U.S. and the Others

Global Media Images on "The War on Terror"

Stig A. Nohrstedt & Rune Ottosen (eds.)



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Editors:
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Introduction

Media and the 'War on Terror'

Birgitta Höijer, Stig A. Nohrstedt & Rune Ottosen

The immediate response from the USA to the horrendous terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, was to regard them as acts of war and to declare a global 'war on terrorism'. Jihad was met with "crusades", and the President of the USA warned countries harbouring terrorists that "either you are with us or you are with the terrorists". In so doing, not only was another "new war" proclaimed, with unforeseen political, economic and legal consequences, but a new global 'discursive order' (Fairclough, 1995) was also initiated that aimed at control of representations and communications. In short, the 'war on terrorism' was a propagandistic and rhetorical device for establishing power over meanings constructed and exchanged about September 11. Anything but support for the US leadership in this global war enterprise would be treated as anti-Americanism and as taking sides with the terrorists. Irrespective of the empathy and understanding that one has for strong and emotional reactions to these shocking and traumatic events, the strategic importance of the US official response must not be overseen. Not only should it be recalled that the President's National Security Council the very same day of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon discussed the situation as a window of opportunity to do away with the Taleban regime in Afghanistan as well as the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq (Woodward, 2002: 32, 83, 90, 282, 319). The strategic relevance is also not least evident when reflecting on the discourses in the media and elsewhere and on the opinion building in the aftermath of September 11. Never has the theoretical definition of discourses as communication *con* socio-political acts been as manifest and visible in practice as now.

The New (Global) Wars

It is evident, if not before September 11, 2001 so in any case after this date, that the world faces a new type of war, almost entirely different from previous wars in modern history. The basic conflict structure is not a confronta-

tion between nation states, but rather one between an international coalition of states and a loosely constructed and less nation state-based antagonist.

Another remarkable characteristic is that the battlefield is global. National borders are not relevant. Neither the terrorist onslaughts nor the response from the superpower respect national territorial borders as a limitation of their operations. Equally the new war has no time limits. It is even difficult to say when it started – whether it was on September 11, 2001, or in 1998, in connection with the attacks on the US embassies in Africa, or even earlier – not to mention the difficulties to predict when and how it will end. The New World Order, proclaimed by the former US President George Bush in connection with the Persian Gulf War 1990-91, is marked by a permanent struggle of unlimited and invisible frontlines.

As a consequence of these remarkable dimensions, distinctions like pre-war and post-war lack meaning, and the same goes for demarcations between war propaganda and opinion building in peacetime. Discursive discipline is urged and promoted by leaders in democratic states in a way we have hardly seen before, except during total war periods. And since this war seems to have no end, one can suspect that democracy, as we know it, is in real danger. This state of mental emergency has proliferated surprisingly quickly almost on a global scale and with worrying consent from political leaders in many democratic – and undemocratic – countries. Perhaps, we have not yet seen the final outcome of unconfirmed accusations against alleged terrorist collaborators and appeals for "responsible" journalism, and the tide might turn. But the degree to which pressure is put on communication – thoughts and opinion – makes independent journalism a threatened art and freedom of speech a mine field. One can suspect that the next phase in this dismantling of civic culture will imply demands that protesters against the World Bank, IMF, etc. will be defined and treated as terrorists.

In many ways the present situation is marked by problems of legitimacy. Mobilisation for the new war is not without problems, especially since it demands permanent enrolment by the constituencies. It is a remarkable situation because there is not only desperation in the air but also hope of eternal peace, and in both cases it has a lot to do with the notion of a New World Order. Beliefs that we are entering a new era have spread at least since the Persian Gulf War 1990-91, when the ex-President George Bush proclaimed the New World Order. He explained that in the world after 1989, violations of international law and crimes against human rights would no more be accepted. Dictators like Saddam Hussein would not find any safe havens neither behind territorial borders nor behind armed forces. The utopia is that all this is now possible to accomplish. The present President Bush expressed it soon after September 11: "I will seize the opportunity to achieve big goals. There is nothing bigger than to achieve world peace." (Woodward, 2002: 282) The threats against the good society can now eventually be exterminated. Hence, from a legitimacy point of view the present situation is rather strange where alarmist and utopian expectations concur in the public discourses. In the next paragraphs

we will bring up two prominent dimensions of the legitimacy problematique associated with how the 'war on terrorism' is pursued by the US Administration – dimensions that are also central for understanding the media discourses on this war and their places in relation to the global discursive order. The first is the issue of whether the actions taken in response to the terrorist attacks are in accordance with international law, i.e. the legality dimension of the legitimacy issue. The second deals with the humanitarian side of what is a legitimate warfare, i.e. the consequences for innocent civilians.

The New World Order and the Legal Theme: A Global Controversy?

During the Gulf War, President George Bush defined the global situation as "the New World Order". A significant part of this world order was that the USA through a UN mandate acted as a military global leader through the Coalition that eventually chased Iraq out of Kuwait. This "first stage" of the New World Order was replaced by a second stage when US and British forces implemented the "no-fly zones" (without a UN mandate) over the northern and southern part of Iraq in order to protect the Kurds and the Shiah Muslims respectively against Iraqi air-strikes. This diffuse transition from a UN mandate to a non-UN mandate has been used by US and British forces to put pressure on the regime of Saddam Hussein through military attacks on a number of occasions since the Gulf War (including some attacks on Baghdad) (Nohrstedt & Ottosen 2001). The third stage of the New World Order came when NATO went to war against Yugoslavia, without the authorisation of the UN, justifying it as a humanitarian intervention to stop ethnic cleansing of Kosovo Albanians, authorised by President Milosevic (Nohrstedt, Höijer & Ottosen 2002). The 'war on terrorism', declared by President George W. Bush, could be analysed as a fourth stage of the New World Order with the following features:

1. The UN Security Council Declaration 1368, which later was claimed to authorise the use of force as self-defence (according to the Norwegian expert on international law, professor Geir Ulfstein, the resolution itself did not authorise the use of force).
2. Implementation of Article 5 in the NATO Charter (declaring that an attack on one NATO member should be regarded as an attack on the whole alliance) for the first time in history as a basis for the bombing of Afghanistan on 7 October.
3. The new US defence strategy claiming the right and obligation to take military action against foreign forces that are potential threats to the USA; the principle of so-called 'pre-emptive war'.
4. The interpretation of international law that possession of weapons of mass destruction is a threat to humankind and international peace, and in consequence a legitimate basis for military intervention.

5. Change in domestic legislation to make the war on terrorism more efficient in the USA through the introduction of military tribunals as a replacement for ordinary court cases against suspected terrorists. The military tribunals have secret negotiations and verdicts with lower demands for proof and legal procedures than ordinary trials.

This fourth stage of the New World Order has vast impact on the discussion of the legal basis for the war against Afghanistan (and later against Iraq). Furthermore it has crucial bearings on the media, first with respect to the practical relationship between the authorities and the media, and second with regard to the media coverage of issues like access to sources, censorship on a global scale and the propaganda launched to defend the war on terrorism.

The New World Order and Global Compassion

Globally circulated images of the collapsing WTC twin towers and the persons falling to a certain death created an enormous shock and empathy for the innocent victims and their relatives, not only in the USA but all over the world. These visual representations of the horror had such remarkable impact as they showed something completely unforeseen and at the same time recalled visual pictures from well-known Hollywood films. But whatever the psychological mechanisms, there is no doubt that these images had a deep resonance in a media tradition of increased concern for human agony in distant places. This growing global compassion is also a trend that has affected the role of the media in military conflicts. When it comes to September 11 and its aftermath with the war in Afghanistan, the tight relation between war propaganda and pity for innocent victims – either in New York, Kabul or in both places – becomes extremely clear.

Since the end of the Cold War, politicians in the West alternate between the rhetoric of political ideologies or power interests and the rhetoric of human rights and global compassion when motivating international intervention. In order to claim legitimacy in the name of the UN Charter the interventions are said to be necessary to stop crimes against humanity (for criticism of such claims see Chomsky, 1999). Further, when the USA and Britain started their bombings of Afghanistan in order to defeat the Talebans and Osama Bin Laden they tried to bridge over the inhibit contradiction between violence and compassion by simultaneously drop humanitarian aid in the form of food bombs. US aircrafts dropped 37,500 yellow food packages over Afghanistan in order to be seen as the Good Samaritan (Reuters News, 9 Oct 2001). A military victory would not be enough: "The US must also win a global war of hearts and minds. If the first wave of allied aircrafts over Afghanistan carried food, not bombs, Mr Bush might claim a resounding moral victory". (http//:www.guardian.co.uk/weblog/special/0,10627,559063,00.html)

The discourse of global compassion has expanded and developed in the interplay between politics, the media, audience/citizens, and humanitarian organisations in connection with international conflicts. There is an increased political willingness to pay attention to internal national conflicts and civil wars with victims among the civilian population – at least some conflicts and civil wars – and to see them as threats to global security (Minear, Scott & Weiss, 1996). Through extensive media coverage, images of distant suffering have become part of ordinary citizens' perceptions of conflicts and crises in the world. Further, humanitarian non-governmental organisations have been growing in number and membership and they have attained more prominent positions in the West (Tvedt, 1993).

We shall not try to find the hen and the egg in the development of global compassion because there is a complex interplay of factors behind it rather than a linear causal chain of relationships. Anyway, media coverage seems to be something of a driving force in the development, influencing both the public and the politicians. Especially television with its reach and visual impact plays a key role in the fostering of a collective global compassion. Photographic pictures are often perceived as truthful depictions of reality. As audience we feel as if we see the innocent victims of the violence with our own eyes, and the pictures become evidence of the suffering.

The importance of global compassion, from a propaganda strategy point of view, is revealed in the continuous struggle around visual images of civilian casualties and sufferings in wars. In some conflicts, e.g. the Gulf War 1990-91, the suffering of the people disappeared in the news reports, whereas in the Kosovo conflict, reports about civilians explain the propaganda crisis that NATO ran into after a couple of weeks of the bombing campaign (Nohrstedt, Höijer & Ottosen, 2002). On the whole, however, news media are to a greater extent than before focusing on civilian populations as victims of conflicts and wars. Studies show an increased exposure of pictures of human suffering in television news, and that the visual presentations have become more lurid (Cronström, 2000; Höijer, 1994; 1996). The camera explores faces twisted in pain, or lingers on wounds and bloody bandages, it zooms in on broken and mutilated limbs, or pools of blood, and the injured are not soldiers but ordinary people. The pictures may invite the audience to moral empathy at a distance, but they can also be rejected and met by ignorance.

According to the moral ideals of the humanitarian organisations there should be no social boundaries for qualifying as a victim worthy of help. However, in international politics as well as in the media, many victims never qualify as *worthy victims*. The hundreds of thousands of victims of the civil wars in Liberia and Sudan in the middle of the 1990s are two "forgotten" examples discussed by Minear, Scott and Weiss (1996). Chomsky (1999) asks why the Western Powers do not pay attention to the Kurdish victims in Turkey, and there are many more examples, such as Sierra Leone, Burundi, Ethiopia and Eritrea. That some victims are worthier, i.e. conceived as deserving our empathy more than others, was apparent when the victims of the terror attack on the WTC were

honoured by compassion-filled moments of silence in governments, working places and the streets of most European countries.

That the ideal victim is a cognitive and cultural construction also becomes apparent if we consider the victim status of gender and age categories, such as women and children. It is not until recent times that male soldiers' systematic rapes of civil women from the enemy side are being condemned. Today women are often seen as helpless in a violent situation, deserving our empathy. A child is, however, the most ideal victim in the perspective of compassion. When a child shows his/her feelings by crying or by a sad look we may feel pity, both by way of revival of being open and left out to the treachery of adulthood, and by our adult identity of protecting the child. Fears that the media will expose such pictures also from the enemy side and affect public opinion may be great. In the Afghanistan War, American authorities put pressure on the media to refrain from reporting about civilian casualties and suffering so as not to adversely affect the public support for the bombings. The chairman of CNN instructed its staff that if such news were going to be broadcast, they should balance the reporting of victims in Afghanistan with reminders of the victims of the terror attack on the WTC and the Pentagon (Ottosen, 2002).

According to Ignatieff (1998), the shame of the Holocaust is the breeding ground for the development of a moral universalism, which focuses on innocent victims of political violence. The roles of the UN and UNESCO should, of course, not be underestimated, but there are also many thousands of non-governmental humanitarian organisations helping suffering people in the world. Boltanski (1999) goes further back in history in his understanding of what he names 'the politics of pity'. However, in the same way as Ignatieff, he claims that the last twenty years of development of non-governmental humanitarian organisations "is something new" (Boltanski, 1999: xiii). Johnstone (2000: 15) also notes the growth in humanitarian engagement in the West: "As political parties have declined, the creative centre of the old liberal left has shifted to single-issue and humanitarian non-governmental organisations". The apolitical character of such organisations may even be a reason for their attraction. They are in their philanthropic and altruistic messages and practices raised above the power game and hypocrisy of ordinary politics. They are in the service of humanity, they always side with the victims, and they appeal to our most noble feelings – compassion and altruism.

With their ethos, the humanitarian organisations are important actors in the political and propaganda battles associated with the war on terrorism. They may both be the media sources that mobilise help for people in severe need to the extent that they encourage military "humanitarian" intervention, and the witnesses of civilian sufferings at the onset of war. Besides they have also an organisational economic self-interest on their agenda, which makes them interested in media attention. All this makes the global compassion discourse a relevant, but also very complicated, backdrop for studies of the media coverage of September 11 and the Afghanistan War.

The Controversy on Journalistic Positions: Martin Bell vs John Pilger

By introducing the concept of 'journalism of attachment' Martin Bell summarises his professional position as a war correspondent after covering the civil war in Bosnia (Bell 1995). This was the latest of numerous wars Bell had covered throughout his life-long career as a journalist for the BBC. In the book *In Harms Way*, Bell rules out the possibility or need for "objectivity" in war reporting. After seeing all the suffering in the Balkans during the civil wars in former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, Bell concludes that the cruelty will not stop just because it is made known through the media. It did not stop the Serbs from continuing to massacre civilians, including the mass killings of 8,000 in Srebrenica. After the whole world for four years had watched Sarajevo being terrorised by snipers and numerous attacks by Serb military positions from the hills around the city, Martin Bell made the choice to define his goal as a journalist to support a military offensive by NATO to stop the killings of innocent civilians. To his mind, this was the only ethically correct position, both as a journalist and a human being. His reasoning was followed by Michael Ignatieff and other intellectuals supporting the concept of 'humanitarian intervention'. (Ignatieff 1993)

By taking this position, Bell openly opposes colleagues like John Pilger who insists on continuing their criticism of great power politics also in times of war. Pilger supports Noam Chomsky's analysis of 'humanitarian intervention' as a propaganda slogan for great power hegemonism (Chomsky 1999). Pilger claims that the media, simply by referring to the official positions in a given way, will fall in the "propaganda-trap" by not revealing what "the real interest" of great powers are in international conflicts, including their own economic interests like oil, trade and securing the investments of financial centres. From this position, Pilger opposes the warfare of NATO both in Yugoslavia in 1999 and Afghanistan in 2001/2002 and uses his position as a journalist to fight against them.

The "truths" of John Pilger and Martin Bell are quite different. Bell calls for national consensus and common action to serve humanity. To Pilger's mind, the US's great power policy is the root of the problem and can be no part of the solution to serve humanity on a global scale.

As in journalism generally, issues like referring the truth and being open about the truth claimed by others can be shared as a common platform in ethically valid positions also in war journalism. But "the common truth" can be quite a challenge when journalists must judge historical development and its forces, without considering right or wrong from a universal point of view. Or when facing opposite perspectives and conflicting sources or being put under government pressure for "loyalty" during times of crisis. In addition there are potential cross-cultural conflicts involved. Will it be possible for Muslims in the Middle East and Christians in the US, angered by the events of September 11, to share the "truth" about the developments in the Middle East or the "need" to bomb Afghanistan in the hunt for terrorists. In his book

Orientalism, Edward Said explains how the West throughout history has interpreted events through the glasses of our colonial past, with our own narrow perspectives coloured by our understanding of the "truth". Quite differently from the "truth" of the people living there, with the perception of the West as the colonial oppressors rather than "freedom fighters" (Said, 1978). On the other hand, there are Muslims in the Middle East who, angered by the US support for Israel and oppression of the Palestinians, are willing to understand and in some cases even defend horrible acts like the ones we witnessed on September 11. In the West such examples might again be used to generalise how "Muslims" feel and think. This can in turn be used for propaganda reasons to justify preparations for a military solution to conflicts that could potentially be solved through dialogue and negotiations. In his journalistic position, John Pilger will argue that the media must open the eyes of the public and show them the "hidden agenda".

Perhaps both Bell and Pilger underestimate their public? Our experiences from discussions in focus groups show that the public tend to both feel sympathy for civilians and be suspicious of government propaganda and the media reporting (i.e. Nohrstedt, Höijer & Ottosen, 2002). Perhaps neither Bell nor Pilger can offer them the journalism that can qualify as a tool in an ethical global discourse? Both are exponents of a Western debate. Must not journalism aim at a global outlook in order to be relevant from a universal moral point of view?

A global discourse ethic could be used to define a platform for common understanding of complex conflict issues. The purpose of this book is to discuss how the media will affect the ethical issues at stake. We know that the media will play an active role in global events. Through the project *Journalism in the New World Order*, we have documented that the media to some extent reflect the policy in a given country. Journalists are coloured by the foreign policy as defined by his or her government and will feel pressure to be loyal in times of crisis (Nohrstedt & Ottosen 2001). But this is not "law" – there are lots of examples of journalists who refuse to simply be a propaganda tool for the government. To our mind, this is not only possible but should be an essential part of a global discourse ethic. It goes without saying, that if journalists are to be able to avoid the propaganda traps, they cannot simply shut their eyes but will seriously have to consider the way in which propaganda strategies both exploit and counteract the compassion discourse in the new wars.

Challenges for War Propaganda in the New Wars

The New World Order became concrete in connection with the Gulf War 1990-91. The President of the USA at the time, George Bush, proclaimed an international new context after the end of the Cold War, an order in which international justice and human rights should be guaranteed. This rhetoric

and its visions created new legitimacy conditions for the international community and armed interventions against genocide, ethnic cleansing and terrorism. Partly it signalled a preparedness of the only remaining superpower to adjust the balance between the principles of national sovereignty and international law enforcement for the benefit of the latter. Partly, it emphasised the demands that such interventions should be accomplished with complete adherence to current legal principles and respect for human rights. Accordingly, the vision about a New World Order on the one hand implied a promise that a higher moral should rule the international society, and on the other hand it concurrently implied an automatically increased sensitivity for critique concerning lack of realisation and selectivity in the implementation of this moral. This two-sided legitimacy situation becomes extremely evident in connection with the expression 'humanitarian intervention' (and its implementation). For war propaganda, this means that reports on what journalists like to phrase "the true face of the war", i.e. civilian casualties and suffering, will be a dangerous threat to its credibility when the casualties and suffering are caused by one's own troops. The change can be illustrated in the following way. While in previous wars it was essential to keep "body bags" with fallen soldiers from one's own side away from the media agenda if the public opinion support was to be gained, in the new wars it is rather reports about innocent civilian victims on the opposite side of the conflict that must be avoided – at least in the media.

The internal discursive relations between the legal theme, i.e. the legality of the military operations, and the humanitarian theme, i.e. human agony and compassion, respectively are in this legitimacy situation decisive for the outcome of the propaganda war and opinion struggle. At the same time these discursive relations are not given *a priori* but they are on the contrary something that is constructed and changed in interaction between various discourses: propaganda, media content and compassion. A basic conflict line seems to antagonise between, on the one hand, the attempts by the propaganda strategists to withhold from the public stories about innocent victims of the international community's (read the big Western powers') military operations and, on the other hand, the journalists' ambitions to draw attention to human suffering, irrespective of whether it is inflicted by one or the other of the conflicting parties. For the former there is a strong interest to channel attention and compassion so that the public will support the war efforts and the propaganda. The unilateral implementation of the Geneva Convention by the USA with the implication that journalists who report unpleasant information about innocent victims are themselves attacked by military force is a worrying response to this situation. Even more alarming to independent war journalism, to freedom of information and to democracy, is the neglect by journalists and the media to report about these dangers. If *they* will not tell how journalists are selected as military targets, how will the general public ever be able to support their right to report?

Conditions for War Journalism in the New World Order

There can hardly be any doubts about late-modern society being marked by globalisation processes in many respects. The media and new information and communication technologies are of great importance to this development – most globalisation theorists agree that new media, like satellite television and the Internet, are the decisive agents in these processes. The news industry is of key importance here and the total transnational flow of news has increased substantially over the last decades. As media consumers we are simply offered more information than ever before about what is happening in foreign countries. Technically there is more international information available than ever before. It is remarkable, however, that the big news companies are continuously degrading their resources for foreign news coverage (McPhail, 2002: 10; Winseck, 2002; Kunkel, 2001). Particularly the resources on foreign correspondents stationed abroad have been cut over the last decades. These two, as it seems, contradictory tendencies need to be explained. This is not the place for in-depth investigations of the economic rationale behind them. Suffice it to say that the flow of transnational news has grown quicker and much more than the number of permanent correspondents, which has been possible because of increased integration and concentration of the news industry globally. Also, stringers and other external news sources, for example on the Internet, have gained importance as low-cost providers of news.

Here we are more concerned about the consequences of these processes for the news media as public spheres. Few actors in the international media sector have the economic capacity to report world-wide, and the danger of oligopolies controlling the global flow of news is evident. What about pluralism and global understanding in a world where CNN and a few other media giants are the main sources of foreign news for the media in almost all corners of the global village? Is the transnational news market approaching a stage in history when news editors in the only remaining superpower are framing the views on world events produced in the "global news room" (Cohen, et al., 1996)? Or will the client media companies at the receiving end transform the news according to their taste and tradition? In some analysts' diagnosis, the commercial and consumerist media culture in its neoliberal shape has made globalisation a totalising ideology for the corporate capital (Mattelart, 2002). Increased integration between countries and cultures, but for whose interests and worldviews?

If it is true that the American media have a framing effect on news media in other countries, what about the traumatic shock that seems to have burned its marks on the way in which September 11 was discursively constructed in the US (Zelizer & Allan, 2002)? Did the media elsewhere also report on the terrorist attacks in a state of trauma? Or were distant media emotionally and analytically uninvolved? One way of approaching these issues is to study the way in which various aspects and the legitimacy discourses are present

in the media from various countries. In this volume, therefore, we have gathered contributions from authors with extraordinary experience and knowledge from "the media war on terrorism". They bring attention to a wide variety of aspects and media, but reading them together, in addition to them offering specific knowledge, also makes it possible to find out whether the legality theme and the humanitarian theme are handled differently in media from different countries. Do the American media show a more traumatic attitude, i.e. are they more narrowly framed and controlled by the alleged national US interests than other media?

Content of the Book

In the following chapters there are many suggestions as to how media discourses in the USA and other countries constructed the relationship between the public and the victims of the terrorist attacks, as well as to the responses from the US Government. The central theoretical question is what kind of transnational contingencies emerged from the way in which the attacks and the subsequent situation were described by the President of the USA and his Cabinet. What could have been said and what was actually said in a situation which was polarised to the extreme by statements that those who are not with the USA are against her? And exactly how was it said? Accusations of anti-Americanism have flourished when the historical background of the terrorist attacks has been addressed. Even European intellectuals and editors in countries with a history of close links to the American society have banned discussions about the roots of the hate and enmity expressed in the terror of September 11. Excommunication of these topics seems to be a crucial characteristic of a discursive order that was established by two elements in the US Administration's immediate response to the attacks. Namely, that they were declared (a) acts of war, and (b) directed at all free and democratic societies. Besides the legal implications of the first element, i.e. point a, the discursive state of emergency that it created was crucial as well. The disciplinary effect of this cannot be overestimated. Implied is a command to rally behind the US President in his role as leader of the civilised world, and, even more importantly, the declaring of any critique as support of terrorism. In short, a polarised and propagandistic discursive order was rhetorically constructed which placed any opposition to the US leadership in a disadvantaged position. One of the central questions that this book discusses is to what extent this order also became global.

In the first part both personal and official responses to the September 11 terrorist attacks are reported and discussed. In his chapter, Toby Miller tells about his personal feelings living in Manhattan, but also reveals his frustration about the public discourse in the USA when it comes to putting the emotions and the horrifying events into perspective. From other chapters in

the book we may reflect upon his hope that the media and intellectuals from outside the USA will be supportive in contributing those wider public spheres for discussions that Miller calls for, and hence whether the media outside the USA provide an answer to his intriguing question on what terrorism we are supposed to fight. Noam Chomsky addresses the legality theme in the next chapter. Here, as in many other contributions to debates about the US foreign policy that he has made over the years, he indeed exemplifies the vitality of the American critical intellectuals. With a retrospective view on the first 'war on terror' under the Reagan Administration, Chomsky brings up the historical background to the horror of September 11. Not only with respect to experiences and feelings in less developed parts of the world, but also in regard to what previous "responses" have led to. In some detail he clarifies how deeply involved the US authorities themselves are in the prehistory of the terrorism that struck Manhattan and the Pentagon the very same day, only twenty-eight years later, as the coup d'état in Chile 1973. Robert Fisk, a well-known British journalist who has covered many wars, reports about an incident in Pakistan, where he was physically abused by Afghanistan refugees who probably believed he was, if not President George W. Bush himself at least an American official. Besides sharing a moment of grim journalistic reality with us, his article is a remarkable example of empathy and personal courage in solidarity with the casualties of the war in Afghanistan. No wonder some colleagues have become furious about Fisk's attitude, which has been interpreted as moral relativism of a sort bordering on total cultural submission and treason. In the second part analyses of the coverage of September 11 in American media are presented. The first one is a chapter by the senior scholar and peace researcher, Johan Galtung, presenting a scheme for studies of alternative conflict discourses. Thus, his central concern is to argue for the possibility of discursive pluralism even in the post-September 11 situation. Furthermore, Galtung suggests some general conclusions from surveying the international press. Particularly interesting is his remark that in connection with the one year anniversary there is little compassion with the US internationally, except in Israel. From this conclusion follows, we believe, an urgent suggestion for media research to explore more in-depth the dynamics and development of war journalism. The next three chapters concentrate on the US media discourses. Ivar Iversen compares news magazines' images of evil in conjunction with the Oklahoma bombing in 1995 and September 11, 2001, respectively. How is the killing of 167 innocent citizens by an ex-veteran explained by the media compared to their description of September 11? Iversen elaborates on the constructions of evil in these two cases and the ways in which these constructs are related to stereotypical views of different peoples and cultures. In her article, Karmen Erjavec discusses the risk discourse in the US news magazine *Newsweek* in connection with September 11. She reveals how this kind of discourse supported the Anti-Terror Act, especially its most troubling measures: the surveillance of new technology. In their study, Patrick Martin and Sean Phelan compare

the way history is alluded to in mainstream television news and in online discussions on the CNN message board respectively. Consequently, this chapter brings some empirical findings to the general discussion whether new media represent another public sphere with democratic values neglected by the major television companies.

The third part of the book consists of analyses of European media discourses. These texts offer perspectives on the complex and complicated relations between, on the one hand, the US Administration's attempt to set up a global discursive order in accord with its interests, and, on the other hand, the more distanced discourses in countries with different affiliations with the US in the past. Rune Ottosen raises central ethical issues brought to the fore by the terror attacks on the WTC and the Pentagon. Firstly, the meta-ethical question whether any common ground for legitimate responses to terrorism is plausible in the New World Order with the hegemonic USA promoting unilateralism. Secondly, how war journalism should realise its professional claims when there is no common epistemology based on universal truth claims, but rather a dominant trend in mainstream media to support the war propaganda from the government. A study of editorials in two leading Norwegian newspapers indicates ambivalence and even critique against the US Administration for its lack of effort in seeking international support for its interpretations of international law. The Greek media discourse is assessed by Sophia Kaitatzi-Whitlock and Dimitra Kehagia with special emphasis on the history of US involvement in South-East Europe and the Middle East. Against this backdrop the terrorist attacks are explained with references to conditions in the world – poverty, famine, desperation and contempt – which, according to the Greek media, the USA is responsible for. Kaitatzi-Whitlock and Kehagia further point out some remarkably clear-sighted prognoses of what September 11 could lead to, in particular for the relations between the European Union and the USA. While the Greek media seem to explore the relative independence of national perspectives in relation to the US global discursive order, the Irish media exemplify the pressure to avoid any neutral standpoint in the 'war on terrorism' in the study conducted by Sean Phelan. Whereas several of the contributors to part three vindicate the importance of the national historical and political context for media discourses in their analyses of the coverage in relation to the nation state level, the study by Greg McLaughlin and Stephen Baker has a sub-national context focus. Media discourses in mainstream and opposition media in Northern Ireland are compared, where the latter are represented by the republicans' and the loyalists' media. McLaughlin and Baker show how deeply "global events" are inscribed into local conflicts and vice versa. Then again, in a study of how the Swedish broadcasting company, Sveriges Radio (SR), reported on September 11, Marina Ghersetti finds a massive pro-US predominance in the news material. Her project was initiated after the SR reporting had been criticised for being anti-American. In fact, this accusation came from members of the SR board. However, the results showed the opposite. That

the SR nevertheless was accused of anti-Americanism could be an indication of a totalitarian tendency in the global discursive order. When the study was made public in Sweden, hardly any news media mentioned the findings or even that the report existed. Ethical principles of journalism have been discussed in relation to the media images of the terrorist attacks, for example by Ottosen. Also Anders Johansson discusses ethical matters, but in his case from the angle of crisis communication. Swedish society has been spared from close encounters with terrorism. Therefore, it may be expected that September 11 should have been a wake-up call for consequential ethical reasoning among journalists. Johansson's interviews with editors in major Swedish news media indicate however that they did not seriously conceive of Sweden as involved in the war on terrorism, whatever measure they took in the news narratives to raise the audience's attention to the global dimensions of the terrorist threat. In his chapter, Peter Berglez provides a theoretical discussion about the discursive relations between the US political hegemony and the media coverage in Slovenia and Sweden. Although he does not use the term anti-Americanism, his reflections on identification and disidentification in the media reports clearly contribute to a deeper understanding of the discursive mechanisms that were released by the 'war on terrorism'. He further argues that even rather ambivalent images of the US are blocked from supporting a systematic critique of the hegemonic role of the superpower as the guarantor of the present world order.

Part four includes two final chapters dealing more specifically with how the Afghanistan War, as a major military response from the USA to September 11, was depicted in the media. Elisabeth Eide takes a cultural perspective in her comments when analysing stereotypes that more often than not give the media war its propagandistic slants. In the international and Norwegian media that she studies, several myths about the Afghanistan War are paramount; one being that the bombs were aimed at liberating the women of this poor country. The urgent globalisation question which ends her article, i.e. whether the media in small countries like Norway shall be confident with reporting global issues in provincial manners, is a memento both to media researchers and journalists. Finally, Jörg Becker compares the German and the Turkish media coverage of the war on terror and reflects on issues like self-censorship in the media, repression of critical journalism in the USA and the relation between propaganda and the entertainment industry. He questions the legality of the war in Afghanistan and criticises the lack of respect for § 80a in the German penal code, by which public incitement to an aggressive war is to be penalised.

This volume has unfortunately been limited to American and European media. Our ambition from the outset was to include contributions from other parts of the world, but we failed basically due to lack of contacts with scholars outside the so-called "first world". This is even more regrettable because the intention was that this book would be an exception to the usual Western-centred perspectives in most media studies on international conflicts.

Hopefully the next book, a volume about media discourses in a number of countries on the Iraqi War 2003, will be more successful in that respect. In the coming book we will also elaborate more thoroughly on three urgent issues that we will only mention here with a few brief comments. The first question has to do with the concept 'global discursive order' and its empirical relevance and normative value. On the one hand the studies reported in this volume indicate that there is no such thing as a homogeneous conception of September 11 and the war on terrorism. Media in different countries vary with respect to framing, tendency and reflexivity. On the other hand, however, there is in this book plenty of evidence that at least in European media this was considered a global event with widespread ramifications and great attention in many parts of the world. We also see indications of a discursive force being released by the US leaders as they proclaimed war and urged the international community to join in the struggle against terrorism. A preliminary conclusion would be that in their implications, these declarations established a discursive order of a global magnitude. The second question refers to the consequences of this discursive order for the safety of war correspondents. Here one arrives at reflections about propaganda effects, not only on the way in which events and conflicts are reported, but rather on matters of life and death for those who are appointed to report on them. In the present volume, this discussion has been left aside for the sake of space. There are nevertheless reasons to fear that a discursive order with a totalitarian tendency, like the war on terrorism, sets the ground for – official or not – definitions of media personnel as military targets, when they annoy or put obstacles in the way for war propaganda from the superpower. The NATO attack on the TV building in Beograd in 1999 during the Kosovo War and the American attack on the office of the Arabian TV channel Al Jazeera in Kabul in 2001 are signs of a practice that aims at curtailing information about civilian casualties on the other side from the public. The fourth estate-role of the media, which is highly saluted in liberal ideology and political rhetoric, risks being replaced by the media as the fourth arm of the military forces. Thirdly, the war on terrorism as a global discursive order calls into question the possibility for public opinion to take a reasoned stance in political issues of great international and national importance. When a majority of the American population is made to believe in unverified accusations, such as the Saddam Hussein regime being involved in the September 11 terrorist acts and hiding weapons of mass destruction in spite of negative results from the UN inspectors, as recent opinion polls indicated a couple of months after the Iraqi War 2003, then the global village must, like Toby Miller, turn its hope to spheres of the global discursive order mainly outside the USA.

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Chapter 1

Being Ignorant, Living in Manhattan[1]

Toby Miller

> George Bush is the President, he makes the decisions, and, you know, as just one American, [if] he wants me to line up, just tell me where – Dan Rather, CBS News anchor, *Late Night with David Letterman* September 17 2001 (quoted in Navasky 2002: xv)
>
> Television is equivalent to a campfire in the days … [when] the wagon trains were making their way westward and there was a catastrophe on the trail. Some people pulled the wagons around, and sat down and discussed what was going on and tried to understand it – Peter Jennings, ABC News anchor re domestic coverage of September 11 2001 (quoted in Zelizer and Allan, 2002b: 3-4)
>
> [I]n the American media … coverage has tended to be very emotional … emotions are normal … but when the press becomes very emotional I have problems. ... It's become extremely patriotic to the point of being jingoistic sometimes, and I think this is a serious problem … the patriotism, the flag-waving that has been done in the context of what is supposed to be news reporting I think has been very problematic. When you have people on cable TV – I won't mention names – talking about "the bad guys," I have a problem with that … people who commit terrorism are more than bad guys, they're criminal, immoral people. … But when the news media covers these people I think it needs to use more careful and measured language. The American media I find has been engaged in a lot of sloganeering, easy, simple phrases. It has followed the lead of the president … to try to paint this as a one-dimensional, stereotypical contest of black and white, of good and evil, of right and wrong, of moral and immoral – Rami Khouri, Jordanian journalist (in Hudson *et al*., 2002)
>
> A recent poll tells us that one in two Americans now believe Saddam [Hussein] was responsible for the attack on the World Trade Center. But the American public is not merely being misled. It is being browbeaten and kept in a state of ignorance – John Le Carré, British novelist (2003)

The jingoism of Rather in the quotation above is matched only by the twee reference to a history of dispossession made by his rival Jennings. Together,

these remarks indicate the bizarre blend of hyper-emotionalism and mythic folksiness that have displaced critical analysis from mainstream US television – yet Rather's words were acclaimed by some US media professionals as signs of a renewal of journalism (Zelizer and Allan, 2002b: 5)! In the spirit of Khouri's and Le Carré's concerns, this paper seeks to explain the conditions of existence of such banal but tellingly dangerous comments.

The paper was written for a special session of the International Association for Media and Communication Research, held in Barcelona in the northern summer of 2002. Under the guidance of Chair Carlos Barrera, a panel looked at three events of world-historical significance that had occurred on September 11: in 1714, the loss of an independent Barcelona at the end of the War of Succession; in 1973, the loss of democracy in Chile through the *golpe* against Salvador Allende's government; and in 2001, the loss of the World Trade Center in New York City via the use of civilian airplanes. These events have more in common than chronological coincidence. They also shared violent loss of life and the introduction or solidification of regimes of domination. But the three traumas are in different historical and methodological frames. My colleagues on the panel, professors Jaume Guillamet and Patricio Bernedo, addressed these two earlier moments through a combination of political history and textual analysis, whereas I was more interpretative, as you will see.

In the case of 1714, we know enough about the consequences of the event to assign it a full historical significance, and to see its effects on everyday life in Catalunya. But primary documents, sources of memory and testimony, are not so available. For its part, 1973 still has many hidden aspects – understanding what it meant for Latin American politics and the role of the US, and deciphering truth from falsehood in the actions of the fascists who are still alive. The documents and the memory are there, but so is the guilt, and hence the obstructionism. By contrast, 2001 is very, very close to our own time. And there is almost too much information available – a vast array of testimony, an unparalleled media archive of a highly specific event. But the *significance* of that event is unclear. Hence the need for interpretation, and hence my title. For unlike those present in Barcelona in 1714 and Chile in 1973, many of us who were actually in Manhattan in 2001 seem to understand very little indeed.

I

I remember September 11 1973. I was in my parents' rented London studio, just after returning from a couple of months in the US. I turned on the radio and learnt of the brutal *golpe* that, we came to realize, Washington had engineered in order to remove the elected government of the Chilean people. Now by that stage, everyone knew about Watergate and Vietnam. A combination of the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* had revealed as much. But the clear and present involvement of the US in these latest events seemed

unlikely to many people who were far-removed from Chile. It took revelations about the astonishing acts of brutality funded, supported, and undertaken by Washington across Central America throughout the 1980s to convince ordinary folks in the US of something that most of the world had long held as an article of faith – that Yanqi governments and corporations take as a self-ascribed divine right that they may intervene in the political economy of all Third World nations in any way and at any time that the US deems fit.

When added to the Watergate and South-East Asian affairs, those extraordinary revelations made it clear that a country which advertised itself as the world's greatest promise of modernity had turned itself into an imperialist shop of horrors dedicated to translating its own national legacy, a brutal nineteenth-century regime of clearance, genocide, and enslavement, into a foreign economic policy with similar effects and, at times, methods – freedom at the price of destruction, a modernity built, as each successful one has been, on brutality. But now that this is public knowledge, its shock value seems to have diminished. It is actually beyond politics, and its links to the horrendous violence that founded and sustains the US are lost to the minds of the public. Just as Yanqis remember the Western as a movie genre where there might be awareness of Native American history, so they think of Latin Americans wishing to enter the US as self-interested economic migrants where we might understand them in the light of US imperialism, strong-arm anti-democratic tactics, and industrial exploitation. How could a country with a million warriors across four continents, battleships in each key ocean, and a much-vaunted desire to mount wars on two international fronts at the same time as ensuring domestic security be said to have lost its "innocence" on 11 September? Something is rotten in the state of empire.

This forgetfulness is matched by an extraordinarily inadequate US political system. It lacks both competent media practice and a tradition of Cabinet responsibility to ensure governmental accountability, other than over questions of personal morality. How astonishing that within a matter of a few weeks in 2002, the US could oversee another *golpe* in Latin America, this time a failure in Venezuela, with no political impact whatsoever on Washington, while in the Netherlands, a Prime Minister resigned because the Dutch army had failed to protect folks in Srebrenica seven years earlier (Osborn and Brown, 2002). Why did Bush not resign after the revelations about Venezuela? Why were there no calls in the media for sanctions against his Cabinet and advisors, at the very least? Why are there no effective traditions of responsibility in the executive government, given all that even the most supine observer has seen over the past thirty years? All the work of Watergate and the *Pentagon Papers* was gone, forgotten, part of history. It had become one more moment in the United States' convenient ongoing amnesia of its own duplicity and brutality.

II

Twenty-eight years after Chile, I was living in Manhattan. Having worked late the night of September 10 2001, I was awoken the next morning by a plane right overhead. That happens sometimes. I have long expected a crash when I've heard the roar of jet engines so close – but I didn't this time. Often when that sound hits me, I get up and go for a run down by the water, just near Wall Street. Something kept me back that day. Instead, I headed for my laptop. Because I cannot rely on the local media to tell me very much about the role of the US in world affairs,[2] I was reading *The Guardian* on-line when it flashed a report about the planes. I looked up at the calendar above my desk to see whether it was April 1st – April Fool's Day. Truly.

Then I gave myself over to television, like so many others around the world, even though in my case, these events were happening only two kilometers away. I wanted to hear official word, but there was just a huge absence. George W Bush was busy learning to read in Florida, then leading from the front in Louisiana and Nebraska. Finally, I went out to see people leaping from buildings that then fell to rubble. As the day wore on, I tried to call my daughter in London and my father in Canberra, but to no avail, as the phones didn't work. Visiting a Palestinian friend, I got through to Illinois, and asked an ex-*novia* to telephone England and Australia and report in on me. The Palestina managed to ring relatives on the West Bank. Israeli tanks had commenced a bombardment there, right after the planes had struck New York – within the hour. Family members spoke to her from under the kitchen table, where they were taking refuge from the shelling of their house. Then I took to the streets again. In bars and elsewhere, I met people with other stories. One man had been in the subway on the way to work when smoke filled the car. He told me that no-one could breathe properly and people were screaming. But his only thought was for his dog DeNiro back in Brooklyn. From the panic of the train, he managed to call his mother on a cell phone and ask her to feed DeNiro that night, because it looked like he wouldn't get home. A pregnant woman told me she had feared for her unborn as she fled the blasts, pushing the pram with her baby in it as she did so. Away from these heart-rending tales of strangers, I was filled with dread: what horrible price would the US Government extract for this, and who would be the overt and covert agents and targets of that suffering? What blood-lust would this generate? What would be the pattern of retaliation and counter-retaliation? And what would become of domestic civil rights and cultural inclusiveness?

In the first days after the airplanes crashed into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and the Pennsylvania earth, each certainty was as carelessly dropped as it had once been carelessly assumed. The sounds of lower Manhattan that used to serve as white noise for residents – sirens, screeches, screams – were no longer signs without a referent. Instead, they made folks stare and stop, hurry and hustle, wondering whether the noises we thought we knew so well were coefficients of a new reality. Since that time, the US

media and war planners have supplied their own narrow frameworks, making New York's "ground zero" into the starting point for escalating global violence. There has been no reflexivity whatsoever about the history of US aggression or militarism, its policies of attrition and destruction in the Third World, and its internal plutocratic workings. As the distinguished journalist-publisher Victor Navasky has noted, 'post-September 11 journalism' took as a *donnée* that 'this was a time for rallying around the flag and that those who questioned national policy were giving aid and comfort to the enemy.' Adducing connections between the attack and US foreign policy 'somehow smacked of apologetics' (2002: xiii). How did this appalling infringement of basic TV standards come to pass? It gets back to the closure of a door that was briefly ajar during the disgraces of Vietnam, Watergate, and Central America. I think this is the outcome of two problems. The first is the status of intellectuals in US public life. The second is the status of commercial TV in the US. I shall deal with these problems serially.

III

Outside the pedagogical tasks of babysitting (high school), transitioning (undergraduate college or university), re-infantilising (graduate school), and hegemonising (professional training for business, the law, and medicine), intellectuals have two roles in US public life. The first is to be technocrats, providing solutions to problems that will make money or allow governments to achieve policy targets. The second is to offer cultural critique and political intelligence to the elite, both inside and outside the state. The room for this intellection is not, however, on commercial television – the still-extant mass audience is not the target. So there have been few credible, relatively objective professional academicians explaining the history of US foreign policy, its relationship with oil interests, arms manufacturers, and despots, its complex twists and turns of supporting and undermining various brands of Islam and of Arab rule, and its bizarre insistence on an ethical reputation even as the nation is routinely perfidious in terms of international law. Nor have we seen consistently competent contextualization of the hypocrisies and horrors of its opponents. Instead, a jingoistic and spiritual message comes through, juxtaposing freedom and decency with repression and fanaticism in a way that always seems to break down the binary rather disturbingly. Perhaps this reached its apogee with the reigning talk-TV current affairs host Bill O'Reilly of Rupert Murdoch's Fox News. Chillingly, O'Reilly has referred to Islamic fundamentalism as 'the enemy of the US' (*The O'Reilly Factor* 15 June 2002) without defining his terms via either the adjective or the noun (what, for example, is his view of Hindu, Jewish, or Christian fundamentalism and the reigns of terror they have perpetrated?). He also called for the government to 'bomb the Afghan infrastructure to rubble – the airport, the

power plants, their water facilities and the roads. ... We should not target civilians, but if they don't rise up against this criminal government, they starve, period' (*The O'Reilly Factor* 17 September 2001).

Susan Sontag (2002) evaluated the coverage of 11 September like this:

> It is all in the grand tradition of American anti-intellectualism: the suspicion of thought, of words. And it very much serves the purposes of the present administration. Hiding behind the humbug that the attack of last 11 September was too horrible, too devastating, too painful, too tragic for words – that words could not possibly do justice to our grief and indignation – our leaders have a perfect excuse to drape themselves in borrowed words of contempt

In the intervening period, we have seen other, more unstable ways of interpreting the signs of September 11 and its aftermath. Karl-Heinz Stockhausen's work was banished (at least temporarily) from the canon of avant-garde electronic music when he described the attack on *las torres gemelas* as akin to a work of art. Then Jean Baudrillard (2002) weighed in with the following:

> The fascination with the terrorist act is first and foremost the fascination for an image. … Rather than the violence of the real being there first, and the shiver of the image being added, the image comes first and the shiver of the real is added to it. It is something like one more fiction, a fiction going beyond fiction. … After the fact, one tries to impose a meaning, any meaning on the event, to find any interpretation of it, but there is none. One finds instead the radicality of the spectacle, the brutality of the spectacle, which alone is original and irreducible

For once, his stress on simulation as a referent rather than a signifier of the real did not cause offence. Why? The equally apolitical Katie Couric, NBC headliner, said 'It looks like a movie' (quoted in Zelizer and Allan, 2002: 4). As if to answer Bush II's plaintive cry to Congress on September 20 2001, 'Why do they hate us?,' Don DeLillo told readers of *Harpers Magazine*: 'it is the power of American culture to penetrate every wall, home, life and mind' – whether via military action or cultural iconography, one might add. It seems that this popular culture has penetrated *our* walls, homes, lives, and minds more thoroughly than anyone else's. The events were, precisely, movie-like – as was the television response.

Of course, sometimes academics are neglected because of political action rather than because of popular-cultural obsessions, ignorance, or jingoism. For example, the right-wing thinktanks that dominate Washington policy on the Middle East have sought strenuously to discredit area studies across US universities, especially Middle Eastern studies programs, and have also placed their own house reactionaries in vital opinion-making *fora* that feed into TV current affairs, such as the op-ed pages of the *Wall Street Journal*,

the *Jerusalem Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *New York Times* (Whitaker 2002; Brynen 2002; Davidson 2002).

Those intellectuals who do obtain access have in some measure adopted the logic of global manifest destiny. For example, the so-called liberal Michael Ignatieff (2003) has called for a new and thoroughgoing imperialism in the *New York Times* magazine, and *Time* has done the same, citing Puerto Rico as an instance of the US' record as a benign despot, while similar sentiments are on display in the *Weekly Standard*, *Foreign Affairs*, the *Harvard Review*, and *Atlantic Monthly*.[3] None of this should come as a surprise when we note the conduct of TV news executives after Condoleeza Rice, the National Security Adviser, asked them to cease playing tapes of Osama Bin Laden; Bush Press Secretary Ari Fleischer had already said people should 'watch what they say' about terrorism and US foreign policy (Navasky 2002: xv-xvi). For as Bush II put it on 20 September, 'this country will define our times, not be defined by them.' Truly imperialist words.

IV

The second problem leading to this deracination of public commentary is the two dominant influences on current-affairs TV: financialization and emotionalization. These tendencies typify the lifestyle, genre-driven nature of television in a deregulated era. Ideas of a common purpose and comprehensive coverage enshrined in public-service and network broadcasting have been displaced by cultural specificity/market niches. *E pluribus unum* has been consigned to history by right-wing deregulation, substituted with quotidian consumption. The period ushered in by Ronald Reagan's Federal Communications Commissioner Mark Fowler was characterized by his argument that TV was just a 'toaster with pictures.' As a consequence of that era's policies, the major networks were sold off to corporate conglomerates in the 1980s. They "rationalized" journalism, closing foreign *bureaux* and investigative sections (Chester, 2002). No wonder, then, that two decades on the networks look parochial by contrast with, say, the Qatar-based Al Jazeera.

So Dan Rather knew why the US was attacked: 'because they're evil, and because they're jealous of us' (quoted in Navasky, 2002: xv). This insolent ignorance is not so surprising when one realizes how little the US networks know about any other part of the world by contrast with Western European, Latin American, and Middle East sources, as evident from journalists' embarrassed admissions that US TV coverage of the invasion of Afghanistan was abysmal. In the absence of experienced crews with the relevant knowledge of culture, language, and history, they were shown up – even in their own eyes (Rosen, 2002: 31). At the same time, a glance at the transcript of a discussion about US terrorism coverage, held in Ljubljana in November 2002, reveals an ongoing chauvinism on the part of representatives from Fox, CNN, NBC, and

CBS that contrasts with contributions from all other nations (Kroll and Champagne 2002). The proliferation of US flag pins on reporters and the repeated othering use of embarrassing Membership Categorisation Devices such as 'we' is simply not permitted by the major global newsgatherers, whether they are regionally or nationally based and funded. In this light, the US networks' decisions to conceal footage of Afghan civilian casualties in October 2001 were as predictable as they were appalling (Hudson *et al*., 2002).

