television, per-

sonified reportage, characters in soap operas), but also in relation to mediated and face-to-face public debates of a rational nature. Inclusiveness can be enhanced by means other than by giving opportunities for participation and access. On a textual level, for example, an inclusive communicative space can, be enhanced through lexical choices; on a professional level it can be fostered by incorporating journalists working for “multicultural programmes” into other newsrooms; and on an institutional level it can be promoted by initiatives to deposit minority language publications in an archive for easy access.

Clearly, these notions overlap, since an authentically diverse communicative space is inclusive and an authentically inclusive space is diverse. On a normative level, both hold up democratising and unifying values, respecting difference and rupturing homogenous and narrowly defined imaginaries of who belongs to “us” and who does not.

The Ideal Affirmed by Pan-European Media Initiatives

On a European level, ideas in alignment with the theoretical concept envisioned above are expressed in quite a few charters, policies, and action plans concerning media and communication. However, in many cases, media policies, and action plans formulated directly by the EU or by its partners such as the Council of Europe or the OSCE (the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) concern ethnic and cultural diversity in general rather than ethnic and cultural minorities in particular. This signifies that the policies refer primarily to the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic differences among member states, not directly to ethnic, cultural, and national minorities and people of immigrant origin.

The trigger for EU policymaking in this field, accordingly, seems to be concern for a quantity of debate around “European issues” and a concern for underdeveloped communication practices between the citizens of member states and EU institutions. In many media and communication policies of a general nature (e.g., *Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate* and the *White Paper on European Communication Policy*), the concern for minority participation and representation is expressed only in passing.

References to national minorities, when they are made at all, occur more frequently than references to recently arrived immigrants. In more general terms, it can be said that, although policies on a pan-European level have purposes and perspectives that differ significantly, national minorities seem to be in a stronger position than recently arrived migrant workers, refugees, and asylum seekers.

The communicative rights of national minorities (particularly linguistic national minorities such as the Swedish-speaking Finns, the Catalonians in Spain, the Sámi in Nordic countries, etc.) are protected under the Council of Europe’s *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (1995). Article 9

states that “persons belonging to national minorities are granted the possibility of creating and using their own media”.

Additionally, Article 11 of the Council of Europe’s *Charter of Regional and Minority Languages* (1992) obliges member states to “encourage and/or facilitate the creation of at least one television channel in the regional or minority languages; or to encourage and/or facilitate the broadcasting of television programmes in the regional or minority languages on a regular basis”.

The framework convention is an essential binding document for all members of the Council of Europe and the Charter is binding for the signatories. In conformance with the *Guidelines on the use of minority languages in the broadcast media* submitted by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in 2003, both documents ignore migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

Nevertheless, these groups have not been completely neglected in media and communication policies on a pan-European level. Recently, for example, the European Commission has launched an initiative to map how minority groups in general and how immigrants, asylum seekers, and refugees in particular are treated by the audiovisual media (EC-assignment 2006.) In addition, on the initiative of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, newsroom constellations and media content have been mapped in member states, an investigation that also took into consideration recently migrated minority groups. (ter Wal 2002 and the EUMC-Pilot Media Project 2007).

Furthermore, the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) is, in its legal provisions, guaranteeing the right to fair representation and access on equal terms for ethnic minority groups, regardless of whether they belong to national minorities or to recently migrated communities living within the EU. The conditions for active membership in the EBU are laid down in Article 3§3 of the Union’s Statutes; the article states on a fairly general level that the EBU members are “...under an obligation to, and actually do, provide varied and balanced programming for all sections of the population, including programmes catering for special/minority interests of various sections of the public, irrespective of the ratio of programme cost to the audience” (EBU 2006).

Besides charters, treaties, member state assignments, and monitoring initiatives, European institutions have cooperated closely in several campaigns for rising awareness. The year 2008, for example, has been designated the *European Year for Intercultural Dialogue*, an occurrence that received little attention in the mainstream media, at least in Finland, but still, an action of some significance in transmitting information about the values the EU wishes to communicate to its citizens.

The different pan-European awards given to programmes and to journalists for providing a “well-balanced picture of the multicultural aspects of society” also function as symbolic acts aimed at transmitting values that build on respect, inclusiveness and anti-racism. *The Iris Prize Europa*² and the EBU’s *Boundless Cultural Diversity Media Award* affirm the ideal of an ethnoculturally diverse and inclusive communicative environment,³ but do not really advocate how this environment is to be achieved.

Finland as a Case in Point: Policies and Particularities

If we now move from the supra-national to the national level, we find in Finland a useful case of an EU member state that has ratified the Council of Europe's and OSCE documents mentioned earlier. Finland's two major broadcasting houses (YLE and MTV3) are members of the EBU and are therefore obliged to adhere to the conditions for active membership. Moreover, there are national clauses, charters and other types of professional codes dealing with ethnocultural diversity and the media on a national level.