Contemporary coverage of the market is the one intellectual component of TV – its specialized vocabulary is accepted, a community of interest and commitment to fictive capital are assumed, and the deep affiliation and regular participation of viewers in stock prices are watchwords. News stories are evaluated in terms of their monetary significance to viewers. Neoclassical economic theory is deemed palatable in a way that theory is not accepted elsewhere – other than the weather. We see business advisors dominating discussion on dedicated finance cable stations like CNBC and Bloomberg, and close to the status of seers when they appear on MSNBC, CNN, and the networks. That's the financialization side – knowing and furthering the discourse of money and its methods of representing everyday life is one substitute for politics and history. In the case of *las torres gemelas*, it produced an immediate calculation of the likely impact of the attacks on Wall St, the emergent recession, and the global economy. There was no critical discussion of labor issues, and minimal participation by academic economists. And of course, this model sits perfectly well with the position enunciated by Bush II a year after the crisis, when he unveiled a National Security Strategy dedicated to leading the rest of the world to 'the single sustainable model for national success' – US welfare corporatism (quoted in Ignatieff, 2003: 24).

Then there is emotionalization. Valorised by some as an expansion of the public sphere to include issues hitherto excluded from view, such as sexual politics revealed on television talk shows, I'd rather see this as the tendency to substitute analysis of US politics and economics with a stress on feelings – in the case of 11 September 2001, the feelings of firefighters, viewers, media mavens, police officers, Republican and Democrat politicos, and brain-dead Beltway state-of-the-nation pundits. Consider the following from policy "analyst" Lawrence Eagleburger, a former Secretary of State, called in to comment by CNN: 'There is only one way to begin to deal with people like this, and that is you have to kill some of them even if they are not immediately directly involved.' House Republican intellectuals like Anne Coulter were calling on the government to identify the nations where terrorists lived, 'invade their countries, kill their leaders and convert them to Christianity' (*National Review* Online, 13 October 2001).

Of course, powerful emotions were engaged by the horrendous events of that day, and there is value in addressing them and letting out the pain. But as per financialization, this exclusivity helped to shore up an illegitimate Administration and a teetering economy in the name of raw, apolitical truth. Barbie Zelizer and Stuart Allan suggest that 'journalists and news organizations

covering the events of September 11 were wounded' (2002b: 1). This may be right. It is presumably the case when reporters are writing about any number of issues in the violent panoply of US history. The point is to work with and through the inchoate into an apparatus that makes sense of such feelings – especially given that so many in the audience will simply not share any or all of the commitments, knowledge, or ignorance that make for such reactions. The ludicrous forms of personalization that are standard in US journalism need to be understood for what they are – time-bounded and space-bounded norms of a particular period and nation. For instance, the longstanding newspaper practice of beginning stories with lengthy paragraphs about one family or one person, prior to establishing the nature of a social problem, are profoundly irritating to readers reared on traditions of shared problems rather than personal worries as the center of news – especially as the individual is inevitably forced to recede by the weight of the actual story sooner or later, and so the devotion of space to establishing a solitary situation, when what matters is its representativeness, is wasted on us.

Pat Aufderheide (2001) claims that it is a task of the 'national mass media' to 'provide emotional reassurance':

> Their human faces of tragedy were connections to emotional expression for viewers groping to make meaning out of the extraordinary events, and the implied promise of victim-by-victim coverage – which had a voyeuristic pleasure in itself – was that empathic participation in grief and trauma was the road to recovery. ... network newsmakers assumed a therapeutic role as grief counselor for the nation's inner child

The remainder of Aufderheide's piece perceptively criticizes the longstanding failure of the media to provide international perspectives and information, but her seeming endorsement of news-on-the-couch is part of the problem, rather than separate to it. Consider the impact of such coverage on public understanding of the dramatic US coal-mining disaster of July 2002, when working men were trapped for over three days in a flooded mine shaft in Pennsylvania. The feel-good, faith-based TV emphasis on rescue, feelings, and God was at the absolute exclusion of the two factors that created the disaster: the Republican Administration rolling back occupational health and safety regulations and systems of compliance, and supporting anti-union employers using antiquated, dangerous systems of exploration (Sherman and Vann, 2002).

In short, TV news focused on the financial implications of the destruction of *las torres gemelas*, and asked everyone in sight how they *felt* about it. On that day and subsequent ones, I looked to the broadcast television networks, traditional sources of current-affairs knowledge, for just that – informed, multi-perspectival journalism and critical academic comment that would allow me to understand my feelings, and come to a just and reasoned decision about how the US should respond. I waited in vain. No such commentary came

forward. Just a lot of asinine inquiries from reporters that were identical to those they pose to basketballers after a game: Question – 'How do you feel now?' Answer – 'God was with me today.' Or not. But learning of the military-political economy, global inequality, and ideologies and organizations that made for our grief and loss – for that, there was no expertise, no discourse, and no space. TV had forgotten how to do it. *My* principal feeling soon became one of frustration.

V

What GK Chesterton (1932) called the 'flints and tiles' of urban existence were rent asunder on September 11 2001, like so many victims of high-altitude US bombing raids. As a First-World disaster, it became knowable as the first-ever US "ground zero" because of the high premium set on the lives of Manhattan residents and the rarefied discussion of how to commemorate the high-altitude towers. When, a few weeks later, an American Airlines plane crashed on take-off from Queens, that borough was left open to all comers. But Manhattan was immediately locked down, flown over by "friendly" bombers. In stark contrast to the open if desperate faces on the street of 11 September, people went about their business with heads bowed even lower than is customary. No surprise, then, that the media routinely featured hegemons of the insurance industry complaining that ideas about public compensation for the bereaved from *las torres gemelas* might assume the equal worth of all lives, rather than assigning them value based on existing financial wealth and future investments.

The contradictory deconstructions and valuations of Manhattan lives mean that September 11 will live in infamy and hyper-knowability. The vengeful United States government continues on its way. Local residents must ponder insurance claims, real-estate values, children's terrors, and their own roles in something beyond their ken. New York has been forced beyond being the center of the financial, legal, media, and art worlds and the UN, beyond even its status as the *ur*-city. It is a military target, a place that is receiving – as well as funding – the slings and arrows of global fortune. In one sense, attrition-at-a-distance, as per Chile in 1973, has ended. The violence is suddenly local. In another, as we have come to see these past eighteen months, attrition-at-a-distance is undergoing a frightening renewal. The *blasé* attitude to Venezuelan democracy adopted by the US and its plutocratic media provides yet further evidence – if any were needed. Today, those from elsewhere are *not* all Americans, as the Israeli Government raced to say that fateful September, because they are not all ignorant of what the United States does, unlike those of us who live in Manhattan.

The challenge is to right that ignorance – to ensure that the quality of coverage and comment from CNN and the *New York Times* can begin to

approximate what is available via *La Jornada*, *The Independent*, Al Jazeera, CBC, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, All-India Radio, or *El Pais*. That would itself assume a free press – free in the sense of true freedom of information, and the formation of a truly critical attitude. We have a media system in the United States whose mindless bluster is matched only by its awesome force. The extent and power of this bulwark of ignorance and violence have led Robert Fisk (2002), the *Independent* newspaper's noted foreign correspondent, to the brink of despair. When John Malkovich told the Cambridge Union that he 'would like to shoot' Fisk, the journalist received many more death threats. His reaction was to say: 'If we want a quiet life, we will just have to toe the line, stop criticizing Israel or America. Or just stop writing altogether.' With attitudes like Malkovich's, is it any surprise that the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press' study of 42 nations in 2002 found a dramatic fall from favor for the US since Bush's election? As John Le Carré (2003) sorrowfully put it in a recent piece for the London *Times*, 'The United States of America Has Gone Mad.'

Those of us who live in the US can only hope that Fisk's quiescence is as unlikely as his prose is ironic. The one hope for us seems to lie in outside truth-telling and political pressure. The places that provide the US with bases, *materiel*, personnel and ideological support, must change their tune. There must be pressure within the UN, NATO, OAS, and the EU against the US and against Israel's position on territory claimed since 1967. There must be pressure on totalitarian US allies, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Pakistan, to become genuinely democratic. And there must be pressure to open up the US media system to effective foreign ownership and the retraining of journalists in keeping with best democratic practice. Help us lose our ignorance. Help us keep Manhattan alive. 'Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists' (Bush 2001).

Notes

1. Thanks for their comments to Carlos Barrera, Rune Ottosen, Kristina Riegert, Rick Maxwell, and Margareta Melin-Higgins, to the Barcelona audience at IAMCR, and to Reymond Levy for his excellent essay on US reactions to the event, written for a Cultural Citizenship class. This paper was worked on in several different places. The finishing touches were applied at the Center for Ideas and Society, University of California, Riverside.
2. I'am not alone in this observation. It can be no accident here, surely that ITN's *World News for Public Television* saw a ratings increase of more than 50%, and BBC News drew appreciative viewers across the US (Zelizer and Allan 2002b: 12).
3. For useful discussions of media coverage, see *Television & New Media* (2002); Berrington (2002); Silberstein (2002); and Zelizer and Allan (2002a). For discussion of this renewed imperial project and its warm welcome by the *bourgeois* media, see Foster (2002).

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Chapter 2

Terror and Just Response*

Noam Chomsky

Terror War September 11 will surely go down in the annals of terrorism as a defining moment. Throughout the world, the atrocities were condemned as grave crimes against humanity, with near-universal agreement that all states must act to "rid the world of evildoers," that "the evil scourge of terrorism" – particularly state-backed international terrorism – is a plague spread by "depraved opponents of civilization itself" in a "return to barbarism" that cannot be tolerated. But beyond the strong support for the words of the US political leadership – respectively, George W. Bush, Ronald Reagan, and his Secretary of State George Shultz[1] – interpretations varied: on the narrow question of the proper response to terrorist crimes, and on the broader problem of determining their nature.

On the latter, an official US definition takes "terrorism" to be "the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to attain goals that are political, religious, or ideological in nature...through intimidation, coercion, or instilling fear."[2] That formulation leaves many question open, among them, the legitimacy of actions to realize "the right to self-determination, freedom, and independence, as derived from the Charter of the United Nations, of people forcibly deprived of that right..., particularly peoples under colonial and racist regimes and foreign occupation..." In its most forceful denunciation of the crime of terrorism, the UN General Assembly endorsed such actions, 153-2.[3]

Explaining their negative votes, the US and Israel referred to the wording just cited. It was understood to justify resistance against the South African regime, a US ally that was responsible for over 1.5 million dead and $60 billion in damage in neighboring countries in 1980-88 alone, putting aside its practices within. And the resistance was led by Nelson Mandela's African National Congress, one of the "more notorious terrorist groups" according to a 1988 Pentagon report, in contrast to pro-South African RENAMO, which the same report describes as merely an "indigenous insurgent group" while observing that it might have killed 100,000 civilians in Mozambique in the preceding two years.[4] The same wording was taken to justify resistance to Israel's military occupation, then in its 20th year, continuing its integration

of the occupied territories and harsh practices with decisive US aid and diplomatic support, the latter to block the longstanding international consensus on a peaceful settlement.[5]

Despite such fundamental disagreements, the official US definition seems to me adequate for the purposes at hand,[6] though the disagreements shed some light on the nature of terrorism, as perceived from various perspectives.

Let us turn to the question of proper response. Some argue that the evil of terrorism is "absolute" and merits a "reciprocally absolute doctrine" in response.[7] That would appear to mean ferocious military assault in accord with the Bush doctrine, cited with apparent approval in the same academic collection on the "age of terror": "If you harbor terrorists, you're a terrorist; if you aid and abet terrorists, you're a terrorist – and you will be treated like one." The volume reflects articulate opinion in the West in taking the US-UK response to be appropriate and properly "calibrated," but the scope of that consensus appears to be limited, judging by the evidence available, to which we return.

More generally, it would be hard to find anyone who accepts the doctrine that massive bombing is the appropriate response to terrorist crimes – whether those of Sept. 11, or even worse ones, which are, unfortunately, not hard to find. That follows if we adopt the principle of universality: if an action is right (or wrong) for others, it is right (or wrong) for us. Those who do not rise to the minimal moral level of applying to themselves the standards they apply to others – more stringent ones, in fact – plainly cannot be taken seriously when they speak of appropriateness of response; or of right and wrong, good and evil.

To illustrate what is at stake, consider a case that is far from the most extreme but is uncontroversial; at least, among those with some respect for international law and treaty obligations. No one would have supported Nicaraguan bombings in Washington when the US rejected the order of the World Court to terminate its "unlawful use of force" and pay substantial reparations, choosing instead to escalate the international terrorist crimes and to extend them, officially, to attacks on undefended civilian targets, also vetoing a Security Council resolution calling on all states to observe international law and voting alone at the General Assembly (with one or two client states) against similar resolutions. The US dismissed the ICJ on the grounds that other nations do not agree with us, so we must "reserve to ourselves the power to determine whether the Court has jurisdiction over us in a particular case" and what lies "essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of the United States" – in this case, terrorist attacks against Nicaragua.[8]

Meanwhile Washington continued to undermine regional efforts to reach a political settlement, following the doctrine formulated by the Administration moderate, George Shultz: the US must "cut [the Nicaraguan cancer] out," by force. Shultz dismissed with contempt those who advocate "utopian, legalistic means like outside mediation, the United Nations, and the World Court,

while ignoring the power element of the equation";"Negotiations are a euphemism for capitulation if the shadow of power is not cast across the bargaining table," he declared. Washington continued to adhere to the Shultz doctrine when the Central American Presidents agreed on a peace plan in 1987 over strong US objections: the Esquipulas Accords, which required that all countries of the region move towards democracy and human rights under international supervision, stressing that the "indispensable element" was the termination of the US attack against Nicaragua. Washington responded by sharply expanding the attack, tripling CIA supply flights for the terrorist forces. Having exempted itself from the Accords, thus effectively undermining them, Washington proceeded to do the same for its client regimes, using the substance – not the shadow – of power to dismantle the International Verification Commission (CIVS) because its conclusions were unacceptable, and demanding, successfully, that the Accords be revised to free US client states to continue their terrorist atrocities. These far surpassed even the devastating US war against Nicaragua that left tens of thousands dead and the country ruined perhaps beyond recovery. Still upholding the Shultz doctrine, the US compelled the government of Nicaragua, under severe threat, to drop the claim for reparations established by the ICJ.[9]

There could hardly be a clearer example of international terrorism as defined officially, or in scholarship: operations aimed at "demonstrating through apparently indiscriminate violence that the existing regime cannot protect the people nominally under its authority," thus causing not only "anxiety, but withdrawal from the relationships making up the established order of society."[10] State terror elsewhere in Central America in those years also counts as international terrorism, in the light of the decisive US role, and the goals, sometimes frankly articulated; for example, by the Army's School of the Americas, which trains Latin American military officers and takes pride in the fact that "Liberation Theology...was defeated with the assistance of the U.S. Army."[11]

It would seem to follow, clearly enough, that only those who support bombing of Washington in response to these international terrorist crimes – that is, no one – can accept the "reciprocally absolute doctrine" on response to terrorist atrocities or consider massive bombardment to be an appropriate and properly "calibrated" response to them.

Consider some of the legal arguments that have been presented to justify the US-UK bombing of Afghanistan; I am not concerned here with their soundness, but their implications, if the principle of uniform standards is maintained. Christopher Greenwood argues that the US has the right of "self-defense" against "those who caused or threatened...death and destruction," appealing to the ICJ ruling in the Nicaragua case. The paragraph he cites applies far more clearly to the US war against Nicaragua than to the Taliban or al-Qaeda, so if it is taken to justify intensive US bombardment and ground attack in Afghanistan, then Nicaragua should have been entitled to carry out

much more severe attacks against the US. Another distinguished professor of international law, Thomas Franck, supports the US-UK war on grounds that "a state is responsible for the consequences of permitting its territory to be used to injure another state"; fair enough, and surely applicable to the US in the case of Nicaragua, Cuba, and many other examples, including some of extreme severity.[12]

Needless to say, in none of these cases would violence in "self-defense" against continuing acts of "death and destruction" be considered remotely tolerable; acts, not merely "threats."

The same holds of more nuanced proposals about an appropriate response to terrorist atrocities. Military historian Michael Howard proposes "a police operation conducted under the auspices of the United Nations...against a criminal conspiracy whose members should be hunted down and brought before an international court, where they would receive a fair trial and, if found guilty, be awarded an appropriate sentence." Reasonable enough, though the idea that the proposal should be applied universally is unthinkable. The director of the Center for the Politics of Human Rights at Harvard argues that "The only responsible response to acts of terror is honest police work and judicial prosecution in courts of law, linked to determinate, focused and unrelenting use of military power against those who cannot or will not be brought to justice."[13] That too seems sensible, if we add Howard's qualification about international supervision, and if the resort to force is undertaken after legal means have been exhausted. The recommendation therefore does not apply to 9-11 (the US refused to provide evidence and rebuffed tentative proposals about transfer of the suspects), but it does apply very clearly to Nicaragua.

It applies to other cases as well. Take Haiti, which has provided ample evidence in its repeated calls for extradition of Emmanuel Constant, who directed the forces responsible for thousands of deaths under the military junta that the US was tacitly supporting (not to speak of earlier history); these requests the US ignores, presumably because of concerns about what Constant would reveal if tried. The most recent request was on 30 September 2001, while the US was demanding that the Taliban hand over Bin Laden.[14] The coincidence was also ignored, in accord with the convention that minimal moral standards must be vigorously rejected.

Turning to the "responsible response", a call for implementation of it where it is clearly applicable would elicit only fury and contempt.

Some have formulated more general principles to justify the US war in Afghanistan. Two Oxford scholars propose a principle of "proportionality": "The magnitude of response will be determined by the magnitude with which the aggression interfered with key values in the society attacked"; in the US case, "freedom to pursue self-betterment in a plural society through market economics," viciously attacked on 9-11 by "aggressors...with a moral orthodoxy divergent from the West." Since "Afghanistan constitutes a state that sided with the aggressor," and refused US demands to turn over suspects,

"the United States and its allies, according to the principle of magnitude of interference, could justifiably and morally resort to force against the Taliban government."[15]

On the assumption of universality, it follows that Haiti and Nicaragua can "justifiably and morally resort to" far greater force against the US government. The conclusion extends far beyond these two cases, including much more serious ones and even such minor escapades of Western state terror as Clinton's bombing of the al-Shifa pharmaceutical plant in Sudan in 1998, leading to "several tens of thousands" of deaths according to the German Ambassador and other reputable sources, whose conclusions are consistent with the immediate assessments of knowledgeable observers.[16] The principle of proportionality therefore entails that Sudan had every right to carry out massive terror in retaliation, a conclusion that is strengthened if we go on to adopt the view that this act of "the empire" had "appalling consequences for the economy and society" of Sudan so that the atrocity was much worse than the crimes of 9-11, which were appalling enough, but did not have such consequences.[17]

Most commentary on the Sudan bombing keeps to the question of whether the plant was believed to produce chemical weapons; true or false, that has no bearing on "the magnitude with which the aggression interfered with key values in the society attacked," such as survival. Others point out that the killings were unintended, as are many of the atrocities we rightly denounce. In this case, we can hardly doubt that the likely human consequences were understood by US planners. The acts can be excused, then, only on the Hegelian assumption that Africans are "mere things," whose lives have "no value," an attitude that accords with practice in ways that are not overlooked among the victims, who may draw their own conclusions about the "moral orthodoxy of the West."

One participant in the Yale volume (Charles Hill) recognized that 11 September opened the second "war on terror." The first was declared by the Reagan administration as it came to office 20 years earlier, with the rhetorical accompaniment already illustrated; and "we won," Hill reports triumphantly, though the terrorist monster was only wounded, not slain.[18] The first "age of terror" proved to be a major issue in international affairs through the decade, particularly in Central America, but also in the Middle East, where terrorism was selected by editors as the lead story of the year in 1985 and ranked high in other years.

We can learn a good deal about the current war on terror by inquiring into the first phase, and how it is now portrayed. One leading academic specialist describes the 1980s as the decade of "state terrorism," of "persistent state involvement, or 'sponsorship,' of terrorism, especially by Libya and Iran." The US merely responded, by adopting "a 'proactive' stance toward terrorism." Others recommend the methods by which "we won": the operations for which the US was condemned by the World Court and Security

Council (absent the veto) are a model for "Nicaragua-like support for the Taliban's adversaries (especially the Northern Alliance)." A prominent historian of the subject finds deep roots for the terrorism of Osama Bin Laden: in South Vietnam, where "the effectiveness of Vietcong terror against the American Goliath armed with modern technology kindled hopes that the Western heartland was vulnerable too."[19]

Keeping to convention, these analyses portray the US as a benign victim, defending itself from the terror of others: the Vietnamese (in South Vietnam), the Nicaraguans (in Nicaragua), Libyans and Iranians (if they had ever suffered a slight at US hands, it passes unnoticed), and other anti-American forces worldwide.

Not everyone sees the world quite that way. The most obvious place to look is Latin America, which has had considerable experience with international terrorism. The crimes of 9-11 were harshly condemned, but commonly with recollection of their own experiences. One might describe the 9-11 atrocities as "Armageddon," the research journal of the Jesuit university in Managua observed, but Nicaragua has "lived its own Armageddon in excruciating slow motion" under US assault "and is now submerged in its dismal aftermath," and others fared far worse under the vast plague of state terror that swept through the continent from the early 1960s, much of it traceable to Washington. A Panamanian journalist joined in the general condemnation of the 9-11 crimes, but recalled the death of perhaps thousands of poor people (Western crimes, therefore unexamined) when the President's father bombed the barrio Chorillo in December 1989 in Operation Just Cause, undertaken to kidnap a disobedient thug who was sentenced to life imprisonment in Florida for crimes mostly committed while he was on the CIA payroll. Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano observed that the US claims to oppose terrorism, but actually supports it worldwide, including "in Indonesia, in Cambodia, in Iran, in South Africa,...and in the Latin American countries that lived through the dirty war of the Condor Plan," instituted by South American military dictators who conducted a reign of terror with US backing.[20]

The observations carry over to the second focus of the first "war on terror": West Asia. The worst single atrocity was the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, which left some 20,000 people dead and much of the country in ruins, including Beirut. Like the murderous and destructive Rabin-Peres invasions of 1993 and 1996, the 1982 attack had little pretense of self-defense. Chief of Staff Rafael ("Raful") Eitan merely articulated common understanding when he announced that the goal was to "destroy the PLO as a candidate for negotiations with us about the Land of Israel,"[21] a textbook illustration of terror as officially defined. The goal "was to install a friendly regime and destroy Mr. Arafat's Palestinian Liberation Organization," Middle East correspondent James Bennet writes: "That, the theory went, would help persuade Palestinians to accept Israeli rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip."[22] This may be the first recognition in the mainstream of facts widely reported in Israel at once, previously accessible only in dissident literature in the US.

These operations were carried out with the crucial military and diplomatic support of the Reagan and Clinton administrations, and therefore constitute international terrorism. The US was also directly involved in other acts of terror in the region in the 1980s, including the most extreme terrorist atrocities of the peak year of 1985: the CIA car-bombing in Beirut that killed 80 people and wounded 250; Shimon Peres's bombing of Tunis that killed 75 people, expedited by the US and praised by Secretary of State Shultz, unanimously condemned by the UN Security Council as an "act of armed aggression" (US abstaining); and Peres's "Iron Fist" operations directed against "terrorist villagers" in Lebanon, reaching new depths of "calculated brutality and arbitrary murder," in the words of a Western diplomat familiar with the area, amply supported by direct coverage.[23] Again, all international terrorism, if not the more severe war crime of aggression.

In journalism and scholarship on terrorism, 1985 is recognized to be the peak year of Middle East terrorism, but not because of these events: rather, because of two terrorist atrocities in which a single person was murdered, in each case an American.[24] But the victims do not so easily forget.

This very recent history takes on added significance because leading figures in the re-declared "war on terror" played a prominent part in its precursor. The diplomatic component of the current phase is led by John Negroponte, who was Reagan's Ambassador to Honduras, the base for the terrorist atrocities for which his government was condemned by the World Court and for US-backed state terror elsewhere in Central America, activities that "made the Reagan years the worse decade for Central America since the Spanish conquest," mostly on Negroponte's watch.[25] The military component of the new phase is led by Donald Rumsfeld, Reagan's special envoy to the Middle East during the years of the worst terrorist atrocities there, initiated or supported by his government.

No less instructive is the fact that such atrocities did not abate in subsequent years. Specifically, Washington's contribution to "enhancing terror" in the Israel-Arab confrontation continues. The term is President Bush's, intended, according to convention, to apply to the terrorism of others. Departing from convention, we find, again, some rather significant examples. One simple way to enhance terror is to participate in it, for example, by sending helicopters to be used to attack civilian complexes and carry out assassinations, as the US regularly does in full awareness of the consequences. Another is to bar the dispatch of international monitors to reduce violence. The US has insisted on this course, once again vetoing a UN Security Council resolution to this effect on 14 December 2001. Describing Arafat's fall from grace to a position barely above Bin Laden and Saddam Hussein, the press reports that President Bush was "greatly angered [by] a last-minute hardening of a Palestinian position...for international monitors in Palestinian areas under a UN Security Council resolution"; that is, by Arafat's joining the rest of the world in calling for means to reduce terror.[26]

Ten days before the veto of monitors, the US boycotted – thus undermined – an international conference in Geneva that reaffirmed the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the occupied terrorities, so that most US-Israeli actions there are war crimes – and when "grave breaches," as many are, serious war crimes. These include US-funded Israeli settlements and the practice of "wilful killing, torture, unlawful deportation, wilful depriving of the rights of fair and regular trial, extensive destruction and appropriation of property...carried out unlawfully and wantonly."[27]

The Convention, instituted to criminalize formally the crimes of the Nazis in occupied Europe, is a core principle of international humanitarian law. Its applicability to the Israeli-occupied territories has repeatedly been affirmed, among other occasions, by UN Ambassador George Bush (September 1971) and by Security Council resolutions: 465 (1980), adopted unanimously, which condemned US-backed Israeli practices as "flagrant violations" of the Convention; 1322 (Oct. 2000), 14-0, US abstaining, which called on Israel "to abide scrupulously by its responsibilities under the Fourth Geneva Convention," which it was again violating flagrantly at that moment. As High Contracting Parties, the US and the European powers are obligated by solemn treaty to apprehend and prosecute those responsible for such crimes, including their own leadership when they are parties to them. By continuing to reject that duty, they are enhancing terror directly and significantly.

Inquiry into the US-Israel-Arab conflicts would carry us too far afield. Let's turn further north, to another region where "state terror" is being practiced on a massive scale; I borrow the term from the Turkish State Minister for Human Rights, referring to the vast atrocities of 1994; and sociologist Ismail Besikci, returned to prison after publishing his book *State Terror in the Near East*, having already served 15 years for recording Turkish repression of Kurds.[28] I had a chance to see some of the consequences first-hand when visiting the unofficial Kurdish capital of Diyarbakir several months after 9-11. As elsewhere, the crimes of September 11 were harshly condemned, but not without memory of the savage assault the population had suffered at the hands of those who appoint themselves to "rid the world of evildoers," and their local agents. By 1994, the Turkish State Minister and others estimated that 2 million had been driven out of the devastated countryside, many more later, often with barbaric torture and terror described in excruciating detail in international human rights reports, but kept from the eyes of those paying the bills. Tens of thousands were killed. The remnants – whose courage is indescribable – live in a dungeon where radio stations are closed and journalists imprisoned for playing Kurdish music, students are arrested and tortured for submitting requests to take elective courses in their own language, there can be severe penalties if children are found wearing Kurdish national colors by the omnipresent security forces, the respected lawyer who heads the human rights organization was indicted shortly after I was there for using the Kurdish rather than the virtually identical Turkish spelling for the New Year's celebration; and on, and on.

These acts fall under the category of state-sponsored international terrorism. The US provided 80% of the arms, peaking in 1997, when arms transfers exceeded the entire Cold War period combined before the "counter-terror" campaign began in 1984. Turkey became the leading recipient of US arms worldwide, a position it retained until 1999 when the torch was passed to Colombia, the leading practitioner of state terror in the Western hemisphere.[29]

State terror is also "enhanced" by silence and evasion. The achievement was particularly notable against the background of an unprecedented chorus of self-congratulation as US foreign policy entered a "noble phase" with a "saintly glow," under the guidance of leaders who for the first time in history were dedicated to "principles and values" rather than narrow interests.[30] The proof of the new saintliness was their unwillingness to tolerate crimes near the borders of NATO – only within its borders, where even worse crimes, not in reaction to NATO bombs, were not only tolerable but required enthusiastic participation, without comment.

US-sponsored Turkish state terror does not pass entirely unnoticed. The State Department's annual report on Washington's "efforts to combat terrorism" singled out Turkey for its "positive experiences" in combating terror, along with Algeria and Spain, worthy colleagues. This was reported without comment in a front-page story in the *New York Times* by its specialist on terrorism. In a leading journal of international affairs, Ambassador Robert Pearson reports that the US "could have no better friend and ally than Turkey" in its efforts "to eliminate terrorism" worldwide, thanks to the "capabilities of its armed forces" demonstrated in its "anti-terror campaign" in the Kurdish southeast. It thus "came as no surprise" that Turkey eagerly joined the "war on terror" declared by George Bush, expressing its thanks to the US for being the only country willing to lend the needed support for the atrocities of the Clinton years – still continuing, though on a lesser scale now that "we won." As a reward for its achievements, the US is now funding Turkey to provide the ground forces for fighting "the war on terror" in Kabul, though not beyond.[31]

Atrocious state-sponsored international terrorism is thus not overlooked: it is lauded. That also "comes as no surprise." After all, in 1995 the Clinton administration welcomed Indonesia's General Suharto, one of the worst killers and torturers of the late 20th century, as "our kind of guy." When he came to power 30 years earlier, the "staggering mass slaughter" of hundreds of thousands of people, mostly landless peasants, was reported fairly accurately and acclaimed with unconstrained euphoria. When Nicaraguans finally succumbed to US terror and voted the right way, the US was "United in Joy" at this "Victory for US Fair Play," headlines proclaimed. It is easy enough to multiply examples. The current episode breaks no new ground in the record of international terrorism and the response it elicits among the perpetrators.

Let's return to the question of the proper response to acts of terror, specifically 9-11.

It is commonly alleged that the US-UK reaction was undertaken with wide international support. That is tenable, however, only if one keeps to elite

opinion. An international Gallup poll found only minority support for military attack rather than diplomatic means.[32] In Europe, figures ranged from 8% in Greece to 29% in France. In Latin America, support was even lower: from 2% in Mexico to 16% in Panama. Support for strikes that included civilian targets was very slight. Even in the two countries polled that strongly supported the use of military force, India and Israel (where the reasons were parochial), considerable majorities opposed such attacks. There was, then, overwhelming opposition to the actual policies, which turned major urban concentrations into "ghost towns" from the first moment, the press reported.

Omitted from the poll, as from most commentary, was the anticipated effect of US policy on Afghans, millions of whom were on the brink of starvation even before 9-11. Unasked, for example, is whether a proper response to 9-11 was to demand that Pakistan eliminate "truck convoys that provide much of the food and other supplies to Afghanistan's civilian population," and to cause the withdrawal of aid workers and a severe reduction in food supplies that left "millions of Afghans...at grave risk of starvation," eliciting sharp protests from aid organizations and warnings of severe humanitarian crisis, judgments reiterated at the war's end.[33]

It is, of course, the assumptions of planning that are relevant to evaluating the actions taken; that too should be transparent. The actual outcome, a separate matter, is unlikely to be known, even roughly; crimes of others are carefully investigated, but not one's own. Some indication is perhaps suggested by the occasional reports on numbers needing food aid: 5 million before 9-11, 7.5 million at the end of September under the threat of bombing, 9 million six months later, not because of lack of food, which was readily available throughout, but because of distribution problems as the country reverted to warlordism.[34]

There are no reliable studies of Afghan opinion, but information is not entirely lacking. At the outset, President Bush warned Afghans that they would be bombed until they handed over people the US suspected of terrorism. Three weeks later, war aims shifted to overthrow of the regime: the bombing would continue, Admiral Sir Michael Boyce announced, "until the people of the country themselves recognize that this is going to go on until they get the leadership changed."[35] Note that the question whether overthrow of the miserable Taliban regime justifies the bombing does not arise, because that did not become a war aim until well after the fact. We can, however, ask about the opinions of Afghans within reach of Western observers about these choices – which, in both cases, clearly fall within the official definition of international terrorism.

As war aims shifted to regime replacement in late October, 1000 Afghan leaders gathered in Peshawar, some exiles, some coming from within Afghanistan, all committed to overthrowing the Taliban regime. It was "a rare display of unity among tribal elders, Islamic scholars, fractious politicians, and former guerrilla commanders," the press reported. They unanimously "urged the US to stop the air raids," appealed to the international media to

call for an end to the "bombing of innocent people," and "demanded an end to the US bombing of Afghanistan." They urged that other means be adopted to overthrow the hated Taliban regime, a goal they believed could be achieved without death and destruction.[36]

A similar message was conveyed by Afghan opposition leader Abdul Haq, who was highly regarded in Washington. Just before he entered Afghanistan, apparently without US support, and was then captured and killed, he condemned the bombing and criticized the US for refusing to support efforts of his and of others "to create a revolt within the Taliban." The bombing was "a big setback for these efforts," he said. He reported contacts with second-level Taliban commanders and ex-Mujahiddin tribal elders, and discussed how such efforts could proceed, calling on the US to assist them with funding and other support instead of undermining them with bombs. But the US, he said, "is trying to show its muscle, score a victory and scare everyone in the world. They don't care about the suffering of the Afghans or how many people we will lose."[37]

The plight of Afghan women elicited some belated concern after 9-11. After the war, there was even some recognition of the courageous women who have been in the forefront of the struggle to defend women's rights for 25 years, RAWA (Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan). A week after the bombing began, RAWA issued a public statement (Oct. 11) that would have been front-page news wherever concern for Afghan women was real, not a matter of mere expediency. They condemned the resort to "the monster of a vast war and destruction" as the US "launched a vast aggression on our country," that will cause great harm to innocent Afghans. They called instead for "the eradication of the plague of Taliban and Al Qieda" by "an overall uprising" of the Afghan people themselves, which alone "can prevent the repetition and recurrence of the catastrophe that has befallen our country...."

All of this was ignored. It is, perhaps, less than obvious that those with the guns are entitled to ignore the judgment of Afghans who have been struggling for freedom and women's rights for many years, and to dismiss with apparent contempt their desire to overthrow the fragile and hated Taliban regime from within without the inevitable crimes of war.

In brief, review of global opinion, including what is known about Afghans, lends little support to the consensus among Western intellectuals on the justice of their cause.

One elite reaction, however, is certainly correct: it is necessary to inquire into the reasons for the crimes of 9-11. That much is beyond question, at least among those who hope to reduce the likelihood of further terrorist atrocities.

A narrow question is the motives of the perpetrators. On this matter, there is little disagreement. Serious analysts are in accord that after the US established permanent bases in Saudi Arabia, "Bin Laden became preoccupied with the need to expel U.S. forces from the sacred soil of Arabia" and to rid

the Muslim world of the "liars and hypocrites" who do not accept his extremist version of Islam.[38]

There is also wide, and justified, agreement that "Unless the social, political, and economic conditions that spawned al-Qaeda and other associated groups are addressed, the United States and its allies in Western Europe and elsewhere will continue to be targeted by Islamist terrorists."[39] These conditions are doubtless complex, but some factors have long been recognized. In 1958, a crucial year in postwar history, President Eisenhower advised his staff that in the Arab world, "the problem is that we have a campaign of hatred against us, not by the governments but by the people," who are "on Nasser's side," supporting independent secular nationalism. The reasons for the "campaign of hatred" had been outlined by the National Security Council a few months earlier: "In the eyes of the majority of Arabs the United States appears to be opposed to the realization of the goals of Arab nationalism. They believe that the United States is seeking to protect its interest in Near East oil by supporting the *status quo* and opposing political or economic progress...." Furthermore, the perception is accurate: "our economic and cultural interests in the area have led not unnaturally to close U.S. relations with elements in the Arab world whose primary interest lies in the maintenance of relations with the West and the status quo in their countries...."[40]

The perceptions persist. Immediately after 9-11, the *Wall Street Journal*, later others, began to investigate opinions of "moneyed Muslims": bankers, professionals, managers of multinationals, and so on. They strongly support US policies in general, but are bitter about the US role in the region: about US support for corrupt and repressive regimes that undermine democracy and development, and about specific policies, particularly regarding Palestine and Iraq. Though they are not surveyed, attitudes in the slums and villages are probably similar, but harsher; unlike the "moneyed Muslims," the mass of the population have never agreed that the wealth of the region should be drained to the West and local collaborators, rather than serving domestic needs. The "moneyed Muslims" recognize, ruefully, that Bin Laden's angry rhetoric has considerable resonance, in their own circles as well, even though they hate and fear him, if only because they are among his primary targets.[41]

It is doubtless more comforting to believe that the answer to George Bush's plaintive query, "Why do they hate us?," lies in their resentment of our freedom and love of democracy, or their cultural failings tracing back many centuries, or their inability to take part in the form of "globalization" in which they happily participate. Comforting, perhaps, but not wise.

Though shocking, the atrocities of 9-11 could not have been entirely unexpected. Related organizations planned very serious terrorist acts through the 1990s, and in 1993 came perilously close to blowing up the World Trade Center, with much more ambitious plans. Their thinking was well understood, certainly by the US intelligence agencies that had helped to recruit, train, and arm them from 1980 and continued to work with them even as they were attacking the US. The Dutch government inquiry into the Srebrenica

massacre revealed that while they were attempting to blow up the World Trade Center, radical Islamists from the CIA-formed networks were being flown by the US from Afghanistan to Bosnia, along with Iranian-backed Hizbollah fighters and a huge flow of arms, through Croatia, which took a substantial cut. They were being brought to support the US side in the Balkan wars, while Israel (along with Ukraine and Greece) was arming the Serbs (possibly with US-supplied arms), which explains why "unexploded mortar bombs landing in Sarajevo sometimes had Hebrew markings," British political scientist Richard Aldrich observes, reviewing the Dutch government report.[42]

More generally, the atrocities of 9-11 serve as a dramatic reminder of what has long been understood: with contemporary technology, the rich and powerful no longer are assured the near monopoly of violence that has largely prevailed throughout history. Though terrorism is rightly feared everywhere, and is indeed an intolerable "return to barbarism," it is not surprising that perceptions about its nature differ rather sharply in the light of sharply differing experiences, facts that will be ignored at their peril by those whom history has accustomed to immunity while they perpetrate terrible crimes.

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Chapter 3

My Beating by Refugees Is a Symbol of the Hatred and Fury of This Filthy War

A Report from Kila Abdullah after Afghan Border Ordeal[1]

Robert Fisk

They started by shaking hands. We said "Salaam aleikum" – peace be upon you – then the first pebbles flew past my face. A small boy tried to grab my bag. Then another. Then someone punched me in the back. Then young men broke my glasses, began smashing stones into my face and head. I couldn't see for the blood pouring down my forehead and swamping my eyes. And even then, I understood. I couldn't blame them for what they were doing. In fact, if I were the Afghan refugees of Kila Abdullah, close to the Afghan-Pakistan border, I would have done just the same to Robert Fisk. Or any other Westerner I could find.

So why record my few minutes of terror and self-disgust under assault near the Afghan border, bleeding and crying like an animal, when hundreds – let us be frank and say thousands – of innocent civilians are dying under American air strikes in Afghanistan, when the "War of Civilisation" is burning and maiming the Pashtuns of Kandahar and destroying their homes because "good" must triumph over "evil"?

Some of the Afghans in the little village had been there for years, others had arrived – desperate and angry and mourning their slaughtered loved ones – over the past two weeks. It was a bad place for a car to break down. A bad time, just before the Iftar, the end of the daily fast of Ramadan. But what happened to us was symbolic of the hatred and fury and hypocrisy of this filthy war, a growing band of destitute Afghan men, young and old, who saw foreigners – enemies – in their midst and tried to destroy at least one of them.

Many of these Afghans, so we were to learn, were outraged by what they had seen on television of the Mazar-i-Sharif massacres, of the prisoners killed with their hands tied behind their backs. A villager later told one of our drivers that they had seen the videotape of CIA officers "Mike" and "Dave" threatening death to a kneeling prisoner at Mazar. They were uneducated – I doubt if many could read – but you don't have to have a schooling to respond to the death of loved ones under a B-52's bombs. At one point a screaming teenager had turned to my driver and asked, in all sincerity: "Is that Mr Bush?"

It must have been about 4.30pm that we reached Kila Abdullah, halfway between the Pakistani city of Quetta and the border town of Chaman; Amanullah, our driver, Fayyaz Ahmed, our translator, Justin Huggler of *The Independent* – fresh from covering the Mazar massacre – and myself.

The first we knew that something was wrong was when the car stopped in the middle of the narrow, crowded street. A film of white steam was rising from the bonnet of our jeep, a constant shriek of car horns and buses and trucks and rickshaws protesting at the road-block we had created. All four of us got out of the car and pushed it to the side of the road. I muttered something to Justin about this being "a bad place to break down". Kila Abdulla was home to thousands of Afghan refugees, the poor and huddled masses that the war has produced in Pakistan.

Amanullah went off to find another car – there is only one thing worse than a crowd of angry men and that's a crowd of angry men after dark – and Justin and I smiled at the initially friendly crowd that had already gathered round our steaming vehicle. I shook a lot of hands – perhaps I should have thought of Mr Bush – and uttered a lot of "Salaam aleikums". I knew what could happen if the smiling stopped.

The crowd grew larger and I suggested to Justin that we move away from the jeep, walk into the open road. A child had flicked his finger hard against my wrist and I persuaded myself that it was an accident, a childish moment of contempt. Then a pebble whisked past my head and bounced off Justin's shoulder. Justin turned round. His eyes spoke of concern and I remember how I breathed in. Please, I thought, it was just a prank. Then another kid tried to grab my bag. It contained my passport, credit cards, money, diary, contacts book, mobile phone. I yanked it back and put the strap round my shoulder. Justin and I crossed the road and someone punched me in the back.

How do you walk out of a dream when the characters suddenly turn hostile? I saw one of the men who had been all smiles when we shook hands. He wasn't smiling now. Some of the smaller boys were still laughing but their grins were transforming into something else. The respected foreigner – the man who had been all "salaam aleikum" a few minutes ago – was upset, frightened, on the run. The West was being brought low. Justin was being pushed around and, in the middle of the road, we noticed a bus driver waving us to his vehicle. Fayyaz, still by the car, unable to understand why we had walked away, could no longer see us. Justin reached the bus and climbed aboard. As I put my foot on the step three men grabbed the strap of my bag and wrenched me back on to the road. Justin's hand shot out. "Hold on," he shouted. I did.

That's when the first mighty crack descended on my head. I almost fell down under the blow, my ears singing with the impact. I had expected this, though not so painful or hard, not so immediate. Its message was awful. Someone hated me enough to hurt me. There were two more blows, one on the back of my shoulder, a powerful fist that sent me crashing against the side of the bus while still clutching Justin's hand. The passengers were looking out at me and then at Justin. But they did not move. No one wanted to help.

I cried out "Help me Justin", and Justin – who was doing more than any human could do by clinging to my ever loosening grip asked me – over the screams of the crowd – what I wanted him to do. Then I realised. I could only just hear him. Yes, they were shouting. Did I catch the word "kaffir" – infidel? Perhaps I was was wrong. That's when I was dragged away from Justin.

There were two more cracks on my head, one on each side and for some odd reason, part of my memory – some small crack in my brain – registered a moment at school, at a primary school called the Cedars in Maidstone more than 50 years ago when a tall boy building sandcastles in the playground had hit me on the head. I had a memory of the blow *smelling*, as if it had affected my nose. The next blow came from a man I saw carrying a big stone in his right hand. He brought it down on my forehead with tremendous force and something hot and liquid splashed down my face and lips and chin. I was kicked. On the back, on the shins, on my right thigh. Another teenager grabbed my bag yet again and I was left clinging to the strap, looking up suddenly and realising there must have been 60 men in front of me, howling. Oddly, it wasn't fear I felt but a kind of wonderment. So this is how it happens. I knew that I had to respond. Or, so I reasoned in my stunned state, I had to die.

The only thing that shocked me was my own physical sense of collapse, my growing awareness of the liquid beginning to cover me. I don't think I've ever seen so much blood before. For a second, I caught a glimpse of something terrible, a nightmare face – my own – reflected in the window of the bus, streaked in blood, my hands drenched in the stuff like Lady Macbeth, slopping down my pullover and the collar of my shirt until my back was wet and my bag dripping with crimson and vague splashes suddenly appearing on my trousers.

The more I bled, the more the crowd gathered and beat me with their fists. Pebbles and small stones began to bounce off my head and shoulders. How long, I remembered thinking, could this go on? My head was suddenly struck by stones on both sides at the same time – not thrown stones but stones in the palms of men who were using them to try and crack my skull. Then a fist punched me in the face, splintering my glasses on my nose, another hand grabbed at the spare pair of spectacles round my neck and ripped the leather container from the cord.

I guess at this point I should thank Lebanon. For 25 years, I have covered Lebanon's wars and the Lebanese used to teach me, over and over again, how to stay alive: take a decision – any decision – but don't do nothing.

So I wrenched the bag back from the hands of the young man who was holding it. He stepped back. Then I turned on the man on my right, the one holding the bloody stone in his hand and I bashed my fist into his mouth. I couldn't see very much – my eyes were not only short-sighted without my glasses but were misting over with a red haze – but I saw the man sort of cough and a tooth fall from his lip and then he fell back on the road. For a second the crowd stopped. Then I went for the other man, clutching my

bag under my arm and banging my fist into his nose. He roared in anger and it suddenly turned all red. I missed another man with a punch, hit one more in the face, and ran.

I was back in the middle of the road but could not see. I brought my hands to my eyes and they were full of blood and with my fingers I tried to scrape the gooey stuff out. It made a kind of sucking sound but I began to see again and realised that I was crying and weeping and that the tears were cleaning my eyes of blood. What had I done, I kept asking myself? I had been punching and attacking Afghan refugees, the very people I had been writing about for so long, the very dispossessed, mutilated people whom my own country – among others – was killing along, with the Taliban, just across the border. God spare me, I thought. I think I actually said it. The men whose families our bombers were killing were now my enemies too.

Then something quite remarkable happened. A man walked up to me, very calmly, and took me by the arm. I couldn't see him very well for all the blood that was running into my eyes but he was dressed in a kind of robe and wore a turban and had a white-grey beard. And he led me away from the crowd. I looked over my shoulder. There were now a hundred men behind me and a few stones skittered along the road, but they were not aimed at me – presumably to avoid hitting the stranger. He was like an Old Testament figure or some Bible story, the Good Samaritan, a Muslim man – perhaps a mullah in the village – who was trying to save my life.

He pushed me into the back of a police truck. But the policemen didn't move. They were terrified. "Help me," I kept shouting through the tiny window at the back of their cab, my hands leaving streams of blood down the glass. They drove a few metres and stopped until the tall man spoke to them again. Then they drove another 300 metres.

And there, beside the road, was a Red Cross-Red Crescent convoy. The crowd was still behind us. But two of the medical attendants pulled me behind one of their vehicles, poured water over my hands and face and began pushing bandages on to my head and face and the back of my head. "Lie down and we'll cover you with a blanket so they can't see you," one of them said. They were both Muslims, Bangladeshis and their names should be recorded because they were good men and true: Mohamed Abdul Halim and Sikder Mokaddes Ahmed. I lay on the floor, groaning, aware that I might live.

Within minutes, Justin arrived. He had been protected by a massive soldier from the Baluchistan Levies – true ghost of the British Empire who, with a single rifle, kept the crowds away from the car in which Justin was now sitting. I fumbled with my bag. They never got the bag, I kept saying to myself, as if my passport and my credit cards were a kind of Holy Grail. But they had seized my final pair of spare glasses – I was blind without all three – and my mobile telephone was missing and so was my contacts book, containing 25 years of telephone numbers throughout the Middle East. What was I supposed to do? Ask everyone who ever knew me to re-send their telephone numbers?

Goddamit, I said and tried to bang my fist on my side until I realised it was bleeding from a big gash on the wrist – the mark of the tooth I had just knocked out of a man's jaw, a man who was truly innocent of any crime except that of being the victim of the world.

I had spent more than two and a half decades reporting the humiliation and misery of the Muslim world and now their anger had embraced me too. Or had it? There were Mohamed and Sikder of the Red Crescent and Fayyaz who came panting back to the car incandescent at our treatment and Amanullah who invited us to his home for medical treatment. And there was the Muslim saint who had taken me by the arm.

And – I realised – there were all the Afghan men and boys who had attacked me who should never have done so but whose brutality was entirely the product of others, of us – of we who had armed their struggle against the Russians and ignored their pain and laughed at their civil war and then armed and paid them again for the "War for Civilisation" just a few miles away and then bombed their homes and ripped up their families and called them "collateral damage".

So I thought I should write about what happened to us in this fearful, silly, bloody, tiny incident. I feared other versions would produce a different narrative, of how a British journalist was "beaten up by a mob of Afghan refugees".

And of course, that's the point. The people who were assaulted were the Afghans, the scars inflicted by us – by B-52s, not by them. And I'll say it again. If I was an Afghan refugee in Kila Abdullah, I would have done just what they did. I would have attacked Robert Fisk. Or any other Westerner I could find.

Note

1. *The Independent*, Monday December 10, 2001.

Chapter 4

USA, The West and the Rest after September 11 and October 7 2001[1]

Johan Galtung

Three Discourses
Terrorism, State Terrorism and Retaliation

There seem to be three discourses, competing for attention, to come to grips with September 11 (terrorism in New York/Washington, killing about 3,000) and October 7 2001+ (state terrorism in Afghanistan, killing about 5,000)[2], summarized in the Table.

The first is the *terrorist discourse*. Inspired by fundamentalist Islam, the *shahadah* ("I testify that there is no God but Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is his prophet") and the sword; the flag of Saudi Arabia is a perfect symbol. To bring Allah's justice to America is one element. Another, articulated by bin Laden, is revenge for humiliation: "What America is tasting now is something insignificant compared to what we have tasted for scores of years. Our nation has been tasting this humiliation and this degradation for more than 80 years".

The second is the *state terrorist discourse*, articulated by fundamentalist USA. Thus W. J. Bennett, on behalf of *Americans for Victory over Terrorism*: "We are a target not because of anything we have done, but because of who we are, what we stand for, what we believe, and what our nation was founded upon: the twin principles of liberty and equality". Charles Krauthammer in Washington Post: "America won the Cold War, pocketed Poland and Hungary and the Czech Republic as door prizes, pulverized Serbia and Afghanistan and – highlighted Europe's irrelevance with a display of vast military superiority". Behind this geo-fascism one can sense Zbigniew Brzezinski's *The Grand Chess-Board: America's Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives*. And underlying that "a nation under God"; and the whole tradition of the Pilgrims.

Acquaintance with these discourses is indispensable to understand the mental frameworks within which motivations – and capabilities – emerge. As pointed out in the opening of the manifesto by 120 American intellectuals "The central fallacy of the pro-war celebrants is the equation between "American values" as understood at home and the exercise of United States economic and especially military power abroad."

And this is where the third *rational analysis discourse* for peace action, with peace journalism, takes off. That discourse will include *diagnosis* of why 11 September and 07 October happened as parts of a retaliation cycle and to use that revenge for other purposes. It would include *prognosis* of what will happen, like rejection of fundamentalism on both sides and of US policy abroad and at home, not because of military overstretch but because of too much military capability and excessive use. It would include suggestions for *therapy*, for instance culturally as dialogue among moderates and between them and their fundamentalists; economically by taming the major "axis of evil", the World Bank-IMF-WTO triad *(Le Monde Diplomatique*, March 2002); politically through conflict resolution in the Middle-East/West Asia; and militarily through US massive base withdrawal and defense of homeland security, *at home*.

Washington and Islamic fundamentalists today suffer rapidly growing opposition, governmental and nongovernmental, in the West and in the Islamic world. When these four forces find each other in a unified opposition to fundamentalism things will change.

9-11 and 10-7 pried the world open. The mega-contradictions of *class*, gross political, economic, military and cultural power gaps among and within nations are there for us all to see. To narrow those gaps is the longer term, indispensable, remedy.

Terrorism as Discourse

That one person's terrorist is the other's freedom fighter is well known. Thus, Hitler's minister of Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels frequently used "terrorism" as defamation of his enemies:

30/01/1943: "We have been fighting against this terrorist Jewish idea of conquering the world".

18/02/1943: "-Bolshevism is not only a terrorist theory but also a terrorist practice". "As national socialists it has been our duty to warn against the effort by international Jewry to throw the European continent into chaos through the terrorist military power of Bolshevism". "This terrorist Jewry has turned two hundred million people in Russia into their servants"

05/06/1943: "We also have to undo the often very heavy effects of the British-American air terror".

Sounds familiar, only with Muslims for Jews and Islam for Jewry, in other words the two religions that challenged the Christian claim to have both Messiah and the only one God. And yet the term "terrorist" is descriptive of something, and something important.

The problem dissolves by distinguishing between terrorism as tactic and as goal in itself. Definitions of terrorism include [a] *violence against civilians* (unarmed, innocent, bystanding) *and* [b] *for political purposes*. Whether

Figure 1. September 11/October 7 2001 and Its Aftermath: Three Discourses

	USA Fundamentalism Puritan Roots	**Rational Analysis for Peace Action Peace Journalism**	**Islamic fundamentalism Wahhabite roots**
Diagnosis of terrorism	**Terrorism** "Evil-doers" "Evil axis" **Other is Evil**	**Retaliation cycle** Violence-breeds-violence logic; **Both are Victims**	**Justice** to USA Let them suffer our suffering **Other is Evil**
Prognosis for terrorism	Will continue unless crushed militarily	Continues unless: Conflicts solved Cycle exit found	Must continue till Islam/ Arabs are respected
Therapy for terrorism and state terrorism	BY WAR against al-Qaeda, Taliban, host countries **HONOR OUR DEAD Goal: EXTERMINATION**	BY INT'L COURT Mobilize against fundamentalism Change policies **DEPLORE VIOLENCE Goal: RECONCILIATION**	BY VIOLENCE till USA pulls out economically militarily **HONOR OUR MARTYRS Goal: DAR-al-ISLAM**
Key focus **analysis** Expertise consulted	**The Other Actor** Muslims & Arabs Cultural Fundamentalism **TEXTS PRESENTISM** (Bypassed by modernity)	**The Relation** between Actors Economic Military Political Cultural Fundamentalisms **SUPER/SUB/DEEP PAST & FUTURE** -US-Saudi-Arabia -US-Muslims – Palestinians – Iraq, Iran (No dialogue)	**The Other Actor** USA & Christians Economic and Military Fundamentalism **TEXTS PAST & PRESENT** "more than 80 years" (Invaded by Westernization)
KEY IDEA	Terrorism can be eliminated like Nazism and Communism	State terrorism breeds terrorisms Root conflict: Class struggle	Provoke USA and USA provokes by repressing General Revolt
AFGHANISTAN	**War a success:** Al Qaeda out Vertical org Taliban down No US losses	**War a failure:** al-Qaeda escaped Horizontal net Talibans marginal 5,000 Afg killed	**War a holy duty:** Jihad Afghan camps for Chechnya jihad Kashmir jihad
CONTEXT ISSUES SUBTEXTS	None, this is struggle for survival; **you are with us or against us**	Used to limit human rights; Used as pretext economically, oil militarily, bases geopolitics Eurasia control	None, this is struggle for survival; of **Muslims against the infidels**

perpetrators of the terror are in uniform (state terrorists) or not (non-state terrorists) is of minor importance from a victim point of view. Uniforms do not legitimize violence against civilians, nor does their absence – referring to maxims of guerrilla warfare.

But what is that political goal beyond the tactical use of terrorism in the sense [a,b] above? *To produce a change*, bringing in a new regime/rule, ruler or rulers opposed to status quo, or *to prevent a change*, protecting that sta-

tus quo. A terrorist does not see terrorism as a goal in itself. But how do the terrorists think that their atrocities can bring about the desired political goal?

By *making people rise against their rulers*, or, the opposite: by *scaring people so that they do not rise against their rulers*.

The first theory assumes that the victims see the situation the same way as the (state) terrorists do: your rulers are so bad that they forced us to do this; remove them and we shall stop immediately. More likely, the victims will see the (state or not) terrorists as the problem, and see the link to their own leaders as indirect or missing. Maybe as point 2 on the agenda. They will rise or bear grudges against the terrorists. And yet this kind of stupid theory was underlying the Allied bombing in Germany and Japan, the Baader-Meinhof RAF (and Brigate Rosse), the killing of civilians in the Gulf and Yugoslavia wars and September 11 and October 7. Terrorism will continue till that hypothesis is out.

The other hypothesis is better: people may for some time be terrorized into submission. The Prince may stay in power because he is feared rather than because he is loved, as Machiavelli advised. Authoritarian regimes are usually based on this, as opposed to totalitarian regimes, democracies and anarchies. But people are known to rise against autocracies. Or they collapse by their own weight, through demoralization. They are not eternal.

By this terrorism definition the 20th century with a civilian toll in warfare increasing from 25% to above 75% was terrorist. If a victory can be won through internal revolt caused by external terror, then killing civilians is rational precisely because they are defenseless. By bombing from high altitude the military can also be turned into lame ducks. And the pilots are invulnerable, defying all classical rules of courage, honor and dignity. This is the coward victory, hiding deep in cave pits and high in cockpits.

The other problem is that there could be retaliation against own civilians, by the same flimsy theory. And that is an element of what happened on September 11. And probably also on October 7 and the time after.

The first encounter the USA had with Islam was similar: the blockade of the Mediterranean coast, then known as "the Barbary Coast" (today Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco), ordered by Thomas Jefferson in 1801. The enemy was referred to as a "treacherous set of villains". Their crime: not piracy as was alleged, but that they defended themselves against trade, then (as today?) a criterion of civilization, the opposite of barbary. "US agents turned to covert action – marched across the desert from Egypt with several hundred Greek and Arab mercenaries and eight US marines and covered 500 miles in 50 days" (WP 10/03/02). Then, as today, the USA decides herself where her interests are located.

To what extent terrorist tactics were used in this the first of well over 200 US interventions abroad is unknown. But when the term is used today, in the discourses mentioned, it is less to describe a tactic than to defame those who use it as barbarian, villains. As "evil-doers". And evil they are, using such tactics against human beings. But, if "terrorist" is the last word in the

analysis, with no effort to understand motives, then it does not bode well for dialogue, conflict transformation, reconciliation, peace. The step from "evil-doer" to "vermin to be exterminated" is short, and is taken by Goebbels, as also by Bush and bin Laden.

One general hypothesis may be that terrorist tactics is violence to retaliate, *fueled by anger*, with no holds barred. Human beings will generally not resort to terrorism as the first step. The violent prehistory may include structural violence. And another general hypothesis would be the opposite: violence *fueled by greed*, a calculated strike in cold blood to force capitulation, like what the West often did to colonize, telling themselves they were fighting beasts. But what, then, causes anger and greed?

Why do human beings use violence, in general? An effort:

Figure 2. A Typology of Violence

	INSTRUMENTAL GOALS	EXPRESSIVE GOALS
OWN GOALS	Revenge **OCTOBER 7** conquest	Consumption
COLLECTIVE GOALS	Punishment – decision mechanism	Justice **SEPTEMBER 11**

Violence may be used to produce a result, for oneself, or for a collectivity to which one belongs. Revenge and conquest are such results. They are self-oriented. The end reward is supposedly a feeling of satisfaction from revenge and a booty – political, economic, military, cultural – from conquest. Violence as punishment may serve deterrence as an end, warning the same perpetrator not to repeat and/or others not to do the same. There is no booty accruing to the executor of the violence. But violence as decision mechanism may be working according to "winner takes all". Violence for conquest incapacitates the other side so that the booty is up for grabs, it differs from violence as decision mechanism if the culture designates the winner (far) short of incapacitation, and the violence stops.

Then there is violence as a goal in itself, as consumption rather than to produce anything. We assume this to be a rare case. "Justice" has been put in this category, at the collective level, as an expression of the will of higher forces. It is not revenge to satisfy the sentiments of mundane actors, nor is it punishment designed to deter. Justice simply *is*, in and by itself.

September 11 is seen as an Act of Justice, bringing Justice to the US essence, its economic and strategic centers, to force them to submit to stay off *dar-al-Islam*, Allah's lands. And *October 7 is seen as revenge and conquest*, doing the latter under the pretext of the former (and punishment, and justice). How? Why?

Fundamentalism as Discourse

This is where fundamentalism enters, like terrorism a term for Other. Self is seen as moderate/proportionate and rational. Psychologically fundamentalism polarizes, dehumanizes Other and bolsters Self. Whether terrorism is triggered by anger or greed fundamentalism produces the necessary numbing and legitimation.

The world is right now in the clutches of two fundamentalisms pitted against each other. Relative to the world population these are small groups, with Wahhabite Sunni Islam and Puritan Protestant Christianity, both some centuries old, at their core. But they have powerful weapons at their disposal: suicide bombing with the use of airplanes as bombs and carpet bombing with the possible use of nuclear bombs. We are dealing with deeply rooted pathologies which for individuals are diagnosed as narcissism and megalomania *cum* paranoia. But at the collective level they still pass as expressions of devotion and patriotism. In sick national cultures.

Here is a definition of *fundamentalism* with seven elements:

1. *Chosenness*. The idea built into the national narrative that the nation is chosen by transpersonal forces, such as Yahweh for the Jews and the successors, God and Alla'h.
2. *Glory*. The basis is usually a myth combining a glorious past with a glorious future once the problems of the more dubious, even ignominious, present have been overcome.
3. *Traumas*. The shocks, mythical or not, suffered by a nation, leaving deep wounds, festering in the collective subconscious, to be drawn upon, particularly by leaders with similar wounds.
4. *Dichotomy*. The tendency to divide everything, like world space states and nations, into two parts, with sharp borderlines.
5. *Manicheism*. The tendency to attribute only Good qualities to Self and only Evil qualities to Other. God vs Satan.
6. *Armageddon*. The tendency found in the abrahamitic religions to envisage a final battle between God/Good and Satan/Evil.
7. *Repression/Projection*. A psychological syndrome repressing, denying, the bad qualities of Self (such as excessive violence in thought, speech and action), and attribute them to Other.

Point for point this applies to both of them, making them each other's mirror images with exchangeable scripts (Osama Bush and George bin Laden) and implacable enemies. Armed with suicide bombs and carpet bombing the result is already catastrophic.

The Saudi Arabia state religion is Wahhabite Islam, a purist Sunni Islamic movement, from Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, 1703-91.[3] Wahhabism has several important aspects in this connection:

First, all Saudi territory is a mosque, a Sacred Land of the two holy cities (Mecca, Medina) and the two holy mosques (third is Al Aqsa in Jerusalem). Alla'h chose an Arab. Mohammed, as *rasul*, Prophet, making Arabs Chosen People. "Let there be not two religions in Arabia" was Mohammed's deathbed injunction. Wahhabism sees itself as the one, also turning against other Muslims (eg. Kerbala in 1801).

Second, a very high level of asceticism, returning to the original strength of Islam, the "Golden Age": no music, no silky clothes, no decoration of mosques, no alcohol and tobacco.

And third, frequent use of capital punishment, bringing justice to perpetrators by putting them to the sword; symbolized by the green Saudi flag with the sword surrounded by the *shahadah*.

Saudi-Arabia is based on cooperation between the Royal House and the high clergy of Wahhabism. Most inhabitants are Wahhabites, like the Saudi ambassador to England who April 13 published a poem praising suicide bombers. Bin Laden is a Wahhabite. So are the Talibans. And in many other terrorist Islamic groups Wahhabism is an element. Obviously, the oil in Saudi Arabia and the US role (from the first drilling for "black gold" by Standard Oil in 1933 via the Roosevelt-Ibn Saud agreement in 1945 up till today) with all the wealth that followed is in flagrant contradiction with the first and second of these tenets; asceticism and only one religion.

What remains is Wahhabite brutality, especially against women. What the Talibans did in Afghanistan at the level of economic misery the Saudis have done and do at a level of wealth that masks some of the ugliness. Few human rights arguments used against the Talibans do not also apply to that major supplier of oil for the West in general, and the USA in particular.

We would expect true Wahhabites to be of the opinion that the USA is driven mainly by economic and strategic, material concerns, as witnessed by the oil concessions and the military bases in their holy land. The choice of targets September 11 follows. We would also expect that their expectations were deeply confirmed when after the October 7+ killing in Afghanistan the USA (UNOCAL) gets oil pipe-lines and a military base (Kandahar).

Prejudices confirmed are no more prejudices; they constitute knowledge according to normal science. And will strengthen their resolve enormously, as already revealed in the public opinion data showing 90-95% support of al-Qaeda among Saudi youth after the war in Afghanistan. No doubt the linkage between oil (UNOCAL), oil infrastructure (Halliburton) and arms industry interests (Carlyle group) and the present US leadership provides extra confirmation, not only of Wahhabite but also of marxist/leninist assumptions about class and the economy-politics-military interface.

Generally, it is very unwise to confirm the theories of one's enemy. A wiser strategy would have been to declare that the USA will stay off Afghanistan economically and strategically. But then wisdom is a scarce commodity, and particularly with the present US leadership, strongly fueled by greed.

And no doubt also by anger. They did not bring September 11 upon themselves. But they certainly knew how to make use of it.

The similarity bordering on identity with US Puritanism, a purist movement in Protestant Christianity, is obvious. The first Pilgrims, referring to themselves as "Saints" and to the rest of the world, including the Quakers for instance, as non-believers, were also in possession of a Sacred Land, they themselves being the Chosen People, living off the Jewish archetype, with Cotton Mather, Endicott and John Winthrop among their spiritual leaders.

The asceticism was proverbial. And so was capital punishment, for instance against Quakers and the 20 "witches" in Salem 1692.

Puritanism became the core in US civic religion, also using Southern Baptism as a carrier. Neither bin Laden nor George W Bush live in ascetic poverty.[4] But they see their own land as sacred, their people as holy, use religious idiom and are very facile with the life of others, easily taking life as when Texas under a duly elected George Bush as governor held the US death penalty record. Civilian deaths 9/11 and 10/7+ were simply "collateral damage".

Richard Drinnon summarizes in his famous *Facing West*[5]:

> To their minds they were the only carriers of the last best hope of the Protestant Reformation. Hence, while the English Puritan version of the Protestant ethic was harshly intolerant, the New England variation was even more so. The tempers of Winthrop and Endicott were more hairtrigger sensitive than Cromwell's when someone threatened to defile their holy mission. Abroad, to be sure, Cromwell hunted down the Irish, but he still fell short of the unyielding fury the Saints turned on the New England specimens of those "differing little from beasts", those "savages" who had both a different color.

These fundamentalisms emerged at considerable distance in space, only one century in time but, importantly, as reform movements in two of the abrahamitic religions. The third one, fundamentalist Judaism and its offsprings, is presently at work massively killing Palestinians after Nazi Germany committed genocide against them. Like turning against Afghanistan after having been hit by Saudis. Using terrorism and anger to mask occupation and greed for land.

Why US Interventionism?

The thesis is not that US interventionism[6] is only fueled by anger and greed, legitimized by fundamentalist tenets. We are also talking about cool calculation, except, of course, when somebody hits back (Pearl Harbor and September 11 and before that slave and native revolts, Nat Turner 1831 and Wounded Knee 1890). Almost all of the "interventions" are compatible with the class conflict between and within countries hypothesis. Interventions take place to establish, maintain or reinforce bridge-heads for US imperial activ-

ity, fueled by greed economically, protected militarily, legitimized culturally. And much of that legitimation derives from the Puritan pathology in the US civic culture.

Two alternative hypotheses to explain this activity, *clash of civilizations*, and *promotion of democracy/human rights* should be explored. How would the intervention pattern and US politics have looked to confirm these hypotheses? Obviously very different.

For the clash of civilizations hypothesis to gain in credibility there would have to be heavy cultural/civilizational targeting, hitting mosques, people praying, religious leaders, art treasures, memorials. No such activity has been observed. To the contrary, no massive refusal to grant immigration visas to Muslims has been observed and the USA has been admirably open to people of other creeds and to their religious practices and artefacts. This may change, but so far there is no evidence to support a clash of civilization hypothesis. The USA fights "socialism", but that is hardly a civilization; in addition, the economic aspect of the general class conflict hypothesis fits the data very well.

The "promotion of democracy/human rights" hypothesis may receive some confirmation from US acts of commission, but is then clearly disconfirmed by US acts of omission. If promotion of democracy and human rights were the guideline, then

- the Batista regime in Cuba would have been intervened as much as the Castro regime;
- the Somoza regime in Nicaragua as much as the Sandinista regime;
- the military dictators in Guatemala as much as Arbenz in 1954;
- the Jimenez regime as much as the Chavez regime in Venezuela;
- the Saudi Wahhabite regime as much as the Taliban Wahhabite regime in Afghanistan;
- Israeli action against the human rights of Palestinians/Arabs as much as any Palestinian/Arab act;
- Libya under King Idriss as much as under Qaddafi;
- Kuwait under the al-Sabahs as much as Iraq under Saddam Hussein;
- the Shah regime as much as Mossadeqh and Khomeini;

and so on and so forth – there are many such paired comparisons.

What stands up very well against the data is a systematic effort to protect and promote US economic interests against governmental or popular forces that might be contrary to those interests, whether in the name of governmental nationalization or popular movements with redistribution one way or the other on the program. And then the military deployment pattern, including bases abroad, to protect and promote those economic interests.

In short, economic and strategic interests, against Article 3 of the Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Human Rights of 16 December 1966 which stipulates that proceeds from natural resources have to accrue to the people of those countries (the USA has not ratified that crucial element in the International Bill of Human Rights since it obviously gives people's needs higher priority than the free flow of factors and products).

Of course, the rhetoric justifying intervention, for the public at large in the USA, and abroad (except for the missions to governments behind closed doors) will be phrased differently. Of four classical Western patterns, anti-Judaism, anti-Islamism, anti-communism and anti-terrorism (from the days of the French revolution), the US rhetoric used anti-communism for a long period (and may do so again). Today ample use is made of anti-terrorism, and *may* add (is already close) anti-Islamism. The USA has an anti-semitic past, but stays away from anti-Judaism/semitism, so far.

Some other elements have also been picked up to justify military action, such as environmentalism and humanitarianism. Unfortunately for the USA, the record of action for economic and strategic interests accompanied by generally acceptable rhetoric is too long and too well-known for such spins to convince others than the very gullible, or the chronic america-philiacs.

A low estimate of the number killed in the interventions after the Second World War might be 6 million in the overt action by the Pentagon and 6 million in the covert action by the CIA+ (the possible target of the fourth September 11 plane?)[7] That gives us 12 million. To that should be added the victims of structural violence. At least 100,000 die from basic needs deficits due to seriously flawed economic structures every day; a part of that is attributed to the USA, also because of the tight relation to the economic "axis of evil" cited above. With 10 people as a low estimate of the bereaved for each person killed we can talk about well above 100 million, maybe half a billion, with strong anti-USA emotions. Somewhere in this hatred a thirst for revenge is burning. But it took Islamic fundamentalism to convert anger into action. And Christian fundamentalism to be blind, deaf, numb to US action. Only saying, "But we are a free country!"[8]

What Would a Rational Analysis Look Like?

Any rational analysis of September 11 would take as point of departure two buildings as representing US economic and strategic interests, and the (reported) national origin of the 19 perpetrators: 15 of them Saudis, the other 4 also Arabs. The hypothesis that some Saudis have something against US economic and strategic activity seems plausible and should have been a centerpiece of any analysis of 9/11. Of course, in no way should analysis stop at that point. When A is violent to B then we should also analyze A for generally violent tendencies, and B for general victim traits that do not relate to A.

There is some validity to analysis of criminals in general (relative deprivation, for instance) and victims in general (making themselves too available, for instance). But in no way should that kind of absolutist analysis be permitted to stand in the way of relational, reciprocity-oriented analysis, exploring the concrete relation between A and B. To talk about "Islamic fundamentalism" and "envy of US/Western civilization" with no word wasted on A=15 concrete Saudis and B=very concrete, symbolic buildings is feeble-minded.

The abrahamitic religions are more actor-oriented; daoism and buddhism more relation-oriented. The same can be said about psychology vs sociology. What is needed is both. We need insight into what moves key actors like al-Qaeda and the USA, and we have to analyze their relation. September 11 was not a clash of civilizations but of two fundamentalisms within them, and follows logically from the premisses of those fundamentalisms. The same goes for October 7+. That being said, most of the content of the first and the third columns in the Table is self-explanatory; a question of spelling out fundamentalist logic. And this will continue till the second column becomes discourse dominant and non-fundamentalist actors become dominant actors.

As to the discourse: this is best seen from the media, to be dealt with in the next section. A general theory will run something like this: what is among people (like that Gallup poll) yesterday will be in the media today and be picked up by politicians tomorrow. As a general trend, no doubt with very many exceptions. Thus, media could cut down the lag by reporting peace-oriented voices in the population, like the demonstrations in New York April 5 and in Washington outside the White House April 20 2002 (not in the *IHT*, but on Japan's NHK/TV).

Here is a double-tracked prognosis:

TRACK I: The War on Terrorism will continue, if not the full scale of (around) 60 organizations in (around) 60 countries[9], then some of it; right now Palestine, Pakistan and the Philippines(3P). Iraq follows?[10] No operations will be at the Afghanistan level, partly because the US economic/strategic interests were paramount as a part of the general Central Asia geo-strategy and had been planned for a long time, and partly because the impact of September 11 was fresh, could be used and the consciousness of US (-supported) atrocities was low.

- Israel-Palestine is the mini-version of USA-the World and difficult for the USA not to support with tanks and helicopters etc. at the same time as this is where the coalition is breaking up, and not only in the Muslim world, and not only in the streets;

- Pakistan may be carried over into the much more important Iran and release fully the potential of shia Islam;

- Philippines will spread from the jungles of Basilan[11] and Muslim insurgency to get their lands back mixed with Abu Sayyaf banditry to the politics in Manila and this effort to bolster a flagging economy.

The USA is engaged in Mission Impossible. Islamic militancy is diverse, ideologically rather than vertically inspired and the US/West approach produces more terrorist militancy than it eliminates.

That "terrorism produces state terrorism" is obvious, in the sense that the evidence is openly available. This shows up not only as a violent counter-attack also killing civilians, but as enormous increase in Pentagon budget and readiness to use weapons of mass destruction, as witnessed by the targeting of seven countries (how many civilians?) for nuclear attack.

That "state terrorism produces terrorism", is less obvious in the sense that the evidence is not openly available. Terrorists cannot disclose their budgets but use secret financial operations; they cannot leak memoranda but try to hide them as well as possible. Their motivations are carried in their hearts and their brains, not in their memoranda. The only thing that shows is action, the rest is conjecture. And even action may have to wait for a long time, for instance till the anti-terrorist measures have been relaxed after the initial shock. Thus, the state terrorist production of terrorism has to be seen in a longer time perspective. Intergenerational transmission of terrorist motivation should not be underestimated; the Palestinian refugee camps being obvious transmission mechanisms.

Will there be new attacks on the USA, and/or the West in general?

Above September 11 is seen as bringing *justice to America*; and justice was served by the attack, exhausting the motivation of that group which may have annihilated all traces by annihilating itself. But other groups, generated by the disproportionate and misguided US atrocities in Afghanistan may want to punish America, revenge or even embark to destroy America. The flying bomb approach, far beyond the imagination of "experts", has been exhausted. But they may once again out-trick unimaginative experts. Suicide bombers from countries hit by the USA/Israel and economic boycott are likely. So are nuclear responses, planned for the "outer axis of evil", from 3 to 7.[12]

That kind of response, basically as God=USA's punishment would be similar to what happened August 6-9 1945 in Hiroshima-Nagasaki. And September 11 can certainly be compared to Pearl Harbor, and also to *kamikaze*[13]. The eclectic combination of Emperor cult, state shinto, confucianism and zen buddhism generated willingness to give up one's own life with certainty, not only with the high probability of the usual combat soldier. But there is a very important difference.

Those young Japanese were not motivated by three generations in refugee camps and two generations of US interventionism killing millions. They were not suffering from PTSD, collective or individual or both – creating disorders where suicide is easily embedded, even without the support of a fundamentalist creed. Again, the more US/Israel atrocity, the more PTSD, the more suicide. Suicide bombing is not only a way of deploying explosives and attain martyrdom. It is also a way of committing suicide when despair is soul deep.

In other words, the logic of the two fundamentalisms will continue. They are both well coded, programmed and trained. And they will both hope for dissent, even uprisings in their favor.

TRACK II: The War on Freedom[14] will continue. The massive, Christian fundamentalist right (but not of the Falwell-Robertson more lunatic variety) also makes use of the window of opportunity created by September 11 to attack freedoms gained after hard struggle against those forces. US Congressman Dennis J. Kucinich (D-Ohio) mentions the erosion of the First, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Eighth Amendments, together major parts of the human rights package.[15] The saying "Military justice is to justice what military music is to music" is belittled by the Guantanamo process: this is not music=justice at all but a travesty. What is left to defend against terrorism? Why confirm their hypothesis that there will be massive oppression?

A major aspect of the war on freedom is the war on livelihood. "We Demand Money for Jobs, Education, Housing and Health Care – Not for War & Corporate Giveaways!", the April 20 demonstration in Washington, summarizes the issue. "They have refused to increase unemployment insurance for 100,000 travel industry employees and 400,000 workers in other sectors who lost their jobs" (as a result of September 11).[16]

Then there is the failure to comply with the Geneva Convention, focused on the 299 prisoners reported held in Guantanamo and 240 in Afghanistan – reported by Amnesty International[17] and all over.

These factors fuel the rapidly increasing, ever more vociferous opposition in the USA. The experience of the present author after talks and interviews in a September 11 struck and partly stunned USA is a deep distrust in their own media ("We are being systematically lied to") and a yearning for a deeper diagnosis-prognosis-therapy than they are served by their leaders. Richard Perle: "This is total war. We are fighting a variety of enemies. There are lots of them out there don't try to piece together clever diplomacy, just wage a total war."

This opposition can rapidly attain Viêt Nam war dimensions. Conventional mainstream analysis is afraid of imperial overstretch relative to military capability and over-reporting of US atrocities. In fact, it may work exactly the other way round: it is military over-stretch and media under-reporting that make people stand up.

Abroad the coalition shows important cracks, not only in the Middle East Muslim/Arab countries, but also in NATO. Most important is the clear Saudi disinvitation. also claiming that the USA has broken the promise by Bush Sr in 1990 to vacate Saudi Arabia when the "job was done". The Saudis say the job was to liberate Kuwait, the USA that "the unfinished war" – often repeated by CNN to prepare world population – "must be finished by toppling Saddam Hussein".

Given the position of Saudi youth (96% of educated 25-41 years old supported in October 2001 "bin Laden's cause") major uprisings are possible. The Royal House fights for its life with peace proposals.

Tony Blair is under considerable pressure including threats of resignation of cabinet members and survey majorities against invading Iraq. And European NATO members worry about the absence of a clear exit strategy; a clear definition precisely of when the job is done.

In a survey in Britain, Italy, Germany and France[18] "disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling international policy" is (partly much) higher than "approve" in the last three. Very strong majorities in all four said "he makes decisions based entirely on US interests", and "the USA is not doing as much as it can to bring about a peace settlement between the Israelis and the Palestinians". Demos all over. And rise of non-fundamentalist Islam all over, but under-reported.

Imagine that before the end of 2002 government and non-government opposition, in the West and in the Islamic world, are mutually visible to the point of coalescing. Will the USA go alone even if compelling alternatives (a Middle East Community for Israel-Palestine, pulling out of Saudi Arabia, peace dialogue with Iraq/Iran) are available? Possible, but if proofs of failure also are available, at considerable risk. Even to the point that Bush/Cheney just *may* not complete their (unelected) terms, having become a liability to be impeached away on the basis of high level economic (not sexual) misdemeanors.

Some time in the future a turning point in the US consciousness about the US role in the world from early 17th century till today is located; turning from triumphalism and manifest destiny to shame and joining the world as an equal partner. For Germany this was around 1965, for Japan earlier. In both countries some groups are hanging on. And for the USA September 11 may still turn out the be a wake-up call.

How did the media react? Too early to tell, of course. But using the first five issues of *WORLD PRESS Review (WPR)* after 9/11 at least gives an impression[19].

The hypothesis would be that Discourse I does not find its way into the media, that Discourse II is the dominant discourse with Discourse III recessive to start with but then gaining momentum as the absurdity in addressing class grievances with blunt killing power – terrorist or state terrorist – becomes obvious to many or most around the world.

What did people in general think on this issue? Fortunately there was the poll by Gallup International in 33 countries right after September 11, between 14 and 18 September. As opposed to US polls people were given a choice: "In your opinion, once the identity of the terrorists is known, should the US government launch a military attack on the country or countries where the terrorists are based or should the US government seek to extradite the terrorists to stand trial?" (the Libya model). And this was a clear majority, around 80% on the average, in (UK 75%, in France 67%); in Latin America well above 80%. Only three countries were in favor of "attack": Israel 77%, India 72% and the USA 54% (these three are also bin Laden's "axis of evil"). No. 4 in favor of "attack": France, 29%.

This is the closest to the interface between two key Western values, "democracy" and "globalization" and it does not support the US-led West. With governments out of synch with the world population where would we expect the media to be located? In general in-between: as nation-state institutions key media would be mainstream, reflecting government positions; as sellers they would also reflect the *buyers. In addition there is, of course, the political color of the media.*

One year World Press Review from April 2002 leaves no doubt that the tenor of reporting on the terrorism/state terrorism interface changed dramatically. The major conclusion [1] above remains unchanged, however. Still no constructive, peace-oriented reporting, no doubt related to the distance to the parties ([8]) above). Thus, asking the parties, what do you want, then sifting between legitimate and illegitimate goals, ultimately searching for a bridge over the gap between legitimate goals, is not found in the articles excerpted. If the USA wants, say, free trade across all borders, and the wahhabs behind September 11 (if we believe that story) want respect for Islam in general and their brand of it in particular, then there certainly is a conflict.

If the USA got her way the world with look like a US shopping mall, with more poor than in the USA. If the wahhabs got their way the world would look like a vast conglomerate of puritan, ascetic sects with some but not much trade. There are good reasons to oppose both views; negatively by opting for secular, reasonably self-reliant welfare states, and positively by encouraging free, borderless trade and respect for fundamentalist religion provided basic human need and rights are respected. Debates about such matters would have been useful. Nothing, Zero, is found.

We find critique of the USA, coming out in full bloom at the 911 2001 anniversary in the PR "Special Commemorative Issue", november 2002. Before that we find articles like "Treatment of Prisoners Exposes America" (*The East African*, Nairobi, 27/1/02); The Message Without Lies*" (The Irish Times*, Dublin, 2/3/02 about Pentagon efforts to manipulate world press; "US-Europe: Continental Rift: The Logic of Empire" (*The Guardian*, London).

One year after 9/11 there is little compassion, except in Israel, with the USA. To the contrary, it is as if the world ress is building up to an overwhelming majority against the US/UK war on Iraq March-April 2003. "Reflecting Without Forgetting" in the Philippine Daily Inquirer (Manila, 10/9/03) captures the mood: "we are being asked to – see no pain but America's. Not the pain of other victims of terrorism, not the pain of victims of unjust wars and occupations – often of America's making. Indeed, not the members of the Afghan wedding party who fell victims to George W. Bush's smart bombs. – Still more. – to forget that the United States not long ago popped up Idi Amin, Bokassa, Duvalier, Noriega, van Thieu, Pinochet, our very own Marcos and a host of other nasty characters in Asia, Africa and Latin America who unleashed their murderous thugs to keep the world safe for democracy.

And conservative *The Daily Telegraph* (11/09/02) laments how "failures by US military forces have led to thousands of militants escaping the drag-

net, permeating the world with more dangerous and secretive terrorist groups" and "the continuing ethnic and tribal tensions in a country devastated by 23 years of war – the failure of the international community – to stabilize Kabul and five other cities – to deliver on reconstruction funds".

Of course, even that author, Ahmed Rashid, would have come closer to conveying why the war in Afghanistan continues had he written "140 years of foreign intervention" instead of the standard "23 years of war", starting with the intervention by England.

And thus it continues, with all kinds of critique of the USA, like gun-laws ("Murder Made Easy", *Daily Mail*, London, 27/10/02) and patriotism ("American Patriotism", Tempo, Jakarta, 14/10/02), attacking the books My America and What's So Great About America: "examples of narcissism putting up a huge mirror, applauding itself unceasingly – Why has the United states produced no Gandhi after the 9/11 terror, only dozens of pieces of bad prose?".

Opinion is divided over the war on Afghanistan. *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* (Munich), 07/01/03) opening for the Iraq war celebrating liberation of "an entire people from the clutches of a barbarian brand of Islam"; *Al-Hayat* (London, 20/12/02) blaming Pentagon for "funding schools, bribing journalists, and paying demonstrators".

September 11 forgotten? No, but the world press is still grasping for ways of writing about it. Barbie Zelizer and Stuart Allan, *Journalism After September 11* (London, New York: Routledge, 2002) has many interesting reflections about "how the traumatic attacks of that day continue to transform the nature of journalism and particularly in the United States and Britain". The book is a must. And yet the many authors and pages miss the basic point.

Journalists report texts issued by policy makers about key events; investigate hidden texts with motives not to be revealed; subconscious supertexts and subtexts about mandates from Heaven and basic views like "he who is not with me is against me". The sum total of these texts may make the text look like a pretext. But how about the context, in time and space? 9/11 had a massive prehistory of unresolved conflict and US violence around the world. That gives two explanations for 9/11: frustration and retaliation. The major problem for US journalism was that whoever tried to explain was accused of justification. They all became silent, unable to stand up, say loudly: To explain is not to justify! and defend that view. And that is not so difficult. Thus, we need the unjust victor's treaty from Versailles to explain Hitler's rise to power. But in no way does that treaty justify Auschwitz or his other crimes against humanity and peace. We can explain Soviet communism without justifying stalinism. Of course, Rumsfeld fundamentalism, "We have seen evil reveal itself in our midst, then seen it humbled by the power of pure goodness, *IHT*, 12/09/02 is tempting, but wildly irrational. Human action, also that of terrorists, is caused, and, if you do not like the effects, try to remove the causes. But first, know the causes. How can we even start thinking of September 11, not taking into account the massive history of violent US state terrorist intervention, at least 67 of them after World War II,

with an estimated 12-16 million killed, moving its point of gravity from East Asia via Latin America to West Asia? Using intervention "to keep the world safe for our economy and open to our cultural assault" as a Pentagon planner once said, adding that "to those ends, we will do a fair amount of killing". Maybe also unfair?

How can we think of October 12 2002 in Bali without paying at least some attention to night clubs as places of sins to many, as places of sexual exploitation of local girls by white men, as a place of racism close to "whites only", of Australia as having ulterior petroleum goals? This is being whispered all over, bring it out in the open, if wrong then rebut it! Have a dialogue!

How can we talk about North Korea as "admitting/confessing" uranium enrichment with no mention of the two civilian reactors not having been delivered, nor of the nuclear threat hovering over North Korea from the end of World War II? Or of US geopolitics?

How can we talk about WMD in Iraq with no mention of massive weaponry pointing at them from the West and used, from the Baghdad massacre in 1258, by Hulaku, Djengis Khan's grandson in alliance with the Pope and Armenian Christianity (ending a civilization), via egoistic British colonization up till today? If wrong, rebut!

Well, we somehow manage, showing how shallow our "freedom of expression" is when so many people even are afraid of mentioning the obvious. If the West retaliates and punishes, what makes us think that others may not be similarly inclined? If the West wants massive weaponry also for deterrence, what makes us think that others do not also want some WMD for deterrence?

Maybe there is a common enemy here. Maybe we jump too quickly to retaliation/punishment and deterrence as opposed to trying to find out what the conflict is about and then solve it?

The basic point is that the West is afraid that explanation will justify, not being totally ignorant of the disasters colonialism, slavery, imperialism, interventionism, exploitation have wrought, and the death and misery it continues to bring about. There is some awareness way down there, even in those autistic boys: "one day they will come back and treat us the way we treated them". To prevent that from happening, never talk about a past that might explain. And journalists have obeyed. They could use as a model a Palestinian journalist, Ramzey Baroud, "Condemn terrorism, but ignore its causes at your own peril" in *International Herald Tribune* 13/12/02: "The Chechen suffering does not excuse the violent hostage-taking in Moscow, but explains it". When did the *IHT* give space to that excellent idea about 9/11?

To explain is not to justify violence, but to point to causes and their possible removal. This is mostly the task of the West since the West has sown most seeds of violence. Change the policies of interventionism and exploitation of the present, apologize and try to reconcile for those of the past, solve conflicts for a better future. Entirely possible. Germany has done it (Japan not), South African Whites have done it. The West should live up to

the best in its civilization, not down to the worst. And journalism should show the way.

Let us now try to extract some carefully worded impressions:

[1] There is much critical commentary, but absence of constructive commentary about solutions beyond "dialogue" and "reduce poverty".[20] Governments looking for advice find war, not peace journalism.

[2] Unqualified support for the USA is rare (*Le Monde*, *The Straits Times*, *Die Zeit*); possibly only in NATO countries (adding Poland and the Czech Republic) as an expression of Article 5, *and* as an expression of class solidarity sensing that the terror may hit other countries in some of the same political-economic-military-cultural position as the USA. Unqualified support for the terrorist act is not found in the media at all (but possibly in the minds, and the streets).

[3] The more a country has suffered or is afraid of future terrorism, the more sympathy and support of the USA (Israel, India).

[4] Countries use their history to understand the present (Spain, Sri Lanka; Japan using Pearl Harbor; Yugoslavia recent bombing. The more governmental the papers the more against terrorism – governments often being a major target (China, Cuba).

[5] The more governmental the papers the more against terrorism - governments often being a major target (China, Cuba).

[6] Hard-line US reaction is met with general and deep skepticism; and very few seem to believe in US official communiques.[21]

[7] Little or no investigative reporting can be found; more shock, strong emotional reactions, with more or less profound commentary (Madeleine Bunting is fine but one-sided; Milosz may be right later).

[8] Generally, the media seem to have little contact with Al Qaeda and the US leadership – hence guess-work more than investigation – with the brilliant exception of *Al Jazeera* TV network.

[9] Over time the critique of US military action, given all the ambiguities surrounding Afghanistan, increases – also with cartoons.[22]

[10] By and large the media correlate quite well with public opinion.

[11] No commentary saw the two sides of the battle in the same light.

The big exception to the last point is not media commentary but the talk given by Malaysia's Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad, opening the 57-member Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in Kuala Lumpur. Mahathir's simple definition of terrorism is "people who attack civilians". This was rejected by the foreign ministers, saying "We reject any attempt to link

terrorism to the struggle of the Palestinian people in their exercise of their inalienable right to establish their independent state" (*Bangkok Post*, 2/4 2002). The controversy might have been avoided had the delegates distinguished between terrorism as method and the underlying motive. "We must win the heart and minds of the people most likely to support terrorism", Mahathir said, and added that Muslims had grievances which were "real and truly unbearable, beyond mere understanding and tolerance".

Summarizing the books published on September 11 (surprisingly few, actually) Gara LaMarche[23] makes the point that:

I must also confess skepticism, after reading so many thousands of words written about September 11, from across the political spectrum, that anyone's view of the world has been very much changed. What strikes me most forcefully is how virtually everyone with an opinion or an orientation has cut 9/11 to fit his or her preconceived agenda.

The advantage of democracy is that media and people generally can see mega-events like September 11 and October 7+ through their prisms, which they always do anyhow *and* that these prisms are different.

However, some requirements should be added to this, such as sufficient concrete specificity, attention to the particular case. Very few have the details at their command like a Robert Fisk, through deep knowledge and extensive investigative journalism. A world leader. To that should be added the ability to see a conflict from more than one side. And the ability to make visible actions, words even thoughts that point toward exit from retaliation, solutions, peace.

Conclusion: by and large the media fall short on these criteria.

Notes

1. Based on talks given in Norway (Trondheim and Oslo), Nicaragua (Managua), USA (Ft Lauderdale, New York, Washington and Honolulu), England (London), Indonesia (Bali), Japan (Kyoto, Tokyo) January-April 2002, and in many radio and TV interviews. This is a follow-up to "United States, the West and the Rest: Diagnosis, Prognosis, Therapy", based on talks fall 2001.
2. See <www.pubpages.unh.edu/~mwherold> for updated reports.
3. See, for instance, Paul L. Williams, *Al Qaeda: Brotherhood of Terror*, Alpha, 2002, pp. 73ff.
4. Thus, George W Bush, a man of substantial means, had hardly been abroad before he became president, not only of the US but of the US empire, to impact dramatically on a world he did not know.
5. Oklahoma University Press, 1997, p. 32.
6. 35 (assassinations) +11 (torture) + 25 (bombings) +67 (global interventions) +23 (perverted elections)=161 cases of political violence after the Second World War only, see William Blum, *The Rogue State, A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*, Common Courage Press, 2000.
7. CIA has reportedly been mentioned in captured documents earlier. But CIA was hit September 11: "A secret office operated by the CIA was destroyed in the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, seriously disrupting intelligence operations. – -The station was a base of operations to spy on and recruit foreign diplomats who were stationed at the

United Nations" (*IHT*, 6 November 2002). That an imperial USA bent on world hegemony does such a thing is of course not surprising; a little surprising is the lack of outcry, open protest. And not everybody in the Twin Towers was "innocent, civilian, bystander".

8. The catch-all US formula of "getting away with it" as explored by Blum, *op.cit.*, final chapter (27).
9. Any struggle for the *Daulah Islamiah Raya*, a pan-islamic federation or state, would actually involve Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei and parts of (southern) Thailand, Cambodia and the Philippines – seven of the ten ASEAN members (the others being Burma, Laos and Viêt Nam) — see *TIME* April 1, 2002. A population of 260 million is very close to the USA.
10. There are, of course, other likely targets. Somalia also has untapped oil and there is the additional factor of US revenge, a very powerful motivator (with people being prepared through the historically totally incorrect story in *Black Hawk Down*). Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are through basing agreements under de facto US occupation and there are US military tent cities in 13 countries surrounding Afghanistan.
11. See Walden Bello, A "Second Front" in the Philippines, *The Nation*, March 18, 2002.
12. Of these seven countries (Libya, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Russia, China, North Korea) six are in Asia, reflecting the US NATO-AMPO pincer movement against the Eurasian continent, with 40% of the world population in Russia, China and India alone (India is probably seen as reliably anti-Muslim, possibly on the brink of civil war). Four are predominantly Muslim and three are Arab. Six of the seven have strong state capitalist/socialist parties of which five are in power. Geo-politics, Culture/Race and Class.
13. The number of *kamikaze* suicide pilots (also of dwarf submarines) was 2,800 in the army and about 1,000 in the navy (there was no separate air force).
14. The title of the excellent publication by Nafeez Mosadeq Ahmed, with the sub-title *US Complicity in 9-11 and the New Imperialism*, January 2002, at <policyresearch@mediamonitors.org>
15. In his famous A Prayer for America, <dkucinich@aol.com>. "The trappings of a state of siege trap us in a state of fear—the War Games of an unelected President and his unelected Vice-President". "Kucinich for President" has been heard and seen many places.
16. See <www.internationalanswer.org>.
17. See, for instance, *IHT*, April 17 2002.
18. See *IHT* 19 April 2002.
19. The full texts of the quotes are not printed here, but are available in earlier versions of the paper (eds. comment).
20. Among the ten points in the "Assisi Declaration for Peace" these two points can be found, but in a rich context of "violence and terrorism are incompatible with the authentic Spirit of religion and we condemn every recourse to violence and war in the name of God". The Declaration was not picked up much by the media, but then it was short on concrete content.
21. A very explicit critique of "Die Herren der Welt", "The Lords of the World", *Der Spiegel*, 8/2002 triggered a response in *TIME* March 11, 2002, "How Europeans can be Useful" (by doing the peacekeeping, and the USA does the combat job). Cross-national, even cross-continental, "debates" among media are relatively rare.
22. An example is the cartoon in *THE TIMES*, portraying Blair as a lion with the well-known teeth, dressed in stars and stripes, being trained by the USA – already with medals from 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001. "Very faithful in spite of being treated badly". Reproduced in *Der Spiegel*, 14/2002.
23. "Six Months On, and Counting", *The Nation*, April 1, 2002.

Chapter 5

Portraits of Evil

Timothy McVeigh and Osama bin Laden in Time and Newsweek

Ivar A. Iversen

Timothy McVeigh and Osama bin Laden were the men behind the two most devastating terrorist attacks on American soil in its time. They both attacked America at home, in its heart, at its most vulnerable. They both wanted to hurt the American ideal itself. They were both called evil men by the American president.

There are plenty of similarities between the Oklahoma bomber and the al Qaida mastermind, but there is at least one significant difference: Timothy McVeigh was an American whereas Osama bin Laden is not.

In this essay, I present an analysis of how American and un-American evil are represented in the two most influential news magazines in the United States. I have systematically read, analysed and compared four portraits in *Time International* and *Newsweek*, two of Timothy McVeigh and two of Osama bin Laden, and I have read several other articles dealing with the two men.

The texts present their explanations on evil in the Midwest and in the Mideast. I present my explanation on what these explanations tell about those who have constructed the portraits. I wish to explain how they contribute to the reconstitution of an American identity discourse, or to put it more bluntly: How they portray an America where terror knows no place.