The most practical code is the *Guidelines for Journalists* drafted by the Union of Journalists in Finland and adopted by the Council for Mass Media (the CMM). These guidelines support the responsible use of freedom of speech in mass communication. In their Clause no. 26 it is stated that "the human dignity of every individual must be respected. The ethnic origin, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, convictions or other similar personal characteristics may not be presented in an inappropriate or disparaging manner".

These codes play a role in daily journalism. When editors-in-chief were asked to reflect on news reporting and issues related to immigration and integration as part of an academic study consisting of in-depth interviews (Floman 2007), many of them referred to Clause no. 26. What exactly is meant, however, by "inappropriate" and "disparaging" depends on the context and is a matter of constant negotiation.

The advancement and application of these professional guidelines is self-regulated. The Council for Mass Media is not a court nor does it exercise legal jurisdiction. Yet journalists engaged in mass media affiliated with the CMM are voluntarily committing themselves to uphold these ethical principles. If the CMM determines that good journalistic practice has been violated, the media concerned must publish the resolution of the Council without delay and without direct comment.

All major media houses and professional associations in Finland have signed the CMM contract. In addition, the National Broadcasting Company in Finland, YLE, a public service company with a particular social responsibility to include minorities in the media, has formulated separate, more specific policies regarding services for minorities.

This policy, the *YLE Policy on services for minorities and special groups*, was published in 2005. During the same year the *Act of Yleisradio*, was revised and enforced in order to make it more suitable for today's emerging multicultural society. Chapter 3, Section 7 of Act no. 1380/1993 states that public service shall, in particular "treat Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking citizens on equal grounds in its broadcasting and produce services in the Sámi, Romany, and sign languages as well as, where applicable, in the languages of other language groups in the country". Further, according to the Act, YLE shall "support tolerance and multiculturalism and provide programming for minority and special groups".

Just who the "other language groups" are, what the phrase "when applicable" means, and whether "programming" refers only to news or also to current

affairs programmes and fiction are answers not specified. Moreover, the word “tolerance” is used in an ambiguous way. (To tolerate someone can mean to dislike the individual, yet still put up with the person or situation).

Legal acts, however, need to be succinct; deeper discussion must take place elsewhere. In the case of YLE, questions related to these issues are dealt with in an unpublished working group document (YLE 2005b) written as a background paper for the development of the *YLE Policy on services for minorities and special groups* (YLE 2005a).

Before turning to this working group, however, a word about the Swedish-speaking minority. As is evident in the passage cited above from the *Act of Yleisradio* no. 1380/1993, Swedish-speaking Finns enjoy a privileged position in comparison to other minorities. This is the first particularity that distinguishes Finland in the present context.

This minority (circa 300,000 citizens or six per cent of the total population) have guaranteed access to media in their mother tongue, since Finland is officially a bilingual state and since certain generous communication rights are stated in the Finnish Constitution. The Swedish-language media can be said to form an institutionally complete media system⁴ (Moring 2001). However, to revisit the theoretical level, a sphericule is not formed, since issues move on a daily basis between the Finnish and Swedish language media in Finland, thus making the issues accessible to people with insufficient language skills to follow both.⁵

The case of other minorities is very different, which brings us to the second, third, and fourth particularities: Finland has a strict immigration policy, and in 2006 Finland's foreign community was only 2.3 per cent of the total population⁶. Most of the new minority groups have come to Finland since 1990, and the largest groups of foreigners/immigrants consist of people of Russian and/or Estonian origin.⁷ (Thirty-five per cent of Finland's foreign community is comprised of Russian or Estonian citizens, according to Statistics Finland 2006.)

These factors obviously influence not only the communicative environment, but also the research field. Ethnocultural inclusiveness and the diversity of the national communicative space have only recently been issues for civic and academic debate. Moreover, it is evident that since the major groups in Finland do not differ physically from the majority population, questions of “race” or visual characteristics of minority subjects, such as skin colour, are not the most significant analytical dimension in the research conducted (e.g., Pietikäinen 2000; Horsti 2005; Raittila 2004).

This does not mean that there are only people of Caucasian/ European descent living in Finland. In 2006, Finland's foreign population consisted of around 4,500 Somalis⁸ who came as refugees via the former Soviet Union in the early 1990's, 3,400 Iraqis, around 2,600 Iranians; and 2,800 people from Turkey. In 2006, there were also some 3,000 Thais and 600 Filipinos living in the country, most of them women married to Finnish men. (Statistics Finland 2006.)