In the portraits, Timothy McVeigh is America's lost son, a paranoid man who chose to step out of the safe American collective to become the face of terror. Osama bin Laden is portrayed as an evil manifestation of the oriental 'other': A devil and a mesmerizer, a mysterious ghost hovering through the media coverage of the war on terror. [1]

Two Acts of Evil

In hindsight, there is no doubt which of the two events people across the world remember as *the* act of terror. Still, there are several striking similarities between Oklahoma and 9-11.

First, the attacks were quite similar in scale, considering the effort. Timothy McVeigh alone killed 168 people with his car bomb. The 18 people taking part in the September 11 attacks killed approximately 3,000 people. Three thousand divided by 18 comes to 166.7 people per terrorist.

Obviously, this way of counting death and devastation hardly gives much meaning. It is far more relevant to compare the attacks by considering their impact at the time – the perceived scale of the attacks.

Both Oklahoma and 9-11 were considered the most massive acts of terror against America when they occurred. Even if 9-11-01 means a great deal more to most people today than does 4-19-95, both attacks were perceived to be of paramount importance. When 9-11 is referred to as the first attack on America since Pearl Harbour, one forgets 4-19.

This leads directly to the second point: The Oklahoma bombing was – as was 9-11 – interpreted as an attack on America itself, not just as a spectacular act of crime. "A blow to the heart" appeared on the first pages of *Time's* special issue on Oklahoma, an issue in devoted entirely to the attack (as there was a special issue after 9-11).[2] "This doesn't happen here", *Newsweek* opens, followed by: "It looked like Beirut. But the devastated building was deep in America's heartland, ending forever the illusion that here at home, we are safe."[3]

This statement has several implications. First, it establishes the familiar context of terror: This happens in Beirut, not here. Furthermore, the phrase "deep in America's heartland" underlines that this is not an attack on any building. "Heartland" is the Midwest – the homeland of the American dream – the land civilized by American settlers (by emptying it of Indians). Finally, it aims at "ending forever" the illusion that terrorist attacks do not occur in America. 9-11 should come as no surprise.

Six years later this seems forgotten. This is the "Day of infamy", *Time* claims in its special issue. The phrase is widely recognised as the name given to the attack on Pearl Harbour over 60 years ago.

A third way to compare the two attacks is to look at how much attention the two culprits were given. Judging by *Time* and *Newsweek*, McVeigh and bin Laden appear to be roughly of the same fame: They have both been on the cover of three issues of *Time* (no small feat, though a long way from real fame: The Clinton-Lewinsky affair covered 13 front pages in 1998 alone.) A February 2002 search in the electronic archives of the two magazines gives 94 hits on 'bin Laden'. If the search is limited to the period after 9-11, the number is down to 71. "Timothy McVeigh" gives 85 hits. The corresponding numbers for *Newsweek* are 120 and 93 for bin Laden and 69 for McVeigh. Not entirely different, considering that bin Laden was a public figure when no one knew of McVeigh.

A fourth similarity is the motives presented for the two attacks: Both McVeigh and bin Laden were seen to have been driven directly by their view on the federal, official United States. Actually, they both chose their targets *because* they were symbols of America.

These similarities may all be summarized in the last and most important point in this comparison, the words used to describe the two attacks. On September 12, 2001, George W. Bush called for a "momentous fight between good and evil in the world". On April 19, 1995, Bill Clinton called the terrorist(s) behind Oklahoma "evil cowards".[4]

The presidents were not the only ones to use the term 'evil'. Following are the introductory lines in *Time*'s special issue on 'the heartland bomb':

> The truck bomb in the heartland brought the terrible realization that America has bred its own sort of new political monster, one afflicted with hatred so malignant that only murder on a grand scale can satisfy it. Who really knows how many citizens – a dozen? a hundred? – feel so passionately that their government is the Great Satan that they would resort to such evil?[5]

Here follows a quote regarding 9-11: "Evil possesses an instinct for theatre," Lance Morrow writes in *Time*'s special issue. He claims the attackers deliberately planned their attack so that it would be broadcast live on TV across the world.

The use of the term 'evil' is central in my understanding of how the two attacks are interpreted by *Time* and *Newsweek*. As I see it, the concept of evil is a founding element in the epistemology of bin Laden and McVeigh.

The word may seem old fashioned. Norwegians generally shrug their heads when president Bush talks of an 'axis of evil' – as if there is a line called 'evil' out there in geopolitical space, beset by small, red devils. The word is nearly extinct in everyday language, both Norwegian and English; 'bad' has replaced it in most situations.[6]

Still, at times presidents, major news magazines and other agents with normative power find it appropriate to talk about 'evil'. In the past, the word was reserved for the 'evil empire' – the Soviet Union. Now terrorists are preferred.

Jennifer Szalai, editor of *Harper's Magazine* in New York, gives the following explanation in an article in *New Statesman*:

> Bush's frequent use of the word 'evil' simply exploits an American inclination that was born out of the country's idealistic beginnings and reinforced by its youth and its isolation. Evil explained all the bad stuff that happened; it was something that existed out there or offshore, in the hostile stranger or hopeless criminal. The United States is one of the few liberal democracies where capital punishment thrives, reflecting an ethos that holds evil as an aberration, the product of "evildoers" only, and impossible for the ordinary, incorruptible, American soul.[7]

Evil, Szalai explains, has throughout history been reserved for industrialization, slavery and communists – and now: terrorists. When an exceptional act of terror occurs, directed towards the US, the victim interprets it as evil.

The use of the word 'evil' in this context may, as Szalai does, be interpreted as a central element in American identity discourse, a verbal practise aimed at reminding one and another of what it means to be an American. The practise serves an important cause: It preserves the American collective – it helps to reconstitute the identity of the country.

Two Evil Characters

"Identities are constitutive: They define a reality, a real existing 'we'. The values that carry this reality are a set of signs separating us from them" writes political scientist Iver B. Neumann in his book on discourse analysis.[8] The way we organise reality through sets of bipolar conceptions is such a fundamental value that it may be called a cognitive precondition – it is something we do everywhere, about everything. "On the other end of 'I', 'the other' has had its place in the very roots of language since its origin", writes Danish author Peter Thielst.[9]

Thus the famous 'us against them': We organise our thoughts as counterparts – you can be man or woman, young or old, smart or stupid, good or evil, and you can be one of us or one of them. Your position is not neutral. According to Peter Thielst, the postromantic, individualistic man will always denominate 'the other' as someone strange and threatening.[10]

In this text, the line between 'I' and 'the other' is not drawn at the fence separating two neighbours, but at the border separating American and un-American. The evil 'other' comes from outside the collective to attack 'us' (the US). Thus, we must defend ourselves against evil. As president Bush famously put it in Congress on September 20, 2001: "Either you're with us, or you're with the terrorists."

"Sentiments such as 'anyone who is not with us is against us' are popular with such groups, because they conveniently allow the group to despise all their victims as enemies," social psychologist Roy F. Baumeister writes in a book on evil from 1995.[11] With the term 'such groups', Baumeister does not refer to American presidents, but to terrorists. At least, Bush and the terrorists seem to share the same perception of the world. They only disagree as to which of them is evil.

By arguing that the evil one is the 'other', and thus the un-American, how can Timothy McVeigh be the evil one? It is a physical fact that McVeigh was an American, so he must have been part of the American 'us' at some point.

Consequently, the portraits aim at understanding how and why he fell out of this collective. Why did McVeigh turn evil? In order to sustain the American identity, the portraits also locate evil outside the American collective: 'We' don't make McVeigh evil; it is he who has chosen to step out and become the evil one.

The 'other' is by nature a stereotype – a preconceived and oversimplified impression of a person or group, or rather of a person through group characteristics. There is no obvious stereotype for McVeigh. A book on stereotypes in the American news media, published in the US in 1994, lists 29 common types of 'others' in the American public. Arabs have their own chapter; the same goes for several religious groups, homosexuals, women, handicapped and many other social groups. There is no chapter for white Christians from the Midwest.[12]

Bin Laden fits perfectly into one of the classic stereotypes. As a dark, Arabic Muslim, he is the obvious 'other' portrayed by Edward Said in his book *Orientalism*. Said uses the term 'Orientalism' to describe how the Arab world has been treated throughout history in the broad Western literary discourse. His book, published in 1977, is now a (albeit disputed) standard reference for studies on how the relationship between the West and the Middle East are portrayed in Western texts. Said claimed (and still claims[13]) that the Orient is portrayed as static and unchangeable by the West, and Arabs as lazy, slow and unreliable.[14] On the basis of this, the Arab world is presented as a major threat to Western democracy.

There is much to be said about Said and his Orientalism. I intend to show how his ideas are still highly relevant. I believe there are obvious traces of Orientalism in the texts I have analysed, visible in the different explanatory models used for McVeigh and bin Laden. As I have now established a kind of '*in ceteris paribus*' ('all others equal') by showing the fundamental similarities between the two acts of terror, I assert that the main reason behind the differences I find is in fact where these two evil men come from.

In other words, this is a question of identity. Edward Said writes that identities are not "shut-down, sealed-off entities that have been purged of the myriad currents and countercurrents that animate human history."[15]

Because I don't provide a detailed discussion on a complicated term such as 'American identity discourse', I may be accused of purging the complex myself. It is not easy (or perhaps not even possible) to give an exhaustive definition of a concept such as 'the American' in all its nuances. My point is merely to discuss how the concept of evil is treated in a specific section of a broad American identity discourse. The selected section is comprised of articles in *Time* and *Newsweek*; the concept of evil is represented through the two specific persons Timothy McVeigh and Osama bin Laden.

A Sick Man (Timothy McVeigh)

"There's a home place under
fire tonight in the heartland"
from *Heartland* by Willie Nelson and Bob Dylan

"The face of terror" read the front page of *Time International* on April 27, 1995. Timothy McVeigh looks at us with a clenched stare directed towards the left. There, a smaller picture has been put in, showing a fireman with a dead orphan in his arms, one of the victims of the terror attack. Here, in Timothy McVeigh's person, we see the evil 'other', the face of terror looking at his victim without remorse. The only strange thing is that the face looks like one of us.

"If you don't consider what happened in Oklahoma, Tim was a good person." This quote introduces an article about McVeigh in *Time* two years later, titled "Day of reckoning".[16] That week, a grand jury is preparing to decide whether or not McVeigh should be sentenced to death.

Over the two years since the events in Oklahoma, *Time* and *Newsweek* have moved from representing McVeigh as the face of terror to representing him as an ordinary American boy. The process began with a diagnosis: Tim is sick.

In a section titled "Who are they?" *Time* spends eight pages of its special issue on Oklahoma discussing the "paranoid life of suspected bomber Timothy McVeigh and his right wing conspirators," as the opening lines read.[17] A paranoid person suffers from persecution mania. Giving McVeigh this diagnosis plays a central part in the text as it directly answers the question posed in the title: Who are they? The fact that 'they' are sick people, comforts the rest of 'us': They are the ones who need treatment, not us. And, even more reassuring: Since they are only sick, there is a cure.

Not many of the eight pages in the article are spent on the *person* McVeigh, as he was not known to the public before the bombing. However, a small biography has been dug up and begins by describing a normal life that somehow descended into evil: McVeigh did well in school, and although some people bullied him, he never hit back. He became a soldier and performed well in the Gulf War. "He was a good soldier. If he was given a mission and a target, it's gone" remembers one of McVeigh's former sergeants.

Then something happened: McVeigh failed to qualify for the Army Special Forces. "After he failed to make it, friends say, McVeigh, already a loner, became increasingly frustrated. His politics veered far rightward."

The central point here is how the explanations of the possible motives are all at the level of the individual. It is McVeigh's personality, not society, that must be altered.

Banality of Evil

The personal explanation is followed by the last source in the portrait that bears witness on McVeigh's past. He says: "He was a follower, not a leader.

He'd do whatever you asked him, but he didn't have any ideas of his own. That's why I don't believe he could have set this all up."

This observation is reminiscent of the concept 'banality of evil' and Hannah Arendt's portrait of Adolf Eichmann, the man who ran the Auschwitz concentration camp. In Arendt's account, Eichmann was a banal person, not capable of doing anything but conscientiously obeying his orders, no matter how cruel.[18]

In the quote, McVeigh is given the features of an Eichmann. Who gave him his orders is already discussed: The army told him how to kill, and he was a good soldier; "If he was given a mission and a target, it's gone."

One might think McVeigh's experience as an elite soldier would be the central element in the explanation of Oklahoma, however this does not seem to be the case in the texts analysed. Concentrating on McVeigh's background in the army would imply an interpretation of the attack as the work of an American soldier, not a frustrated fanatic. This would have challenged one of the fundamental institutions of society – the army. Settling with personal frustration is safer.

That McVeigh is an outsider from the collective is underlined by *Time* when the magazine repeatedly refers to him as a 'loner'. He is also called a 'home-grown zealot', the prefix 'home-grown' pointing out how zealots by nature are grown somewhere else, not at home. McVeigh belongs in Beirut, not Oklahoma.

How do you cure a paranoid outsider? The article in *Time* gives no clear answer. However, it indicates how a cure would have been easier to find if the culprits had been Islamic terrorists: "Immediately after the Oklahoma blast, some politicians and commentators had fingered Islamic terrorists as the most likely culprits, fuelling anti-Muslim sentiment and triggering calls for tougher anti-immigration measures."

If 'the others' had been behind the deed, there would have been a cure: keeping them outside through tougher anti-immigration measures. But McVeigh is already inside. In another article in the same issue, *Time* makes a suggestion on how to solve this dilemma. "How safe is safe?" it asks. "Americans must decide how much freedom they are willing to trade for more security," the introduction reads.

Moving from *Time* to *Newsweek*, the article in the latter magazine underlines the main theme of the texts analysed from the first week following the attack: Evil does not fit in. In a textbox titled "Three strange friends", McVeigh is presented along with the two Nichols brothers, who were arrested along with him, but were later released. "The suspect and two key witnesses were misfits, men both ordinary and bizarre," the introduction reads.

As in *Time*, the turning point for McVeigh is believed to have been while he was in the army, but no further account is given on what made this young man hate the government so strongly when he resigned from the army. His childhood was 'unremarkable' according to the article. At the same time, McVeigh and his friends are described as 'good ole boys', real Midwesterners who enjoyed playing with explosives and guns in the yard.

The Suspect Speaks Out

Can you kill a 'good ole boy'? "Should McVeigh die?" *Time* asks on June 16, 1997. The symbolic picture of the fireman carrying the dead baby is included here as well. But now McVeigh no longer looks at it with clenched eyes. Instead, he looks directly at the reader, his mouth halfway open and his eyes filled with wonder. It is as if he asks us all "Should I die?"

This is the question the reader, and every American, must answer this week. McVeigh is about to be sentenced to death, which is no easy matter. *Newsweek* explains: "According to the latest *Newsweek* Poll, there is overwhelming support for the death penalty when it is considered in the abstract: only 16 percent oppose it. But no criminal defendant – not even Tim McVeigh – is an abstraction to the jurors who must decide his fate."[19]

"It is far more difficult to kill someone you can empathize with – someone who, despite his crime, is at least a bit like you," the magazine continues. Who is 'you'? Obviously, the readers of *Newsweek*. In what way is McVeigh a bit like 'you'? He is an American. Is it possible to imagine a similar debate on bin Laden? "Does this man deserve to die?" The answer would probably be given in advance.

The humanization of Tim McVeigh began in these first portraits I have been discussing. A few weeks later, *Newsweek* published the first exclusive interview with McVeigh: "The suspect speaks out."[20] Here, humanization has come a long way already in the headline. McVeigh is no longer 'the face of terror'; he is an acting subject, a suspect (not a terrorist) who speaks out. He is also referred to as the "alleged Oklahoma City bomber"; 'alleged' bomber is a long way from the face of terror.

McVeigh (or should we call him Tim?) poses with his arms crossed and a relaxed glance into the camera, and tells "a Modern Boy's Life Story" as the second paragraph reads. He has a steady handshake, enjoyed a safe childhood, looks the interviewers straight in the eyes and has been interested in sports. As *Time* has already concluded: "He is an all-American boy."[21]

I have underlined the element of psychology in the explanation of McVeigh. The psychologists are also present in the texts in which McVeigh speaksout. They are frustrated when studying McVeigh's story of his own childhood, *Newsweek* reports: There is nothing wrong to find. Indeed his parents were divorced when he was ten, but that does not explain it. "There's nothing there", McVeigh insists. *Newsweek* does not contradict him.

One of Us – Contingent Evil

McVeigh is being psychologized, pathologized and humanized – all consistent with his position in the American identity discourse – he is, after all, an all-American boy.

But criticism of the system may also be found in the texts. Already in the opening lines of the first analysed text from *Time*: "America has bred a new kind of monster". 'Breeding' means transferring genes, which again implies that the monster has some of mother and father America's genes inside. Exactly what he has is made evident through titles such as "Why guns share the blame". The American weapon culture has its share of coverage the first weeks following Oklahoma.[22]

This passes, though. Six years later, in the texts concerning the death penalty placed on McVeigh, arms control is a non-existent issue. The criticism no longer has a part to play. A passage from Roland Barthes' *Mythologies* is illustrative:

> To instil on the Established Order the complacent portrayal of its drawbacks, has nowadays become a paradoxical, but incontrovertible means to exalting it.[23]

In his book on mythologies, the French sociologist and semiologist uses margarine commercials as examples: He describes a commercial that at first reminds the viewer of the negative aspects of margarine – the fact that it merely consists of fat – and ends concluding that, after all, it is cheaper than butter.

What is the similarity between weapons control and butter? One could say that the conclusion seems to be that, after all, it is better to have freedom than arms control. Early in the narrative on Timothy McVeigh, the reader is reminded of the negative sides of the American weapons culture, before it ends by concluding that McVeigh is the sick one, not the weapons culture – and certainly not society. As Barthes writes: "It's a kind of homeopathy (…) one inoculates the public with a contingent evil to prevent or cure an essential one."[24]

Whether sick or contingent evil – Timothy McVeigh is dead and buried. The US, including weapons culture, elite soldiers and other essential evils, is cured.

Fired by Fury and Faith (Osama bin Laden)

> "You got to try on evil
> when it comes after you"
> from *Let's roll* by Neil Young

When it comes to Osama bin Laden, evil is not contingent. The following is how he is described in the first portrait following September 11: "…the man U.S. officials believe to be not only capable but also guilty of one of the worst single massacres of civilians since Hitler's camps were shut down." [25]

"Since Hitler": One understands why the act is not compared to Oklahoma; after all, there is a difference between 168 deaths and 3,000. But why not

the worst massacre since My Lai in Vietnam? Or Hiroshima? Perhaps because American soldiers were behind these attacks. Then why not Srebrenica or Rwanda, massacres not far back in time? Probably because Hitler was the image that first came to the journalist's mind when she was to describe the ultimate evil: Hitler and bin Laden.

Actually, it is Hitler, bin Laden and Satan himself: The picture accompanying the portrait in *Time* underlines the diabolic presence. Bin Laden's face covers an entire page, filtered in red – the devil's colour. The title "The most wanted man in the world" is followed by "he lives a life fired by fury and faith."

"Why terror's $250 million man loathes the U.S." continues *Time*. "Things could have been different if…" the article starts. The first 23 lines discuss events that might have made things different:

> If bin Laden had not been born rich…
>
> If he had been born rich, but not a second-rate Saudi…
>
> If he had been given a different teacher during Islam studies…
>
> If the Soviet Union had not invaded Afghanistan…
>
> If Saddam Hussein had not stolen Kuwait…
>
> If American troops had not left Somalia as quickly as they did…

These explanations summarize the essence of *Time*'s representation of bin Laden. The rest of the five-page long text focuses on these six explanations and their meanings. Thus, I will concentrate on them in my analysis.

The first three are personal explanations, the last three contextual. What the personal ones have in common is the fact that they do not concern bin Laden's own personal choices: He did not choose to be born, he did not choose the family he was born into and he did not choose the teacher he was given. We remember the portrait of McVeigh: a frustrated soldier who *chose* to step out of the community to become an extremist. In the text, these choices are not available for bin Laden. As *Time* writes: "For him, life is preordained, written in advance by God." If we interpret this statement strictly, it means nothing could have changed: Bin Laden was preordained to become the terrorist he is, no matter what.

The second explanation is partly a psychological one. Because bin Laden had a mother who was not a Saudi, he was a second-rate citizen. But this is indeed a strange way to explain why the man attacked the US. Why did he not attack Saudi Arabia instead?

Then, the three macro explanations: As the aim of this analysis is to relate the portraits to an American identity discourse, the most interesting common denominator is how the US appears in the text.

First, concerning *Time*'s argument on Afghanistan: If the Soviet Union had not invaded Afghanistan, bin Laden would not have travelled there to fight them. Subsequently, he would not have built an army in Afghanistan, which in turn would mean there would be no al-Qaeda. A different argument could

be: If the CIA had not paid and trained the Arabic soldiers, bin Laden would not have been able to build an army.

The portraits of McVeigh state that the US "has bred its own kind of political monster." This argument is barely visible regarding bin Laden. His relationship to the CIA is mentioned in the text, but it is underlined that – according to American officials – there was no contact between them. It is, however, mentioned that the CIA built the cave complexes al-Qaeda later used for cover. The US is also described as bin Laden's benefactor, whom he later "turned against". At this point, bin Laden at least seems to have made a choice himself.

Second, there is Kuwait: If Iraq had not invaded the country, the US would not have deployed large troops on holy ground in Saudi Arabia, an act perceived to be a central reason for bin Laden's rage. On the other hand: To deploy the troops on a permanent basis was the US' choice, not Iraq's.

Finally comes the point at which the Americans are mentioned directly. If they had not pulled out of Somalia so quickly after 18 Americans were killed in 1993, bin Laden would not have got the impression that Americans are "cowards who can be defeated easily," *Time* writes. This could also be expressed in another way: Had the Americans not rolled into Somalia, ignited street fights and killed nearly a thousand Somalis, neither bin Laden nor anyone else would need to feel provoked.[26]

There are diverging interpretations of all these incidents. My central point is that each interpretation is part of a discourse that must be interpreted in the right context. When *Time* represents bin Laden's motives, American actions are generally not to blame. When the magazine mentions bin Laden's objections to American policies in the Middle East, words like 'believed' and 'perceived' are always attached.

The Mesmerizer

The contrast made between 'Arabic' and 'American' is even more evident when we look at *Newsweek*'s first portrait of bin Laden.[27] The title is "The mesmerizer", a term that may be associated with words like magic, mass suggestion, trance – none of which describes a rational actor. Titling the story "The mesmerizer" indicates that the hijackers on September 11 were put into some kind of hypnosis, i.e. they were not rational actors. By rejecting your enemy as irrational, you reject the fact that he might perceive his agenda as rational.[28]

Newsweek's introductory sequence continues to use hypnosis as lead metaphor. Bin Laden is described as a tall, almost feminine man. "His eyes twinkle. His immense charisma, in fact, derives not simply from his capacity for violence, but for the gentle manner in which he comports himself."

The phrase 'not simply…' points out that violence must be the primary cause behind bin Laden's mesmerizing powers. In other words: Violence makes him attractive amongst his potential followers (predominantly young,

Arabic males). The idea that Arabic men are attracted to violence is a typical feature of Orientalism, according to Said.[29]

Newsweek also points to his mannerisms. He fascinates *not only* because he is a master of violence, but also because his eyes twinkle and he has gentle manners. He appears as a 'Verführer' – or a Führer.

The Envious Others

Apart from the two portraits I have analysed above, there is not a great deal to be found on the person Osama bin Laden in *Time* or *Newsweek* after September 11. There are three cover photos, plenty of photos in articles and several references to him in different articles. But bin Laden remains the mysterious and evil mesmerizer throughout.

Notable is how bin Laden is characterised as evil and hypnotising. More important, however, is how the representation of bin Laden influences the understanding of an entire group of people as hypnotised and followers of violence, as irrational and driven by fury and faith. An argument from Norwegian philosopher Arne Johan Vetlesen illustrates:

> Evil is not a social phenomena by nature. Rather, the famous others are brought into the account by being given a certain relieving function when one cannot bear one's own lack of being (lack of independence, invulnerability, immortality) and uses the other to create suffering in order to escape from or illusorily 'overcome' the unbearable aspects, namely by attributing it to specific others.[30]

According to Vetlesen, attributing evil to a social group is an erroneous inference. But this is done in *Time* and *Newsweek*, because of the US' lack of being: its vulnerability and mortality after September 11. And the unbearable aspects (that the US is hated) is attributed to the Arabic others. This attribution is evident in the portraits of bin Laden, as well as in numerous other texts from the time following September 11.

The phrase 'us versus them' appears already in the first magazine with bin Laden on the cover, titled "Target: Bin Laden". Inside, with the headline "us vs. them", the entire world has been given colour codes based on whom they belong to – us or them.[31] The only countries qualifying for 'them' are Afghanistan and Iraq. But there is also a whole sequence of countries on the brink of becoming 'them' if they don't behave, including China, North Korea, Cuba and Iran.

I must add that the coverage in *Time* and *Newsweek* is more than merely orientalist headlines and simplistic colour maps. The magazines I have analysed also contain several lengthy articles discussing US-Arab relations. Arabic voices can be found in several places. But the scheme 'us vs. them' is nonetheless there in the most central texts. On October 7, *Newsweek* spends 20 pages trying to explain "Why they hate America" and what "The roots of rage" are.[32]

The text begins: "Bin Laden's fanatics are the offsprings of failed societies." The most generally recognized causes for this fanatism are then listed: "We stand for freedom and they hate it. We are rich and they envy us. We are strong and they resent this. All of which is true." But this is not necessarily true. As religious historian Berit Thorbjørnsrud explains in an interview in the Norwegian magazine *X*: "Bush says 'they hate our freedom', but for most Arabs this is more about a hatred towards a foreign policy that keeps authoritarian regimes in power, and that says "You are not going to have what we have."[33]

This foreign policy is given limited attention in the article in *Newsweek*. The 20 pages are divided into four main parts, which may be interpreted as representing the main explanations for 9-11 according to *Newsweek*. These are: "Rulers of mosque and state", "Failed ideals", "Enter religion" and finally "What to do": The first three concentrate on internal relations in Muslim countries; not until the fourth headline does *Newsweek* include a discussion on American foreign policy.

The last text I would like to mention appeared in *Newsweek*'s Christmas edition of 2001.[34] "After the evil" says the front page, accompanied by a blurry photo of a man with large beard and turban. The photo stems from one of the videotapes released by the Pentagon in which bin Laden is said to discuss the terror attacks with his friends. Evil is again the issue, but this time the theme is not to portray evil but to save the Arab world from evil, no less.

Inside the magazine the happy Christmas Carroll is presented on six pages: "How to save the Arab world," says the headline. The picture used to illustrate this message shows an elderly unidentified Arab resting on the street smoking a water pipe. This static, unmovable Arabic obviously needs some saving (the word 'save' may imply a mere rescue, but also divine salvation). "Washington's hands-off approach must go. The first step to undermine extremism is to prod regimes into economic reform," *Newsweek* proclaims. They call for a crusade.[35] Structural adjustment and liberalisation make up The Holy Evangelism, while the economic Wise Men of Washington act as apostles.

This is Said's Orientalism at its most vital. As he writes: "The West is the actor, the Orient a passive reactor. The West is the spectator, the judge and jury, of every fact of Oriental behavior."[36]

So how should one fight evil and save the passive and effortless Arabs? Through salvation. This is not a call for the Arab countries to change from within as acting subjects. This is a call for Washington to save the Arab countries, preferably by Christmas.

Same, Same, but Different

"Some people are good at finding what they are looking for," Arne Johan Vetlesen writes in his essay, quoted earlier in this text.[37] This is the case for

all text analysis, including this one: The reflections I have presented are my own interpretations of a material I myself have chosen as one section of a broader discourse I have chosen to call an 'American identity discourse'. Just as I claim to have described central elements of this discourse, I have also described central elements of my own perception of it. But I have not chosen my points blindly.

I have systematically read and compared the four key texts, and have found significant differences in the representations of Timothy McVeigh and Osama bin Laden. Whereas psychology is used to explain McVeigh as an individual, bin Laden is more mystified than explained. And most important: The blame is always to be found somewhere else. McVeigh was created within his 'own, paranoid world', bin Laden in the 'failed Arab societies' – and all the way through, the American collective remains untouched.

Portraits of evil contribute to a reconstitution of the American identity. The contribution is considerable; as cover stories in the two leading news journals in the US, these texts strongly indicate how evil is understood in a discourse on American identity. The texts disclose how Orientalism is still vivid, and the comparison between McVeigh and bin Laden shows how differently the two men are understood. And this difference applies not only to these two individuals; this is also a difference in the representations of entire groups.

The following observation by linguist Tzvetan Todorov from his time as prisoner in a Nazi concentration camp during the Second World War tells what the difference might mean:

> Someone who sees no resemblance between himself and his enemy, who believes that all the evil is in the other and none in himself, is tragically destined to resemble his enemy. But someone who, recognizing evil in himself, discovers that he is like his enemy is truly different. By refusing to see the resemblance, we reinforce it; by admitting it, we diminish it. The more I think I'm different, the more I'm the same; the more I believe I'm the same, the more I'm different.[38]

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Chapter 6

The Newsweek War on Terrorism

A Construction of Risk

Karmen Erjavec

Since September 11, fear of terrorism has permeated every pore of the global society. On the basis of this, we the citizens have expressed our demands for greater security, authorizing our governments – without any reservations – to exercise surveillance of our private lives (e.g., luggage, e-mail, video-surveillance), thus reducing our civil liberties; without seriously doubting the effectiveness of the measures, we approved high military and intelligence costs to ensure better security. What has happened? And how?

First of all, it is necessary to distinguish between a terrorist attack and a terrorist threat, claims Beck (2001: 45). It is not the risk that is politically decisive, it is the awareness of the risk. He (1992: 77) claims that if people experience risks as real, they are real as a consequence. The consequences of the attack may be as hypothetical, as justified, as minimized, or as dramatized as the dominant class wishes. Where they are believed, the result is seen in different social, economic, political and legal consequences. According to Beck, if the risks are real in this sense, they completely mix up the structure of social, political and economic (ir)responsibility. Fear has specific influence on the construction of reality. Influenced by fear, the awareness reduces political and social reality, because it does not offer an alternative to the images of the threat, but at the same time releases visions of the threat and countermeasures. Things that were still possible yesterday suddenly have a limit today, or what was recently still beyond the possibilities of human intervention, now becomes part of the scope of political influence.

One of the consequences of the attacks on the WTC and the Pentagon was the 'Anti-Terror Act' (officially named The USA PATRION ACT), signed by President Bush on October 26, 2001. The Anti-Terror Act allows the US to arrest or detain suspected non-citizens indefinitely, deport them, imprison them in solitary confinement and search their home without any or with minimal authorisation. This Act gives the FBI and the NSA unlimited power. It side-steps all legal restriction, as for example the surveillance of communication, both at home and abroad. With the exception of some individuals

(e.g. congressman Tom Daschle) and civil-society groups (e.g. Center for Constitutional Rights, the American Civil Liberties Union), the majority of the politicians and US citizens fully supported the Anti-Terror Act (Halperin, 2001; Mayer, Greven, 2001).

The main purpose of the present paper is to examine the role, which the media played in the perception of the terrorist risk. The focus of this study is not on the media representation of the terrorist attack, but on the production and reproduction of risk discourse. Through a semantic analysis of a small corpus of *Newsweek* articles, I demonstrate how risk discourse was constructed between September 11 and the Anti-Terror Act.

The first section of the paper presents the background information about the passing of the Anti-Terror Act. The second section is devoted to the discourse analysis of the selected *Newsweek* articles. The discussion and the conclusion sum up the findings of the discourse analysis and relate these findings to the main question of this article.

Background

The week after the terrorist attack of September 11, Bush administration's 'Anti-Terror Act' appeared before the Congress. Clearly, there had not been time to draft something new. The bill consisted of provisions that had long rested in the files of the law-enforcement and intelligence agencies waiting for the right moment (Halperin, 2001; Mayer, Greven, 2001).

Among the bill's most troubling provisions – according to the American Civil Liberties Union Legislative Analysis (2001) – are measures that: (a) minimise judicial supervision of federal telephone and Internet surveillance by law enforcement authorities; (b) allow for indefinite detention of non-citizens who are not terrorists on minor visa violations if they cannot be deported because they are stateless, their country of origin refuses to accept them or because they would face torture in their country of origin; (c) expand the ability of the government to conduct secret searches; (d) give the Attorney General and the Secretary of State the power to designate domestic groups as terrorist organisations and deport any non-citizen who belongs to them; (e) grant the FBI broad access to sensitive business records about individuals without having to show evidence of a crime.

The American Civil Liberties Union (2001) claims that the Act gives the Attorney General and the federal law enforcement unnecessary and permanent new powers to violate civil liberties that go far beyond the stated goal of fighting terrorism (see ACLU 2001). Over 1,200 foreigners have been secretly arrested this way, because of mere suspicion. Four months latter, 900 of them were secretly incarcerated, without having ever been presented before a judge or having had the opportunity to be assisted by a lawyer (de Benoist, 2001: 126).

News Magazine on Risk Discourses. A Discourse Analysis

The approach to discourse analysis followed in this paper draws on the Critical Discourse Analysis of Fairclough (1989, 1992, 1995a, 1995b) and van Dijk (1980, 1987, 1988a, 1988b, 1991, 1995), devoted to the 'analysis of linguistic and semiotic aspects of social processes and problems' (Wodak, 1996: 15). The methodological assumption underlying CDA qualitative approach is, as Fairclough (1992) claims, that discourse is socially shaped (constituted) and shaping (constituting), that means that, discourse is not only a product or reflection of social processes, but is itself seen to contribute towards the production or reproduction of these processes.

News magazine was chosen for the analysis because of its detailed presentation of social events and processes. In her doctoral dissertation on genres in the press, Košir (1987) claims that because more space is available for in-depth analyses and there is less pressure to publish immediately, weekly news magazines do not publish classical news reports, but opt for articles in which the key characteristic is the desire of the journalist to explain a certain situation from various aspects with the help of research.

Furthermore, *Newsweek* articles were chosen for the analysis because *Newsweek* represents one of the main opinion leader roles in the USA and abroad. Its target audience consists of educated and relatively well-off people who have an important decision-making role in American and global society. Its image is that of serious, objective and in-depth coverage of international and domestic affairs, often serving as reference on political and business information. This weekly news magazine can be considerate a moderate but left-of-centre news magazine. (Entman, 1991)

The sample used in the detailed discourse analysis consists of two opinion articles and eight informative articles published in *Newsweek* between September 11, 2001, and the week when President Bush signed the Anti-Terror Act. The articles discuss the domestic situation after the terrorist attacks. The analysis does not focus on the presentation of the attacks and or the international circumstances, but on the internal, US situation. A list of all the articles analysed, with their publication dates, is provided in the Appendix. The data for the analysis consists of all the articles published by *Newsweek* on the domestic situation in the six issues defined above.

This sample seems relatively small and therefore, I make no claims for the generalizability of my findings. The goal is to present an example of how the media construct risk discourse and legitimate the law. The first question of the analysis is what lexical items are used to present the situation. The second issue concerns what Fowler et al. (1979) call 'over-lexicalization as a pragmatic strategy of encoding ideology in news discourse' and lexical cohesion, which through repetition of a word establishes linked meaning (Fairclough, 1995). Whereas this semantic account takes place at a more local level, I also analyse the global meanings (macro-propositions) of the news

magazine discourse. On all the levels of the semantic analysis, the focus and facts regarded as uncontroversial as well as the ideology, which has become part of the 'common sense' and is therefore presupposed in the texts, are identified.

Lexis

The first section focuses on lexical choices, lexical cohesion and over-lexicalization. The structure of vocabulary constitutes particular ways of dividing up some aspects of reality, which are built upon a particular ideological representation of that reality.

Lexical Choice

The analysis begins with the words of the selected news magazine articles. It is widely accepted that the choice of the words in news articles is by no means arbitrary. It is not the journalist's own creation, but has something to do with his/her society. Trew (1979), Teo (2000) and Pan (2002) in their studies of lexical choice and ideologies, concluded that all perception which is embodied in lexicalization, involves ideologies. Thus, the *Newsweek* coverage of the situation after the attacks will be studied, first of all, at the lexical level, because the choice of words is crucial in representing the intended situation about the news events to readers, and hence is an indication, whether implicit or explicit, of the ideological stance on the media in general and journalists in particular.

Reference to the Situation after the Attacks

In referring to the situation after the attacks, *Newsweek* used different expressions.

In the first issue after September 11, the first *Newsweek* article [A] used 'a nation united', 're-United States of America', 'renewed spirit of togetherness', 'spirit of solidarity' to describe the situation in the USA after the terrorist attack. Those expressions denote a re-established unity of the nation caused by the attack. The journalist's play-on-words of the country's name (e.g. 're-United States of America') implies that the country was not proper before, because it was not united.

In the second article [B] with the overline 'After the Attack: Fighting Back', *Newsweek's* journalists described the situation as 'war', 'threat(s)', 'scare(s)' and 'fear'. In general, the situation was defined as 'war'. Using the word 'war' implies a state of emergency. To describe the situation in detail, words such as 'threat', 'scare(s)', 'fear of terrorists' were used and the situation was presented as a state of great anxiety.

In the next issue, the long article [C] that described the domestic situation, presented it as a 'crisis', 'alarm', 'shock', 'anxiety', 'widespread concern',

Table 1. Reference to the Situation after the Attacks in *Newsweek*

Sep. 24 [A]	'a nation united', 're-United States of America', 'renewed spirit of togetherness', 'spirit of solidarity'
Sep. 24 [B]	'war', 'threat', 'scares', 'fear'
Oct. 1 [C]	'crisis', 'alarm', 'shock', 'anxiety', 'widespread concern', 'full of fear and worry', 'the threat to the country's social fabric', 'danger to national security', 'almost normal life'
Oct. 1 [D]	'fear of further terrorist activities', 'panic'
Oct. 8 [E]	'anxious', 'scare', 'nervous', 'threat', 'difficult situation'
Oct. 8 [F]	'epic attempt to establish homeland defense'
Oct. 15 [G]	'fear of another attack'
Oct. 22 [H]	'anxious', 'worry', 'scares', 'panic', 'concern', 'fear', 'threat', 'risk', 'danger', 'normality as possible'
Oct. 22 [I]	'crisis', 'inwardly anxious', 'risk', 'fear as cleanser', 'fear as unification', 'current anxiety', 'uncertainty'
Oct. 29 [J]	'threat', 'hazardous life', 'future threat'

'full of fear and worry', 'threat to the country's social fabric', 'danger to national security' and 'almost normal life'. Two different types of expression presented the same situation. The majority of the expressions presented the situation as uncertain and one of emergency, while some of the expressions, such as 'almost normal life', presented the situation as normal.

In the next article [D] from the same issue, the expressions 'fear of further terrorist activities' and 'panic' were used to describe the situation in the US. In the article [E] from October 8, journalist used even more words of uncertainty such as 'anxious', 'scare', 'nervous', 'threat', and 'difficult'. The next article [F] presented the situation in the US as the 'epic attempt to establish homeland defense'. The 'epic attempt' denotes the heroic, enormous effort 'to establish homeland defense'. A new term, 'homeland defense', was invented; the term has a patriotic connotation that every home in the land should be protected.

In the issue of October 15, more information was devoted to the international war on terrorism than to internal anti-terrorism measures. The article about the domestic situation [G] described the situation as one of 'fear of another attack'.

The issue of October 22 once again devoted more information to the domestic situation. *Newsweek* described it in a long article [H] using terms such as 'anxious', 'worry', 'scares', 'panic', 'concern', 'fear', 'threat', 'risk', 'danger', and 'normality as possible'. Once again, the situation was presented as a threat and at the same time as normal.

The author of the opinion article with the headline 'Facing Our Fear' [I] used the terms 'crisis', 'current anxiety', 'risk', 'inwardly anxious', 'fear as cleanser', 'fear as unification' to describe the current situation in the USA. In this article, fear and anxiety were presented in a positive light as factors of re-establishing the US unity and solidarity.

The last analysed opinion article [J] of October 29 defined the 'future threat', which was labelled as a 'cyberterrorism'.

To sum up, *Newsweek* used nouns such as 'threat', 'anxiety', 'fear', 'scares' and 'risk' to describe the situation as a threat. The general definition of the situation in the first issue was 'war', which also implies fear and anxiety. Choosing Tulloch and Lupton's (2001: 13) definition of risk – to over-focus Beck's one on specific areas of (environmental or intimate) risk – as 'a threat to one's economic status, home, gendered (and aged) relationships with others, social standing or status and emotional or psychological states', I define *Newsweek*'s words of threat as an instance of 'risk discourse'. As opposed to Tulloch and Lupton's individual conception of risk, *Newsweek*'s risk discourse focused on the collective level. Risk was identified as a threat to the nation, not only to small group(s) or individual(s). Beside the majority of expressions that presented the situation as risk, there were also a few expressions that presented the situation as normal. And furthermore, there were two articles in which positive nouns of description of the situation were used, and presented fear and anxiety as factors of re-establishing the US unity and solidarity.

Lexical Cohesion and Over-Lexicalization

The vocabulary of any political speech community will have a different number of linguistic distinctions for phenomena depending on their perceived importance. This is essentially similar to what Fowler and Kress (1979: 211) call over-lexicalization, which they define as 'the provision of a large number of synonymous or near-synonymous terms for communication of some specialised area of expertise', giving rise to a sense of 'over-completeness' (van Dijk, 1991).

Let me first of all examine the pervasive use of lexical cohesive devices to construct risk discourse. Lexical cohesion is cohesion through vocabulary – through repetition of words, and words that are linked in meaning (Fairclough, 1995: 121). The most direct and obvious form of lexical cohesion is the repetition of a lexical item such as *'threat'*. The use of synonyms such as 'risk', 'danger' and 'hazard' and other direct references to the probabilities of harm also contributes to the co-referentiality of *threat*. An additional reference to it consists of the lexical item *'fear'*, which includes synonyms such as 'anxiety', 'fear', 'terror', 'uncertainty', 'fright', 'worry', 'concern', 'shock' and 'scares'. The third group covers references to risk-objects. Synonyms of two subgroups of technology were mostly repeated: *'new technology'* and its synonyms, e.g. 'new tech', 'modern technology', 'high-tech', 'advanced technology', 'information and communications technology', 'modern tools', and *'biological weapon'* and its synonyms, e.g. 'anthrax risk', 'anthrax powder', 'anthrax attacks', 'bioweapons', 'biological or chemical weapons', 'threats of bugs or gas', 'pathogens and poisons'. The fourth group includes references to normality of the situation with the repetition of phrases such as '*normality as possible',* 'almost normal life'. References to the *new legislation* are the fifth group, with the repetition of the expression 'anti-terrorism

bill' and its synonyms such as 'legal means', 'new law', 'Anti-Terror Act' and 'anti-terrorism measures'. In these expressions the main stress is on the premodifier 'anti-terrorism'.

The diversity and the frequent repetition of the lexical items show preoccupation of some aspect of reality to different degrees, with larger or smaller numbers of words (Fairclough, 1992). But the question then is: what were the socio-political effects of this over-lexicalization of the situation the after the attack, emphasising the threat, fear and risk-objects on the on hand and the normality of the situation of the other hand, and the anti-terrorism bill in such explicit, repetitive and overt manner? *Newsweek*'s over-lexicalization of the expressions of threat and fear co-constructed the state of emergency by repeating specific risks and their synonyms, focused the attention on new technology and biological weapons as the main risk-objects, and, by repeating the anti-terrorism bill and its synonyms, co-constructed the need for passing it among the readers. Beside the risk, the sense of normality was also used to co-construct a controllable risk situation.

Macro-Propositional Analysis

To continue the analysis of the news magazine articles, which has thus far focused on the microstructure of particular words and phrases, the macrostructure of the sentence, several sentences or paragraphs, is now examined to investigate the meaning of *Newsweek's* risk discourse. The semantics of discourse deals with the meanings in terms of 'propositions' (Brown, Yule, 1983). A proposition is a conceptual structure, which consists of a predicate and one or more arguments. According to van Dijk (1988) propositions are smallest independent meaning constructs of language and thought, which are typically expressed by single sentence or clauses.

In this study, a proposition is defined as an 'idea unit', in the form of a single sentence, several sentences or paragraph. The analysis of some kind of macrosemantics, which deals with global meanings and enables the description of the meanings of all the news magazine articles, will be presented here. I will analyse the macro-propositions of the risk discourse in the *Newsweek* articles from the first issue after the attacks until the issue of the week when President Bush signed the Anti-Terror Act. Because the majority of the articles analysed are long and also deal with other topics (e.g. the presentation of the attacks and international anti-terrorism measures), this study focuses only the propositions in the parts of the articles discussing the domestic situation, which I have defined above as risk discourse. The close analysis of the macro-propositions enables us to look at the risk discourse in the news magazine as a whole and thus allow a comprehensive view of the meaning of the constructed risk discourse. I intend to single out the propositions conveyed in the articles about the same issue in the period of searching for a way of legitimating the Anti-Terror Act.

In the first *Newsweek* issue after the attack, the main proposition of first article [A] about the current situation in the USA is that the *unity of the USA has been re-established*. The proposition presupposes that in the past unity was lost, but it has now re-emerged. The presentation of the situation as re-united has ideological consequences. The construction of unity automatically excludes others, who are not part of it. The activities of the groups outside the unity are seen as deviant and marginal. The second proposition is that *early signs show that it was business as usual*. Two main propositions about the domestic situation in the first article after the attack present the situation in a positive light.

Article [B] presents the situation as the opposite of that described above. The first proposition is that *President Bush declared the situation as a war*. Presenting the situation as war implies that the USA is in a state of emergency and a different way of state operation than in peace. When at war, the rule of law does not operate and civil liberties are limited. At war security must be achieved by military means. The second main proposition – *the USA is afraid of new terrorist attacks* – presents the situation as a state of great anxiety. This means fear of *further terrorist attacks* in general, and *the abuse of the main Americans strengths – openness and new technology* – in particular. New technology is presented in the article as the main strength of American society, and, at the same time as the greatest threat to American society. New information and communications technology (mobile phones, e-mail, the Internet), which is not yet under legal control, is equalised with other weapons. Presenting new technology and openness as the greatest threats implies the need for surveillance of new technology.

We are free and open, the terrorists are uncivilised and abnormal, is the next proposition of this long article. By attributing exaggerated positive characteristics to the WE-group and proportionately negative ones to the THEY-group, the journalists construct contrasting social groups and define the in-group and the out-group. In the article, the out-group – the terrorists – is presented as a group of ahistorical, apolitical, archetypal Islamic fanatics with an abnormal mix of capabilities, such as the will to die, extremely high intelligence, patience, wealth and technological equipment which they know how to use. The in-group – the USA – is presented in an extremely positive light as open and free.

In the long article of October 1, [C], three main propositions about the domestic situation are identified: *President Bush said that the USA would be attacked with even more terrible weapons*. This proposition once again presents the situation as a state of great emergency and anxiety. What is identified as threats? There are no specific weapons mentioned, but in the sentences that follow, the journalist identifies all kinds of threats, from public-health threats and water supplies, economic damage and illegal immigration to biological, chemical or plutonium weapons and modern technology. In this article the threats are presented as total.

President Bush's life is almost back to normal is the next main proposition. When President Bush speaks, he identifies his situation as 'almost normal'.

On the collective level, the country is facing an emergency situation, but the president describes his individual situation as normal. How can we interpret this discrepancy? In a state of emergency, full of fear and worry, the citizens of the US should act as their leader and role model. But how can they do that? *New law-enforcement anti-terrorism measures put forward by the Attorney General, John Ashcroft, will provide national security*. With this proposition the coherence of the meaning is constructed: the new Anti-Terror Act will give the American people their normal lives back. In the article, implicit assumptions chain together successive parts of the text by supplying missing links between explicit propositions (Fairclough, 1989: 81). The reader has to supply these linking assumptions between the explicit propositions by the process of gap-filling or *inferencing,* of which he or she is often not conscious of.

In the next article, [D], from the same issue, the proposition identified is: *the Americans are willing to sacrifice their civil liberties for security*. The word 'Americans' is used to once again construct a sense of unity and exclude 'them': those Americans who are not willing to sacrifice their civil liberties for security. The journalists suppress the information that some civil-society groups (see ACLU) are against the sacrifice of civil liberties for security. This proposition also includes an implicit claim, a presupposition, that there is a dilemma between security and civil liberties, which implies that the USA must sacrifice civil liberties to be safe. By using presupposition, the notion of unity, and misusing information, the basis for the assumption that the point of view represented is natural, commonsense, to be taken for granted, not meant to be doubted is constructed. The next proposition is that *the Attorney General, John Aschroft, vowed to use every legal means at his disposal to prevent further terrorist activities*. This proposition connotes maximal efforts, unselfishness and resoluteness of Aschroft as a representative of the political elite for achieving security. The words 'every legal means' emphasise the legality of the anti-terrorism measures. *Further terrorist activities in general and new technology (e. g. phones, computers, the Internet, e-mail, credit-cards) used by the terrorists in particular are threats to the national security.* The process of gap-filling, or inferencing presents the new legal measures as a solution to the problem of national security.