The immigrants who have come to Finland, have arrived for a variety of reasons: to study, to work, as a result of marriage, or as refugees and asylum

seekers.⁹ In the Government Programme (2007), however, it is stated that work-motivated immigration shall be promoted, mainly due to the ageing of the population, which is reducing the number of working-age people. As a result, the demographic profile of the population will almost certainly change as the relative proportion of immigrants and their children vis-à-vis native-born Finns increases.

These recent political, public discourses on future changes presented as facts that cannot be disputed (“the population is aging – foreigners are needed”) have already influenced a certain latent and non-enthusiastic attitude shift towards greater comprehension and acceptance of foreigners (e.g., Haavisto, Kiljunen and Nyberg 2007.)

This shift in awareness, the political strategies, and the demographic features in the case of Finland together with the theoretical ideal and the policies presented form the context for the following sections of this chapter. In light of this framework, we can now turn our attention to the grassroots level and look at results from empirical studies of minorities and the media.

Authority Voices and “Pedestalised” Representations in Print Media

In Finland, the field of research into ethnocultural diversity and the media is not only recent, but also empirically and methodologically narrow. Most studies focus on media content and mediated representations (Raittila and Vehmas 2005; Haavisto 2007; Horsti 2005; Raittila 2004; Pietikäinen 2000.) Fewer studies have been conducted on media production, consumption and/or on the employment of minority professionals. The situation, however, is beginning to change, and Finnish media researchers have begun to show interest in perception processes and so called diasporic communication (Horsti 2008).

To evaluate ethnocultural diversity and the inclusiveness of the communicative space in Finland, three different areas of communication will be discussed: print, audiovisual and minority media.

The core of this section is based on two long-term projects mapping ethnic diversity in the daily newspapers in Finland (Raittila and Vehmas 2005; Haavisto 2007)¹⁰. In addition to the quantitative mappings, several case studies have been conducted within the project financed by the Ministry of Education in Finland. These relate, for example, to the representation of Islam and Muslims (Raittila, Maasilta and Creutz 2007), to mappings of racist Internet sites (Pekkinen 2005) and to reception processes of a television series dealing with multiculturalism and immigration (Nikunen 2008). The results of these studies are reported in the first part of the section. The second part of this section relies upon a briefing conducted for the European Commission on behalf of the Ministry of Transport and Communication in Finland (Haavisto 2006) and on a critical reading of two internal working documents submitted by two working group committees from within the National Broadcasting Company (YLE 2005b; 2005c). The third part

relies on a mapping done by Rolf Kauranen and Salla Tuori (2002) and updated by Minna Suihkonen (2003). In addition, it offers an evaluation of the diversity and inclusion of ethnic minorities in the mainstream media and indicates the opportunities for self-articulation through producing minority media.

It is also important to mention here that the three fields discussed in this section (print, audiovisual, and minority media) do not exclusively constitute the communicative space. Public debate is understood here as consisting of political and cultural expressions, articulations, and claims and is also taking place in civic forums, such as multicultural centres, public hearings, and discussion boards on the Internet. The civic debate which does not always find its way into the mainstream media is largely maintained by activists and citizens concerned with the issue. For this chapter, however, the fields chosen (daily press, television and minority media) are the ones considered the most significant for minority visibility, participation, and access to information.

Concerning visibility and representations of ethnic minorities and people of immigrant origin in the Finnish mainstream print media, in the early 1990's – a time of economic recession – new immigrant groups and particularly Somali asylum seekers were reported on in a biased and negative manner. Moreover, the news on this particularly-stigmatised minority group did not improve. For example, in 1999, eight years after the arrival of the first Somalis, a group of rightwing radicals attacked a group of boys of Somali origin playing football. Although the attack was clearly initiated by the radicals, the event provoked a news article with the word “Somali-fight” in the headline (Ylönen 2000: 19). The positions of victim and perpetrator were exchanged, shifting the interpretation and clearly discriminating against the minority actors.

In the last ten years, the situation has improved and explicit racism seldom occurs in Finnish mainstream print media in the twenty-first century (Haavisto 2007, 2005b; Horsti 2005, 2002; Raittila and Vehmas 2005). However, a problem still exists.