In the article in the issue of October 8, [E], the situation is identified as one of great emergency: *a terrorist assault with biological or chemical weapons*. The journalist ascribes the anthrax attacks to terrorists. The main proposition of the next article, [F], is that *the US attempts to establish homeland defense with a familiar friend: technology*. The new term, 'homeland defense', has already been analysed in the section on lexical choice. Technology is presented in an extremely positive light – a friend is someone who is always helpful and trustful. In addition, new technology, such as 'sophisticated devices and software programs', 'security cameras', 'smart card', 'bomb-detection devices or 3-D scanners in air-ports', 'Backscatter X-ray', 'machines for sniffing our highways and borders' is specified. The journalist completely

omits the negative side of using new technology: the possibility of the surveillance of private lives.

In the article in the issue of October 15, [G], the main proposition about the domestic situation after the attack is *the Americans still fear another attack*. Risk discourse is still present. In the long article from the issue of October 22, [H], the first main proposition is that *the Americans are anxious about anthrax*. The second one is that *President Bush implored all Americans to resume their normal lives*. The third one is that *the new anti-terrorism measures in general and new technology in particular will make the country safe*. Once again, the words of President Bush call for normal life. The gap-filling assumption implies that the new law-enforcement anti-terrorism measures will allow the US to develop and use new technology that will enable the Americans to go back to their normal lives.

The main proposition of the opinion article [I] is that *fear re-establishes the unity of the US around George W. Bush*. Once again the proposition presupposes that in the past there was unity which, however, was lost, but it has now been re-established. A sense of unity is constructed to exclude 'them': those who are not unified around the president. The author presents fear in a positive light as a factor of homogenisation of the nation. President Bush is presented not as an active participant but only as a symbol of unity.

The last opinion article analysed of October 29, [J], is devoted to the future threat of 'cyberterrorism'. The main proposition of the article is: *the next threat is the weapons of mass destruction: computers*. After President Bush signed the Anti-Terror Act, computers were presented as a future threat.

Further, the legitimation of the Anti-terrorist Act requires the construction of a consensus by quoting statistics which show the support for George W. Bush. We tend to look at facts, particularly those grounded in statistics, as the most reliable and objective form of information. When statistics are used to demonstrate the support for the President, they become ideological. Using statistics to legitimate the anti-terrorist measures is the most frequent strategy of the news magazine.

The main propositions of the articles analysed show that *Newsweek* presented a scary situation in the USA. All kinds of threats were identified, but in general journalists focused on further terrorist attacks, such as anthrax attacks and new technology. New technology was first presented in the text as the main strength of the US, later portrayed as the greatest threat to society and finally, shown as a solution for all the current security problems. But its usefulness for society can only be achieved by gaining total control over it. No negative aspects of using new technology, such as the surveillance of private lives were presented.

Furthermore, by presenting the American people as united, by using presupposition, and by misusing information, the proposition that all Americans are willing to sacrifice their civil liberties for security, the basis for constructing a consensus, was established. In the articles, President Bush implored all Americans to live their lives as normally as possible. The process of gap-

filling or inferencing presented the new Anti-Terror Act as a solution to enable normal lives in an extremely dangerous society. The Act will enable the realisation of the magic role of technology to secure the Americans from further terrorist attacks. By presenting the Anti-Terror Act as the only solution to the risk situation, the journalists legitimated the Anti-Terror Act.

In the articles, the in-group – the USA – was presented in an extremely positive light as open and free, while the out-group – the terrorists – were portrayed as ahistorical, apolitical, abnormal, uncivilised, archetypal Islamic fanatics. Such a presentation of the terrorists was used to construct an enemy with unnatural powers, a total enemy and to produce fear in the readers.

Information Sources

It has already been mentioned that the journalists focused their attention on the President of the Unites States, George W. Bush (This can be seen in the fact that they quoted his lengthy statement). The next characteristic of the news discourse analysed is the reliance on various sources of information on which the article is constructed. The analysis of the information sources is very brief, since the journalists only quoted other politicians, such as senators and political advisors and other important individuals from the political, economic and social arena. In addition to this reliance on official sources, experts are also crucial to explaining and debating policy, especially in complex stories like this one. As with sources, experts are drawn almost entirely from establishment, given that their main purpose is to express the consensus of those in power. Since September 11, the range "expert" analysis has been limited mostly to the military and intelligence communities and their supporters, with their clear self-interest in the imposition of military solutions. There are no quotes from sources presenting the opinion opposing the dominant view. The analysis of information sources reveals that the dominant sources are homogenous. The journalists thus increased their credibility and legitimated their representation of the situation.

Discussion

The above analysis of the *Newsweek* articles can hardly be said to be properly representative of the complex dimension of risk discourse, but it provides an example of the media construction of risk discourse. Other analyses of the media construction of risk discourse in the USA (see, for example Besser, 2001; Mayer, Greven, 2001; Kellner, 2002; Monthly Review, 2001) also show that the media played a decisive role in the construction of risk and the legitimation of the anti-terror measures. Why is it that the U.S. news media – which praise themselves for their objectivity – became the explicit agents of

the dominant discourse without batting an eyelid? We can seek the answer in the professional ideology of journalists, which is usually neglected in the analyses, although we are aware of the fact that other political and economic causes are also important.

The institutional forms of production, distribution and consumption are guided by professional norms and informal rules of journalistic discourse, and discursively constructed household routines. The decisions of journalism arise in part from the doomed effort to produce news that serves two conflicting ideals: mirroring reality and holding political power accountable (Entman, 1989). According to the mirror standard, journalism should passively reflect and exert no political influence apart from reality. But following the watchdog standard requires that the media actively select specific data needed to hold the power accountable. Journalists attempt to resolve the contradiction between being a mirror and watchdog through the rules and procedures of 'objective journalism'. In practice, these rules mean that in a political conflict, or in cases where conflicting viewpoints can clearly be determined, the media give a balanced presentation of the points of view of political parties or all the actors involved. But how do journalists present social events in which it is impossible to identify the opposing actors? How do they present reality, when there is a consensus in society? In those issues in which the media assume that there is a consensus in society, journalists reproduce the discourse of the dominant ideology. Hallin (1986: 50) claims that 'where consensus reigns, they rely as heavily as anyone else on the symbolic tools that make up the dominant ideology of their society.'

At any rate, professional norms and myths of objectivity in practice mean that journalists are 'neutral' when there is a political conflict between parties where it is possible to clearly locate the 'sovereign'. When journalists are unable to locate the 'sovereign ' (Laclau, 1977) – for instance, the actor who would stand up for the rights of the terrorists – they assume that the matter is consensual and they reproduce the discourse of the dominant ideology. If risk discourse as legitimate public discourse and part of complex collective will – represented by the constant publication of statistical evidence – is never questioned, journalists make use of such discourse without any reservations. In the construction of risk discourse, the journalists gave up their right to take reporting as a process of searching for the truth and the story was told by the dominant ideology, instead of them.

Conclusion

The present analysis demonstrates how *Newsweek* constructed risk discourse through textual devices (lexical choice, cohesion, over-lexicalization, use of statistics) and, with the use of different types of implicitness (gap-filling or inferrencing, presupposition), information sources and misuse of informa-

tion, legitimated the Anti-Terror Act, especially its most troubling measures: the surveillance of new technology.

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Appendix

The following *Newsweek* articles were used in the discourse analysis. The bold capital letters in brackets are used for citing the articles in the text.

Newsweek, 24 September, 2001, *A Nation United,* pp. 4-27. [**A**]

Newsweek, 24 September, 2001, *Bush: 'We're at war',* pp. 28-38. [**B**]

Newsweek, 1 October, 2001, *Bush's Battle Cry,* pp. 22-27. [**C**]

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Newsweek, 8 October, 2001, *Unmasking Bioterror,* pp. 19-25. [**E**]

Newsweek, 8 October, 2001, *A high-Tech Home Front,* pp. 47-49. [**F**]

Newsweek, 15 October, 2001, *Bush's 'Phase One',* pp. 34-35. [**G**]

Newsweek, 22 October, 2001, *Anxious About the Anthrax,* pp. 32-55. [**H**]

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Chapter 7

Mr. President: "The Enemy is Closer than You Might Think"[1]

Rune Ottosen

Since Phillip Knightley recorded his experiences as a war reporter in his book *The First Casualty*, the expression "Truth is the first casualty in a war" has almost become a cliché (Knightley, 1989). As the result of self-critical discussions among reporters after the Gulf War, it is now conventional wisdom among journalists that, in every major conflict, one must prepare oneself to be subjected to propaganda by all parties in the conflict. This is generally accepted among professional reporters and was discussed widely in the Norwegian media after the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Studies of media coverage of previous wars, such as the 1991 Gulf War and the 1999 Kosovo war, have found that the earlier experiences with media-military relations and media coverage of war are not repeated (Nohrstedt, Höijer & Ottosen, 2002). Also after these experiences, no one will bagatalize the importance of the media as an instrument for all parties to distribute propaganda. Thus after September 11, a great many journalists sought advice from media researchers on how they should prepare themselves to meet the propaganda pressure they expected as part of the preparations for the bombing of Afghanistan.[2] This was even more so in the crisis over Iraq in the winter of 2003. As I, however, will show through examples in this chapter the lack of critical reporting in times of crisis is obvious in main stream Norwegian media.

For many journalists, it obviously has become an ethical issue to prepare themselves and their audience to counteract a situation where the authorities and the military establishment will withhold information, manipulate facts, distort images of the enemy, and use other well-known propaganda techniques to put "the other side" in the worst light possible (Loustarinen & Ottosen, 2002).

After September 11, the U.S. media was severely tested on how to handle a situation in which the whole nation was in shock over the mass murder of close to 3,000 people in what is best characterized as a crime against humanity. This test included ethical issues such as how to simultaneously be a channel for the strong feelings in American society – reporting on the

anger and trauma of millions of people – and also assist the authorities to distribute information to suppress panic while preparing for possible new attacks. At the same time, the media was obliged to defend the classic values of a democratic society, such as the freedom of the press and freedom of expression. Obviously, this was the first real test case for U.S. society since the Second World War, because this was the first attack from above on U.S. territory since the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour on December 7, 1941. This test had global implications, since the development of satellite technology and the modern global media infrastructure now automatically make modern wars into global media events. Images are distributed to a world audience within minutes after such dramatic events as the attack on the World Trade Center (Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2001). Of course, this also has ethical implications on a global scale, since major news organisations such as CNN are controlled from U.S. territory. As the sole military superpower with the capacity to interfere in all corners of the earth, the U.S. also has the power to interfere in the media through military, political, and psychological means. If we define freedom of speech and freedom of the press as universal values, then the U.S. authorities have global obligations to defend democracy and liberal values. In fact, the U.S. is committed to the U.N. *Declaration of Human Rights* and other international obligations to do so. In many respects, events like the September 11 attacks serve as test cases for how deeply rooted the will to defend civil liberties is. Before discussing some of the disturbing facts that indicate that the U.S. did not pass this test, I will try to construct a journalistic ethical framework for this discussion by identifying different professional positions through an analytical discourse.

Ethical Challenges During Crisis

Obviously, the events of September 11 must be characterised as a crisis. But as Raboy and Dagenais point out, the intensity of a crisis determines the means one chooses to meet it. The line between reaction and and overreaction is in itself an ethical issue (Raboy & Dagenais, 1992). Here, of course, the working conditions for the media during the crisis is a central issue (see Introduction chapter).

As I will show in the Norwegian media coverage of September 11 and the war in Afghanistan, a great deal depends on the discourse that the individual media and journalists choose to present to the public.

Even an issue like ”common truth” can be a challenge when journalists must choose angles and sources under government pressure for ”loyalty” during times of crisis. In addition, there is the potenial for cross-cultural conflicts. Will it be possible for Muslims in the Middle East and Christians in the U.S., angered by the events of September 11, to hear the ”truth” about developments in the Middle East or the ”need” to bomb Afghanistan in the

hunt for terrorists? In his book *Orientalism* and other works, Edward Said explains how throughout history the West has interpreted events through the lens of our colonial past: Our own narrow perspectives are coloured by our understanding of the "truth" as being quite different from the "truth" of the people living there, who perceive the West as the colonial oppressors rather than "freedom fighters" (Said, 1995). On the other hand, there are Muslims in the Middle East who, angered by the U.S. support for Israel and oppression of the Palestinians, are willing to defend horrible acts like the ones we witnessed on September 11. In the West, such examples might again be used to generalize about how "Muslims" feel and think. This can again be used for propaganda reasons to justify preparations for a military solution to conflicts that could be solved through dialogue and negotiation. Jake Lynch, the former correspondent of Sky News at NATO headquarter during the Kosovo war, has suggested an ethical approach to meeting the challenges for journalists during times of war. In his book *Reporting the World*, (2002), he suggests the concept of "peace journalism" as a tool for circumventing propaganda efforts from all sides in a conflict. Lynch argues that, since the essence of propaganda in preparing for war is to build up the will to use force, a journalist's duties include presenting the alternatives to the audience.

A global discourse could be used to lay a foundation for a common understanding of complex conflict issues. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss how the media will affect the ethical issues at stake. We know that the media will play an active role in global events. Through the project "Journalism in the New World Order", we have documented that the media to a large extent reflects the security policy in a given country. Journalists are influenced by their government's foreign policy and will feel pressure to be loyal to that in times of crisis (Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2001). But this is not a law, and there are many examples of journalists who refuse to be simply a propaganda tool for the government (see Robert Fisk's article in this book).

More than anything else, the newspaper industry fears losing credibility and provoking its readership. An interesting example of how a newspaper tried to please both proponents and resisters of a possible new war against Iraq was when *The Independent,* on February 15, 2003, commissioned Robert Fisk, one of the most outspoken opponents of the war, to write an anti-war article entitled "The case against: A conflict driven by self-interest of America". Meanwhile, his colleague Johann Hari wrote "The case for war: We must fight to the end to end Iraqis' suffering". I think this is a signal of a new trend: A newspaper doen't necessarily speak with only one voice.

National or Global Loyalty?

One essential question in times of war is whether a journalist should have a national or a global approach to the coverage. Here we can use as an exam-

ple the different positions taken by British journalists during the Falklands War. At the time, media such as the BBC and the major newspapers were under heavy pressure to support the British forces in their efforts to reassert British rule. Edward Furdson, a war reporter for the prestigious *Daily Telegraph*, claimed that he had no trouble living up to the call for patriotism during this difficult hour for the nation, stating that "[t]he commander-in-chief has got to win and there is nothing else that matters". This view was disputed by BBC reporter Peter Snow, who claimed that being a professional journalist meant that he could not primarly define himself as British: "I see myself as a citizen of the world, a detached journalist," he wrote. "I don't think it is our job to twist things so that you put the British case over in the most favourable light" (both quotes from Luostarinen 2001). By taking this position, he was implying that the political leaders in his own country potentially could choose the wrong position. He suggested that an ethically valid position could only be found through a global discourse based on certain principles (Loustarinen & Ottosen, 2001).

The Rhetoric of President Bush

In his speech to the Congress nine days after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, President Bush used rhetoric that defined a narrow framework for possible ways to handle this extremely delicate situation. I question whether this was an acceptable framework for fighting international terrorism and at the same time establishing a democratic foundation for multicultural global understanding.

President Bush's Speech as a Discourse with Implications

In the following section, I will draw on discourse analysis to review President Bush's speech to the Congress on September 20, nine days after the attacks on the World Trade Center and other targets. I am inspired here by Norman Fairclough's theory that a speech act must be analyzed within an ideological and political framework – what he calls "language use conceived as social practice" (Fairclough, 1995, 135). This means that any use of language by political leaders like George Bush also should be analyzed within the framework of the use of power. *The idea of a critical discourse approach is to identify the obscured link between the spoken word and the use or misuse of power.* Fairclough also uses his approach explicitly to bring about social change. When a member of the elite uses the language in a particular manner, it is up to the journalist to either refer to it uncritically or set it in context. I will later show how the two Norwegian dailies, *Verdens Gang* (*VG*)

and *Aftenposten*, chose different approaches to reporting and how these differences reflected the way each newspaper has analyzed global issues since September 11. *Aftenposten* is the biggest Norwegian morning paper, and *VG* the biggest tabloid.[3] Both *VG* and *Aftenposten* are owned by Schibsted, one of three media conglomorates in Norway controlling over 50 per cent of the newspaper market.

The bombing of the former Yugoslavia in 1999 was defined as a "humanitarian intervention" (not as war) intended to prevent the Serb forces from committing atrocities. The media images of the flow of refugees out of the war zone created a favorable atmosphere for the journalism of attachment (to use Martin Bell's position explained in the Introduction chapter). Polls showed that this rhetoric found a favorable climate in the opinion of the Norwegian public, who felt that "something had to done" to stop Milosevic. Still, our prime minister at the time, Kjell Magne Bondevik, (as other NATO-politicians) refused to call this a war[4]. But the public had its own problems accepting that this was not a war, since Norwegian pilots for the first time since the Second World War took part in a military attack on another country. The result was a discourse in the media that sought a balance between the NATO propaganda for "humanitarian intervention" and a genuine sympathy for the people in Kosovo who were subjected to Serb atrocities. Our analysis of the public's reaction to this cross pressure (through interviews with viewers' panels) proved that ordinary people struggled with the dilemma of whether one evil ("ethnic cleansing") could justify another evil (bombing Yugoslavia) (Nohrstedt, Höijer & Ottosen, 2001). Public opinion was ambivalent. If there were doubts among ordinary people, there were none among our leading politicians. They "knew" that their task was to stand by our great allies in NATO and approve the Norwegian contribution to the war against the Serbs. And they did this – with no written communication between cabinet and parliament, and with the matter handled informally and secretly by a parliamentary committee (*Aftenposten* April 17, 1999). This historical background is necessary to understand that there were relativly few critical voices in Norwegian media towards Norwegian military contribution to the "war against terror" in Afghanistan as a response to the attacks on September 11. In contrast to the situation before the bombing of Yugoslavia, in which the Rambouilet process at least pretended to solve the conflict between NATO and President Milosevic through peaceful means, in the "war against terror" there was less room for doubt after September 11.

After the attacks on the ultimate symbols of global capitalism and U.S. power, the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, we were prepared by President Bush's September 20 speech for relentless propaganda. This was probably meant primarily for the home public rather than for a global audience, but nobody doubted who was in charge afterwards. Surely all over the world there was a genuine empathy with the innocent 3,000 who lost their lives, but we were to be overwhelmed with reminders of their fate through incessant pictures in the media, especially of their crying relatives. To paraphrase Noam Chomsky, they were the "worthy victims" (Herman &

Chomsky, 1988). The "unworthy victims" – the equal number of Afghan civilians who died – were not to be eulogized through pictures of mourning relatives. They would remain anonymous – written off as collateral damage.

Returning to Bush's speech on September 20, he raised an important question at the beginning of his speech, but offered an answer that was bereft of insight into the global issues at stake:

> Americans are asking, "Why do they hate us?"
> They hate what they see right here in this chamber: a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms: our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other.

President Bush's critics have noted the irony that Bush himself was not elected by a majority, the overall outcome having been decided by irregularities in the Florida elections. Moreover, the Index of Censorship and other human rights organisations have drawn attention to the many reductions in traditional civil rights in the U.S. after the new laws against terror were implemented. Surely this should have been no time for the Bush administration to boast about freedom. And if we go outside the U.S. borders, we must not lose sight of the following facts (partly based on Marable, 2001):

- The U.S. government refused to accept the ruling of the International Court of Justice in the Hague that mining Nicaraguan harbours and supporting the Contras during the civil war against the Sandinistas was illegal according to international law.
- For three decades, the U.S. has refused to ratify the 1965 United Nations *Convention on the Elimination of Racism*.
- For many years, the U.S. owed $582 million in back dues to the UN, which they paid up only when they thought that the September 11 attacks jeopardized their national security.
- Republican conservatives demanded that the United States should be exempted from the jurisdiction of an international criminal court, a permanent tribunal now being established at The Hague.
- U.S. and British forces have attacked Iraq without a UN mandate on several occasions in the ten-year period since the Gulf War (Ottosen 2002).
- Politicians and the media in the U.S. repeatedly refused to pursue any discussion about possible connections between the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the attacks on September 11. Most people, with the possible exception of the Israelis, found it reasonable to link Israel's opposition to negotiation and human rights violations as having contributed to an environment that would engender Arab terrorist retaliation. Even one of the strongest allies of the U.S., British Foreign Secretary

> Jack Straw, perceived that frustration over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict might become an excuse for terrorism, stating that "there is never an excuse for terrorism. At the same time there is an obvious need to understand the environment in which terrorism breeds" (quoted in Marable, 2001). There was no doubt among most of the world's one billion Muslims that they represented the same kind of force as the black people represented to the apartheid regime of South Africa.

To summarize without justifying any acts of terrorism or violence, I will argue that part of U.S. policy is a relevant background to understanding frustration among Arabs, Muslims, and other critics of U.S. policy. One example of this was the blanket U.S. support for Israel and repressive Arab regimes like Saudi Arabia. Another example was former U.S. Foreign Secretary Madeline Albright's statement that keeping up the pressure on Saddam Hussein through the boycott against Iraq was "worth the price" of 500,000 dead Iraqi children.

The Discursive Position in President Bush's Speech

Let us try to interpret some of the statements in President Bush's speech in order to view them with a domestic and global discursive perspective. Here I will draw on the "us and them" perspective that I used in earlier studies of enemy images (Ottosen, 1994).

The definition of the situation:

> Bush: "[The] U.S. is at war....enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country".
> Here the word "war" is essential. Both during the Gulf War and the Kosovo War, the Pentagon and NATO avoided using the word "war" to characterize the situation. This was probably intended to avoid the legal issue: could this legally be called a war according to international law? In Kosovo, the concept of "humanitarian intervention" was introduced to avoid that issue. Since no state had declared a war before the attack on September 11, the question was, who was the enemy?

The definition of the enemy:

> According to Bush, all terrorists are the enemy, not a particular country: "First we will conquer al Qaeda then all other terrorists".

The time perspective:

> According to Bush, the war could possibly last forever, since the intent was to continue until all terrorists had been "found, stopped, and defeated".

The cause of terrorism:

Americans wondered, "Why do they hate us?"
President Bush had a very simplistic explanation:

- Because we have a democracy as opposed to those who "are self-appointed"
- Because we support freedom as opposed to those who "hate our freedoms: our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other"

The U.S. response according to Bush:

The President offered a timetable that could quite honestly be "forever":

- Broad-based retaliation and not just "isolated strikes"
- Rather than an equal response to the attacks of September 11, "a lengthy campaign unlike any other we have ever seen".

The media aspect:

President Bush promised media restriction and censorship: Some information would be available to the media ("dramatic strikes visible on TV"), but some would be kept secret ("covert operations secret"), and we must accept that we would lose some opportunities for propaganda in the interest of maintaining secrecy ("even in success").

The means of the struggle:

President Bush promised an overall struggle on all fronts without hesitation or any possibility of compromising his position:

- Choke the financial channels ("starve terrorists of funding").
- Cause unrest among the potenial supporters ("turn them one against another").
- Hunt them down on a global scale ("drive them from place to place until there is no refuge or no rest").
- Punish any nation that opposes the struggle ("pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism").

The definition of friends and enemies:

President Bush offered just two positions to choose between: "Every nation in every region now has a decision to make: Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists".

The global perspective:

President Bush declared that U.S. interests are defined by NATO, which automatically defines the interests of the rest of the world: We are all in this together since an attack on America is an attack on us all: "This is the world's fight. This is civilization's fight. This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom".

The justification of NATO's *Article Five*:

> The interest of the world equals the interest of NATO: "[The] NATO charter reflects best the attitude of the world: An attack on one is an attack on all".

The potential opponents:

> According to Bush, the U.S. automatically represents the civilized world and any opposition is uncivilized: "The civilized world is rallying to America's side".

The legal domestic aspects:

> Here President Bush was warning of the anti-terror legislation (Patriotic Act) to come, a warning that the legislation was to be adapted to the war on terror (not the other way around!).
>
> - If necessary we must change the laws: "We will come together to give law enforcement the additional tools it needs to track down terror here at home".
> - The character of the legal adjustment must enable us to take preventive actions: "We will come together to strengthen our intelligence capabilities to know the plans of terrorists before they act and to find them before they strike".

The mandate:

> Like presidents before him, Bush was certain to have God on his side: "In all that lies before us, may God grant us wisdom and may he watch over the United States of America."

Missed Perspectives

Before we analyze the events taking place after this speech, we can identify some points of what Fairclough defines as "missed perspectives" (Fairclough, 1995, 106) in Bush's speech as seen from a multiethnic, democratic, discursive global position:

- There was no reference to the UN or UN conventions like the *Declaration of Human Rights*.
- There was no reference to international law.
- There was no definition of democracy.
- There was no definition of freedom.

Unilateral Action or a Global Discourse?

I will now highlight some events after September 11 that can be analyzed as a logical consequence of Bush's positions in this speech. President Bush was criticized for being absent and uncertain in his role as president during the first days after September 11. Media analyst Norman Solomon (2001) suggested that the September 20 speech to the Congress became a turning point: "[A]fter a wobbly performance on Sept. 11, Bush got into a groove of seizing the TV opportunity and making the most of it". Solomon referred to Mark Crispin Miller, the author of the book *Boxed In: The Culture of TV*, in which he disputed the customary image of the U.S. president as a "mighty individual" and identified that image as "a corporate fiction, the careful work of committees and think tanks, repeatedly reprocessed by the television industry for daily distribution to a mass audience". After consulting Miller, Solomon summarized the significance of the September 20 speech. According to Solomon, prior to this speech Bush had been projecting an affable personality that some have found endearing. But even while carrying out weighty duties of the presidency with all its trappings, he struck many Americans as a lightweight, ill-suited for the job. A turning point came with his dramatic speech to a joint session of Congress in mid-September.

The rave media reaction "was understandable", Miller told me, "because it actually reflected less on Bush's speech per se than on the moment's strange and terrifying context. The speech was deemed 'Churchillian' because the audience [the American people, Congress, the media] was so desperate for a proper leader at that fearful moment". Miller was also commenting on the new clarity in Bush's rhetoric after September 11, with reference to his book *The Bush Dyslexicon: Observation on a National Disorder:*

> [T]he president has lately spoken relatively well for the same reason that he's always broken into sudden fits of lucid English – because, in speaking of our national mission of revenge, he's speaking from the heart. In fact, George W. Bush has always spoken clearly on those subjects that genuinely matter to him. That is that, when he talks about baseball, say, or about his property in Crawford, he has no problems with his syntax, grammar or vocabulary. [He] is most articulate when speaking cruelly – on the value of the death penalty, or when cracking jokes, or when saying "No". It's when he tries to sound a higher note – idealistically, or out of magnanimity, or on his trademark theme of "compassion" – that Bush starts speaking broken English, because, like most of us, his tongue will not cooperate when he is being insincere" (quoted from Solomon, 2001).

Earlier in this article, I relate how Bush identified the "uncivilized" as "them" who attack us because we defend our "freedom". The ironic consequence of this narrow perspective is less tolerance and freedom. Is it a coincidence that those who were suspicious of the new statesman-like image of the presi-

dent were the first ones to experience the new atmosphere of intolerance in the U.S.? Tom Guitting was sacked from his position as editor-in-chief of the *The Texas City Sun* for a critical article on President Bush's performance after September 11. His colleague, Dan Guthrie of *The Daily Courier* in Oregon, was fired after calling President Bush "an embarrassment" in a September 15 article.

These and other proofs of intolerance prompted the Paris-based NGO Reporters Without Borders to send a mission to the U.S. from September 26 – October 2, 2001 to report on the conditions for media there after September 11. They interviewed, among others, the organisation Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR), which is generally very critical of the mainstream media in the U.S. Their spokesman, Steve Rendall, found the coverage of the first few days after September 11 to be "acceptable overall", but interestingly, identified Bush's September 20 speech to Congress as the turning point to inferior coverage. Eric Leser, the correspondent of the French daily, *Le Monde,* agreed: "Since then, the media has taken on a strongly patriotic tone and news has lost out to propaganda." (quoted from Levy & Bugingo, 2001).

A French journalist, a Balkan specialist who covered the NATO intervention in Serbia, agreed that American television had "gone to war". Instead of news broadcasts, 62 regional channels of the Sinclair Broadcast group have carried this advertisment on their web site: "Our team supports the action of President Bush and the leaders of our nation in putting an end to terrorism" (quoted from Levy & Bugingo, 2001). In their conclusion, Reporters Without Borders found some worrying consequences of this new atmosphere.

One preliminary conclusion is that there is a connection between the harsh rhetoric in the Bush speech and repressive action against the media. There are more examples of this on a global scale than those noted by Reporters Without Borders. I can briefly mention the attempts by the U.S. government to pressure the government in Qatar to stop the broadcasting of the television station Al Jazeera, and eventually the bombing of Al Jazeera's Kabul office in November 2001 (for more examples, see Ottosen, 2002).

Norway's Place in The New World Order

Before going into the details of the Norwegian coverage of September 11 and the bombing of Afghanistan, I will as background refer to earlier research on war coverage in the Norwegian media. Findings from the research project "Journalism In the New World Order" suggest that the overall pattern in the security policy between a given country and the sole leading superpower, the U.S., affects media coverage in times of war. The nordic countries have traditional differences in their political security orientation. Norway and Denmark have been NATO members since 1949, while Sweden and Finland at least formally have held a neutral position outside the power blocks. This

partly explains the differences found in a comparative study of the Gulf War coverage by Norway, Sweden, Finland, Germany, and the U.S. (Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2001).

One of the findings from an analysis of the more than 4,000 articles in this research study is that the media in NATO member-countries like Norway and Germany resort to American rhetoric to a greater extent than in non-NATO countries like Sweden and Finland. This included such rhetorical devices as drawing parallels between Hitler and Saddam Hussein, a cornerstone of President Bush's rhetoric (Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2001). Another finding was that the Finnish and Swedish media focused more on the UN than did the media in the NATO countries. And a comparative study of the use of force also showed that the Norwegian media was more dependent on NATO and U.S. sources than were the Swedish and Finnish media. It must be stressed that consensus within NATO was strong at this time. A study of the media in NATO countries when they disagreed about how to deal with the crisis in Iraq in the winter of 2003 might give a different result, because disagreement among the elite tends to result in a more diversified media picture even in times of crisis (Ottosen, 2002).

The Norwegian Media after September 11

In the following section, I will review some findings from a research project on the Norwegian media coverage during the week following September 11 and the week after the start of the October 7 bombing of Afghanistan.[5] As part of this review, I will also analyze how President Bush's September 20 speech was handled by the two Norwegian dailies, *Aftenposten* and *VG*.

Inspired by Fairclough (1995), three analytical discourse positions were chosen as a framework for the analysis:

- Hatred for the U.S., especially as expressed in the rhetoric of Bin Laden and al-Qaeda: Essential in this approach is that the U.S. "got what it deserved" on September 11 for its military operations in many corners of the world, for its support for the Israelis against the Palestinians, for sanctions against Iraq, and for its presence on "holy ground" in Saudi Arabia.
- The anti-U.S. position: The U.S. was unjustifiably attacked by terrorists who are criminals that should be prosecuted. However, this is a case for the UN and not for the U.S. and NATO alone. A unilateral operation by the U.S. and NATO would cause civilian suffering and justify more revenge and violence.
- The pro-U.S. position: The U.S. was attacked by terrorists, and this was a declaration of war. A counterattack on Afghanistan was justifiable under the self-defence regulations in international law since the Taliban

> regime in Afghanistan has hosted al-Qaeda. *Article 5* in the NATO charter should be activated, and since Norway is a close ally of the U.S., we should close ranks with the U.S. government.

In an analysis of the editorials in *Aftenposten* and *VG*, I have looked for the main arguments, supportive arguments, and counterarguments for the three positions mentioned above. I have used analytical tools like irony, metaphor and metonymy. In following the chain of reference in the text, I will use van Dijk's approach of polarisation and self-representation (us and them) and how these have been slanted to have positive and negative connotations (van Dijk, 1988, 33). I can identify ideological positions by looking at preconceptions and by determining what conditions leading up to the event were taken for granted and what were implicitly stated as an ideological position (Fairclough, 1995, van Dijk 1988, and Svennevig, 2001). The detail of this analysis is documented in Ottosen, 2003; I will just refer to the main conclusions here.

The Editorials in *Verdens Gang*

Verdens Gang had the following ten editorials (the author is responsible for the translation of the headlines):

"U.S.A at war" (September 12),
"The acts of the devil" (September 13),
"Norway's commitments" (September 14),
"I am a New Yorker" (September 15),
"The hour of revenge" (September 16),
"Political education for adults" (September 17),
"Retaliation" (October 8),
"The war continues" (October 9),
"The new area" (October 10),
"An excellent choice for the peace prize" (October 13).'

As an overall conclusion, both *VG* and *Aftenposten* had a U.S.-friendly approach in their editorials. But differences in the language and rhetorical devices showed *VG* to be the most aggressive U.S. supporter of the two papers. To illustrate these nuances, I will review the editorials of September 13, two days after the attacks on the World Trade Center and other targets in the U.S., and I will also use examples from some of the other editorials to compare the two newspapers.

On September 13, *VG* had an editorial entitled "The acts of the devil". It described the feeling of anxiety in the world after the attacks, but also the positive side effect that "the nations of the World stand shoulder-by-shoulder. The U.S. was struck by acts of war and NATO thus decided that this was an attack on the whole alliance. For the sake of the U.S. and of the friends of the U.S., the guilty ones must be punished".

By using the term "devil" in the title, *VG* ascribes the connotation of evil to the people behind the attack and therefore rules out any political analysis that could show them in a human light. This angle is in contrast to the positive tone later in the editorial that points out the solidarity with the U.S. in all corners of the world.

The overall impression of the text is of clear-cut support for military unity and a counterattack in retaliation. As follow-up the day after (September 14), the editorial is entitled "Norway's commitments". This is after the decision by NATO to activate *Article 5*, and *VG* concludes as a result that " Norway is also at war"; Our commitment to the U.S. and the NATO alliance should be "without the least doubt". In the conclusion, however, the editorial states that active military participation "is not very likely". This message is in contrast to a statement in the October 9 editorial after the attacks on Afghanistan had started. Here there is a clear distinction between "us and them", as "the West" is used to characterize the alliance against "fanatical murderers" and forces whose highest goal is to spread as much mass death as possible among innocent and unprepared people. *VG* supported Norwegian military personnel taking part in surveillance missions over U.S. air territory at the time, and when Norwegian pilots later joined the international coalition against terror on the U.S. base in Kirgistan, *VG* supported this too. As I will discuss later, *VG* was full of support for President Bush after his speech on September 20.

The Editorials in *Aftenposten*

Aftenposten ran the following eight editorials:'

"Vulnerability revealed" (September 12),
"NATO must show solidarity to U.S.A" (September 13),
"The plans of U.S. and the terrorist leaders" (September 14),
"The leadership of George W. Bush" (September 17),
"Clear speech from U.S.A-Norwegian confusion" (September 17),
"Operation enduring freedom" (October 8),
"U.S.A. and the Brits" (October 10),
"The Peace Prize is a challenge to the UN" (October 13).

In its September 13 editorial, *Aftenposten* clearly displayed its U.S.-friendly rhetoric by stating that "NATO and Norway owe [the] U.S. its [their] full solidarity and military support if the Americans ask for it". However, the language was not as harsh as in *VG*, and the phrasing "global battle against terror" was used without the demonizing vocabulary as in *VG*. There was no attempt in the editorial to explain why such attacks could take place, and the historical references all put the U.S. in a positive light. The reason why Norway should support the U.S., according to *Aftenposten*, was to defend traditional American values like freedom and democracy. The metaphor for the potential use of force by the U.S. was called the "fist" that might strike back.

On September 16, *Aftenposten* had an editorial entitled "The leadership of George W. Bush". The text was very supportive of President Bush and referred to some of the criticism leveled against Bush for unclear and weak leadership. *Aftenposten* concluded that this criticism was "unjustified and raised at an inappropriate time". It further referred to the great challenges that faced the president and his role "as a gathering symbol for a nation in crisis". Even though this editorial was U.S.-friendly, it also had elements of U.S.-critical discourse in the sense that it raised a fear that the president might strike back too hard and too fast. The title of the following day's editorial was "Clear speech from U.S.A-Norwegian confusion". This was an attack on the U.S. critics in the public debate (contemptuously branded as "shabby '68ers"), including the bishop in Oslo, Gunnar Stålsett, and labour party politicians like the Norwegian foreign minister at the time, Thorbjørn Jagland. The bishop especially had expressed concerns at the time that the U.S. might respond with "blind revenge" that could harm innocent civilians. *Aftenposten* labeled this as the sort of clumsy statement that might ruin decades of efforts by Norway to build goodwill with the U.S. On September 18, *Dagbladet*, a tabloid competing with *VG*, criticized this editorial as a potential hindrance to a necessary public debate on dealing with international terrorism.

In an October 8 editorial (the day after the bombing of Afghanistan had started), *Aftenposten* ran an editorial entitled "Operation Enduring Freedom" in support of U.S. military actions. Among other things, it stated – quoting Prime Minister Tony Blair – that this war was not a war against Muslims, but against terrrorists. The fact that the editorial used the propaganda slogan of the operation "Enduring Freedom" in the heading forewarned of the U.S.-friendly rhetoric that dominated the text. But the editorial also had some elements of U.S.-critical discourse, stating the need to combine military efforts with humanitarian aid, diplomacy, and political initiatives. It warned that there were more issues at stake than "just" to destroy the terror network.

President Bush's Speech in *VG* and *Aftenposten*

In this section, I will analyze how President Bush's September 20 speech was received in *VG* and *Aftenposten*. Based on findings in earlier research projects, I will expect a difference in the approach by the two papers. As a tabloid, *VG* has shorter articles and bigger headlines. *Aftenposten* has a more analytical approach with more space available in its broadsheet format. Previous research has documented that *VG* is more likely to display images of "the enemy" and use the rhetoric of propaganda (Ottosen, 1994).

President Bush's message was introduced in *VG* by a title on the front page and as a headline over a double page inside the paper with a direct quote: "Either you are with us or you are with the terrorist." Both on the front page and as an illustration on the double page inside the paper, there is a large portait of Bush exuding "firmness" with an even larger American flag in the background.

The speech was relayed as a series of quotations. The use of affirmative verbs demonstrated sympathy for the content of the speech. If it had been a speech by Bin Laden, I guess the different quotes would have been introduced with verbs like "claimed", etc. In this case, *VG* chooses verbs that connote respect and approval: The president "made" claims against Afghanistan; he "emphasized" that the battle against terrorism was not to be a battle against Islam. It is reported no less than eight times that, like a schoolteacher talking to his pupils, Bush reassured the world that "The nation is strong". "He also compared last week's attack with the attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941, except that last week's attack was worse."

VG had no comment, editorial, or other articles the same day that might have helped the reader to contextualize this speech or place it in an analytical framework. The next day (September 22) however, *VG* had an editorial with an introduction full of appreciation:

> [The speech] will go into American history as one of the great ones. "Either you support us or you are with the terrorists". This was the message hammered firmly. The speech proved an almost unbelievable decisiveness – a decisivness which most likely will be well received by the American public and which should be received with satisfaction among U.S. allies… .

The editorial was supportive overall, and even characterized the speech as "balanced" since it "stretches out to all who are willing to cooperate in the fight against terrorism". There was a critical remark on only one point. The editorial expressed hope that the fight against terror might extend to a battle against poverty an admitted breeding ground for political extremism in many corners of the world. It also stressed the need for the U.S. to put pressure on Israel to solve the conflicts with the Palestinians.

The editorial ended as it started, with full support: "The number of missing is climbing close to 7,000. It is not hard to understand the firm will to power the president projected when he spoke to Congress, and the unity of support he receives in the U.S. population".

Beside this official editorial support by *VG*, a columnist in the paper, Marie Simonsen, wrote a critical commentary in the same issue, but with more nuances. She referd to, among others, several European leaders who were urging President Bush to hesitate before retaliating, and she criticised President Bush's rhetoric, concluding by writing: "There is a reason to hope that George Bush is underestimated, and that he doesn't take his own western cliches to literally. As we know, the western films end with the hero riding alone into the sunset, while the text on the screen reads, "The End".

Aftenposten, on September 21, took a more critical approach than *VG* to the rhetoric of President Bush. The political editor, Harald Stanghelle, critically reviewed Bush's rhetoric. For obvious technical reasons, there was no explicit reference to his speech to Congress. (*Aftenposten* has an earlier deadline, and was printed before the speech could be documented.) In his

review, Stanghelle warned against simplifying complex issues with "[w]ords that divide [issues] in[to] simplifying terms like "us and them… .Outside the western hemisphere, not least in the Islamic world, it will be read differently, often as more directly threatening."

He concluded his review by warning that the American plans might end up as a U.S.-led crusade in the twenty-first century, and warned against rhetoric that might encourage anyone to think that a crusade is literally in the planning. He reminded his readers that President Bush received negative feedback at an earlier stage in the campaign against terror for using the term "crusade" in describing the battle against terror. Stanghelle warned against the historical connotations this might have in the Middle East. But the warning from Stanghelle was also within the framework of a western discourse. By distancing himself from the concept of *jihad* within Islam, Stanghelle indirectly takes a western position. This could have been an opportunity for him to remind the readers that the western world also has a historical tradition of fanatical use of violence in the name of God.

At the same time, there were important discussions in *Aftenposten* on legal and humanitarian issues, often in the form of letters from readers and chronicles from experts outside the editorial staff. Interestingly, the same day that Stanghelle wrote his commentary, the Norwegian legal expert Geir Ulfstein wrote an article in *Aftenposten* with the title "Terror and international law". In an interesting paradox, this article unwittingly undermined President Bush's rhetoric. Ulfstein questioned the legal basis of an attack on Afghanistan. He also questioned the legality of implementing *Article 5* in the NATO charter in the present situation. Ulfstein went through several examples of previous attacks by the U.S. including on Libya in 1986, on Iraq in 1993, and on Sudan in 1998. He concluded that such "use of force has more signs of revenge and punishment, and not self-defence. International law does not allow the use of power as reprisal".

Ulfstein further warned against an interpretation of Security Council *Resolution 1368* that could justify a military attack on Afghanistan: "[E]ven though the resolution refers to a country's right to self-defence, it does not state that these acts against the U.S.A. give the right to self-defence". It is worth noting here that Norwegian government officials and leading politicians in interviews and comments in the media on several occasions have used *Resolution 1368* exactly in the way Ulfstein warns against. Ulfstein also questioned the formal basis for activating *Article 5* in the NATO charter (the formal justification for collective self-defence). He referred to the September 12 decision by the NATO Council which stated that, if it is proved that an attack on the U.S. was organised from abroad, *Article 5* could be implemented. Ulfstein claimed that this "is too widely formulated", and continued: "The decisive factor must be that another state was behind or contributed (all quotes from *Aftenposten* September 21)".[6]

Harald Stanghelle had a new commentary on September 22 in which he explicitly referred to President Bush's speech to Congress under the title "The

dilemmas of fear". Here he stated that a superpower like the U.S., with worldwide interests cannot be "nice and friendly towards everybody. The position creates enemies, and for some of them hatred of the U.S. becomes an obsession". Stanghelle did not go into detail about what this obsession might mean or whether resistance to the U.S strategic game could be legitimate and understandable. But he warned against the dangers ahead for deepening the global conflicts, which should not be allowed "to mark our future".

Aftenposten had an editorial the same day, discussing the economical consequences of the "war against terror", in which Bush's speech to Congress was also mentioned. The focus here was more on the economic consequences, and the conclusion expressed the hope "that economic problems will not cause American actions that would weaken free world trade and build new barriers – with terrorism as an excuse. Cross-border cooperation is more important than ever".

To summarize, the coverage of Bush's speech in *Aftenposten* and *VG* showed major differences in the approaches and journalistic angles of the biggest broadsheet morning paper and biggest tabloid paper in Norway. The Norwegian media did not speak with one voice, but there is no doubt that, within the mainstream Norwegian press, the point of departure in the coverage was that "we" belong in a natural alliance with the U.S. in "the war against terror".

Bacteriological Warfare and "the Axis of Evil"

In the autumn of 2001, American society was living in fear after several people died from being infected by the anthrax bacterium. The FBI knew early on that the most likely source was a laboratory in the U.S.'s own program for bacteriological warfare. For one reason or another, the question is hardly ever raised why it should be acceptable for the only superpower and its close ally, Israel, to develop all the weapons of mass destruction that were the excuse for labelling other nations as an "axis of evil". The reason was that the truth would have been extremely inconvenient at a time when the propaganda war to start the "war against terror" was in its early stage. It was more useful to blame suspects within the "axis of evil" than right-wing extremists in the U.S. or a crazy state employee seeking revenge against American society.

As a point of departure in an extended battle against the "rogue" state, Iraq, it was too good to be true that the U.S. tabloids had identified a possible suspect for the anthrax attacks in the form of an Iraqi scientist nicknamed "Dr. Bacteria". This story was also carried in the October 23 2001 edition of *VG,* which claimed that the scientist had ties to the Iraqi regime. In February 2001, *The New York Times* could reveal the existence of a new department in the Pentagon called the "Office of Strategic Influence", which was authorized to spread disinformation through western news agencies as a part of its activities (Ottosen, 2002). The news of the office's existence was so contro-

versial that it was closed down, but according to *Le Monde*, disinformation activities continued under the name of the "Office For Special Planning" (Rouleau, 2003). I have no evidence that the story about Dr. Bacteria or other disinformation can be traced back to that office. However, it is a documented fact that Iraq had developed anthrax and other weapons of mass destruction. Regardless of the circumstances behind the story, it obviously drew attention away from a most likely suspect – the American weapons program. This oversight was reinforced in the same article when *VG* quoted UN weapons inspector Richard Spertzel as saying: "[T]here is no doubt that terrorists in the super league are behind the anthrax letters in the U.S., [and that] Iraq is suspect no.1". The fact that "suspect no. 1" at that time most likely was in the nerve center of the American weapons industry was not revealed to the readers of *VG* until four months later. When President Bush said that "either you are with us or you are with the terrorists", it would have been awkward for the terrorist to be actually one of "us".

The discursive approach taken by *VG* (and the U.S.) was to launch Iraq and Dr. Bacteria as two players in the global "war against terror". If we were to choose another discursive approach, we could see another reality that would not fit well into this propaganda perspective.

A part of this alternative perspective was a *Newsweek* story dissecting the theory of a possible link between al-Qaeda and Iraqi intelligence. The original source behind the "Iraqi connection" was Czech intelligence. They based their claim on an alleged observation of a meeting in Prague between an Iraqi agent and the main suspect of the anthrax attack, Mohamed Atta, who allegedly had links to al-Qaeda. Intelligence sources in the U.S. told *Newsweek* that this theory had proved wrong, but that nevertheless "This story has taken a life of its own" (*Newsweek* May 6, 2002).

The Discourse on International Weapons Control

The British author and columnist George Monbiot in the *Guardian* and in the Norwegian leftist newspaper *Klassekampen* chose to view the propaganda battle over the anthrax incidents as a discourse in which the international regimes' struggle for control of weapons of mass destruction were central. In the article "The U.S. bioterror", (April 6, 2002) *Klassekampen* documented how American politicians actively sabotaged attempts to create an effective convention on biological weapons simply because the U.S. wanted to maintain their own arsenal of biological weapons. As late as December 2001, in the midst of the war against terror and after five Americans had lost their lives to anthrax, the U.S. authorities abandoned the 1972 convention on biological weapons. During the six years prior to the December 2001 meeting, 144 signature-states had worked to implement a protocol that would empower the UN to inspect facilities suspected of producing

biological weapons. It is well understood that the U.S. would rather have weapons inspectors in Iraq than in their own country. This could be one of the reasons why the U.S. refused to sign the protocol. When the U.S. delegates broke their promises to support the protocol, and instead sabotaged the December negotiations by making new demands to rewrite the resolution, one angry European delegate remarked to Monbiot:"[T]hey…are liars. In ten years of multilateral negotiations, we have never experienced this kind of insulting behaviour" (translated by the author from the Norwegian version of the article published in *Klassekampen,* April 6, 2002).

In 1998, the U.S. Congress voted against regulations that would allow weapons inspectors to remove chemical samples from the U.S. Just like the Iraqi government, American civil servants had sabotaged the possibilities of de facto weapons inspections in U.S. facilities by UN weapons inspectors. In September 2001, *The New York Times* reported that the Pentagon had built a germ cultivation factory that could produce enough deadly microbes to depopulate an entire city. The explanation was that this would document how easily terrorists could do the same thing. This violated international law, was not monitored by Congress, and was not disclosed as required by the convention. The irony was that the anthrax that killed the five U.S. citizens most likely was developed in the U.S. Army medical research institute at Fort Detrick in Maryland.

VG printed an article on February 26, 2002 entitled "American research Anthrax suspect", which did nothing to correct the story four months previously pointing to "Dr. Bacteria" as the main suspect. In this new article, Barbara Hatch Rosenberg, head of the U.S. research panel for control of biological weapons, was quoted as having said that the FBI had had a named researcher as their main suspect for a long time. According to Rosenberg, the reason the researcher was not arrested was that it would have drawn attention to the U.S. government program for biological weapons.

According to Monbiot, while following a lead to the named U.S. researcher in Fort Detrick, the FBI distributed 500,000 leaflets and a letter to all 40,000 members of the American Society for Microbiology asking whether they knew anyone who might be guilty of the anthrax attacks. When Monbiot personally phoned FBI headquarters and asked whether they had cast such a wide net because there was another trail leading to a government office, they just hung up the phone. Monbiot also has a theory that the reason for sidetracking the investigation might have been to draw attention away from U.S. violations of the convention against biological weapons. Among other violations, they had produced their own anthrax, tested live microbes at the Edgewood Chemical Biological Center in Maryland, developed genetically modified mushrooms meant to attack the cocaine crops in Columbia, and developed a new genetically modified germ to use against future enemies. The research group Project Sunshine has used these pieces of evidence to prove the existence of an illegal U.S. Army program to develop offensive biological weapons (Monbiot, 2002b). Thus, it seems that U.S. authorities

found it more important to hide their dirty laundry than to punish a terrorist within their own ranks. At the same time, to justify attacking Iraq on the basis that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction were a threat, the Bush administration developed a new military strategy for preemptive strikes, in itself a violation of international law.

This put the harsh rhetoric in a new light. The biggest Norwegian newspaper, *VG,* chose to support this rhetoric and print it. Its position became even more vulnerable when it also spread propaganda about the alleged Dr. Bacteria while the real "smoking gun" was in the hand of a U.S. researcher in the U.S. Army program for biological weapons. It did not help much that four months later it printed the true and more unpleasant story. This example is not the whole truth about the coverage in *VG*. A review of the use of sources, angling, and framing of the news coverage reveals a broad approach in the everyday reporting. But the bottom line is that *VG* is a loyal supporter of "the war against terror".

The Attack on Multilateralism Is a Logical Consequence of the Rhetoric

Behind President Bush's rhetoric there is an overall political strategy to confront multilateralism. The new military doctrine of preemptive warfare fits into a unilateral trend which includes refusal to join the new International court in UN, resistance to the Koyoto agreement, attacks on the collective regimes and arms control agreements, and the U.S. escalating the arms race both for conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction. The worst example of subverting multilateralism within the field of weapons of mass destruction is the U.S. attacks on the international regime to control chemical weapons. There is a certain irony to this, since the weapons inspectors were in Iraq in the autumn 2002 and spring of 2003 while the discussion about a possible war against Iraq was intensifying.

Without a doubt, Saddam Hussein cynically demonstrated a willingness to produce, use, and hide weapons of mass destruction. The most brutal example was the use of chemical weapons against a Kurdish village in 1988. There was, however, no logical connection between the U.S. government's harsh line in using this incident (and other examples from Iraq) for its own purposes and its unwillingness to reduce the threat of chemical weapons in general through the existing entity established for this purpose, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). This body was proving increasingly efficient under the leadership of Brazil's José Bustani. With Bustani as chair, OPCW in a few years achieved impressive results: Through inspections of factories, warehouses, and military facilities, it reduced the total amount of chemical weapons by two thirds, and the number of countries signatory to the convention increased from 87 to 145. In 2000,

he was uninamously reelected for a new five-year term, and as late as the autumn of 2001 he was publicly praised for his work by U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell.

This was before he committed the ill-considered act (as the U.S. called it) of trying to get control over the Iraqi stocks of chemical weapons by persuading the Iraqi government to sign up for the convention. This was not at all suitable for the Pentagon's ongoing preparations for war against Iraq. As Georges Monbiot wrote, Bustani had to be removed because he sought a solution to a problem that, at that time, the U.S. wanted no solution to (*Klassekampen* April 22, 2002).

It all started when the U.S. asked the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to remove Bustani, allegedly because they disliked his style of leadership. Such interference was in itself a violation of the convention, which states that the General Director is not allowed to receive any instructions from any government. When this attempt failed, the U.S. started a public slander campaign against Bustani. He was accused of economic mismanagement and other groundless attacks, and criticized for his dealings with Iraq. The U.S. delegation "suggested" that he should resign. This was in itself also a violation of the convention, which states that no signatory power should try to influence the employees. On March 19, 2002, the U.S. introduced a motion of no confidence, but that failed. Finally, the U.S. called a special session on April 21, 2002. Through this pressure, a unique act in the history of multilateral diplomacy according to Monbiot, the U.S. succeeded in removing Bustani. This dramatic event went almost unnoticed in the international as well as the Norwegian press. In a historical light, it proved to be one small step in escalating towards war against Iraq. It was bulldozer diplomacy, which might have looked like a success in the eyes of the U.S. government in the short run, but could prove to be costly in the long run.

Notes

1. This article is an updated version of a chapter earlier published in Norwegian under the title "Hr. president: Fienden er nærmere enn du aner" i (Eide & Ottosen 2002).
2. I draw this conclusion partly because I received many telephone calls from Norwegian journalists after September 11.
3. The word tabloid here refers to the format of the paper. The biggest Norwegian tabloids, *Verdens Gang* and *Dagbladet*, are quality papers and must not be compared to the British tabloids like *The Sun*.
4. Prime minister Bondevik apoplogized autumn 2003 for not calling it a war.
5. I want to thank my research assistant, Tine Figenschou Utne, for valuable work with content analysis of the Norwegian media coverage of these events.
6. Geir Ulfstein had an even more thorough review of the legal aspect in the Norwegian juridical journal "Lov og Rett" no. 2, 2002 in which he concluded that an attack by the U.S. on Afghanistan could be defended as an act of self-defence against terrorism because of the links between the Taliban regime and al-Qaeda, but he also concluded that the attack had no UN mandate, and that none of the relevant UN resolutions permitted the use of force against Afghanistan.

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Chapter 8

"All that is Solid Melts into Air"

How the September 11 Tragedy Was Presented in the Greek Press

Sophia Kaitatzi-Whitlock, with Dimitra Kehagia

Great loss of human life, frustration, grief, and colossal material destruction were caused by the assaults on the New York World Trade Center and on the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. With it were destroyed certainties and illusions. Governments and industrial leaders were taken by surprise and seemed unable to react. Economic activity was paralysed and has lagged behind ever since. Whole industries, particularly those related with air-transport, security and insurance, were crippled by the attack. Investments diminished and businesses reacted with an avalanche of closures, lay-offs and cut-backs. The economic and administrative heart of the super-power suffered a historic blow. Most analysts see the beginning of a new historical phase in which the spectre of terror and the fear of invisible enemies will come to plague our lives locally and globally, in public and in private.[1]

These losses and their immediate repercussions were screened and discussed, raising tremendous empathy around the globe. This was the first terrorist attack whose repercussions were distinctly global. New networks such as the internet and the by now converged media transmitted images of the flaming and collapsing towers into the sitting rooms of a myriad households around the world. This instantaneous and global mediation converted the collapsing twin towers into a tragic experience for the entire world, felt concurrently with the citizens of New York. Even though the four airplane-bombs hit locally the range of their impact was world-wide. Apart from the local physical victims there were masses of secondary-level victims, who live far away and who will never be able to influence decision-making in New York or in Washington. Divisions exist among the afflicted also in the short and long term.

Given the multi-layer impact of the attack it should be examined from the point of view of the immediate victims, *them*, from the point of view of the world system, *the world at large*, and from the point of view of *ourselves,* now and in the future. In this study we look at how the political and mediatic elites of Greece reacted to the attacks, how they were reported by the Greek press, whether important aspects were omitted, whether the coverage was one-sided or impartial, judicious or elucidating.

Object and Setting of the Research

Method

We have picked four national daily newspapers for analysis: the centre-left 'Ta Nea' ('The News'), owned by the influential Lambrakis corporation, the erudite conservative 'Kathimerini' ('Daily'), the centre-left Eleftherotypia' ('Free Press') and the communist 'Rizospastis' ('The Radical'). Kathimerini and Rizospastis circulate in the morning, Ta Nea and Eleftherotypia in the afternoon. These papers cover a broad political spectrum.[2] Together they attract 50% of the national readership and are quite representative of the Greek 'public sphere'. As the discourse of Rizospastis diverges considerably from the rest there are certain thematics that are 'occupied' predominantly by that particular journal. Usually thematics overlap in all four journals. Additionally there are those in which the divergent positions of Rizospastis are shown up. We start by following up the coverage of these four journals on a daily basis during the first week of the crisis (12/09 – 16/09 2001). We continue examining them for five weeks after the incidents by looking at the (more analytical) week-end issues.

Greece: a *Sui Generis* Setting

Greece presents a particular vulnerability in relation to the post-September 11 epoch. Due to its recent political history the country displays an intense anti-Americanism which soared after 1967. This was due to the direct involvement of the US government and the CIA in establishing the military junta (Colobani, 2002:68-69). Thousands were tortured, imprisoned, deported to concentration camps, or forced to flee the country. The dictatorship left deep wounds in the social, material and political fabric of the country, still profoundly felt by the generation that experienced the 1967-1974 epoch. On his visit to Greece in 1999 former US President Bill Clinton asked for forgiveness from the Greek people. But most Greeks still resent that disastrous intervention. Feelings of deep suspicion or hostility towards the US political elite were reinforced when the CIA and former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger participated in setting up the junta of Cyprus, in July 1974, thereby toppling the democratically elected president Archbishop Makarios and inducing the Turkish invasion of the island. State Department Archives released in January 2003 indicate that Kissinger was the mastermind behind these events, as a result of which Northern Cyprus is still occupied by Turkey. It is indicative that Ioannis Kapsis a parliamentarian of the PASOK party asked, in February 2003, that Henry Kissinger be brought to a Greek court to be tried for his crimes. Anti-Americanism was fuelled once again during the recent Balkan crisis. The bombing of Serbia, Kosovo and the broader south ex-Yugoslavia, which meant using depleted uranium bombs right next to Greece's northern borders, upset Greeks, provoking anger and fresh anti-Americanism.

It should be born in mind also that Greece has experienced a long-drawn period of terrorist attacks of its own, by the '17th November' organization whose members are currently on trial. For three decades this problem challenged the political establishment and endangered social peace and the country's international credibility. Greece faced external pressures. Attempts were made persistently to impose bilateral policies or sales agreements on Greece in the name of security and because of the need to curb terrorism. This is evident particularly in view of the country's commitment to organize the Olympic Games in 2004. So, the 09/11 shock came as a distressing omen.

Apart from geopolitical factors and historical heritage the memory, culture and political perception of people are crucial. Greeks today may be divided in roughly two categories: those who have experienced war and strife (WW2, civil war, military junta), i.e. people over 50 years old, and those up to perhaps 30 years of age who grew up after these events, in a developed capitalistic society. Many such younger generation Greeks studied in western countries. So while people in the first category identify with the victims of hunger or torture, i.e. victims of imperialistic policies, those in the second category identify more with the victims of the Twin Towers or the passengers of the 'suicide-planes'. *Anyone of us could be in the Twin Towers or in those airplanes* says Irene Karanasopoulou (Ta Nea (12/09). The majority of this group speak English, not Arabic, wear jeans, not robes, and most importantly, have no knowledge of hunger or of thirst.

Emerging Themes and Prevalent Problems

Nomen Est Numen: Key Words

What strikes one first in the reporting of this issue is the strongly emotional, varied and evocative terms used to articulate the starkly felt and broadly manifested shock. These are the key words used to describe the event. The collection of emotive semantics has its clear projection into reality. *Awe, globalization, global civil war, World War III, panic, arrogance, "the day after", "The Flowers of Evil", Pearl Harbor, Echelon, innocent victims, USA isolation* were just a few of them.

Comparisons of the Event

A second semantically, but also historically significant aspect refers to the comparisons invoked by various writers in order to give a measure of the astounding event. These address a variety of aspects, ranging from war attacks such as the attack on Pearl Harbour, to economic crises, such as the 1929 crash and ecological-human disasters such as the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombing. A significant aspect of the event in the Greek press is the

"symbolic" nature of the attacks. *"The symbolic wound in the metropolis of capitalism and imperialism"*, figures prominently in Kathimerini (12/09). Parallels and images of previous tragedies were invoked. *"The horror of the blind terrorist attacks is familiar in Europe"* mentions Giorgos Kapopoulos in "Kathimerini" (12/09) but Rizospastis offers a counter-distinction: *"There is nothing similar to yesterday's image of New York, apart from the images in Belgrade, Alexinats, Pristina two years ago and in Iraq ten years ago"*. The distinct rhetoric applied in the case of this tragedy is put in stark contrast to that applied for similar previous events mentioned above. The September 11 event was characterized by officials and journalists as *a wound against the civilized world*, an *unprecedented tragedy*, or as *a barbarity*. On 23/9/2001 Rizospastis points out that the US minister of Justice *deliberately alters, if not ignores even recent history. The bombarding of a region of northern Iraq in 1988 cost the lives of more than 5000 people*. Thus the paper denounces the repeated statement by US officials that on September 11 occurred the *most deadly terrorist attack in history*.

The Essence of the Event and Definitions of Terrorism

There are a number of peculiarities to this event. Apart from awe and horror the breathtaking images of the attack on the twin towers generated reactions of perplexity and flabbergasting as many components of the consecutive episodes are utterly enigmatic and in-explicable. Views gravitate towards perceiving the 'unprecedentedness' of the event as a signal for a new generic vulnerability. Analyses tend to pre-empt what the immediate and the longer-term reactions and precautions must be. Any attack brings panic and insecurity, but the 'novelty' of the 11/09 attacks was that for the first time this panic and insecurity *spilled over* onto the global domain in such a dramatic way. As former minister of Foreign Affairs Carolos Papoulias put it, this is *"a new form of terrorism, which, for the first time, seems to have vast implications. It is the first time that it occurs in the heart of the USA"*. Thus, in its aftermath, insecurity and fear became global. Besides, quite a few analysts think that this "globalized impact" will persist. *"We are entering a period of global uncertainty and insecurity",* admits the leader of the Greek Liberal Party, Stefanos Manos while Giannis Pantelakis of Eleftherotypia assesses that *"this event may not have changed the world, but it may cause drastic changes internationally*" (14/09). Hence the "glocalization" of fear and insecurity dawned upon us all. All journals highlight the statement of President Bush that "the USA will lead the world to a victory against terrorism. This will be the first war of the 21st century". Rizospastis claims that *"the USA and its allies, NATO and EU, are preparing an atmosphere of war terrorism all over the world. With the activation of Article 5 of the NATO statutes, they are all trying to prepare the international public opinion to accept new imperialistic murders "*(14/09). The "hunting" of the perpetrators was handled in various

ways: *"Washington is clearly targeting states tolerating terrorism. Those could be blacklisted states like Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya. Or will the definition of "putting up with terrorism" be so elastic as to include those who saw the attacks as an act of revenge, deriving satisfaction from it"*, asks Stavros Ligeros, the foreign affairs analyst of "Kathimerini" (13/9). Dimitris Papaioannou of Eleftherotypia adds: *"terrorism does not have any longer the structure that we knew, neither can it be treated with the same logic"*. Meanwhile, the diplomatic pressure of the American government to weld its western alliance against "world terrorism", provokes Rizospastis' mocking reaction:

> Who is asking: who is for and who is against terrorism? Those who bombarded Belgrade 212 times and Pristina 374 times? Those who killed a million children in Iraq since 1991? Those who characterized Greeks as terrorists because they protested against NATO in 1999?... State terrorism, the worst form of its kind, is to bomb Vietnam, Korea, Grenada, Iraq, Yugoslavia, and Palestine without discretion. Terrorism is to organize 900 terrorist attacks in 15 years, like the CIA did (as became apparent from its own 1961-1975 data). Terrorism is to provide armament to Saddam in order to hurt the Iranian Revolution and then to bomb Iraq, in order to "punish" their own creation: Saddam. Terrorism is to create UCK (the Kosovo Liberation Army, KLA) and then to "disarm" it. Action of terrorism is the abolition of democracy (Chile, Greece etc). Terrorist act is to support the occupation of free and independent states (Cyprus). Terrorism is to create in 1984, in Afghanistan the group MAK, which had Osama bin Laden as its leader, to support it fully militarily and financially, as CIA did since 1988. And that is not what "Rizospastis" says. It is what the American NBC has stated since 24/08/1998. All these are forms of terrorism... argues Nikos Boyiopoulos (Rizospastis, 13/09).

A key element for making sense of the event is identifying who did it. Speculation about the culprits is extensive, but not conclusive as much evidence has not been disclosed. Here belong also speculations about the definition of a terrorist act.[3] Similarly the issue of when and who sets this definition and the criteria for it emerge. It is a tragic irony that currently suspected terrorists were trained and financed by the CIA. So the question is when and why does anyone dub someone a terrorist. Why now? Why not earlier when they also perpetrated horrendous crimes but were exonerated for them? The predictability of the US government's reaction is certain for Dimitris Danikas, (Ta Nea):

> The first argument they will take out and turn around from one side of the "TV world" to the other is obvious: terrorists. The second will be to set in motion the rusty brain-washing machine. Terrorists are Arabs, Serbians, and Asians. Children of a lesser god… Is there anyone who expects to see a mother in Baghdad crying for the victims of the Twin Towers? All of us – the privileged and secure of the western world- just a few years ago were having fun with …

> Lewinski's wet skirt, while missiles were and still are fired at the heads of thousands of children and other innocent people in Iraq and Somalia (12/09).

In a similar vein Rizospastis criticizes the hastiness of US officials to turn international public opinion to the "usual suspects", but questions their capability to achieve this:

> As far as the 'master-mind' and the perpetrators of the attacks are concerned there are many question-marks. Some hurried to "photograph" the wealthy Saudi Arabian Osama bin Laden… by wondering which center has such power to target the heart of the USA and to destroy the security system of Pentagon. ...There is only one center which has at its disposal formidable systems such as Echelon. It's the CIA" (12/09).

The approach of the KKE was typically 'forensic'. *"It is important to identify who would have any motives to do it. If we get an answer to that, it will enable the USA to see the source of this action"*, the party's General Secretary Aleka Papariga, said (Rizospastis 12/09). In a more specific approach Maria Sonidou wrote in Kathimerini: *"Palestinians could easily be the first to blame. Their annoyance with the indifference of the USA to their interests could be the best excuse for such an action. However, they did not do it. They have neither the ability nor anything to gain from it… If the guilty are Arabs, then the Middle East will pay, if not, it will remain indefinitely marginalized."* (12/09). Readiness of US officials to accuse Osama bin Laden without providing hard evidence was criticized. *"Who says Bin Laden is the guilty one? Who would you like? Americans themselves. Since George Bush claimed, 'My enemy is called Osama bin Laden', there can be no question about it* " wrote Papachristos (Ta Nea, 15/09). Four writers of Eleftherotypia, under the common name of 'Ios' ('Virus') highlighted the fact that *"the CIA was in close collaboration with Osama bin Laden and the Talibans"* (16/09).[4]

Other than focusing on the motives Rizospastis expressed a certainty that the crisis will be exploited by the US. So, the next issue of its attention is the repercussions to be expected. Aleka Papariga placed motives directly on the level of political economy suggesting the exploitation of the attack for gain. Moreover Rizospastis sets the 'peoples' *versus* the' capitalist powers' and the 'oppressive economic, political and mediatic elites'. The KKE's certainty that the tragic event will be exploited to the utmost by the 'guilty leadership of the USA' in order to launch attacks on every possible 'enemy' is unshakeable. So, is the certainly that these events are linked to the oilfields of the Middle East and Central Asia. Hence, it calls for alertness: *"Decisions taken by the USA, NATO or any EU member have one goal: To shatter the general awakening that has been evident in different parts of the world. They aim to shatter popular movements."*

The Immediate and Foreseeable Impact

Here we address the impact of the event. We highlight the set of ideas presented and classify them in sub-categories. Surveillance and the curtailing of civil rights are expected above all among Greek writers. Kathimerini claims that after the attacks, the government of the USA "*has now the alibi, to achieve what they always wanted, the realization of their 'Orwellian' plans"* (12/09). According to columnist Periklis Korovesis freedom of expression is also in danger: *"From now on any criticism of the USA will be treated as synergy with terrorism"* he remarks (Eleftherotypia, 17/09). Moreover, in the centre of numerous political analyses stands the fear that the USA's isolation, -which became more apparent since the election of George Bush- will now be vindicated and entrenched. *"In reality 'disastrous terrorism' results in a situation which is hardly manageable by governments"* Ta Nea claims (12/09). This entails a vulnerability which may be the worst consequence of all.

> *There are times when the misuse of power back-lashes. It is broadly believed that the greatest danger for the USA is its enormous and unique economic, political and military strength and especially the management of this strength. This is not unprecedented in history. Empires disappeared because they could not manage their strength and ignored the fact that the 'damned' of this world have nothing to lose but their chains.* (Antonis Renieris, Ta Nea, 12/09).

Taking a more European perspective Kapopoulos notes in Kathimerini: "*The first official European reactions secured solidarity across the Atlantic. However, while the USA is trying to secure its hegemony, the long-term consequences of yesterday's attacks remain unknown*"(12/09). Going beyond the expression of solidarity, he detects a complete divergence between the USA and the EU appreciating the dangers from rogue states: *"the American crusade against terrorism aims to bring these states to their senses, instead of neutralizing particular terrorist groups. This choice stands in direct opposition to European choices."*

The panic that predominated among stock markets internationally was focused on extensively by the Greek press. By September 2001 the Greek stock market was already low, but the collapse of the international markets made the situation even worse. Meanwhile, Greece's joining the European Monetary Union a few months before September 11, had lead to the view that the economy depends more on changes at the international level. The economic shock following the tragedy was reviewed by Rizospastis: *"It is proved that the so called 'monetary stability of the Union' is not as solid as …official propaganda would have it "* (13/09) but ten days later, (23/09) it argued that *"such attacks may lead to economic recession. Yet, this will not have been caused by it. Economies in the USA and Japan have been on edge for quite some time."*

Feared Effects

The attacks gave rise to fears both rational and irrational, and to apprehension for the future. Salient items of concern are: [1] the rise of terror and violence, [2] the rise of a mentality of 'the good versus the evil', [3] the rise of anti-Arab hysteria, [4] the growth of racism, [5] the fear of being differently-minded, [6] the fear of civil liberties being curbed and [7] the fear that alternative political forces be subjugated. Generally, there is strong concern about the development of an 'Us versus Them' ideology linked directly with the *'Whoever is not with the USA is against the USA'* doctrine. In the light of projections about the 'division of civilizations' proposed by Samuel Huntington, such a self-fulfilling prophecy assumes disproportionate significance. So, calls for prudence and for avoiding retaliation were expressed. *"I hope that in their quest to find the guilty they will not attack groups around the world that are not responsible and which suffer already. This may stop their arrogance",* said former minister for Foreign Affairs Theodoros Pangalos while Stefanos Manos considered that *both personal freedom and the world economy are at risk*. Kapopoulos argues (16/09) that the extreme security measures in all airports herald the new era. *"This was a crime-gift for the USA.*[5] *The tragedy, not only for the Americans but also for the entire world, will be used as the official and legal excuse by the USA to turn the world into their own land",* insists Korovesis (Eleftherotypia, 17/09).

An opinion poll showed that only 4% of the respondents think that those responsible should be punished. Conversely, a majority replied that what ought to be done is to identify the deeper causes of such events. *"Dangerous Euro-American plans",* is the title of the leader of Rizospastis on 15/09, the day after the heads of EU member states and the President of the European Commission expressed their willingness to support the plans of the US. "Junta" is the title of an article by Liana Kanelli, journalist and parliamentarian for the KKE, in Rizospastis. *"Junta comes impetuous and much advertised. With informers, censorship, arrests and extermination of people worldwide "(*23/9).

The Impact of the Event on Greece

We find a number of items that relate to the impact of the event on Greece in regard of specific issues. Many references are made to the Greeks or Greek-Americans killed in the twin towers. Another casualty is to be the country's economy. Furthermore the internal security problem due to the action of terrorist groups is stressed as this is raised to a special prominence. This issue is, moreover, strongly related to pressure exerted on the government by allies such as the USA and the UK. The security issue re-appears even more strongly when projected onto the potential repercussions it will have on the organization of the Olympic Games of 2004.[6] This, is correlated with the rise of the cost of the games due to extra demands for security. Fear was expressed

straight after September 11 by many Greek journalists and government officials that the USA would step up the pressure for more antiterrorist action in Greece, bearing in mind that the country was often criticized for the activity of "17 November" group. The handling of local terrorism is presented as the number one goal for the Greek government as a State Department report placed Greece after Pakistan. *"Undoubtedly these attacks will impact on our country, which is seen by certain hard-core officials in the US, as sheltering terrorism "* (Ta Nea, 12/09). Ta Nea argued that "*The instinctive Greek anti-Americanism complicates the job of the government, even if some members of the cabinet believe that … Greeks may shout but eventually expect from us to safeguard their interests* (Dimitris Mitropoulos, 15/09). Such "defensive" perspectives are overturned by Rizospastis: *"Following the tactics used by the American State Department, it would be great, now, if other countries issued travel warnings and discouraging their citizens from travelling to the USA."* (Boyiopoulos).[7] Nevertheless, the ministry of Public Order already *"got the message and knows that Americans will push mainly in order to stop local terrorism. Meanwhile, many in the EU believe that from now on it will be hard to distinguish the borders between police and military action",* Antonis Karakousis argues in Kathimerini (15/09). Rizospastis, combative as usual, launched a fierce attack on cultivating a hysterical *'atmosphere of terror'*.

> The local servants of the 'world order' resort to skilfully stirred up fear and insecurity. They are trying to put into the minds of Greek people the idea that they have to keep quiet, so as not to provoke the 'justified' anger of the Americans. They argue that anti-Americanism hurts the national interest, because, in this 'new era' Turkey is getting stronger and any problems between Greece and the USA would privilege Turkey. Meanwhile, the Greek government seems to get along fine with Turkey, regarding NATO issues (Rizospastis, 14/09, Panayiotis Kakalis).

Manifestations of Sympathy and Solidarity

Manifestations of grief abound over the entire spectrum of the Press. They figure in all four newspapers. Prime Minister Kostas Simitis stated that "*it is our obligation to work together against terrorism*", while Foreign minister Giorgos Papandreou stressed the "*need for international cooperation to find the guilty, but also to find the causes that have made such tactics and ways of thinking possible*". All journals presented the memorial prayer for the victims in New York. The president of the main opposition party of 'New Democracy', Kostas Karamanlis, who was at the time "trapped" in the USA discussed with Greek Orthodox bishops ways to support families of the victims. Shadow foreign minister, Dora Bakoyianni, was prudently cautious: "*America has to punish the truly guilty. All countries bet on being able to cooperate effectively, without opening a new cycle of inexcusable violence*".

Stefanos Manos spoke of a global cooperation against terrorism calling rather invasively for "*putting under global restriction every government which does not participate in such effort"*. In line with general manifestations of sympathy Rizospastis concurred: *"Communists, progressive people, democrats, the Greek nation undoubtedly feel sorrow for the thousands of innocent victims, Americans. It is not only today that we weep for them. We always see the American people as brothers, who suffer."* (12/09). As expected, the communist newspaper expressed compassion, along with calls for fairness and justice. Expression of solidarity is addressed to the American people, which is distinguished from its 'guilty leadership'. Moreover the journal focuses distinctly on the equality between victims. We should not create *'privileged victims*' it is argued. Likewise Rizospastis raises the issue of responsibility and complicity:

> people who remain silent each time terrorist and state-terrorist crimes (by states such as the USA the UK, NATO members and Israel) are perpetrated share the guilt for such crimes. … The American people have to reach some conclusions. It is not sufficient to express our sympathy to them only. Because there are victims, murdered and oppressed in Palestine, in the Balkans, in other parts of the globe. (Papariga, Rizospastis 12/09).

Yes, but …

Nevertheless America's hegemonic and hostile actions around the globe causes also negative emotions. The USA is not seen in the Greek press as an *innocent victim* but rather as a one that brought this tragedy upon itself by being the source of this crisis. In this vein speculations appear about the possibly sobering effect that the September 11 attack may have on the American people. *The only radical outlet would be the search for a resolution of the big social problems that lead parts of the world into the margins and nations into despair*, postulates Nikos Konstantopoulos, leader of Synaspismos, the left coalition party. Along the same lines, Giorgos Katiforis, MEP for PASOK states that the answer lies in *searching for the causes that lead states to give shelter to terrorism*. Stefanos Manos concurs with this judgment. Political responsibility of the free democratic states has its roots in their *reluctance to minimize threats like hunger, underdevelopment etc*. Carolos Papoulias endorses but is more succinct: Certain regions *"produce terrorism, 'because' people suffer … If the USA tried to find a solution in the Middle East by political means, by putting more pressure on Israel for a sincere dialogue, a big part of this hatred would have disappeared."* Christoforos Skepeteris leading trade-unionist stressed a significant distinction: *"As Greeks and as workers we all express our sorrow for the innocent victims in the USA and our sympathy to the American people. But this does not mean that we put up with the imperialistic politics of the USA*. (Rizospastis 23/09). 'Imperialistic

politics' is central in many discussions: *What could we expect in the near future? A new holocaust of the already suffering people in Afghanistan, without excluding a 'final solution' with Iraq"*, predicts Korovesis (Eleftherotypia, 17/09). Criticism against US politics comes also from within. The president of the Council of the Greek Diaspora, Mr. Athens, an American citizen, commented on the tragic irony: *"Bear in mind that the USA declared that Greek airports are unsafe."*

The Motives for the Assault on the American Targets

A number of commentators seem to explicitly locate the motives for the assault on 'American imperialism'. This view is collateral with the notion that it represents an explainable if not a justified, anti-Americanism. Thus, injustice and domination, actively maintained by US official agencies and policies account for this type of explanations. Since international relations do not follow international law, the attack is explained through inequalities and domination which result in famine and ecological destruction around the globe.[8] Many articles "pointed" to the arrogance of the American government and the American people's apathy regarding their country's inimical foreign policies. *"During the years of total domination by the USA, the American people gave the impression that whatever happened in the rest of the world did not concern them ... They could not imagine that the missiles fired by the US against the world could return in the form of suicide airplanes"*, comments Pantelakis (Eleftherotypia, 14/09). These are all seen as key clues to the causes of the disaster and political apathy is blamed equally among them. Kathimerini stresses similarly that *"the USA's arrogance in politics, its ''generosity'' in the use of violence against anyone, may have pushed some to attempt to bring violence inside the USA in the most bloody and striking* way" (12/9). Pantelakis of Eleftherotypia remarks: so far *"the USA played the role of referee in all sorts of disputes worldwide. They thought that their power was sufficient to impose what they believed to be just. Anyone who resisted would have to pay. ... this kind of action causes a reaction and violence at some point breeds violence. "* (14/09).

Evaluating American foreign policy Rizospastis argues that *"all 'peaceful solutions', as diplomats usually characterize them, have been to the disadvantage of the people and of the most powerless states "* (Pavlos Rizargiotis, 13/09). The quest that appears persistently in Greek media is "*who are we going to attack, when the 'enemy' still remains unknown?"*. Rizospastis claims that former head of NATO forces Wesley Clark gave the answer: *There are terrorists in Lebanon, Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Palestine, Cyprus.... Those countries ought to arrest 'their terrorists'*(16/09). The way out of this impasse for many writers is the "awakening" of the American people. *Maybe tomorrow Americans, who experienced this tragedy, will be in a position to understand other nations which lived similar tragedies. Perhaps they will under-*

stand nations which are doomed to live such tragedies more often (Dimitris Kastriotis, Kathimerini 13/09).

An Enemy Within?

The USA as a State Benefiting from Terrorism?

Certain analysts put into perspective the effect of the attack on the future of Euro-American diplomatic relations. As Ta Nea puts it: *No one doubts that the new 'star wars', the USA anti-missile defence system, will go ahead. It will go ahead even faster without any objections from either Europe or Russia* (12/09). Others such as Kapopoulos see *"a complete line up with the USA, bearing in mind that a number of American politicians have appeared on CNN over the last 24 hours, who made it clear that "whoever is not with us is against us""*. (Kathimerini, 13/09). He argues that the USA aims to strengthen its cohesion with the EU *"in the name of fighting the common enemy: international terrorism. "* Yet, he points out that the EU's common and drastic strategy against the challenge of terrorism lies in the sphere of politics and not of repression.

> The momentum for the European emancipation exists. It is true, however, that divergence and disagreements plague Europe. Will this new recasting, that the US is forwarding, lead to a rolling-up of the "civilized world" against terrorism? Will it overtake the momentum of the EU's emancipation and integration? There is a need for international cooperation to cope with all sorts of "Bin Ladens", but also a risk for delaying, if not for blocking this emancipation (ibid, 13/09).

The tragic event sparked conspiracy plots notably in TV talk-shows. But can all versions of conspiracy be excluded ? *"The tragedy has its roots in the "Christian fundamentalism" of some ultra right wing, paramilitary group, as the Oklahoma event has been proved to be, with ex-military officer Timothy McVei. American right wing extremists are very much underrated by international public opinion"* argues Petros Papakostantinou (Kathimerini, 13/09). If *" 'conspiracy theory' is rejected, then, the structure of the Western World has changed. ... If the attacks were not an action by secret agents or provocateurs, then the "myth" of 'American invincibility' collapses* (Rizospastis, 13/09). In light of such a confused picture, *"the numerous contradictory facts and 'facts' puzzle not only citizens, but even experienced journalists"* (Thanos Oikonomopoulos, Kathimerini, 14/09). Not a frequent, but certainly a distinct theme concerns the probability of a *hidden agenda* which is linked, notably, to the way the 11/09 crisis was handled. It is suggested that such a *hidden agenda* may emanate from specific warmongering sections in the US. Such 'readings' suggest that the attack favours the aims of Christian fundamentalists while serving also as pretexts to legitimate aggressive wars against demonised countries. An extreme version of such scenarios is that this assault may have been *home-*

made, (Papakostantinou, Kathimerini, 13/09). The US government never really said out loud that it is the "*only superpower in the world*", a most common attribute in the Greek media. However, the doctrine of "*who is not with us is against us*" entails precisely that hegemony.

The USA as a State Sponsoring Terrorism?

A broad range of references are made to the USA's role in setting up, training and nurturing terrorists and paramilitary forces around the world such as the 'death squads' in El Salvador, the 'Contras' in Nicaragua, the 'Talibans' and *'al Qaida'* in Afghanistan and Pakistan and the 'KLA' in ex-Yugoslavia. Similarly references are made to dictatorships set up and directly supported by the CIA and the government of the USA such as the Pinochet and the Videla regimes in Chile and Argentina and of course the Greek junta. These thorny issues address aspects of "*the politics of insensitivity and hypocrisy*" of the USA. Such views loom large as the attack on the World Trade Centre was attributed to Al Qaida, an organization set up, financed and privileged by the CIA (Ios, 16/09). Hence, it is the disciples of the USA that now turn their terrorist acts against the source that nurtured them. This fact reveals that American officials are inconsistent in their definition of terrorism: Talibans were good and useful so long as they attacked others, but became overnight terrorists once they started attacking Americans. *"The USA counts its wounds from a terrorist attack which jumped from its own* stomach," (Kathimerini, 13/09). For its part Rizospastis announces that *"in the US there is already talk about 'indigenous groups'. Bin Laden is an 'indigenous' creation of the USA and you pay for such creations. Unfortunately, now it is the people of the USA "* (13/9). Korovesis summarizes the superpower's feats: *"since the Cold War the USA has been involved in many hot wars, from Korea, to Yugoslavia"* then, he highlights the obvious: *"the Taliban uprisal was financed by America, the currently wanted Bin Laden was the pampered child of the CIA*[9]*. Therefore, a war in whichever part of the world the USA has any interests is the quintessence of its own Foreign policy "* (Eleftherotypia, 17/09). Besides Greek media treated with some astonishment the fact that no responsible Secretaries of State or chiefs of secret services resigned in the face of this attack.[10]

The inability of the world's best security system to react in a timely and effective way, intrigues both politicians and journalists. The idea is that such an assault should have been pre-empted, deterred or at least fended off. Lack of timely reaction exposed a dormant or an inactive system.[11] This failure is enigmatic all the more because it is unaccounted for. It therefore sparked plausible insinuations about an 'internal enemy' or a 'hidden agenda'.[12] "How could such a thing happen ? Politicians wondered about the ways that terrorists penetrated the supposedly impenetrable security system of the USA. A puzzled Minister of National Defence, Akis Tsoxatzopoulos said that *"the Greek air forces can 'lift' airplanes in less than a minute and reach across the Aegean Sea in two minutes, ready to take part in an air fights."* (Ta Nea, 13/09). Hence,

questions are raised about deterring capacity and infiltration of the American secret services. It is thus implied that the terrorists had a great deal of crucial inside information to organize such an attack. "*The secret services knew*", asserts Kathimerini's editorial title affirmatively (15/09). The journal hosts also reports from the Frankfurter Allgemeine and the Washington Post which concur its editorial statement.[13] It notably outlined in them that the secret services had predicted that suicide attacks would occur in the USA imminently. Quoting the New York Times Kathimerini stresses that terrorists used the same codes as those used by US secret services and revealed that George Bush senior had admitted that *"in the past the CIA decided to put its agents in terrorist groups in order to use them in the nation's interests"* (15/09).

What Is To Be Done?

A number of analysts elaborate propositions about what is to be done next, in the form of policy advise to governments of Western States. They recommend courses of action in view of worrying but foreseeable outcomes in the aftermath of the tragic event. Former foreign minister Carolos Papoulias considers that : *"measures of suppression and dominance should be taken against concrete groups and not against nations. If the USA acts differently it will strengthen such groups... Coping with terrorism by military means will never succeed, as it never did in the past"*. Giorgos Katiforis (MEP) argues along similar lines: "*it is crucial that no states are treated as terrorists*". Yet, other analysts view such a prospect as utterly unrealistic*: "Pessimists believe that the USA will react like a wounded animal with unpredictable consequences*" suggests Pantelakis (Eleftherotypia, 14/09) and he is concurred by Kathimerini which quotes Henry Kissinger's article in the Washington Post: "e*very government that provides shelter to such terrorist groups, whether it is proved that it shares any responsibility for the attacks or not, has to pay with exemplary punishment*. [sic] He stipulates and continues: *"This is something we should do calmly, carefully, unmercifully* [sic]*."*

Considering the fact that it was the US which primarily provided money and shelter to this very group this statement appears tragicomic. So the mandate is to attack mercilessly even those against whom we have no evidence of having any involvement in the attacks. *"Will these bombs of anger be dropped on those governments that Kissinger wrote about, or will there be endless hordes of innocent dying as happened in Iraq or Nagasaki? "* asks Bourdaras (Kathimerini).

Reflections on How the 'Event' Was Mediatized

The 'twin tower tragedy' gave also rise to a host of reports on how it was represented both locally and globally. This media self-reflexivity emanates

from huge disparities in journalistic practices in handling the event between notably the US media and those in the rest of the world. Censorship was evidently among the most crucial issues. Pictures that smash any sense of national pride, moral courage and belief in coping, were suspended in the US. Another problem is the comparatively discriminatory treating of victims. The humanistic need to treat all victims equally when mediatizing their plight comes out starkly in the Greek press. Moreover, evaluating the American way of presenting the tragedy, Rizospastis suggests that the US government "disciplined" the media whereby images particularly of the destruction of the Pentagon, were suppressed.[14] *"The world watches, via CNN, Manhattan on fire with awe*" is the caption of the central photograph on Kathimerini's front page. *"TV, mainly CNN and BBC, are the main sources of information with scenes of horror and the first timid announcements by officials"* it is added in the text (12/09). Thus, American channels, notably CNN, did not screen any pictures of dead bodies both due to policy and the restriction of access to the actual scene for the press.[15] Overall the mediatizing of the tragedy as well as its control was broadly criticized. In the majority of the Greek press the attacks were the theme of leading articles, at least during the first week. An interesting coincidence is noteworthy. UNESCO released its annual report on 'poverty and hunger' a couple of days after the attacks. Quite a few analysts criticized the fact that this crucial report was downgraded by being placed on back pages. But these reports tell us that every year *"ten million children under 5 years old die of hunger and disease in the unknown, underdeveloped world, in Asia and Africa, where such circumstances play an important role – if not the key role- in the rise of terrorism"* (Oikonomopoulos, Kathimerini,14/09).

Beware of the Sole Superpower

The overt or covert reasons for the current state of international disorder is an issue addressed crucially by many analysts in all papers. According to Rizospastis, this outcome is due to the existence of a single superpower in the globe after the collapse of the Soviet Union. We experience these horrific acts and their implications because of the end of the bipolar world system. The rise of the American *monocracy* is seen as the root of the problem. This view gives rise to pessimism regarding future options. Worse and more ominous tragedies are thought to be in store for the world while concrete projections are made in regard of the super-power's next steps. These foresee the blackmailing of NATO allies by the US to tow them into aggressive wars and the escalation of gratuitous violence. In this light the New York tragedy seems as a pretext for the subjugation of both allies and enemies. Hence the only feasible act for citizens is resistance to defence civil rights.

Evaluation of Press Coverage and Discourse Contributions

We continue with the assessing of how the four journals perceived and conveyed the uniqueness of the event, its relevance for Greece, for the USA and for the world. How insightful, accurate or pluralistic are they? And how complete a perception of the complex event is conveyed in the discourse of politicians, press pundits and academics? With hindsight, how far-sighted were they in facing the issues and to what extent were they vindicated?

The day after the attack the press was inundated with sensational material from the site of the catastrophe. As time went by the type of press output changes character in all newspapers. This shift is particularly evident in the three centrist journals. Reportage slowly gives way to more inquiring analysis. Writers focus on issues regarding *how* and *why* such terrible event could happen and on interpreting the 'apocalyptic phenomenon'. This affair proved to be a complex case as available information was elliptic, utterly confusing but also controversial. To evaluate both news coverage and discursive contributions in the Greek press, we condense the ten thematic areas of the section 3. into four more general categories: [a] What is the essence of the September 11 event? [b] What were the causes / motives – who stood to gain from the attack? [c] What is the short-term and the foreseeable long term impact of the event? [d] What can and should be done in its aftermath?

In all four categories a wide variety of contingencies emerge which are discussed broadly over the entire spectrum of the journals examined. With the exception of Rizospastis we observe a broad convergence of approach. The issues are treated with varying emphasis and hierarchy of priority. Certain issues receive a relatively asymmetrical visibility but not in any remarkable degree. Significant differences are attributable to the views of individual writers. A wide range of opinions are aired both on the essence of the event and on its handling. A multiplicity of parameters, diverse ideas and viewpoints are laid out to public scrutiny which we deem as a merit of the Greek press. The event itself, as well as the chain of events it set in motion were not taken at face value. An enquiring scepticism is manifest while we perceive no undercurrent of political or diplomatic pressures being put to bear. The influx of the 'raw material' comes mainly from international news agencies, the CNN but also correspondents *in situ*. Integrity and moderation in the handling of this issue are evidenced, along with a sobriety which reflects genuine concern.

a. What is the essence of September 11?

Among the most recurring characterisations of September 11 we find the words: *unprecedented, universal, global, a new form of undeclared war, irrational, offensive, blindly violent*. It is viewed as the attack that in one blow cost human life, caused economic disaster, provoked political inertia

and havoc. Likewise it is seen as a symbolic blow to the prestige and self-image of the superpower. It is accurate that the attack incapacitated the internal security system of the USA.[16] These observations go to the heart of the matter. The dominant perception is that this is an act of *blind terrorism* whose motives may be external to the USA, but are not at all irrelevant to the policies of the USA. The theme of *'imperialistic politics'*[17] is central in the discussion of all four journals and of most writers. So overall, the event was captured in an overarching and broad way.

b. Who stood to gain from the attack?

The issue of Islamic fundamentalism is used as an explanatory parameter for *kamikaze* violence. The Greek press examines a broad set of underlying causes for such acts. Scepticism prevails as to the alleged perpetrators. Hence, speculation is open and goes in all directions. The most daring scenarios examine even the possibility of an 'enemy within' or a 'home-made' project: a line of thought which is perhaps unthinkable in the mainstream press of other countries. Nothing is taken at face value and there is no precipitate jumping to conclusions. The press coverage as a whole presents a sophisticated questioning of all possible scenarios with a strong tendency towards pessimism for the future. Extremist activism is identified and termed in accordance with the official terminology in use in the USA. The terms 'terrorists' and terrorism', used systematically by news agencies of the Talibans and Al Qaida, are adopted by the Greek press. These terms are used of Islamic fundamentalists but also of irredentist activists in the republics of ex-Yugoslavia.[18]

The underlying causes for any type of extremism are tenuously emphasized in all journals. Poverty, famine, desperation, or contempt are invoked as key originators of such acts. Contributors to maintaining these conditions – such as the G7 countries – are thereby incriminated, at least indirectly, for fuelling the rise of extremism. The recurrent use of the term *'imperialism'* in all journals is proof of that. Thus, the true reasons for the attack are said to relate (a) to conflicts of interests between the various fundamentalist groups and American agencies, and (b) to discrimination against Arabs and contempt of Muslims. [19] Thus, the trampling on the rights of the weaker nations – to which most of the Muslim populations around the world belong – is seen as the cause of extremist frustration. This set of issues is raised by all journals but Rizospastis is the most incisive in highlighting causes and in proposing alternative interpretations but also defiance.

c. What is the short and long term impact of the event?

In regard of the impact we observe a broad coverage of it from all points of view. Three levels of impact are identified: (a) the local level of the event: the US (b) the global level: the impact on the world at large, and (c) the

impact at the Greek national level. All four journals clearly agree that the impact of September 11 will be gravely felt in Greece and that the it will be severe both in the short and in the long term worldwide. A widely expressed feared impact, albeit with varying emphasis, appears to be the possibility of aggressive reprisals taken unilaterally by the US.

d. What can and should be done in its aftermath?

Regarding what should or could be done, the essence of the discourse is limited to calls for caution. The fear of over-reaction, principally against Arabs or Muslims is manifest in all journals in view of the disturbing trends that surfaced quickly in the US. Yet, with the exception of Rizospastis and a few individual writers, the three centrist journals suggest or imply that Greece, as an ally and NATO member, should stand by the US government in its decisions. This 'passive solidarity' with the primary victim of the assault indicates acceptance of the pre-eminence of the USA and a *de facto* recognition of it as the *key victim* if not the *sole victim*. Here, then, we observe a contradiction. The event is recognized as global in terms of its impact, but, simultaneously, it is not perceived as such in regard of the appropriate policies for facing it. But, if it is accepted that the US impose its strategy and policy decisions in handling this issue, then, this betrays that the event acceptably is *de facto* not treated as *glocal* one. This course refutes the view that the September 11 phenomenon is a problem of world significance in which all parties have stakes and responsibilities. The rationale that, since we also suffer from this crisis, we should also be able to decide about it, notably about any defensive action, is thus undermined. The combination of severe criticism with 'passive' solidarity reveals, moreover, a double edged position; one of juggling between incompatible wishes, legitimate fears and reluctance to risk or reticence to assume political responsibility. The opposition to any retaliation against innocent countries is thus weakened because it is de-linked from decision-making on action. Likewise the wish to safeguard security seems only rhetorical. Security is seen as achievable only through siding up with the superpower. Thus, in response to the issue of what the government should do: most of the articles gravitate towards affirmative but 'passive' support for the wounded ally. Rizospastis differs in that it makes a stark critique, rejecting 'defensive or offensive' action.

Predictions Vindicated

Explanatory and predictive qualities rank high in journalism. They give it essence, credibility and kudos. Discourse which comprises these merits is crucial and hence praiseworthy. Two years after the event we are able to gauge the degree to which certain estimates were vindicated or seem plau-

sible now. A number of assessments by the Greek press seem to have been largely vindicated by subsequent events.

First, subsequent actions taken by the US government on Iraq and the split within the UN Security Council over the pre-announced war, prove that the prediction that the September 11 affair would be exploited to the utmost for entrenching arbitrary use of power gains full credence. Two sets of goals appeared to be being served: (a) more authoritarian policies within the US and internationally (b) favouring the interests of the *military industrial complex* through such policies. This accurate appreciation of the Greek press is concurred with by the most pertinent source. In his letter of resignation US diplomat in Athens, John Brady Kiesling states:

> We spread disproportionate terror and confusion in the public mind, arbitrarily linking the unrelated problems of terrorism and Iraq. The result, and perhaps the motive, is to justify a vast misallocation of shrinking public wealth to the military and to weaken the safeguards that protect American citizens from the heavy hand of government. September 11 did not do as much damage to the fabric of American society as we seem determined to so do ourselves." (New York Times, 27/02/03).[20]

Secondly, the idea that officials knew about the imminent attack, yet did not prevent it, has been steadily gaining ground (Franssen, 2002, Meyssan, 2002, Colobani, 2002, Katzilakis, 2003)[21] and is by now publicly admitted by US officials. The 'hidden agenda' which Greek analysts foresaw is now in full swing in the form of new wars launched or threatened against 'insubordinate states'. The rush to respond to this crisis – irrespective of who the perpetrators were – shows how the event was used as a pretext. Kiesling concurs with this:

> The sacrifice of global interests to domestic politics and to bureaucratic self-interest is nothing new, and it is certainly not a uniquely American problem. Still, we have not seen such a systematic distortion of intelligence, such systematic manipulation of American opinion, since the war in Vietnam. The September 11 tragedy left us stronger than before, rallying around us a vast international coalition to cooperate for the first time in a systematic way against the threat of terrorism. But rather than take credit for those successes and build on them, the Administration has chosen to make terrorism a *domestic political tool*, enlisting a scattered and largely defeated Al Qaeda as its bureaucratic ally." (New York Times, 27/02/03, my emphasis).