Ethnic minorities and immigrants do not, for example, tend to get their voices heard in relation to issues that concern them, but rather authorities and ethnic Finns tend to speak on their behalf. The monitoring of Finnish language newspapers, from which over 5,000 news articles on ethnicity and racism have been analysed between 1999 and 2004, shows that minority subjects are quoted in about 25 per cent of the articles in which they are featured. Authority sources, such as the police or local authorities, are quoted in about 60 per cent of the articles in which they are featured (Raittila and Vehmas 2005: 17.) This tendency, confirmed by studies of the Swedish-language print media in Finland (Haavisto 2007), risks affirming those discourses in which ethnic minorities and immigrants are unable to care for themselves. The danger is also borne out by results stating that, on a textual level, there is a lack of dialogue between ethnic Finns and ethnic minorities and/or immigrants. (Raittila 2004: 223-295)

The representation of minorities and immigrants in daily newspapers, however, can not be discussed here in a very general way since there are significant differences in how the different minority groups are represented. Certain

groups, for example, are frequently represented when such negative topics are reported as criminality and prostitution, while other groups are more likely to appear in well-meaning “sunshine stories”.

According to the monitoring of 1,200 Swedish-language news articles published between 1999 and 2005, Russians, Estonians, and others from former Soviet Union are portrayed as the perpetrators in 70 per cent of articles reporting on non-violent crimes¹¹ (Haavisto 2007: 101).

As a potential counter-balancing to the crime theme, articles explicitly promoting “tolerance” of ethnic minorities and immigrants frequently occur in Finnish newspapers.¹² In these articles – aimed at including ethnic minorities by presenting them in a respectful way, providing them visibility, and giving them chance to have their voices heard – there is, however, a tendency to overdo the inclusion by an over-usage of different markers of similarity. Minority subjects are often presented as “more Finnish than real Finns are”. Journalists, for example, frequently mention how minority representatives love Finnish nature, adore the sauna, dress in a “western” way and live like Finns: paying taxes, sharing household work, and living a secular life (Haavisto 2008).

This “pedestalising tendency”¹³ can be seen as one of the obstacles hindering the enhancement of an ideal diverse and inclusive communicative space, since the conditions of participation are so harsh. At the risk of generalising, it can be stated that daily newspapers in Finland appear to be more eager to publicise minority voices if the boundaries of difference do not challenge “Finnish values” or myths of typical everyday life. Difference is accepted, but within certain limits.

A Debate Provoked by Televised Fiction

The tendency to locate markers of Finnishness in ethnic minorities and immigrants by well-meaning journalists can to some extent also be seen in audiovisual programmes. There, however, the visibility of ethnic minorities and immigrants is so recent and so sparse that it is more relevant to pay attention to the fundamental obstacles that hinder developing an ideal communicative space realised in and through audiovisual media.

In a self-critical spirit, YLE, evaluated the visibility of ethnic diversity and ethnic minorities in its programming (Roos 2004). In 2005 an internal working group was set up to define the minority groups involved, clarify their needs, map existing programme content that directly or indirectly served these groups, and articulate strategic proposals. The report of this Working Group in Programming (YLE 2005b) was then used as a preparatory paper for the *YLE Policy on services for minorities and special groups* (YLE 2005a).

A critical reading of the working document and the final YLE policy, shows that many concrete suggestions for improving the services for minority audiences have not been realised, at least not yet. For example, in the preparatory working group document, the Russian-speaking minority – the most numerous

foreign-language minority in Finland – is seen as the group most urgently in need of improved services. In one of the pragmatic examples given for improving their situation, the idea of offering Russian subtitles for popular programmes was proposed. *Itsevaltiaat*, a fictional programme concerning contemporary issues using humour as a means of criticism was the proposed target for this initiative (YLE 2005b: 15). Yet, nearly three years later, this proposal has yet to be implemented.¹⁴

The constraints on implementing the pragmatic suggestions put forward seem to be both economic and ideological.

In theory, the current shift from analogue broadcasting to digitalised television could provide more broadcasting time for audience segments with special interests and needs. Due to economic pressures, the Board of YLE tried in 2007 to end the Swedish-language youth channel and to merge the Swedish-language newsroom with that of their Finnish colleagues. This proposal provoked such a storm of criticism that it was eventually withdrawn. Economic restraints are thus, in some cases, only a matter of prioritising, although it is a fact that competition with commercial channels is stiff and the amounts paid through licence fees are declining.

Concerning ideological matters, YLE Programme Director Ismo Silvo stated in an interview (Tuomarla 2002) that partly due to integration strategies put in place by the Government, there would not be increased minority language programming to serve “new” minorities living in the country. Instead, those minority groups would be served by relevant programming in Finnish or Swedish. In the Working Group report (YLE 2005b), more programmes in “Special language”, an easily understood Finnish, were requested for those who have a limited knowledge of Finnish. Yet so far, such programmes have been provided only on the radio.

On the other hand, not all the suggestions given by the Working Group in Programming have been ignored. In the working document (YLE 2005b: 17-18), domestically produced television fiction was seen as one major target areas. Between 2005 and 2007 there was in fact a launch of three new, domestically produced television series with plots primarily featuring ethnic minorities, immigrants and refugees (*Äbläm-säbläm*, *Poikkeustila*, and *Romano-TV*). All three were highly controversial and provoked extensive public debate on racism and the media (e.g., Kivikuru 2007.)

It is also worthy noting that commercial television’s investment in talent shows and reality programmes has attracted a significant number of competitors of ethnic/ immigrant origin. Whether this sort of increased visibility is seen as a positive tendency is questionable, however, since the area in which this visibility seems to be enhanced is so narrow and, in this case, only consists of pure entertainment – an area to which, from a historical perspective, ethnic minorities have always had easier access.

To achieve the ideal communicative space, it is vital that ethnic minorities and individuals of immigrant origin are included in representations in a variety of different segments, not only as people to be represented or served, but also

as producers of media content. Today, minority professionals talk about “ethnic pockets” within YLE. For a minority professional, working for programmes explicitly dealing with multicultural themes (e.g., *Basaari*) might be the only realistic professional starting point; yet frustration soon grows when faced with a lack of opportunity for advancement to newsrooms and other sections of the company that do not deal specifically with multicultural themes.¹⁵

Here a special input in human resources and recruitment strategies would be needed. A critical reading of a second working group paper for the YLE Policy (2005a) shows that the Human Resources department within YLE still left many challenges unaddressed. The working document of the Human Resources Group (YLE 2005c, 4 pages in all) was designed to meet the most pressing demands submitted by the Working Group in Programming (YLE 2005b), especially the demand for more diversity in the newsrooms and at all other levels of the company.

The working document, however, gives the impression of having been submitted in great haste. For example, the paper does not at any point articulate how this goal should be realised, given that recruitment processes are not centralised in the company; rather, they are in the hands of a significant number of middle-level managers. It is also worth noting that the EU-funded *Mundo-training programme* (2004-2007) for training minority media professionals, in which the YLE was a major partner, is not once mentioned in this working paper submitted by the Human Resources Working Group.

Whereas official recruitment patterns might be stiff and exclusive, spontaneously occurring professional contacts on a personal level can be the opposite. A positive example took place in the news reporting on the political crises in Somalia culminating in the winter of 2006-2007, when Finnish-speaking people of Somalian origin were used as news reporters, even on prime time news.

Reaching Out through Minority Media?

In general, the battle for visibility and the opportunity to express opinion is less bruising in the minority media than in the mainstream media. The potential to “be heard” and to influence fellow citizens and decision-makers is clearly much lower in the minority media. As we have seen at the beginning of this chapter, in some cases issues filter from the minority to the mainstream media through an extensive network of agents: translators, intermediators, and institutional facilitators. In a Finnish context, the minority-language media (other than the Swedish-language) can be said to have a very low capacity to force issues into the mainstream. As Ralf Kauranen and Salla Tuori (2002) have observed, most of the minority media (mainly photocopied newsletters and periodicals lacking an ISSN number) cannot even be found by non-subscribers, since there is no public library or other institution mapping existing publications.

Despite the consequences of this limited accessibility, the minority print media situation has been evaluated by Kauranen and Tuori (2002) as lively and

productive, and the same applies to radio programmes in minority languages. Community radios in the three biggest cities of Finland – Helsinki, Turku and Tampere – have the most extensive broadcasting in various languages made by and for different ethnic communities in the country. There are regular programmes in Arabic, Somali, Russian, Kurdish, Tamil, Estonian, German, French, and English. (Kauranen and Tuori 2002).

Besides these, YLE has a radio channel called *YLE Mondo* with radio programmes in a variety of languages plus a Sàmi channel and *YLE po-russki* for Russian-speakers living in the country. There is also a commercial Russian-language radio channel called *Radio Russkoje Helsinki*, earlier known as *Radio Sputnik* (<http://rusradio.fi/>).

The biggest concern in relation to the minority media is that periodicals and community radio programmes are short-lived and entirely dependent on volunteers. Their publishers are usually organisations or individuals, and the continuity in production is dependent on the activity of only one or a few individuals. (Kauranen and Tuori 2002.) There have been, however, some attempts to produce periodicals on a more professional and commercial basis. The most successful has been the monthly Russian language newspaper named *Spektr*, which was launched in 1998. An attempt to publish a successor, the weekly *Spektr Nedeli*, however, failed. After a year and a half on the market, the publishers ran out of financial resources, fell into debt, and were obliged to call a halt to the publishing. The success of *Spektr* relies heavily on the editor-in-chief, Eilina Gusatinsky, who recently established a publishing house for literature in Russian.