Strong subsequent pressures to launch a 'perpetual' war against insubordinate countries around the globe, reinforce the idea that the lack of timely and effective deterrence against the *kamikaze* airplanes was opportune for such hidden agendas. In this terrorist attack the enemy was invisible and difficult to

define. But rising nationalist manifestations were expedient for launching precipitate, arbitrary aggressive interventions without any legitimacy.

Thirdly, many writers warned early on about the activation of Article 5 of the NATO Treaty inappropriately so as for the USA to oblige its allies to consent to wars to pre-empt potential attacks by inimical but sovereign states. This is crucial as the NATO Treaty applies to defence action in cases of *declared* and certainly different types of *war* than blind terrorist group attacks.

Fourthly, writers in all four journals who feared the worse in regard of curtailing human and civil rights have been vindicated. In the US, but also in many other mainly western states, sweeping violations of the principle of 'innocent unless proven guilty'[22] have occurred. As denounced by organizations such as Amnesty International, numerous arrests were made only on the vaguest of suspicions. In Greece less than a year after the attack, a new stricter anti-terrorist law was passed in connection with the arrest of the 17th November group. Moreover, as is pointed out by the International Federation of Journalists, press freedom has been extensively curtailed in many countries, including the USA (White, 2002). The stricter legislative and policing measures taken against refugees and immigrants in many western countries are equally a negative effect of the cultivation of an *'anti-terrorist hysteria'*.

Fifthly, a few analysts, notably Kapopoulos in Kathimerini foresaw the eventuality of a rift emerging within the Atlantic alliance and also within the EU. He predicted the US's divisive strategy against the EU in connection with the kamikaze attack. In the light of current divisions within the EU over Iraq, this point has obviously been vindicated. Since the start of the war on Iraq in March 2003 this diagnosis is proven accurate and this issue is now among the hot problems of the Union. However improbable or odd-seeming two years ago, the idea that there existed an active plan to split and weaken the EU is currently (2003) in the minds of most analysts and statesmen. Besides, disagreements that appeared between the EU and the USA after the start of the "war against terrorism" are now increasing dramatically. Following the announcement of the termination of Saddam Hussein's regime and the war in Iraq, attempts were made on both sides of the Atlantic to bridge the gap. One of these was initiated by the Greek government during the Greek presidency of the EU. Yet the essential rift remains.

Omissions

Since the *kamikaze* assault on the World Trade Centre is as a novel form of aggressive war, we are faced with a corresponding void in legitimate ways to respond to it. This requires deliberation, study and the adoption of a multilateral agreement to guarantee a politically agreed handling as the international community can face such new challenges only within the bounds of law, if we are to make any claims to rationality and to a code of ethics, in ruling and being ruled at the international / global level. There is obviously

a legal and political gap to be filled. Before doing so it must be understood and put on the agenda. Yet, we find no contributions towards such a rationale in the press. No proposals are made to cure this fault, nor arguments developed in this direction. Although the uniqueness of the event has been focused on, the necessary steps for the creation of relevant legal instruments within the UN are missing. This means that novel problems are left to be tackled with inappropriate or obsolete instruments or arbitrarily. Furthermore the perception of the *glocality* of the event is limited in the Greek press to aspects of impact alone. This reveals a logic according to which the USA is: (a) the only agency eligible or ready to act, (b) the sole power disposing the means and legitimacy to act so as to defend itself. So, what remains for other countries, notably the US allies, is merely a declaration of solidarity. But an unconditional siding up with the primary victim is a problematic option. It precludes the choices of the other actors involved, the secondary level and long-term victims. Such a stance reveals political defeatism and powerlessness.

The 1999 NATO attacks and bombing of Serbia were illegal.[23] In their tragic aftermath it is intriguing and certainly problematic that issues of legitimacy and legality are ignored once again or played down. Thus an observable gap in the international legal system is alowed to persist by omitting to deal with it also in public debate. Failure to adhere to international legislation and to call for new legal reveals a retreat from upholding the rule of law. It shows loss of faith in pursuing principled politics in the emerging global domain. It reveals a tacit accommodation to power politics rather than pursuing principled diplomacy and common interest politics. Thus the ideology of 'might is right' advances unrestrained. This contingency is alarming as its certain outcome is more chaos and impotence to settle crises rationally and collectively. This leads writers into fatalistic prognoses and to suggest ways of assuaging the wounded pride of the super-power. We ignore the issue of legitimacy at our peril.

Summing Up

How can we assess the mediation of such a major crisis, as the assaults on the World Trade Centre in New York and on the Pentagon on 11 September 2001? Traditional political communication models and known theoretical tools such as 'agenda setting' and 'source centered approaches' (McCombs, 1982, Goldenberg, 1984, Schlesinger & Tumber, 1994, McNair, 1994) do not seem appropriate for analyzing such a historically unprecedented event. The most challenging and characteristic features of this tragedy, as a current affairs item, emanate from the *power of the course of events;* that is, the power of the *course of history*. It happened so suddenly. Its mediatic handling had to be ad hoc, instantaneous. We need to search for more special, comprehensive and complementary approaches.

The press plays an actively leading role not merely a neutrally mediating one, and its importance is accentuated in times of crisis. The principles of liberal democracy conceive of the press as a pivotal agent in the formation of a free civil will and readiness to decision making and action. Public media such as newspapers reflect, but also form and channel concerns, grievances and the will of society.[24] They radiate the mental atmosphere and ideological climate in the body politic as well as among decision-makers. Journals contribute to the understanding (a) of problems and crises, but also, (b) of the demands set by civil society on how to face, and to redress problems of *glocal* and universal nature. Such nuances impinge, moreover, (c) on the extent of autonomy enjoyed by the press itself, but also (d) on journalists' capacity to play their essential political role entrusted to them in liberal democracies. Nuanced, diverse and even oppositional approaches confer precious sources for understanding complex occurrences of our uncertain world. If we accept that current history is determined largely by brutal pragmatism and the lowest common denominator of power politics, then, the significance of any press discourse has little or no relevance for any other optional courses of action.. In our time the press is everywhere dominated by commercial competition and by concentrated ownership. Moreover, several other restrictive conditions operate in biasing ways. It is, thus, obstructed from serving its communicative goals. So, within this *unfree* and restrictive framework how did the Greek press do on this issue? To what extent was the Greek press capable to develop its own autonomous perspecive and rationale?

Overall, the Greek press (a) provides sympathy and compassion, (b) launches a severe critique both immanent and external and (c) gives the ground up for any future action to the 'superpower'. Ta Nea follows a comparatively more calm and painless reporting than Rizospastis, while it is less analytical, politically, than Kathimerini. As regards the impact, looking at the portions of the press devoted to the three main segments of concern that is: us / them / the world, we find that there is a reasonable balance between them without a strong partiality in any of these elements. The only exception to this is Rizospastis whose emphasis is on the general good and the macro-level. What is crystallized here is a direct press stance whose discourse reflects a quest, even though rhetorical, for a peaceful, global stability and denounces hegemonic or abusive policies. Such positions gravitate towards the common global interest and are not determined by narrow national perspectives. Greek public opinion and the mood of civil society strongly correspond with this outlook. These qualities are explained by the country's nature: i.e. geopolitical position, and political culture, i.e. recent political history of turmoil, oppression, instability and curtailing of civil rights and democratic institutions.

Greek press reporting on this issue condenses a radical political but mainstream rationale and discourse. It moreover presents a remarkable level of convergence of views among the different journals. It is noteworthy also that commercial sensationalism did not impinge on the severity and the essence

of the event that shook the world. The views aired appear critical, autonomous and authentic. The socio-political positions observed in Greece combine manifestations of vital immediate reflexes, but also of pleas for justice and fairness. The points vindicated in the Greek press are quite significant, sometimes even remarkable. Yet, the omissions we have identified ignore the vital necessity not only for new legitimate international legal instruments, but also and, most importantly, for a multilateral politics of agreements and commitments to face novel challenges in orderly ways. Finally, the Greek view injects into the global public sphere a healthy scepticism. As it was not guided by short-sighted objectives and expediency, it was an antidote against mountains of sensationalism, propaganda or redundant information. John Brady Kiesling's letter of resignation to Colin Powell crystallizes the Greek stance.

> I urge you to listen to America's friends around the world. Even here in Greece, purported hotbed of European anti-Americanism, we have more and closer friends than the American newspaper reader can possibly imagine. Even when they complain about American arrogance, Greeks know that the world is a difficult and dangerous place, and they want a strong international system, with the U.S. and EU in close partnership. *When our friends are afraid of us rather than for us, it is time to worry. And now they are afraid.* Who will tell them convincingly that the United States is as it was, a beacon of liberty, security, and justice for the planet? (New York Times, 27/02/03, emphasis added).

The watershed that this event set in history was perceived in quite a radical way in Greece. As pointed out by several writers, 11 September 2001, was not merely the most lethal peacetime attack in the heart of the USA, but the terrorist act that will restructure the geostrategic and geo-economic field of this century. The attack caught the US off guard and was devastating enough to shatter stability and security worldwide. In this light, no single actor should be allowed to exclusively determine the future policies for the managing of such 'glocal' crises. The only hope rests in collective and legitimate future action because the nature of these assaults are ecumenical. We need to understand and to cure their causes. Avoiding the repetition of such acts, punishing the guilty and pre-empting such activism is an affair that concerns us all. The dire effects of such acts radiate out in concentric circles. The epicentre and the circles closest to them are hit immediately and the hardest. The circles farthest away from the place of the first attack are hit less strongly at first, but may suffer the worst in the long term.

Notes

1. A host of books and articles have emerged on the issue of September 11 with a variety of approaches and critical appreciations (Franssen, 2002, Meyssan, 2002, Homer – Dixon, (2002), Romaios, (2002). The day after the attack on the twin towers the French daily 'Le Monde' came out with a front page headline declaring "We are all Americans". Less than

a year later the director of that newspaper J. M. Colobani published a book questionning that first statement, entitled "Are we all Americans?"

2. We have excluded the extreme right- or left-wing press. In spite of its high readership rates we also chose to exclude the morning daily To Vima as it belongs to the same owner as Ta Nea.
3. The definition of the terms terrorism and terrorist seems to be one of the most contested issues. Their political character underlies these disagreements (Roberts, 2002).
4. Tasos Kostopoulos, Dimitris Trimis, Dimitris Psaras and Agelika Psara are the writers of 'Ios'. Brady Kiesling the now resigned political counsellor of the American Embassy in Athens replied to 'Ios' that the US government had never been in direct contact with Osama bin Laden.
5. The phrase "crime-gift" is used also by Daniel Elberg (Katzilakis, 2002:32). Similarly Colobani argues that a generic and undiscriminating anti-Americanism serves precisely the hidden agenda of the military-industrial complex (Colobani, 2002:72).
6. The president of the International Olympic Committee Jacques Rogge said that "nothing is like before", adding that if security matters were the first priority for the Committee, after the games of 1972, now there is even greater need for it" (Kathimerini, 15/9).
7. The US State Department has issued numerous such warnings against Greece over the last 20 years. These were often viewed as attempts to extract political or economic gains by threatening the tourism industry of the country.
8. As has been seen in all recent UN conferences on sustainable development, environmental protection and world poverty the US government and American multinational companies are among the least willing to cooperate in the solution of world problems.
9. See also Colobani, 2002:51, Franssen, 2002, who advance the same position about the 'rise' of Osama bin Laden.
10. In cases of disasters in Greece media and political pressure is exerted for the resignation of whoever bears political responsibility.
11. For detailed evidence on and discussion of these allegations see Franssen, 2002, Meyssan 2002, Colobani, 2002.
12. See for example the work by Franssen, 2002, and Meyssan, 2002.
13. See also Franssen, 2002
14. Meyssan (2002) argues that there was no airplane attack against the Pentagon.
15. CNN producers explained that *such scenes would cause more anger and panic, which would destroy national morale even more.*
16. The feelings of invincibility and of safety of the American population were shaken severely. The phrase 'the beginning of the end' was among the most frequent used on an opinion site set up by the Greek section of the BBC world Service.
17. This very term is used increasingly by many Americans in opposition to the Government's and the military industrial complex's warmongering designs. Eminent Americans such as Noam Chomsky, Gore Vidal, Martin Sheen, Ramsey Clark, Margaret Papandreou and many others belong among them. Daniel Elsberg is similarly quoted by Katzilakis (2003) denouncing the imperialistic US policies.
18. Evidence suggests that the KLA, but also other Islamic organisations in ex-Yugoslavia received financial, arms and training support from bin Laden who, however, had both protection and support from the US (Franssen, 2002:78-80, Colobani, 2002:34). Similar claims were made in the press of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
19. This is notable in references to the Palestine question and to the continuing crisis in the Middle East.
20. Published in numerous journals around the world, notably, in *Eleftherotypia* and in *New York Times* of 27/02/03.
21. 'You knew, you did not act' has already become a standard protest slogan in post September 11 anti-war rallies.
22. *Nullum crimen, nulla poena sine lege.*

23. This accusation was addressed by many authoritative agencies both before and after the undeclared war against Yugoslavia. The Select Committee of the House of Commons of the UK ruled, post facto, that the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia was illegal. See Wintour, 2000, Kaitatzi-Whitlock, 2002.
24. Habermas, (1984, 1989) advances a rationale for the constructive role of the 'public sphere' and of citizens' 'communicative action', as opposed to the self-interest-oriented 'strategic action', which occur only with the media at their best.

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Chapter 9

The Bulgarian Press and the 'New War'

A Study of the Dailies 24 Chassa *and* Dnevnik

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On the Media Landscape in Bulgaria

The media sector in Bulgaria developed rather rapidly during the first years of democracy (1989-90). Immediately after its establishment, the citizens began publishing their own partisan newspapers. The market for print media was progressively built up, and the response was overwhelming – the researchers have listed and described nearly 1,000 different newspapers in 1991. A year later (1992-93), the state broadcasting monopoly was broken. The first private Bulgarian radio stations appeared, and the private TV operators soon followed them. Now there are approximately 300 cable and airwave electronic media for a population of less than eight million. Thus, the development of the media sector became symbolic of a dynamic transition to democracy – of diversity, pluralism, and competition.

All the same, the Bulgarian media were continually and permanently the focus of public debate during the entire last decade. The constant political pressures on them, on the one hand, and their dependency on various private economic and corporate groups' interests, on the other, were among the basic reasons for the high degree of public curiosity and attention. After a short life, many of the newly established newspapers disappeared like phantoms.

Now Bulgaria has two national satellite television channels: BNT (Bulgarian National Television), the former state TV station, which is attempting to transform itself into a public service broadcasting institution, and bTV (Balkan News Corporation), which is privately owned by Rupert Murdock's News Corporation. Shortly after its emergence, bTV got higher audience ratings than the traditional BNT and quickly surpassed it.

In mid-1996, the German VAZ Press Group bought the two major Bulgarian national newspapers – *24 Chassa* (outright) and *Trud* (a share). These two papers still have the highest circulation in Bulgaria. The "third" newspaper has a far smaller circulation than either of the former two.

Owing to their powerful influence over the Bulgarian society, *24 Chassa* and *Trud* are the natural focus of media researchers. They are in tabloid format

and define themselves as "national dailies", professing to satisfy the information needs of a broad and diverse public. They are more accurately defined as "hybrid tabloids" (Spassov, 2001: 52) because of their obvious inclusion of features distinctive to both traditionally serious periodicals and tabloid newspapers, and of both publicly significant and sensational stories. We chose *24 Chassa*[1] to be one of the subjects of this analysis.

All attempts to market a high-quality press in Bulgaria during the transition years were unsuccessful and ended in "disappearance" of the edition in question from the public sphere. (Only the better quality weeklies, like *Capital*, managed to survive.)

However, on February 12, 2001, a new publication was born – *Dnevnik*[2]. Its declared intent was "to restore the tradition of the serious daily press in Bulgaria to the exclusion of whatever private, group, and political interests are not in harmony with the common sense and interests of the taxpayers and society at large". We chose *Dnevnik* to be the second subject of our analysis, because we expected to find in it a message that was different from the messages of the hybrid tabloids.

For our study we combined both research approaches – quantitative and qualitative analysis. We considered all articles[3] linked to September 11 and related events, includingly the attacks on Afghanistan until December 15, 2001[4].

Dnevnik is issued from Monday through Friday each week and editions are not published on Saturdays or Sundays. This means that when major events (e.g., September 22 and December 15) occurred on weekends, we studied the issues that came out on the following Monday.

24 Chassa
"The Daily that Covers Objectively the News Events"[5]

24 Chassa treated the terrorist attacks and the related succeeding events (September 11–December 15, 2001) as being very important and highly influential on human thinking and behavior. We found evidence of this in the remarkable number of articles allotted to these subjects.

Articles: Their total number was 175, or 11-12 articles per issue on average[6].

Front page: Four of all the studied issues specifically dedicated their entire front page to the observed theme (with photos covering the whole page and titles such as "America under Attack", "War", and "Contamination"). 78 articles are located in the pages (ordinarily entitled "WORLD") that are reserved for coverage of international events. However, if related articles are printed elsewhere in the newspaper, there are references to them on the front page, which attract the reader's attention from the beginning. In the coverage of these events, the profiled pages that are different from the above-

mentioned "WORLD" have their own headings like "Terror", and "The Sabre Rattles".

Extra editions: 24 Chassa published extra editions. (These issues are called "War Editions", and in our analysis we include one of them, the one on October 8, 2001). The newspaper spends a great per centage of its human resources on covering the event. In September and October, special correspondents went to America (V. Simeonova and M. Karbovsky), and by October other special correspondents were in Afghanistan (G. Milkov) and Pakistan (M. Petrov).

Journalistic form (genre): The major articles are straight informative news (126). This is in full compliance with the usual writing style of *24 Chassa*. With this in mind, we estimate that the intelligibility level of the submitted articles is relatively satisfactory.

In the more analytical articles, the floor is given to Bulgarian politicians, European leaders, and experts to present their opinions (25, including journalistic comments). The reportages of the special correspondents and the accounts of other eyewitnesses are informative, but their representations of events and commentaries emotional, and the viewpoints are personalized. However, there is relatively little actual analysis of the events in all of the articles we studied (only 10 commentaries and analyses). The analyses are confined to the eight issues of September, and their thematic perspective is limited to the terrorist attacks and George Bush's speech.

Information sources: 24 Chassa uses comparatively few sources of Bulgarian origin. When it does, they are predominantly the newspaper's own sources (42 times – correspondents and reporters). A substantial number of the articles (37) are without any identified information source. One quarter of the total articles is have more than one foreign source. These information sources can be classified according to the frequency of their usage in the media, as shown in Table 1.

Headlines: The dominant keywords registered in the titles of the analyzed articles can be assembled into three major groups. The most frequently used group is the one that gives information about the actors in the conflict: America, the USA, Americans, Yankees, etc. – 46; Bin Laden, Osama, the Saudi – 24; Afghanistan, Kabul, Afghans – 24; Bush – 7; Taliban – 7; NATO – 4. The adjectives 'ominous or fateful' occupy second position: terror, terrorism, terrorists – 16; to attack, attacks, crash, shock – 16; war – 10; assault, assaulters – 7. The third keyword grouping describes the behavior of Bulgaria, the actions of the Bulgarian politicians and official institutions – 8.

"We Give the U. S. A. Whatever They Want"[7]

The announcements of the terrorist attacks appear in *24 Chassa* alongside the presentiment of a respondent attack. We use the word "presentiment" to describe the reader's feeling because the main heading ("America Was Attacked")

Table 1.

News agencies and electronic media	*Frequency of use*	*Printed media*	*Frequency of use*
Reuters	11		
CNN	10		
AP	8		
Al Jazeera	6		
Internet (in general)	4	*The Washington Post*	4
Debka (Russian website), UPI, AIP (Taliban press agency)	2	The Times, USA Today, Newsweek, The Sunday Telegraph, The Drudge Report	2
DPA, FPA, CBS, RFE, Mediafax, DW, BBC, Radio India, ABC, Skynews, Ming News website, Gazetta website	1	*The New York Times*, *The New York Daily News*, *The Star*,*The Los Angeles Times*,*Arguments and Facts* (Russia), *The Wall Street Journal*, *Corrierre Della Sera*, *Takib* (Pakistan newspaper), *Variety Magazine*, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, *The Daily Express*, *The New Yorker*, Press Association, *The Independent*, *Vremya Novostey*, *The Washington Times*	1

of the first article about the event is accompanied by the subheading "Missile Attack on Kabul" (September 12, 2001). The September 12 issue does not say who has attacked Afghanistan. A short article within the body of the follow-up issue contains more complete information: "the missiles that have attacked Kabul belong to the Northern Alliance, (…) the U.S.A. has disproved having any connection with this event". This introduces into the reader's mind the smell of terrorist attack and the perception of a "respondent attack" at the same time. The expectations of a violent response are logically connected with the shocked outbursts of global feeling for the suffering and general reaction of ordinary Americans to the events. The newspaper tries very carefully to report expectations, feelings, and attitudes after the attacks on September 11. Thus, a kind of cohesion between the terrorist attacks and the expected punishment – of binding these two actions together – is suggested to the reader, and the rational elements in this mental process are heavily tinged with emotion (especially in the September articles).

Several trends can be discerned in the strategy of the paper's writing style:

• The effects of the terrorist attacks are presented like this: "Assaulters Wanted to Shoot the White House and Bush's Aircraft", (September 12, 2001). In this sense, the newspaper rarely goes more deeply into psychological motivation. In its first publications after September 11, *24 Chassa limits this debate primarily to the superficial* dimension of the term "terrorism".

• The floor for representations of the September 11 events is *given predominantly to the politicians*. In this respect, the suggestions are uniform and

monotonous. The position of the Bulgarian politicians is declared immediately on September 12, 2001 in articles under headings such as "Civilization under Attack" and "Terror Prevails over Democracy". The newspaper accepts these representations and even intensifies them using whatever techniques it can. For instance, the front page of the September 13 issue features an expressive photo of the soaring Statue of Liberty framed by a smoking city.

In this sense, it is inevitably necessary to mention the current Bulgarian political orientation towards NATO membership. A lot of political effort was exerted in Bulgaria in the last decade to build political consensus in support of this. The media brought home the key phrase in Bush's speech by inserting the following headline in the extra edition on October 8, 2001, "Who Is Not With Us Is With The Terrorists". After Bush's speech, the parliamentary represented political powers[8] and the Bulgarian institutions declared and confirmed in all possible ways their full solidarity with the fight against terror.

An interesting nuance in the debate over this solidarity can be found in an analysis published on September 21. Its author, a member of The Atlantic Club, the NGO dealing with the issues of the Bulgarian accession to NATO, transforms the geographic perceptions of "near" and "far" into value perceptions. He writes, "In the last several years the operations in the Gulf, *Bosnia, Kosovo*, Chechnya, and *Macedonia* (italics added) happened and they were "far away". Now, a barbarian assault has occurred in the U.S.A. and this is "near", in the center of our values". These words reflect the new official position of Bulgaria in the new international context. When *24 Chassa* publishes articles that express some specific Bulgarian notion, such publications usually refer to fears about national security (e.g., "What Will Bulgaria Do? A Plan for More Security Needed!", September 13, 2001), and also to Bulgarian expectations (e.g., "Despite the Assaults, NATO Expands", again September 13, 2001).

• *Bulgaria's official position is widely reported and asserted in 24 Chassa.* And the information about the actions of Bulgarian institutions is only a part of this assertion. At the same time, however, this should not be perceived as an indication that all the Bulgarian society agrees with this position without objections and accepts it as the only possibility. But *24 Chassa* pays little attention to dissidents. A small article (October 8, extra edition) cites a poll (of MBMD Agency) that has registered the following views among the various public opinion groups: Less than 50 per cent of the Bulgarian supported the attacks against Afghanistan, and 74 per cent of the population of this country feared the possibility of entering the war. However, the title of this article subtly minimizes these figures. They are announced under the heading, "Only One in Ten Is Not Afraid". All the same, the message unquestionably implies universal support for the military actions in Afghanistan. There are many examples of this in the newspaper, from different points of the world: Moscow's support is strongly emphasized ("Russia Supports the U.S.A. Attack", October 8, 2001, extra edition; "Washington and Moscow Get Ready for Attacks", October 9, 2001).

The explicit objections to the attacks against Afghanistan are distinctly attributed to "outside" countries. We find such examples in the following issues: October 9, 2001 – a burst of mass demonstrations in Pakistan, October 8, 2001 – a protesting student in Greece (photo with an article below), and October 10, 2001 – a Reuters announcement about the lack of agreement among the European states on the expected attacks against Iraq ("Europe Will Not Attack Other Countries").

However, *24 Chassa* cannot escape its market orientation (having in mind the great number of people opposing the attacks against Afghanistan) and sometimes resorts to using "*hidden messages*". Beyond the official interpretations and political statements the reader discovers references to the inevitable fluctuations of the capital markets, the lack of currency stability, the losses in the insurance business, etc. Such indirect suggestions try to remind readers of the various and diverse interests staying behind all these unexpected events on September 11. The second group of the 'hidden messages' aims at the gaps of the American security services ("Indefensible! Heads Must Be Forfeited!", September 13, 2001). Manifest scepticism appears under headings such as " USA Will Punish, Reform and Finally Will Turn Over the Checkerboard" (September 13, 2001). They become more direct in the time of bombing – "No End To This War", editorial, October 9, 2001.

This, however, does not change the major findings: *24 Chassa*, in general, supports not only the idea of a unreserved conviction of terror but also the notion of the "just war" as its consequence. In fact, the newspaper does not debate the legitimacy of the intervention into Afghanistan. What might be a rational discussion is *displaced* by emotional representations and the bombings are called "respondent action" ("No Doubt For The American Leadership: The Attacks Against America Are Bin Laden's Affair", September 13, 2001). One of the very few articles distinctly expressing the absence of whatever apparent connection between Bin Laden (to whom even the Taliban said "Go!", heading, September 21, 2001) and Afghanistan is a reprint from the *Times*[9].

"No Mercy For Violators. They Are Not Human"[10]

It could be said that the *consequences* for civilians in America and in Afghanistan are completely incommensurable in *24 Chassa*. The number of victims of the kamikaze terrorist action is grotesquely exaggerated. On September 12, 2001, there was a report of "at least 25,000" American civilian victims. The next day the newspaper reported that 1,400 had already been counted. Most other articles reported tens of thousands killed.

The victims in Afghanistan after the attacks on October 7, 2001 were counted in "tens", although one of the headings informed us that it is a question of "9 Children Killed in Kabul".

The trauma of the Americans is described as an especially serious consequence. It is horror (killed stewardesses, survivors calling on mobile phones from under the ruins, etc.). It is panic, because new dangers are expected (anthrax, more deaths, etc.). It is a pervasive fear of more assaults in the near future; various news sources throughout the whole period fed on such rumors (e.g., "Shooting America Again in the Next Days", October 31, 2001).

Many photos intensify sympathy for the suffering Americans. A picture of a woman (September 13, 2001), whitened with dust and thus transformed into a nightmare, especially arrests the reader's attention: she is seeking shelter from the flames. Buildings on fire, crying people, ruins and rescuers – such photos are more numerous than the many visuals evidencing worldwide solidarity in demonstrations before the U.S. embassies in different countries. America is identified with a horrible pain. Against this background, it is quite natural to find headings such as "America, Crush Them!" (September 12, 2001).

An appropriate sympathy accompanies the suffering of the Afghan citizens as well. Here we refer to two large photographs of children killed by the bombs and their grieving parents. The effect of these visual images is also very disturbing. However, the attacks of the American missiles disseminating ruin and death are glossed over as distressing errors ("Afghan Village Bombed by Mistake", "Three Houses Hit by Mistake", October 29, 2001). The articles about the consequences of the U.S. military action in Afghanistan are usually set in close proximity to information on one or more of the following themes:

- The actions of the Northern Alliance (e.g., "Kabul Was Detached from Northern Afghanistan", October 10, 2001, or "The Northern Alliance Advanced to the Attack with U.S. Support", October 30, 2001);
- The civilized world soon to face new dangers and risks (anthrax, October 10 and 30, 2001), includingly military (speculations for terrorist attacks against London, Berlin); the US victims are permanently recapitulated (6,000 Dead in the Attacks Against USA, October 8, 2001);
- American soldiers taking care of civilians ("Afghans Are Taught How to Distinguish Bomb from Food", October 31, 2001);
- The special correspondent of *24 Chassa* (G. Milkov) reporting from Kabul. ("The Road to Kabul: in the Phantom Towns of Afghanistan You May Die on the Gallows, or by Starvation, Knife, or Bomb", October 29, 2001).

Constantly the theme about the American air attacks is discussed simultaneously with the issues of the civil war in Afghanistan. In November the newspaper also emphasizes the victory over the Taliban ("Uprising Swept the Taliban in Jelalabad" and also "Afghans Dance, Shave their Beards", both published on November 15, 2001).

Invariably, *the image of Osama Bin Laden is looming over the notion of suffering from the terrorist attacks and the war in Afghanistan*. Numerous

visuals add unattractive features to his verbal portrait: he is a real demon with many wraiths, lurking ominously in his "den"; "he is planning the death of the Jordanian king" and "blames Russia for the assaults"; he has "stockpiles of nuclear weapons". But he is completely rejected ("Citizens of Islamabad: Osama Isn't a Hero", October 10, 2001), even by the Taliban – *24 Chassa* describes their leader, Molla Omar, using the same vocabulary (e.g. "Perhaps Omar, the One-eyed Chieftain, Is Mad", October 8, 2001).

The technique of presenting Bin Laden through his own words reinforces the sinister nuances ("Bin Laden: Our Brothers Died Happy in the U.S.A.", December 14, 2001). Articles deriding him are scathing (his image appears on a toilet paper, etc.).

The manner in which the images of Bin Laden, of the Taliban, and of al-Qaeda are created is clearly a technique of inventing the *"image of the enemy"* around us and among us.

Faced by the mass of information that has been collected about the events of September 11, 2001, it is rather difficult for the reader of *24 Chassa* to verify the audacious errors and omissions that occur on its pages. We shall point out just one of them. *24 Chassa* uses different information sources, includingly the news agencies of the Taliban, the Northern Alliance, Pakistan, India, and others. Its information source is also the Qatar TV station Al Jazeera (about which it reprints an article from the Russian newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda* under the heading "Al Jazeera – The Arab CNN", October 10, 2001). However, the bombing over Al Jazeera's office is mentioned only in a tiny article under the heading "At Target". It announces dispassionately that an American missile has destroyed the office of a media outlet. This article is set in close proximity to one that is entitled, "Uprising Swept the Taliban" and to a map of Afghanistan that shows the liberated regions.

The editorial framework of *24 Chassa* is shaped by two main themes. On the one hand is the prompt and unambiguous identification of the enemy (Bin Laden – terrorist, al-Qaeda – terrorist organization, the Taliban – obscurant regime that supports terrorism). On the other is the official position of Bulgaria toward the events of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent diplomatic and military actions in Afghanistan. Thus, an accessible cycle has been shaped. Bearing in mind the obvious predominance of informational articles and small number of current analyses, it seems that the paper's representation of events is relatively shallow and devoid of serious intellectual challenge. Instead, its focus is on the human sense of horror and aversion to the violation of the innocent.

24 Chassa does not favor attempts at deeper representation. As we have demonstrated, all of the paper's articles can be assigned to one of two categories: "We Give the U.S.A. Whatever They Want" and "No Mercy for Violators. They Are Not Human".

Dnevnik
The Business Daily of Bulgaria[11]

Dnevnik takes its own position on September 11, and follows this viewpoint step by step:

The episode is tragic both for America and for the rest of the world. Innocent people are dying, the "freedom of peaceful people is violated", and "human rights are infringed", (September 13 and 14, 2001).

The September 11 events and their consequences will have economic and political effects both on the entire world and on Bulgaria (e.g."The Markets Collapsed, Bulgaria Strengthens Security Measures", September 13, 2001).

Important events[12] are occurring in Bulgaria and will continue. The newspaper cannot ignore them. The global theme about the "bloody acts" (September 12, 2001) in New York and Washington is logically embedded in the paper's overall context.

The September 11 was a golden opportunity for *Dnevnik* to prove its ambition to be the qualitative newspaper in the Bulgarian media landscape.

In distinction to the leading circulating Bulgarian daily newspapers, which published extra editions, *Dnevnik* did not vary its circulation routine – editions every working day and not on weekends. It did not increase the volume of any daily edition.

The total number of articles about the events of September 11, 2001 and their consequences in the studied sample was 342. Many of the news briefs were published on the front page under a single heading – the "*Dnevnik* News in Brief" – split into two columns, "Bulgaria" and "World". A special subheading, "War Against Terror", appeared after September 14, 2001 immediately below the head of the "World" news reference column. Thus, the news related to the event is strongly emphasized and explicitly distinguished from the rest world news.

The thematic heading categories were relatively constant. The main categories are "News", "Economics", "World", "Comments & Analysis", "Theme", and "Society". However especially in September, articles about the effects of the terrorist acts appear also under page headings such as "Sport", "Entertainment", and even "Metro". (The latter focused on news from Sofia.)

Information sources: Dnevnik uses a broad diversity of information sources (Table 2), which can be grouped in the following categories:

- Media (97) – newspapers and journals, radio and television channels, news agencies and two books, Internet sites, Internet information agencies;
- Official resources (22) – persons and institutions;
- Own (20) – a correspondent in The Hague and special correspondents in Kardzhali[13] (Marin Delchev) and Afghanistan (Stoyan Vitanov);
- No source indication (41) – independent, usually short articles under separate titles.

Each article usually quotes at least two independent sources. The main information source was customarily referred to more than once.

Table 2.

Foreign Information Sources	
Reuters	46
CNN	27
BBC, AP, The Washington Post	16
The New York Times	8
Al Jazeera, The Times, RIA- Novosti, NBC, The Guardian	5
Afghan Islamic Press, FPA, Financial Times	4
CBS, ABC, Sky News, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Sunday Times, Die Welt, ZDF and other French, Arab, Japanese, Israeli, Rumanian, Serbian, Afghani, Pakistan, etc. media.	less than 4 times

Two books (Daniel Yergin's *The Oil People* and Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations*) were used as specific information sources in the "Comments & Analysis" section.

Journalistic form (genre). There are three genres of media representation in *Dnevnik* – informational, commentary, and analytical.

Informational forms of representation predominate. Their total number is 211. Although unequally distributed, it is not difficult to find them in all the issues from September through December 2001. Very likely, this is the reason for the plurality of the used information sources. Representation is presented not only through the basic informational genres, such as news, narratives, and information sketches, but also in informational correspondences and thematically profiled information texts (mainly on economic issues such as currency, companies, insurance, and exchange markets).

There are totally 116 commentaries. The used genre forms are rather diverse: from the witness's personal account, and opinions of citizens and politicians or statesmen from Bulgaria and other countries, to the reporter's story (sometimes combined with comment), to learned legal and sociological comments and interpretations, historical comparisons, and official statements and institutions' declarations. These articles appeared in *Dnevnik* mainly in September and October. Their number decreased in November, and by December there were few or none of them.

Quite logically, there are few articles (15) in the third, i.e the analytical group.Their authors are renowned Bulgarian sociologists, political analysts, lawyers, or world-famous political writers and modern thinkers such as Francis Fukuyama, Alvin Toffler, Michael Barry, and Samuel Huntington. Articles of that sort can be found in *Dnevnik* only in September and October.

Graphics: The maps, tables, and diagrams, etc. were totally around 45**.** They were mostly used only as "garnish" to the text if the text covered economic issues. In this case, graphs and diagrams usually conveyed economic infor-

mation – data from the stock and capital markets, currency exchange rates, etc. However, the maps, even though economically exploited, were charged with almost an independent function. They were boxed off in special squares and were usually supplemented by some kind of graphics and a short text as a heading or as an additional explanation. For example, the map in the September 21, 2001 issue is designed as a separate communicative unit in a square under a separate running title, "Attack Against Taliban – Mission Impossible?" (This heading intentionally draws an analogy with *Mission Impossible,* the American adventure series about the U.S. secret services, recently broadcast in Bulgaria.) Graphs and pictures about the weaponry carried by U.S. aircraft accompanied this map. Half a page of the October 10, 2001 issue was occupied by a large square that includes colored maps and schematics under the headline "The U.S. Armada Against the Taliban Forces". The whole communicative unit was attributed to Reuters, but under the credit was a distinctive reference indicating the specific official information source – The Military Balance, IISS, Jane's Information Group/CIA.

Headlines: The rating of the key words that *Dnevnik* used in the headings during the four months of observation is shown below:

Table 3.

Key word(s)	*Frequency in the Headlines*
America, USA, Americans, American	54
Attack(s), to attack; bloody act, tragedy, drama, conflict, catastrophe, crisis, (national) mourning;	32
Companies, markets, bank, currency, investment, economics; insurance, insurance companies	32
Bulgaria, Bulgarians, state, government, Parliament, premier	20
Afghanistan, Kabul, Afghans, Afghani	19
Religion, Islam, Islamic, Muslims	17
New York, World Trade Center, Washington, Pentagon	15
War	13
Refuges, victims, gone, vanished, survived	13
World	11
Security measures, security, national security	10
Bin Laden, Osama	10
Bush, President	9
Europe, European Union	5

Levels of Representation in *Dnevnik*

In general, we registered three levels of media representation in *Dnevnik*: **information-current affairs, comment-current affairs, and analytic-commentary**.

At the *first* level, terrorism is represented as a concrete event, as a separate occurrence or fact with precisely defined parameters in time and space (space-time continuity). The media image of reality is created through the techniques of representation of each single event and/or fact. The media reality is comparatively close to actual reality (at least such is the implication of the various journalistic techniques): *Today. Here. Now.*

At the *second* level, media interpretation and intensification of generalization of actual reality are clearly discernible. The comments does not take into consideration all the information about the event, just the one that supports the argument. However, the degree of abstraction is also relatively small. It still depends on the facts from the actual event and bears its signs, at least externally. Prognosis is quite seriously and tangibly included as well. The dimensions of terrorism are sought either as human relations (mainly international) or as they affect the daily lives of ordinary citizens, no matter whether they are Americans, Bulgarians, Afghans, Europeans, or Asians. At this level, the media image of reality is created through commentary representation of the broad space-time framework of the actual facts and trends: *Now. Here.*

At the *third* level of representation the concrete event as a kind of demonstration of certain bilateral human relations (Americans-Afghans, Bush-Bin Laden) disappears almost completely. In drawing conclusions and proofs, the single event appears as just a notion, as a presence but too indistinct to be touched. It has already lost something of the density and substance of materiality. The level of abstraction is in obedience to historical tendency and not to the concrete substance of the event. Terms appropriate to this level of representation include religion, civilization, culture, values, and psychology. Terrorism is discussed and perceived as the philosophy of destruction and evil. At this level, the media image of actual reality is constructed through the assistance of techniques that are completely different from the ones used at the previous two levels. The question is about a clear analytic interpretation of human reality, of our human world as such: *Here.*

Thus, the media representation achieves three types of association:

- Informational – at the level of common *human emotions*, provoking interest and accumulating attitudes;
- Commentary – somewhere in the middle of the road *between emotion and reason*, but it seems leaning towards concrete human reasoning;
- Abstract – at the level of *abstract philosophical thinking in dichotomies*: values/antivalues, transience/non-transience, trust/revenge; mainly influences the nonmaterial, rational human perceptions, but in some cases this process relies on strong emotional grounds.

At the second and third levels of media representation of the actual event, and in the process of drawing its public image, the texts become more and more abstract, as if they are trying to surpass material reality. For example: "The Pathos of Impotence", "The End of the Dream", "The Satanic Demon of Civilization", "A Strike Against Civilization", "Compassion Should Oust Revenge", "A Bad Event for Which I Would Not Buy a Ticket" (September 2001); or "Afghanistan as a Life Game"; "War of Cultures? No! A War of Productive Forms!" (October 2001).

So, using the technique of accumulation, the newspaper expands both the meaning of the term "terrorism" and its media representation. Terrorism is an event that happens at this very present moment – *today, not yesterday or tomorrow.* Terrorism is a global phenomenon that occurs in this world and on this planet, *here and not anywhere else*. "The problem is not that America is different. The problem is that the world is different."[14] The sense of suffering is expanding. Individual pain becomes a part of the collective injury and a source of collective inconvenience and trouble. This does not reduce the individual's pain, but expands it. The media channels transport suffering into the hearts and minds of billions of people because "in the global world where terrorism is global, where tragedy is global, private suffering is not growing smaller".[15]

The feeling of indetermination, of insecurity before the vague, shapeless unknown, which human beings are facing at the beginning of the XXI century, also increases: "just a terrorist act" or "a war against the U.S.A."? The analogies with Pearl Harbor, with the outrage against Kennedy, do not work. What is happening *now, here and today* cannot be defined; it is beyond any terminology. Its "namelessness" serves to inform us that the thing that is taking place is entirely different from and incomparable to everything known in human history. The old stereotypes already do not work, but the only classification into which it will fit has yet to be defined. Fear is the only tangible thing ("Europe in fear") – fear of war, fear of destruction and disintegration, fear in front of the closed banks, and fear in "expectation of the collapse of the world". Likely, the radio play of H.G. Wells", *War of the Worlds* (1938), will be the closest analogy we may find.

Balance of Perspectives in Dnevnik

Ethnic peace in Bulgaria: Using "the global event" as a backdrop, the act of publishing texts dealing with ethnic aspects may be perceived as a balancing of perspective.

Dnevnik includes information and commentary that "remind" readers of the difficult and complex journey of the Bulgarian society to the now existing ethnic model and has managed this by using each appropriate news event for that purpose. It found one such occasion during the very first days after

the terrorist attacks against the World Trade Center. On September 12, 2001, the Third Meeting of the Nongovernmental Expert Commission of the Islamic Conference Organization opened in Sofia. It denounced the terrorist acts and expressed deep grief on behalf of Muslims worldwide for the tragedy of the affected American families. Peace issues governed the agenda of the first session of the first day. Selim Mehmed, the Chief Mufti of the Republic of Bulgaria, stated in an interview with *Dnevnik* that

> [the] assaulters were not true Muslims….If the people who had committed the assaults declared that they did it on behalf of our religion, they mislead public opinion because Islam does not preach violence. …The organization of terrorists has nothing in common with the values of Islam. …A collective blame is not possible. That would be much the same as if the whole of mankind began to hate Christianity because of Hitler and Stalin…[16].

The second particular occasion is from the beginning of the war in Afghanistan. Several manifestations of intolerance towards the Bulgarian Muslims in Plovdiv[17] (stones thrown against the Mosque; kerchiefed women offended as Taliban and terrorists) prompted a second interview with the Bulgarian Chief Mufti in the October 9, 2001 edition. Both, the heading and the subhead of this interview are printed in large symbols on the upper half of the page and contain a direct warning and appeal: The Chief Mufti said, "Incidents of intolerance against the Bulgarian Muslims are increasing. A token resemblance between Islam and terrorism is being exploited". The interview emphasizes several issues. Firstly, such manifestations "are not new; they are to be expected." Secondly, they are the work of "some more narrow-minded and more emotional people [who play up] the token resemblance between the terrorists and Muslims". Thirdly, "it is hard to believe that Bulgaria will behave negatively towards us". Fourthly, these actions are "a great insult [and] we need broadcast time and more space in the newspapers to give us a chance to explain that Islam, in fact, is a peaceful religion prohibiting homicide and suicide."And fifthly, "there is no radical Islam in Bulgaria".

On October 10, 2001, *Dnevnik* published an article by its special correspondent in Kardzhali. It is entitled "The Rhodopean Muslims Denounce 'the Religion' of the Assaulters", and informs the reader that the citizens of that part of Bulgaria draw a line between them and "the religion" of Bin Laden, and that they support Sofia's call for a campaign against terrorism. "Osama's attempts to present the events in Afghanistan as a war between believers and non-believers will not succeed; his intention to divide the world into good Muslims and bad Americans will not be understood in the Rhodopes Mountains", Fikri Sali, Regional Mufti in Kardzhali, stated in an interview. "Osama is not a true Muslim and our people will not listen to his appeals." He added, "the Muslims in this part feel insulted because, after the attacks, they and their religion have become the focus of societal attention". However, he did not blame *the Muslims* for their reaction.

Images of Bin Laden and Bush: Bin Laden is referred to right away on the first page of the first edition of *Dnevnik* (September 12, 2001), which is reserved for coverage of the attacks against the World Trade Center. He is accused of threatening to attack the U.S.A. "in an unprecedented way". On the second page of the same issue, in an article under the headline "Who Is Behind the Assaults", we find more details about Bin Laden's motives for organising such an action: "because of Washington's support to Israel". The source of this information is the Arab newspaper *Al-khud Al Arabiya,* published in London. Obviously there is a multipurpose goal in constructing Bin Laden's media image. "The Evil Demon of Civilization"[18] has a unique public demeanor: he is *silent* while his successors are triumphant for "America has been attacked at the heart"; he *utters a threat*: "Bush's Boobies from the Pentagon!… America is stupid. We shall continue our revolution until we have won"[19]. But meanwhile, he *makes a confession*: "I love America!", and also "We shall never gamble with the Russian!" He has his *own way of developing:* Bin Laden has studied management and economics; his immediate family consists of 5 women and 13 children; the Soviet invasion of 1979 convinced him to retire from business and to fight together with the Mujahedin against the Soviet troops; the CIA supported him financially and politically to establish the Islamic Salvation Front that made the days of the Soviet military in Afghanistan a nightmare; later the Americans would brand his organization as "a net of the world terrorism". His silence gives birth to the legends. It is well known that his health is delicate and that he suffers from kidney disease, that he has been a "shareholder in the Spanish Real (Madrid)" (November 15, 2001) and that "he has plans for a nuclear bomb" (November 16, 2001).

The media image of George Bush is less colorful. He is a politician of world importance, leader of a "lonely superpower" (Huntington). His aggression is more a defensive reaction brought on by the assaulters ("We Shall Cruelly Punish the Guilty", September 12, 2001; "Taliban Will Pay", October 10, 2001; "No Neutrals in This Conflict", October 9, 2001). His self-confidence has been offended and his nation has been hurt ("We are peaceful nation…But there is no peace in a world of unexpected terror…the only way to pursue peace is to pursue those who threaten it. We did not ask for such a mission but we shall carry it out", October 9, 2001). One way to manifest his ideology is to defend universal human values ("We protect not only our precious liberties but also the right of all people around the world to live and to bring up their children without fear", October 9, 2001). He also expressed his attitude towards "the starving men, women, and children of Afghanistan" ("The U.S.A. are friends of the Afghan people as we are friends to almost one billion people all over the world who confess the Islamic religion", October 9, 2001). More news and comment about the American president's military and political stance appear as the media's representation of the event develops ("George Bush Between the Eternal and the Removable: Split of President's Crisis Staff into Two Camps", October 9, 2001). These articles emphasize two

important questions. Does he continue the politics of his father from 10 years ago (flashes from Desert Storm, the Hawks against the composed behavior of Colin Powell, Dick Cheney's compromising position)? For that matter, whose war is this? ("George Bush Sr. Managed the Bin Ladens' Financial Affairs", reprint from the *New York Times*, October 29, 2001).

Worthy and unworthy victims: During the whole studied period the reader's attention, almost in equal proportions, is directed not only towards the manifestations of terrorism and the objects of terror, but also towards its victims on both sides of the conflict. The analysts concern themselves with both, the changing world and Bulgaria's complicated and delicate position in it.

Dnevnik is attempting to create the perception that it is the balancer in the mass media mediation between the readers and the event, between the readers and the actors in the event. The newspaper does not offer a quick and assured opinion, nor does it judge or stereotype the parties as "good" and "bad". It leaves this task to the contributing authors and information sources, and to the readers, themselves.

Conclusion
24 Chassa and *Dnevnik*: *Similarities and Differences*

The study proved that, in their coverage of the terrorist attacks against America and their consequences, both publications remain consistent in their own styles. In most of the observed criteria, their writing styles predominantly bear no resemblance to each other.

The media management of the theme by each newspaper is also rather specific:

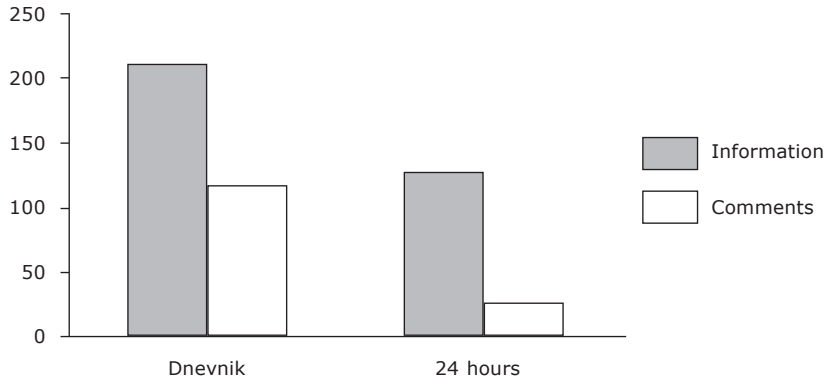
24 Chassa published extra editions (The War Editions) while *Dnevnik* did not. The former assigned four special correspondents to the hot spots of events while the latter sent only one. Of course, we must consider the implications of the different financial capacities of the papers. For instance, *24 Chassa* frequently dedicated its entire front page to one or more photos about the events. This was inconceivable for *Dnevnik*.