The English-language weeklies, *6 degrees* and *Free!*, mainly distributed in the capital area, are commercial products but, in general terms, the small size of the immigrant communities signifies that there is no guaranteed audience for publishing done on a commercial basis. The Ministry of Education's support for minority cultures is crucial to launching many periodicals, but according to Kauranen and Tuori (2002), it is questionable if the measures are enough to support an ongoing publishing activity.

Pragmatic Journalism Colliding with Democratic Ideals?

In light of the empirical studies referred to above, the diversity and inclusiveness of the communicative space assessed through the visibility of ethnic minorities and their opportunities for participating in public life (via the media) appear today to be lagging far behind those ideals formulated by democracy theorists, policymakers, and media companies. Indeed, one might ask if journalistic realities (increased competitiveness, hierarchy of news sources, daily routines, and so on) are at all compatible with an ideal communicative space. Perhaps it is in the nature of journalism to be élite-centred and so long as the élites are ethnically and culturally homogenous, so will the communicative spaces be. Researchers studying “sphericules” and discussing, for example, the empowering effect of the Internet for diasporic groups (Tsagarousianou

2001; Georgiou 2001; Sreberny 2005) seem to cling to this idea, indicating that a diverse and inclusive communicative space might never be generated by or through the mainstream media.

This pessimism is understandable, particularly in media environments in which public service is weak and daily newspapers are bought at newsstands, not through subscription as they are in the Nordic countries. In such a highly competitive environment, one can assume that there is only weak interest in trying to please segments of a potential public, who are presumed by the media and advertising companies to lack purchasing power.

On the other hand, commercialism might not be the villain of the piece in every case. In Sweden, the freely distributed daily newspaper, *Metro*, has managed to enhance the emergence of a diverse and inclusive communicative space by appealing particularly to audience segments with an immigrant background¹⁶ (Andersson 2005.)

In this case a circular effect can be noted: when commercial media products attract consumers of minority origins and when advertisers see this as a desirable development, claims made by the minorities concerning content are more willingly accepted by the media producers. Increased visibility, diverse and unbiased representations, and greater opportunities to participate augment feelings of being included. This in turn influences the image of the media product and hence, attracts new readers. This virtuous circle can, however, turn into a vicious circle if the potential readers are not seen as consumers worthy of being attracted.

The completely commercial Swedish *Metro* also happens to function as an example of how the ideal network type of communicative space in some cases can be generated from a bottom-up perspective. A few minority youngsters, initially producing a weekly page on multicultural youth issues in *Metro* later founded their own magazine, *Gringo Grande*. Meanwhile, they became public figures, frequently appearing on current affairs programmes to discuss issues concerning the diversity of Swedish society and to debate social issues with representatives of the political élite.¹⁷ From the start their purpose was to influence political élites and challenge stereotypical ideas of how immigrants are supposed to look and behave. Starting up a minority language publication and contributing to the construction and/ or maintenance of a communication environment consisting of autonomous sphericules would have been unheard of earlier for such youth. Without defining their target audience too narrowly, they wrote in the language of the suburbs (in so called Rinkeby-Swedish) on topics concerning young people in general.

However, one should not praise the “Gringo-phenomenon” too much. The publisher of the periodical went bankrupt, possibly for trying to expand too rapidly, and although the youngsters had influenced the public debate on Swedishness and multiculturalism for a while, research shows that in general terms mediated discrimination, biased representations and a general exclusion of minorities from the communicative space is an ongoing and serious problem in contemporary Sweden (Camauër 2006; Hultén 2006.)

Although the demographics of the two neighbouring countries differ remarkably in relation to the number of foreigners and people of immigrant origins, the results from empirical studies presented in this chapter and the results from empirical studies conducted in Sweden indicate that the obstacles hindering the enhancement of the ideal are quite similar in both countries.

The will for the communicative space to be more diverse and inclusive seems to exist – and has also in many cases been articulated in charters, acts, and codes. Despite the fact that the policies in a critical reading do not seem to be completely without problems, their core is still – in theory – directed at enhancing an ideal, culturally and an ethnically diverse, and inclusive communicative space. Documents affirm that cultural diversity shall be enhanced, access to media (both the media of one's own and the mainstream media) shall be provided, and the opportunity to participate in public debate shall be made available to everyone, regardless of ethnicity or culture. Yet when one looks at the grassroots level, the reality differs from the ideal, obstacles are often related to economic constraints, and journalistic routines and/or rigid views persist about the characteristics needed for inclusion into the “we-group”.¹⁸

In relation to the economic situation, policymakers and journalists must often face the provocative issue of how to provide tax-funded programmes to a small group of citizens when they are also being called upon to reduce expenditure. As for routines, journalists working under time-pressure and obeying strict deadlines seem unreflectively to use story-telling mechanisms that polarise and dichotomise. In addition, journalists seem to perceive the hierarchy of news sources as something to be taken for granted – a fixed system that simply cannot be challenged.

On a more philosophical level, rigid views about who should be included or excluded might partially indicate a fear of the failure of the Nordic welfare model. Inclusion in the “we-group” seems, for example, to be smoother if there are no concerns about the ability of the individual/group to support themselves economically. On a more prosaic level, the construction of a narrowly-defined “we-group” might also be influenced by the fact that the key figures generating public debate, such as journalists and politicians, have not grown up in a multicultural environment. They might live in the inner city and have few or no contacts at all with citizens of minority and/or immigrant backgrounds.

Still another obstacle hindering an ethnoculturally diverse communicative space to emerge is a certain lack of understanding between journalists and researchers in media and communication. Once again, recently observed, when a report critical of the manner in which the Finnish media reports on Islam (Raittila, Maasilta and Creutz 2007) was made public. The main newspaper in Finland, *Helsingin Sanomat*, published two news articles criticizing the report and interviewed a journalist who claimed fault-finding scholars were “armchair researchers” who understand very little about everyday journalistic work.

But what can be done to remove these obstacles, improve the situation and enhance the ideal? To empower ethnic minority members and included

them, not only in seemingly “tolerance promoting” and “pedestalising” media presentations, but also in a diverse and inclusive communicative space at large, a considerable and radical effort will be required by all agents in the network type of space. This effort will involve both researchers and policymakers to define ideals and the means for realising them; it will involve journalists and editors-in-chief, owners and advertisers in applying these ideals and making them compatible with the harsh demands of profit-making and a strained journalistic workload. It will also involve educators and publics in the need to learn how to become media-literate.

Not least, it will involve ethnic minority representatives in the need to express a desire to be visible and to express an opinion. Those expressing this desire have to be watchful so as not to claim to speak on behalf of individuals who do not identify with the community, although they might share the same ethnic or cultural background. Ethnic minority representatives would need to learn about the news values applied in mainstream media and journalists’ requirements of the validity of their sources.

Much of this activity would have to happen from the bottom up. When policies are formulated on a pan-European level, when service strategies are formulated by media companies, and when new awards for raising awareness are created, there should be strategies available for how to implement those policies in a way that is compatible with economic constraints and journalistic routine.

This goal cannot be accomplished without a more profound knowledge of newly immigrated minorities and issues concerning migration, integration and multiculturalism in general. Increased knowledge could be obtained by enhanced contacts between ethnic minority individuals and mainstream media journalists. In more theoretical terms this would strengthen the links between the different sub-arenas in the network type of communicative space, thus affirming its existence. Issues presented within minority media publications, on minority media Internet sites and on radio shows could – using participants ranging from individual actors to translate selected content to institutional actors, such as libraries to gather minority media publications – flow more easily from one sub-space to another through these intensified links, thus strengthening the network.

Since much of the motivation would come from below, it is also important that minority communities, and media publics in general, put pressure on the mainstream media, requiring visibility, a voice, and a fair representation for ethnic minorities.

In today’s Finland, it is not unusual that when minority subjects do get their voices heard in public, they express nothing but gratitude to Finnish society – for refuge, for education, for work, and so on. If minority representatives are unwilling to shed light on contemporary problems and social evils in public, then how will media publics, decision-makers, and journalists be able to engage in a dialogical debate on these issues? In a worst-case scenario, the situation contributes to the exact antithesis of how public debate should function according to deliberative democracy, namely, only élites will bring up matters to debate.

A significant proportion of the responsibility should also fall on another key group – researchers – who are required to be more than “armchair researchers”. They (we!) must lower the level of abstraction in their (our!) definitions of ideal communicative space and join in the public debate on what kind of communicative space would be the most fruitful for generating diversity and inclusiveness.

If representatives of all key groups (minority media journalists, civic activists, NGO’s, mainstream media journalists, media companies, regulatory boards, researchers, the Ombudsman for Minorities, and so on) worked together in close cooperation, then the goal would be more readily attained. The formation of a “Task force for minorities and media” – that was neither an initiative from the “top down” nor one from the “bottom up”, but something in between – would signify an even more direct and serious input in the attempt to achieve a more diverse and inclusive communicative space.

Notes

1. Habermas 1998. For questions concerning the unequal footing in the Habermasian public sphere, see Mouffe 1998 and Young 1998, 2002. See also the chapters by Hannu Nieminen and Kari Karppinen in this volume.
2. The discourses around this award are discussed critically by Karina Horsti (2009).
3. Besides these awards, there is a wide range of awards in different member states for programmes enhancing ethnic diversity and anti-racism. For instance, the German *CIVIS Europe* is a pan-European prize donated to a radio- and television programme enhancing multiculturalism and understanding across linguistic, ethnic, cultural, and/ or religious group “frontiers”. The CIVIS Media Prize Office in Cologne also offers information, documentation, and secondary contacts on the theme of cultural diversity in the media. (EUMC Annual Report 2004-2005, part 1 and COE 2007.)
4. One television channel, FST 5, two radio channels, and 11 daily, mainly regional and local, newspapers together with a few weeklies and quite a few periodicals serve the minority of around 300,000 inhabitants.
5. Almost all Swedish language programmes have Finnish subtitles on the FST5 channel, which also prevents a “sphericulic” communication situation from occurring.
6. In Finland, official statistics can be found only on the mother tongue, the place of birth, and citizenship.
7. More than 42,000 inhabitants speak Russian as their first language and over 17,000 speak Estonian (Statistics Finland 2006.)
8. Almost 9,000 people speak Somali as their first language (Statistics Finland 2006).
9. In Finland, there is talk of “old” and “new minorities”. The latter consists of the ancestors of the few thousand of Jews, Tatars, Roma, and so-called Old Russians who came to Finland from Russia at the end of the 19th century. These minorities are fully integrated into Finnish society, and, the traditional Roma minority being an exception, the old minorities do not differ visually from the majority population. None of the old minority groups is in a marginalised position because of their language skills and, thus, their access to information and their opportunity to express opinion, is not dependent on linguistic factors. By comparison, in connection with the new minorities, language is one important characteristic to consider when factors influencing the enhancement of the ideal are discussed.
10. For quantitative mapping, the research institutes gathered, photocopied, and analysed more than 5,000 articles in the Finnish language and over 1,200 in the Swedish-language featuring ethnic minorities and/or issues of multiculturalism and racism in relation to Finnish society. (Raittila and Vehmas 2005, Haavisto 2005b, 2007.)

11. Here, only articles on ethnicity, multiculturalism and/or racism in relation to Finnish society were selected. For a detailed encoding scheme, see Haavisto 2005b.
12. In the Swedish-language press these constitute 15 per cent of all article themes (Haavisto 2007: 96); in the Finnish-language press about 10 per cent (Raittila and Vehmas 2005: 16, and Haavisto 2007: 119).
13. The “pedestalisation process” in journalism (Haavisto 2008) can be seen as opposite to the exoticification of minorities. Here similarities to “us” are emphasised, not differences.
14. The Director of Strategy and Development at YLE, Ismo Silvo, however, maintains that the company particularly focuses on serving the Russian language minority in Finland. According to Silvo, one of the tangible outcomes of this aim will be the launching of Russian language television news in 2009. (Silvo 2008.)
15. I refer to minority professionals expressing opinion during the event *Uusia Helsinkiläisiä – kaikki hyvin?* (New Citizen of Helsinki: How Are You Doing?) organised by the daily newspaper Helsingin Sanomat in the International Cultural Centre Caisa in Helsinki on November 30, 2006.
16. The situation in Finland is not comparable to Sweden, since it is obviously easier to attract readers of immigrant background if the overall population of immigrants and foreigners is significant. There are about ten times more foreigners and immigrants in Sweden than in Finland. For a Nordic comparison, see Horsti 2008.
17. Journalist Carlos Rojas from *Gringo* discussed diversity and “Swedishness” with the Ministry of Education and Culture, Leif Pagrotsky, in Gothenburg, on 30 September 2005 (http://www.tunein.se/05/program_soffan.htm)
18. The belonging might unconsciously be negotiated through a series of questions posed, such as ‘Paying taxes?’, ‘Dressed in a ‘western’ way?’, ‘Valuing gender equality?’”

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This book brings together leading European specialists in theories of the public sphere, media and democracy. It explores current key problems of communication, democracy and diversity, and how these are intertwined as part of media practice. Integrating geographical, historical and multicultural approaches, it develops existing thought on *public sphere and democracy*. In particular, it focuses on three dimensions that reflect obstacles to the European democratic project.

In exploring the reality and content of the concept of a *European public sphere*, the book scrutinizes the concept's inherent values and norms as well as the nature of the for-

mation and structure of a transnational public sphere: its efficacy, legitimacy, and pluralism.

Examining media practices, journalistic cultures and the mediation of European issues in member states, it explores how the *European public sphere(s)* are actualized for its citizens.

Opening up the ethnic, cultural, and historical diversity of the continent, the book offers new approaches to the demands of modern European multiculturalism.

In each case, the apparent struggle between idealism and realism forces the authors to question, as well as to offer, new ways of understanding the integration process and its communicative edge.

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