Dnevnik published many articles by foreign authors (almost 20) and reprints from influential publications (7), while *24 Chassa* "re-presents" world opinions partially through the comments of some writers from the foreign press (usually in articles attributed to "*24 Chassa*"). *Dnevnik* showed a preference for editorials (116 commentaries against 211 news items) whereas *24 Chassa* favors news content (25 commentaries against 126 news) (See below Figure 1).

It is important to point out not only that *Dnevnik* offers more representation of events, but also that its representation are richer and more complex:

It suggests deeper and more subtle motivation behind the terrorists' behavior.

Figure 1.



- It reveals diverse aspects of the conflict as a product of globalization.
- It openly suggests the economic implications of the crisis at a world, European, and regional level.
- It presents a demonic image of Bin Laden, but at the same time does not make this image inhuman.
- It gives space to many and various opinions.

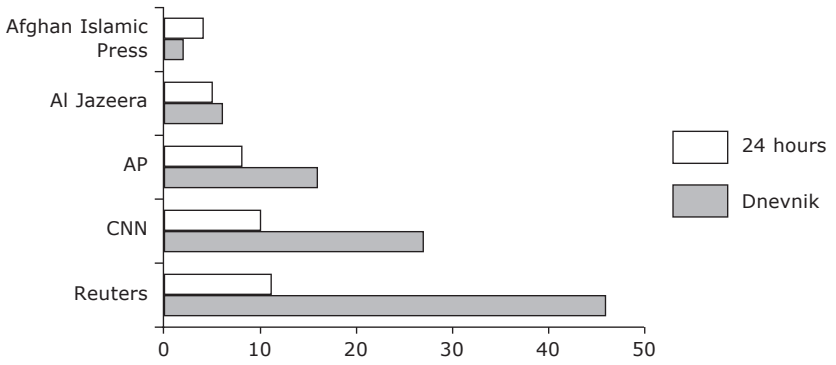
All this allows the newspaper to set an extraordinary event into a fresh context and also to convey it rationally despite its many layers and nuances.

However, we are not blind to the various similarities between *Dnevnik* and *24 Chassa* in interpreting the terrorist attacks against America and their consequences. The analysis in the previous sections identifies these similarities in respect to the information sources used by both publications. Although *Dnevnik* exploited more diverse sources and relied more on the Reuters news agency (46), our analysis convinced us that both papers used almost similar sources and different quantities of information flows (Figure 2).

The use of analytic articles in both publications (10 for *24 Chassa* and 15 for *Dnevnik)* is confined mainly to the September and October issues. Hence this mode of representation is more frequent at the time of the terrorist attacks and the beginning of the bombing, than at other times. In the studied samples, for example neither newspaper comments or draws conclusions about the legitimacy of intervention in Afghanistan.

We have already pointed out that *24 Chassa* does not provide in-depth coverage. It fits its own message within two themes (figuratively described earlier as "We Give the U.S.A. Whatever They Want" and as "No Mercy for Violators: They Are Not Human"). Through "hidden messages", it feeds the skepticism of the Bulgarian society about the attacks against Afghanistan. Although we found that *Dnevnik's* message generally aims to be thorough,

Figure 2.



nuanced, and balanced, a careful study of the lexical and design characteristics of its texts reveals a similar tendency to what we found in *24 Chassa*. However, *Dnevnik's* "hidden messages" support Bulgaria's and the Bulgarian institutions' official position on the conflict.

The most significant difference between the two studied newspapers is in their individual orientations. In fact, both of them represent opposite poles in the Bulgarian daily press. The investigated events presented an excellent opportunity for a high-circulation newspaper, such as *24 Chassa,* to grow, to draw information from an original source, to use visuals effectively, to *exaggerate*. On the other hand, it was a good occasion for *Dnevnik*, the newspaper pretending to be the qualitative press, to make the media representation and persuasion more complex and multilateral.

The most important *similarity* between the two newspapers in regard to the events after September 11, 2001 is in their respect for political consensus on Bulgaria's foreign policy, especially on NATO and EC membership. This has a long history and has been achieved at a high social cost only after many years of political conflict and public debate. As a Bulgarian sociologist has recently suggested an excellent metaphor for this consensus, "Let us not rock the boat until it is pointing in the right direction. Only when it has reached the other side will we be free to rock it without altering its course."

Notes

1. This means hours in English.
2. This means diary in English.
3. Under article in this sense we consider all texts published in the respective newspaper – from the brief news and references through the informational texts, correspondences, comments, opinions, statements etc. to the analytic articles and individual author's arguments.

4. We analyzed the publications of 24 Chassa and Dnevnik on the following dates: September 12,13,14, 21, 22 and 24, 2001; October 8, 9, 10, 29, 30 and 31, 2001; November 14, 15 and 16, 2001; December 14, 15 and 17, 2001.
5. 24 Chassa identifies itself as "the daily that covers objectively the news events".
6. In its 48 pages per single issue normally in the working week 24 Chassa included 85-95 articles (excluding sports, guides, and advertisements on the average). Let us keep in mind also that, in respect to the theme observed, some issues (e.g., September 13, 2001) consisted of 35 articles (an entire page usually consists of 37 articles.
7. Heading, September 22, 2001.
8. In this respect, the political consensus is unambiguously emphasized, including in 24 Chassa. On October 9, 2001, the newspaper reports the official opinions of all political powers that are represented in the parliament. They are the Simeon the Second National Movement, now ruling in collaboration with the Movement for Rights and Liberties (through this organization, in 1990 the Bulgarian Turks and Muslims won the right to political representation), the Bulgarian Socialist Party (the ex-communist party) and the Union of the Democratic Forces (previously in the state governance). One of the major specific features of the "Bulgarian ethnic model" (logically connected to the maintenance of ethnic peace in Bulgaria) is the fact that the Movement for Rights and Liberties has taken part in the rule of the country during the whole transition period after 1990.
9. Although this article consists of paragraphs such as "There is no sense hurling missiles against Bin Laden if they do not hit him; no sense shooting tomahawks on empty camps", generally, it is still written in a "wishful style": the American will not attack Afghanistan, their intention is for "Bin Laden to be surrendered to justice." (September 21, 2001).
10. From a text published on September 12, 2001, in 24 Chassa.
11. Dnevnik calls itself "the business daily of Bulgaria".
12. The elections in June, 2001 overthrew the 12 year political stereotypes of bipolar parliamentarian democracy: the Union of Democratic Forces and the Socialist party lost to the new political establishment of the last Bulgarian king, Simeon of Saxe-Coburg Gotha who became prime minister of the Republic. After the elections in November the leader of the socialists came into presidential office. His communist predecessors expelled the king's family 50 years ago from the country. But 2001 Bulgaria was working for its NATO and EU accessions.
13. Region in the most southern part of Bulgaria near the border with Greece and Turkey densely populated by Muslims.
14. "Belief in Globalization Is Terrorists' First Victim", signed as Interview of Dnevnik, September 13, 2001.
15. "At the Cinema, Reflections of a Bulgarian Writer", September 14, 2001.
16. September 13, 2001.
17. The second largest city of Bulgaria, in the Southern part of the country.
18. Running title and a subordinate heading of a big text portraying Bin laden, September 13, 2001.
19. Article entitled "THREAD: Osama bin Ledan: Americans Are Fools!", October 13, 2001.

Reference

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Chapter 10

"No Room for Neutrality"

September 11 and the Irish Times

Sean Phelan

The immediate reaction of the Irish state, media and public to the "barbaric" (September 17) September 11 attacks on the United States was, understandably, one of acute sympathy.[1] Crystallising in an official, National Day of Mourning on September 14, the reaction was no more than one might expect from a country with such strong ancestral links to the United States, and an economy heavily dependent on the support of American multinational investment (see Kirby, 2002). Yet, in the months after the attacks, the country was – and continues to be – open to the charge that its public, and media, discourse is replete with "anti-American sentiment".[2] As Niall O'Dowd argued in an *Irish Times* opinion piece:

> At a time when the heroism and bravery of so many Irish-Americans is rightly being remembered in America and across the world, reports of anti-American sentiment have been flooding across the Atlantic from Ireland, ancestral home to the largest number of victims on September 11 (December 19, 2001).

Although overstated, the charge certainly suggests Irish[3] ambivalence about the role of American power in the contemporary world. Based on a "critical discourse analysis" (see Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999) of *The Irish Times* editorial comment from September 12 to October 12, 2001, this chapter reflects on the broad issue of Ireland's relationship with America in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. Firstly, I give an overview of the full range of editorial comment and quantify the results in terms of daily coverage and thematic focus. Secondly, I consider the extent to which the editorials foreground the "global" dimensions of the crisis and deal with the prospect of a "unilateralist" American response. Thirdly, in light of Ireland's historical commitment to military neutrality,[4] I examine the political ramifications of Irish "solidarity" with the US. Finally, I examine the charge of Anti-Americanism, reflect on the relationship between *The Irish Times* editorial stance and the stance assumed by other Irish media actors, and briefly consider the limits of a distinctly Irish media perspective in a globalized world.

Although second to the *Irish Independent* in terms of sales, *The Irish Times* is chosen because of its 'cosmopolitan', middle class appeal and *de facto* standing as Ireland's 'paper of record'. Liberal and progressive in character, the paper has, since the 1960s, "to some extent informed the changes that were then [and since] taking place in Irish society" (Horgan, 2001: 93). It is therefore posited as a sound, though, by no means, conclusive, barometer of how Irish media – or at least the liberal end of the media spectrum – generally treated the September 11 attacks. The "genre" (see Fairclough, 1995) of editorial discourse is chosen for two principal reasons. Firstly, it gives representative weight and authority to the discourse analysis, by concentrating exclusively on a particular textual type over the course of the month. Secondly, unlike newspaper reportage, editorials affect no pretension of being value free and are, in effect, the (unsigned) embodiment of a paper's attitude or opinion. They are constructed from a common "repertoire of textual strategies" (Fowler, 1991:209) which work to "highlight the judgmental character of [the] discourse (…) and in turn help [sic] construct…[a] newspaper's claimed authority" (Fowler, 1991:221). In short, the editorial sample is assumed to be a metonym of *The Irish Times*' institutional response to the September 11 attacks, and a textual artefact bearing the traces of the national political culture in which the editorials are produced.

An Overview of Editorial Content and Themes

One of the most salient discourses in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks was the discourse asserting how "the world had changed" as a result (see Zizek, 2002). Based on the number of editorial allusions to the attacks in *The Irish Times* from September 12 to October 12, 2001 (see Table 1), the diverse impact of the attacks, across a whole range of social and economic spheres, certainly seems to confirm the paper's own pronouncements about a world "utterly changed" (September 15). Of the 49 editorials published by *The Irish Times* in the sampled period (the paper normally editorialises on two issues daily),[5] 32 (65%) of them make some reference to the attacks. Considered in terms of daily editorial comment, the attacks are alluded to on all but 1 of the 26 days.

The loose categorisation of editorial themes in Table 1 shows that the highest proportion of editorials (8 editorials) deal directly with the attacks and the subsequent organisation of the American led "international coalition against terrorism" (September 20). Thereafter, it is the distinctly Irish implications which concern *The Irish Times*: namely the impact on the Northern Ireland peace process (7 editorials), the foreign policy implications for domestic politics (4 editorials) or the anticipated "collateral damage" (September 19) to the Irish economy (6 editorials). The paper reflects, more broadly, on "how rapidly the [geo-political and economic] world is being

Table 1. Overview of September 11 Related Allusions from September 12 to October 12, 2001

Main Editorial Themes	Number of Editorials	Percentage[6]
Attacks and aftermath[7]	8	25%
Northern Ireland	7	22%
Domestic economy	6	19%
Domestic politics (foreign policy implications)	4	13%
Middle East	3	9%
International economy	2	6%
Russian and NATO	1	3%
Sellafield[8]	1	3%
Total	**32**	100%

transformed" (October 4) as a result – particularly with respect to the Middle East (3 editorials). One can, therefore, on the basis of the outline evidence alone make one solid observation about the post-September 11 editorial stance of *The Irish Times*: that the editorials themselves help bring a "new political landscape" (September 17) into being, by situating the impact of the attacks in terms of a complex web of local and global political, social and economic conditions.

Constructing a Global Context

> It [the attack] is a profound reminder that we live in one world, however divided it is by wealth and culture (September 12).
>
> This has been a terrible week for the United States and the world community. How we respond to these events will probably determine the pattern of international affairs well into the century to come. Suddenly the profound importance of political leadership has been demonstrated for an anxious and concerned global citizenry (September 15).

The editorial construction of a nominalized discourse which speaks of "the world community" and "an anxious and concerned global citizenry" can be seen as part of the paper's attempts to construct a global problematic; to be ideally addressed in a globally co-ordinated way. Although headlined "Attack on America" (September 12), this insistence on a cohesive international response is asserted from the outset:

> It is *critically important*[9] [note the modal emphasis] that the [Bush] Administration adopts a co-operative attitude, drawing fully on this international good-

> will, rather than rely only on their own immense military resources. That will mean working with allies and with the United Nations in pursuit of those responsible for yesterday's tragic deaths and in elaborating multilateral plans to tackle it on a global basis. Such a choice would affirm the United States' leadership role by retrieving some of the goodwill eroded in the administration's recent unilateralist approaches to environment and security issues. This is a highly sensitive issue, which will need careful handling by its friends and allies" (September 12).

The September 12 editorial foreshadows an interdiscursive and geo-political tension underpinning the whole sample. For while, on the one hand, there is the articulation of a multilateralist discourse type, emphasising the necessity of what is variously described as an "international", "multilateral", "global" and "co-operative" response, based on the involvement of the United Nations and the support of "friends and allies", there is, at the same time, the articulation of a US-centric discourse type, which suggests any co-ordinated response will need to "affirm" the "United States' leadership role". In addition, the same editorial appropriates (already established) critical discourses about the Bush administration's perceived "unilateralism" [sic] on international issues and its "standing aside" (September 12) from the issue of the Middle East. Therefore, while the September 12 editorial foregrounds (as one would expect) *The Irish Times*' condemnation of "these …appalling crimes" and the "great international sympathy and solidarity with the US government", the ominous prospect of an "angry resort to arms" by a President "intent on threatening revenge" (September 12) is already signalled.

The paper responds to these tensions by stressing the need for patient deliberation ("this is a time for cool heads" (September 12) and by liberally appropriating the official, hegemonic rhetoric of 'coalition building'. As a result, any narrative turn which can be interpreted as a signifier of a conciliatory US response – which, in the paper's view, would "affirm civilized democratic values" (September 15), "await [sic] clear evidence and create [sic] an international consensus for punitive action" (September 13) – is warmly welcomed.[10] However, the commendation of US "restraint" (September 19) is motivated by a darker shadow, and the prospect of a "*US lashing [sic] out emotionally* [note how the characterisation constructs the image of an irrational US] against an ill-defined foe" (September, 13). Hence, while the paper pay generous tribute to the (perceived) deliberative tactics of the Bush administration, its praise is always modified and subtly undercut by cues to a more critical discourse: "*So far* his [Bush's] administration has been calm and steadfast in pursuing its investigations of those responsible within the United States and around the world" (September 15); "Mr Bush and his administration are very much to be commended for the cooperative way they have handled the crisis *so far"* (October 3); "Judged by its political, diplomatic and military conduct of the crisis *so far* the US government… adheres to… [UN "benchmarks"]… Any *departure from that commitment* [the euphemized

unilateralist threat] would jeopardise the international support it has so *readily and skilfully* [note how the latent critique is immediately counterbalanced by modalized praise] mobilised over the last two weeks" (September 25).

The prospect of "maximum international co-operation" (September 15) is willed throughout. It is reinforced by the editorial headlines ("shoulder to shoulder" (September 13), "building consensus" (October 3)) and by the ubiquitous references to the "international coalition" (October 8), "the anti-terrorist coalition" (September 20), the "US-led coalition against terrorism" (October 12) and the "worldwide coalition being assembled against terrorism" (September 22). Illustrating the symbolic authority of these discourses (interestingly, the paper appropriates – without the use of inverted commas – the Bush administration discourse about the "international war against terrorism" (September 17) less than a week after the attacks) the word "coalition" is used – with reference to the particular context[11] – 27 times in the sample; in fact, the final editorial in the sample ("Humanitarian Crisis unfolds"; October 12) refers to the "coalition" on no less than 7 occasions.

The paper's attitude towards the credibility of the "international coalition" (September 22) is highly idealized. For instance, it argues against any knee-jerk dismissal of what it calls Russia's "changing attitude to NATO and the European Union in the wake of the terrorist attacks on the United States" (October 4). Instead, it envisions an idyllic convergence of Russian and global interests: "it would be wrong to see these Russian positions as mere cynical opportunism [to justify its own "repressive policies in Chechnya"]; if responded to sympathetically and imaginatively they can become part of a *constructively reorganised world* more capable of tackling terrorism and conditions that give rise to it" (October 4). In contrast, Israeli attempts to exploit the "worldwide campaign against terrorism" (October 6) for its own domestic ends are given short shrift and rebuked with a damning equivalence: "A solo run against the Palestinians by him [Sharon] could be as dangerous for stability as the Islamic fundamentalists suspected of organising the attacks on September 11" (October 6).

The editorials draw on a discourse which seeks to understand the reasons for the attacks and contextualise them as acts with global political antecedents (this impulse can be conceptualised as a historical by-product of Ireland's own "terrorism" narratives). Above all else, the Middle East conflict is cited as a primary "root cause" (September 13); described as "a source of outrage in the Arab world and a barrier to the involvement of its leaders in a worldwide campaign against terrorism" (September 20). Tellingly, these plausible causal links are asserted from the outset: "There has been an extraordinary failure of intelligence, despite advance warnings that deepening conflict in the Middle East could provoke atrocities of this magnitude" (September 12).

The act of the attacks – and the agency of terrorism – is also causally linked to the issue of Iraqi sanctions: "It will be *essential* [note the modal emphasis] … to relax the UN sanctions against Iraq if Arab states and peoples are to be

convinced to support the anti-terrorism campaign" (October 9). More abstractly, the plausible motivation of the attackers is linked to the issue of global poverty and injustice: "An effective long-term campaign against this scourge of the modern world [terrorism] must tackle its *root causes in misery, despair and injustice* [note the paper's affirmation of a rationalising, "root causes" thesis] as well as the suicidal and fanatical individuals who carried out these outrages (September 15). The same causal link – between human despair and terrorism – is implied with specific reference to Afghanistan: "the humanitarian crisis is *inseparable* from the overall crisis and the coalition's objectives" (October 12); indeed, the paper suggests that the "failure" to tackle the "humanitarian crisis" in Afghanistan will make the coalition "rapidly vulnerable to cynical interpretations of its motives" (October 12).

Drawing on multilateralist discourses which stress the need for a co-ordinated diplomatic response, the importance of "close co-operation between the US and the EU" (September 25)[12] is emphasised on several occasions: "The European Union …*must be fully involved* [note the articulation of a discourse asserting the need for the EU to be taken seriously as a 'big' diplomatic player] in promoting those objectives [isolating the Taliban diplomatically and "calming the Israeli and Palestinian violence"] if they are to have any chance of success" (September 27). Characteristically, the paper's perception of a successful diplomatic intervention in the Middle East is co-credited to America and Europe : "Mr Yasser Arafat's decision to call a comprehensive ceasefire this week, along with Mr Ariel Sharon's reciprocal withdrawal of troops from Palestinian-controlled towns were clearly responding to major American *and* European pressure" (September 20).

As one would expect, "the *essential* role of the United Nations" (October 9) is underlined throughout. Drawing on a legalistic discourse ("There should be due legal process through the UN … in bringing those responsible to justice", it asserts on one occasion (September 22)), the paper justifies its own support of the imminent "military response" with reference to UN dictates: "*It is legitimate* on the basis of the Security Council Resolution 1368, passed soon after those appalling events, and the United Nations Charter, which endorses the right of self-defence" (September 25). In this respect, the paper's valorisation of the "UN's moral authority" knowingly follows the stance of the Irish Government, as expressed by Brian Cowen, Minister for Foreign Affairs, in his October 2 address to the UN general assembly: "He [Cowen] pledged to help rebuild the UN's moral authority during Ireland's presidency of the Security Council this month.[13] And he emphasised, as did Blair…. that any US riposte to the attacks should be targeted and proportionate, in line with that consensus".

Like Cowen and Blair, *The Irish Times'* affirmation of "the legitimacy of a military response" is routinely modified by the insistence "that any US riposte to the attacks should be *targeted and proportionate*" (October 3). As the paper recognises, it is a conflation of militarily correct and humanitarian discourses which underpins the rhetoric of political elites "worldwide': "All

concerned[14] have said it [the military assault on Afghanistan] must be *targeted, proportionate and conducted with central regard for the welfare of Afghanistan's civilians*" (October 8). The editorial response to the commencement of the air-attacks against Afghanistan is characteristic:

> It must be assumed the attacks under way last night are *carefully aimed* [the militarily correct discourse] at such [al-Qaeda] targets. It must earnestly be hoped every effort will be made to *minimise civilian casualties* [the reaffirmation of a militarily correct discourse] *and bring essential humanitarian aid* [juxtaposed with a modalized humanitarian discourse] to a desperately suffering Afghan population" (October 8).

The Politics of Irish Solidarity

Published the day after the National Day of Mourning on September 14, *The Irish Times* immediate emphasis is on Ireland's "profound solidarity" (September 22) with the US:

> The depth and breadth of the National Day of Mourning vividly expressed Ireland's sympathies with the victims of this week's mass murders in the United States. The State came to a standstill yesterday in response to the tragedy and the profound realisation it has brought about how *distinctively* close [note the intensifier: the same editorial also calls Ireland a "*particular* friend"] we are to the American people in terms of human, cultural and commercial contacts (September 15).

The paper foregrounds Irish sympathy with what it triumphantly describes as the "World's greatest democracy" (September 13). As the September 19 editorial puts it – in a vivid illustration of the historical ties between both countries – "this may rank as the most destructive act of terrorism committed against people of Irish background" (September 19). Ireland's nominally neutral status means Irish sympathy has its practical limits, however, and while the paper doesn't question the Government decision to "rule [sic] out involving any Irish soldiers in any US-led operation" (September 25), it nevertheless insists on the need for Irish "*political* solidarity" (September 15) with the US. Underpinned by what it calls the "important role" Ireland could play "by virtue of its current membership of the UN Security Council", the implications of this "political solidarity" for "Irish military neutrality" are characteristically framed in terms of Ireland's "UN obligations": "…the universal principles underlying the United Nations Charter….[are] the appropriate benchmark to judge both the crime and the response to it. In the light of those principles *there is no room for a neutral stance* – Ireland's military neutrality is subject to its UN obligations" (September 15). Summarising the Brian Cowen speech to the UN general

assembly, the point is reaffirmed on October 3: "Mr Cowen pointed out that although Ireland is not a member of a military alliance *it cannot be neutral in the struggle against international terrorism*".

The precise implications for Irish neutrality are most pointedly addressed on September 25, when *The Irish Times* proclaims its unequivocal support for the "Government's decision to allow US planes engaged in a military response to the terrorist attacks on Manhattan and Washington refuel at Irish airports and fly over Irish airspace" (September 25). Couched in a euphemized discourse of realpolitik, and drawing on the agency of "Security Council resolution 1368" and the "United Nations charter", the paper maintains that the decision "deserves the support of the Irish people" and is "in keeping with the solidarity extended to the US government and people after the atrocities". And while it ultimately tries to downplay the significance of the decision (it talks, for instance, about "the *marginal role* that Irish airports are likely to play in any military operation"), the paper is in little doubt about where Ireland's "fundamental interests" lie:

> …three of Ireland's most important international relationships are involved in this decision: with the United Nations, the European Union and the United States [the key realpolitik triumvirate]. Not to have taken the decision could have jeopardised the relationships, given the *fundamental interests* involved. Whatever reservations there may be about national political procedure [the same editorial describes it as "regrettable" [sic] that the Government decision wasn't subject to Irish parliamentary approval] or the precise[15] international mandate for a US military response to the atrocities must take second place to those interests, based on the scale of the events and the virtually unanimous international condemnation of them (September 25).

At the same time, *The Irish Times* strives to cultivate the impression that Ireland is no American lackey. As the September 19 editorial puts it, "in international, as in personal relations, the best friends are those who *give candid not sycophantic advice* [note how the antithesis implicitly positions Ireland on the side of the "candid"] in times of crisis, based on their own values and interests. By that test Ireland's friendship with the United States is in good order" (September 19). Identifying again with the official stance of the Government, the paper reminds its readers that "in his statement of support for the US government and solidarity with its people to the Dáil[16] last week Mr Ahern [the Irish Prime Minister] *did not give unqualified or unconditional support* to any US military response"(September 25). Drawing on an interdiscursive amalgam of militarily correct, humanitarian and legalistic discourses, and under a headline dubbed "consensus in the Dáil", the paper summarises the conditions of Irish support on September 19: "But there were also [parliamentary] pleas that indiscriminate civilian casualties be avoided in any retaliation, for proportional measures in line with international law and United Nations norms to be taken and for *seeds* [again note the implicit

legitimisation of the "root cause" thesis] of further religious or civilisational conflict to be avoided at all costs"

The editorials invoke several parallels with Northern Ireland. In an editorial register addressed primarily to the "Republican movement" (September 17), it suggests "Ireland has lessons of its own to draw from these grave events" (September 15) and "there is a compelling opportunity now to demonstrate that terrorism is being left behind" (September 17). Drawing on the theme of a world "utterly changed" (see above), the paper insists that there will be "no more indulgence for Sinn Féin[17] wordplay" (October 10) in the "the new world order" (September 17) and little patience for "the verbal gyrations of Mr Gerry Adams [the Sinn Féin leader] in his attempts to draw a distinction between a 'freedom fighter' and a 'terrorist'" (October 1). Indicting the parochialism and the "frustratingly small minded" "machinations" of both sides of the Northern Ireland conflict, it asks rhetorically: "Can they [Republicans and Unionists] not see the bigger picture from within their smaller world?" (September 24).

As its deference to realpolitik concerns would suggest (see above), *The Irish Times'* reflections on the obligations of Irish "solidarity" take place in a "scenic" (see Burke, 1969a) context which is keenly aware of how Ireland – "as a small open economy" – is "particularly vulnerable to any international [economic] downturn" (September 28). "Much will depend on the US economy" it suggests, for "there is little [The Irish Government] … can do to support the overall rate of economic growth" (September 28). Drawing on a globalizing discourse type, the paper is certainly clearheaded about what it sees as the causal terms of Irish economic prosperity: "if the economy here is to recover from the coming downturn, it will first be necessary for the international economy to start to recover fairly quickly" (September 28).

The Grounds of the Anti-American Charge

Based on the analysis presented in the previous two sections, the key features of the post September 11 editorial stance of *The Irish Times* can be summarised as follows:

1) The US response to the attacks needs to be addressed in a global context, one which affirms the value of international cooperation, the authority of the UN and acknowledges the fact that there are "root causes" of terrorism.
2) What must be avoided is the (very real) prospect of US unilateral action. Therefore, all indicators of a conciliatory US response, respectful to the needs of a *de facto* "international coalition", should be welcomed.
3) The US-led military assault on Afghanistan is a "legitimate" response to the September 11 attacks and in keeping with the UN backed princi-

ple of self-defence. However, the military campaign should be "targeted", "proportionate" and inextricably linked to parallel "diplomatic" and "humanitarian" objectives.

4) The September 11 attack necessitates concrete Irish political support for an "international war against terrorism" in which we "cannot be neutral". And while Irish support should not be "unconditional", the "Irish people" should support the Government decision to allow the use of Shannon airport for the refuelling of American military planes.

Considered in terms of an "order of discourse(s)"[18], *The Irish Times* editorial stance can be broadly described as hegemonic[19]: which is to say that it is ultimately structured around the paper's clear support for a US led-military response to the September 11 attacks. Yet it is a heteroglossic stance made up of a complex hybrid of various discourses (military, multilateral, humanitarian, legal, rationalising, neutralist and diplomatic etc.), some of which assume a more critical disposition towards American power. These critical discourses are not foregrounded; indeed, they sometimes function more like tacit "cues" (see Tannen, 1993) to discourses explicitly articulated in other op-ed sections of the paper.[20] They nonetheless leave the editorials open to a plurality of readings, depending on the cognitive and political disposition of the reader or audience. Writing less than 48 hours after the attacks, an *Irish Times* opinion piece by New York native Richard P. Delevan is typical of the way in which a seemingly "pro-American" editorial stance can be open to contrary readings:

> Most Irish people have been generous in their expressions of sympathy and solidarity and for that all Americans are grateful… But *under the surface* [i.e. the decoded critical cues], as demonstrated in today's *Irish Times* editorial and Fintan O'Toole's column of September 12, lay mixed emotions, and a prejudging of any American military response as unjust and excessive. In both pieces lies the implication that 'arrogant and merciless' America somehow brought this on herself, and that our people are as savage and malignant as those who yesterday killed likely more than 10,000 of my former classmates, neighbours, colleagues, friends and lovers (*The Irish Times,* September 13).

Although widely hyperbolic in its equivalence of an "arrogant and merciless" America with the perpetrators of the attacks, the grounds of this "Anti-American" charge need to be understood with reference to the precise "context of the situation" (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999, 141) – that is, a context in which there has been (near) universal condemnation of the attacks and an "extraordinary [and "worldwide"] affirmation of unity in grief and solidarity" with the US (September 15). This emotionally charged "scene" (see Burke, 1969a) brings with it important theoretical implications for stance-taking, as the discursive context can be described as one in which a limited range of semiotic "acts" (ibid) are permitted, or rendered morally acceptable,

at the level of official, mass-mediated representation.[21] As a result, a high degree of "global" discursive coherence (i.e. sympathy with America) will be assumed on the part of Western minded media and political actors, the net result being that the "local" (see Van Dijk, 1998) features of a stance (i.e. the degree to which *The Irish Times* stance subtly differs from the *Irish Independent* stance and so on) become the crucial basis of ideological "distinction" (see Bourdieu, 1991).

The September 12 editorial may foreground the "great international [and Irish] sympathy and solidarity with the US" (September 12), but by reproaching the Bush administration for its diplomatic indifference to the Middle East (note, too, the October 6th rebuke of Israel[22]), as well as broaching the prospect of a vengeful unilateral response, it effectively confers legitimacy on a highly controversial[23] discourse which seeks to rationalise the attacks, ask *why* they took place and critically interrogate the affects, and effects, of American power. [24] In short, it is by subtly suggesting the need for American and Western introspection about the "causes" of terrorism that *The Irish Times* editorial stance distinguishes itself; at least from the perspective of ideologically entrenched pro-Americanism.

The representative value of *The Irish Times'* editorials – as either a barometer of its own coverage or the coverage in the national "media field" (see Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999) – is in a strict, systematic sense, unknown. Yet, from content broadcast or published in three other, high profile media organisations less than 48 hours after the attacks (*RTE*, the Irish state broadcaster; *Today FM*, the national radio station and the *Irish Independent* newspaper) one can surmise that these critical discourses are appropriated throughout the national media culture and much more likely to assume overt forms outside the conservative strictures of the editorial genre.[25] The conclusion, therefore, is that the grounds of the "Anti-American" charge – which, in its most paranoid form, seeks to delegitimize any semiotic move towards critical introspection of American power – stems from the institutional ability of a significant number of high profile, Irish media organisations to produce critical reflection on American and Western foreign policy in the immediate aftermath of the attacks.

Conclusion

The evidence presented here suggests that *The Irish Times'* editorial stance largely converges with the official stance of the Irish Government, as both structure their positions around a range of interdiscursive tensions which qualify their support for a US led-military response. There are shared absences too. Kenny (2001), for instance, criticises the Irish Government for colluding – under the fig leaf of international "consensus" – in the undermining of international law after September 11 and several of her most se-

rious objections (about the legality of the Bush "ultimatum" to the Taliban, the dubious definition of "self defence", the unquestioned legitimacy of a "military" response and the vague conception of military "proportionality") could also be imputed to the editorials. (To the paper's credit, it did give the same Karen Kenny a chance to vent these concerns in the op-ed pages of the paper in October 2001). The confluence of both stances certainly affirms the Gramscian notion of a symbiotic relationship between elite media and political field actors.

Yet, as *The Irish Times* recognises, one cannot understand the self-censored limits of either stance without considering the politics and the "fundamental interests" involved (September 25). It is, in short, a geo-political context in which four considerations are paramount: Ireland's EU membership; Ireland's "deepening integration into the US economy" (see Kirby, 2002, 32); Ireland's historical commitment to the United Nations (see Kenny, 2001) and Ireland's cultural valorisation of military neutrality. For, straddled between the wish for multilateral ideals and the stark realities of America's political and economic power, the imperatives of these relationships compel Irish elites to generally[26] negotiate two broad, conflict ridden positions:

1) Show solidarity with the US, but insist on the legitimacy of UN and EU affirmation

2) Support military action, while affirming Irish neutrality.

Buoyed by the international consensus around the legitimacy of an American military response these tensions were, in some ways, easily negotiated by *The Irish Times*, and the Government, with respect to September 11, as the context – in contrast to the subsequent Iraqi "crisis" and war – involved no stark choice between Irish identification with American, European or (nominally) global interests. In that respect, it was easy for the paper to rationalize its submission to the "colonial" (see Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999) authority of the "war on terrorism" discourse when it knew that the legitimacy of its own stance could draw on the moral and symbolic authority of a wider institutional (including media) backdrop. The conclusion, therefore, is that not only is the possibility of a distinct Irish media perspective structurally constrained, but that even modest attempts to assert one are potentially controversial.

Notes

1. Unless otherwise stated, each quoted reference (listed only by date) is taken from an *Irish Times* editorial.
2. The charge of "Anti-Americanism" is, of course, in no way unique to Ireland and was a hallmark of post September 11 discourse throughout the world.
3. Unless otherwise stated, all references to Ireland, Irish etc. should be read as references to the Republic of Ireland.

4. Ireland was formally neutral during World War 2 and is not a member of any military alliance. The first Nice Treaty referendum was defeated in July 2001, partly because of the perceived military and defence implications for Ireland's EU membership.
5. *The Irish Times* is published six days a week (every day except Sunday). No edition of the paper was published on September 14, the National Day of Mourning.
6. These figures are rounded up to the nearest percent.
7. The "aftermath" refers to the period up to and including the start of the US led military assault on Afghanistan.
8. The October 5 editorial, "More Radioactivity", examines the threat posed by the Sellafield nuclear re-processing plant in terms of the threat from "international terrorism".
9. Unless otherwise stated, all italics are those of the author.
10. For instance, the paper reacts very favourably to Bush's speech to Congress: "These are all positive signals affirming American internationalism and partnership with its friends and allies and relieving reservations about the president's leadership capacity" (September 22)
11. For instance, all references to the Irish coalition Government are not included.
12. The role of NATO is given less attention (see September 13).
13. Ireland began a two year term as temporary member of the UN Security Council in January 2001 and, under its rotating presidency, chaired the council in October 2001 (see, Kenny 2001).
14. The editorial refers to "the worldwide statements of support for the operation" (October 9).
15. The embryonic "coalition" is described, in one editorial, as "loosely mandated" (September 22) by the UN Security Council.
16. The Dáil is the main chamber of the Irish parliament.
17. Sinn Fein is a 32 county political party and the de facto political representative of the Irish Republican Army (1RA).
18. Fairclough suggests that the "discursive practices of a community" can be understood "in terms of networks which I shall call 'orders of discourse'" (Fairclough, 1995: 55) and the "point of the concept …is to highlight the [ideological and power] relationships between different types in such a set" (ibid: 55).
19. I use the term in the Gramscian sense to mean the "organization of consent [italics in original] – the processes through which subordinated forms of consciousness are constructed without recourse to violence or coercion" (Barrett, 1994: 238).
20. Take, for instance, the damning equivalence and characterisation of regular columnist Eddie Holt: "If fundamentalism is best defined as a reaction against everything which comes from the outside world … then Bush's more inward-looking America caught a form of the virus" (Holt, 2001).
21. This situation applies, a fortiori, in the case of American media (see Martin and Phelan, 2002).
22. The rebuke of Israel can also be decoded as a signifier of Irish post-colonial solidarity with the Palestinians.
23. For instance, the impulse to rationalise the attacks was ferociously rebuked by Christopher Hitchens (see Hitchens, 2001).
24. The tensions between a discourse which seeks to 'understand' the structural reasons for terrorism, and a discourse which regards terrorist acts as 'mindless acts of evil' was a pervasive trope in Anglo-Irish media treatment of the Northern Ireland conflict (see Schlesinger, 1987).
25. The September 12 broadcast of Primetime, RTE television's main current affairs programme, clearly foregrounded the "why" question. The September 12 edition of the *Irish Independent* published a prominently placed article by its regular, syndicated contributor, Robert Fisk, which contextualized the attacks in terms of the Middle East conflict. Fisk was also involved in a heated exchange with the Harvard lawyer Alan Dershowitz on the September 12 broadcast of The Last Word radio programme.

26. I do not mean to suggest that all Irish media elites aim for some ideal equilibrium between both positions. For instance, the *Sunday Independent* (the biggest selling Sunday newspaper) assumed a much more strident, pro-American stance in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks.

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Chapter 11

Alternative Media, the 'War on Terror' and Northern Ireland

Greg McLaughlin & Stephen Baker

This chapter examines the redundancy of mainstream media explanations of September 11 and the 'war on terror' in the context of the Northern Ireland conflict. It does so by comparing mainstream media perspectives with those of the samizdat or partisan press that readily draw from local repositories of lived experience and antagonistic political convictions. These include newspapers and news sheets of Irish republican and Ulster loyalist paramilitaries listed by the US State department as enemies in the 'war on terror'. However, few of these groups would see themselves in critical opposition to the USA. Loyalists in particular have been keen to appropriate the rhetoric of the 'war on terror', and in doing so implicate the IRA in international terrorism. For their part republicans have been more cautious and defensive in their response to recent events. Nevertheless, both groups have shown degrees of sophistication in their separate responses to September 11 and the 'war on terror'; loyalist groups in particular have highlighted and played upon what they see as American hypocrisy and inconsistency in this period. The adroit comments of these alternative media, and their determination to refract international events through the prism of diverse local political agendas, raises questions about the privileged role of the mainstream media in public discourse.

From the perspective of Northern Ireland, then, the media coverage of 'September 11' and the 'war on terror', particularly their unproblematic adoption of the discourse of counter terrorism, glosses over the complexities of political conflict in local as well as global contexts. Of course, the mainstream media see their role in this rather differently. Director of BBC News, Richard Sambrook, reflects on September 11 as 'an occasion when the world needed news in a way it had not for more than a decade. People turned to us desperate to understand, in search of clear, accurate information to help them make sense of those horrifying events'[1]. Certainly, in Britain, over 16 million viewers tuned into the evening news bulletins on BBC and ITV networks on the day of the attacks,[2] while national newspaper circulation rose dramatically in the following weeks. A leading British newsagent reported a 4% rise

in newspaper sales, an upward trend in keeping with circulation figures in the US and Australia in the same period.[3] However, Sambrook's argument requires serious qualification; especially his claim that the news media provided the first stop for people desperate to 'make sense' of events and offer them 'stable points in what appeared to be a terrifying world'.[4] Firstly, surges in viewing and circulation figures in the days after September 11, and during the war in Afghanistan, were relatively short-lived. But secondly, and more importantly, responses and reactions to September 11 were by no means uniform when looked at in local contexts;[5] many of them were expressed with an eye to certain political or ideological specifics. Reactions were certainly rather mixed and heavily qualified in Northern Ireland with its history of political conflict and 'terrorism'.

These were realities that the mainstream media seemed to miss in the aftermath of the attacks on America and only come to light when we turn to alternative sources of information. We looked at extensive archives of loyalist and republican literature in the Political Collection of the Linen Hall Library, Belfast, particularly material published after September 11, and uncovered a startling range of responses to the attacks – some aggressive, some angry, some contradictory. This chapter reviews a sample of this material and considers its implications for the peace process in Northern Ireland, and its significance when compared with the consensual and very restrictive frameworks set by the mainstream news media. First, however, it is important to identify what is at stake in terms of the Northern Ireland peace process and place it in some international context.

The Peace Process and the Good Friday Agreement: The International Context

Although often regarded in Northern Ireland in purely local terms, the Good Friday Agreement is an international treaty, signed in 1988 with the aim of reconciling the warring parties within a framework of consensual and inclusive government. Much of the initial success in bringing this about can be attributed to a certain amount of diplomatic serendipity. The election of Labour in 1997 as the party of government in Britain brought about a warmer, closer working relationship with Dublin than was hitherto possible under successive Conservative governments since 1979. It also improved London's relationship with Bill Clinton's administration in Washington. Clinton was already deeply involved in the peace process and had been from its inception in 1993, playing the role of persuader, and helping to bring Sinn Fein, political allies of the IRA, to the negotiating table with their unionist opponents. He defied the wishes of the previous British, Conservative government by admitting Sinn Fein leaders into the US for vital contacts with the influential Irish-American lobby. His two visits to Northern Ireland, in 1998 and 1999, made a signifi-

cant impact on what were called 'the atmospherics' of the peace process: winning the hearts and minds of an uncertain public. Clinton was also behind the inspired appointment of Democrat Senator, George Mitchel, as Chair of the negotiations of the Agreement. Mitchel was someone most of Northern Ireland's wary and pugilistic parties could trust and respect, never an easy achievement for an 'outsider'.

However, things changed in 2000 with the election of George W. Bush as President. Initially, Bush took a much more non-interventionist position on foreign policy issues in general but after September 11 2001 that policy looked untenable. He resorted to crude and reductive political language, shifting the paradigm of international relations in the process. It was now a world of 'Us' versus 'Them' in which the international community had a clear choice in its dealings with the US: to be either 'with us or against us'. This bipolarity had a familiar ring. As an American official told BBC24, the 'war on terrorism' was 'not so much world war three as cold war two' (7 October, 2001).

The uncompromising rhetoric coming from the US administration, post-September 11, exacerbated conflicts around the world such as Palestine, Kashmir and Chechnya. In Northern Ireland, it offered moral and political cover for hard-line unionist demands that the IRA disband or its political partners, Sinn Fein, be expelled from their two ministerial seats on the newly formed executive coalition. Sinn Fein's position had already been undermined in August 2001 by the arrest of three Irish republicans in Colombia. The charges, training FARC guerrillas in explosives and urban warfare, came amid persistent rumours and accusations that the IRA was still active in surveillance and intelligence gathering at the very heart of government in Northern Ireland.

Republicans were not the only group whose actions were cause for concern in this period. Loyalists, particularly the Ulster Defence Association (UDA), were accused of orchestrating unrest in so-called 'interface areas', the dividing lines between Catholic and Protestant housing schemes in Belfast. This continued throughout the summer of 2001 and included nightly sectarian attacks on Catholic homes, using guns, blast bombs and petrol bombs. But it reached its nadir in early September with the sometimes violent loyalist protest outside the Catholic, Holy Cross Primary School in North Belfast. Scenes of parents escorting their terrified children to school under a barrage of verbal abuse and intimidation had dominated international news headlines. The local media were inundated by emails from all the over the world, thousands of these from the US, asking how people in Northern Ireland could do this to each other. Then came September 11 and the story disappeared from the front pages of even the Belfast newspapers.

September 11 and Northern Ireland: The Mainstream Media Context

Northern Ireland has three daily newspapers – the *Irish News*, the *News Letter* and the evening *Belfast Telegraph*. With a daily circulation of around 55,000, the *Irish News* is a paper supportive of constitutional nationalism. The *News Letter* (35,000) gives voice to a conciliatory, middle class unionist constituency while the biggest selling newspaper, the *Belfast Telegraph* (115,000), is moderately unionist in its editorial agenda but attracts a substantial nationalist readership with its consumer and advertising content. All these newspapers were supportive of the conciliatory and consensual politics that led to Northern Ireland's Good Friday Agreement; indeed, the *Irish News* and *News Letter* have gone so far as to issue joint editorials in support of the efforts for peace and political compromise. It is interesting in this context to compare their coverage of September 11 with that of British newspapers, all of which are available in Northern Ireland.

On 12 September, the front pages of the London dailies were dominated by photographs of the stricken twin towers, accompanied by bold headlines situating the attacks within a discourse of war – 'War on America' (*Daily Telegraph*); 'When war came to America' (*Times*); 'War on the World' (*Daily Mirror*); 'A declaration of war' (*Guardian*). Editorial comment considered the appropriate response to the attacks and here some differences emerge. The liberal-left *Guardian* warned against what it perceived as the twin dangers of America 'withdrawing back into itself', of 'over-reaction, especially of the military variety'. Alternatively, the conservative *Daily Telegraph* commented: 'No political leader will be able to survive who does not react in cold, calculated anger to such outrages.'

By contrast, the headlines and pictures of the Belfast dailies emphasised the human tragedy of the events – 'The Horror' (*Irish News*); 'Hell from the Skies' (*News Letter*). Editorially, *the Belfast Telegraph* hit the most belligerent note, declaring that 'a (military) response was justified, but it must be proportionate and focused'. The paper was in no doubt that, 'Terrorists around the world need to be told in no uncertain terms that outrages such as the attacks on New York and Washington will not be tolerated'. With a view to the lessons of the Northern Ireland conflict, it concluded that 'appeasement of terrorists is not the answer' ('Standing by America', 13 September). Some of its unionist readers might have seen this as quite an ironic *cri de coeur* from a newspaper that enthusiastically endorsed a peace process that had brought terrorists in from the political cold. The mainly unionist readership of the *News Letter* might also have baulked at its pragmatic analysis of September 11. It noted an absence of 'realism' in the international response to the attacks and asked:'Do the powers that be not understand that wars against terrorism cannot easily be won in any permanent or final sense, if it is possible to win them at all?' ('Amid the hysteria, we must pray that wisdom prevails', 13 September). Many *News Letter* readers would argue that British special

forces were well on the way to defeating the IRA (in the so-called, covert 'dirty war') until the peace process rescued the organisation in the early 1990s. These fractures, between editorial positioning and the attitudes of readers, are significant because they highlight the problem with seeing the mainstream media as weather vanes for public opinion.

In another respect, however, the *News Letter* was the first local paper to suggest that genuine grievance rather than inherent evil or criminality may have inspired the attacks. 'Is there no room for a quiet moment of reflection, in which a country which yearns to be loved might wonder for a moment why it is in fact hated so vehemently by half the world?' The *Irish News* called for the sponsors of the attacks on America to be brought to justice ('Vengeance is no substitute for justice', 14 September). A keen proponent of the Good Friday Agreement, the *Irish* had toughened its stance on local paramilitarism. The previous day, the paper had written, with one eye clearly on events closer to home, that 'A different mood will face those who favour violence (after September 11)'. With regards to ongoing loyalist and dissident republican violence and the issue of IRA decommissioning, it stated that, 'Republican and loyalist extremists may have failed to realise it but the world has changed forever over the last 48 hours.' (13 September).

If Northern Ireland's three daily papers differed in their political analysis of the attacks on the US, they were united in expressing their sympathy for the victims. The *News Letter*, despite its ruminations on the 'genuine grievances' of Washington's enemies, encouraged its readers to 'show the victims of the American atrocities that we care' (13 September). The *Irish News* remarked on the same day that there can be 'no doubt that the prayers of the international community are with the people of the United States', while the following day's *Belfast Telegraph* concurred with these sentiments with a front page headline:'The World in Mourning'. However, Northern Ireland's newspaper editors could not count on unequivocal support and sympathy for the US among the general public. They were swift to participate in public displays of mourning and sympathy for the victims of September 11 but that should not be misread in every case as unconditional solidarity with the US and its political response to the attacks. There was plenty of dissent abroad in Northern Ireland about what September 11 represented but one has to look to alternative media to find explicit and articulate examples.

September 11 and Northern Ireland: The Alternative Media

None of the publications reviewed in this section are constrained by the same commercial and political imperatives of the mainstream media. Their marginal status liberates them to articulate what most would not dare to say in public. Politically, they have been less open to conciliatory and consensual

politics than the Belfast dailies. Among all of them, only the weekly paper of the IRA, *An Phoblacht/ Republican News* (AP/RN), supports the Good Friday Agreement.

AP/RN boasts professional production values, wide distribution and respectable salesfigures. Its closest loyalist counterpart in this respect would be the *Orange Standard*, the monthly paper of the Orange Order, the largest Protestant organisation in Ireland. Other journals vary in quality, are published irregularly and are rather random in distribution. *Warrior* is supportive of the Ulster Defence Association (UDA), the largest loyalist paramilitary organisation. While it is not representative of the entire organisation, which is federated in its structure, it is the most prominent UDA publication. The Red Hand is a loyalist A5 sized news sheet based in Scotland, and supportive of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), the second largest loyalist paramilitary organisation in Northern Ireland. Some publications, such as the *Burning Bush* ('A Protestant Witness in a Day of Apostasy'), stamp their political content with a fiery brand of evangelical Protestantism. The editor of the *Burning Bush*, the Reverend Ivan Foster, is a prominent member of Dr Ian Paisley's Free Presbyterian Church in Northern Ireland. Other titles included in our sample are *Saoirse* (Freedom), representing the militant Republican Sinn Fein party that split from the provisional republican movement in the mid 1980s; the *Starry Plough*, the newspaper of the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP) and their paramilitary affiliates, the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA); and *Ulster Nation*, a Protestant publication which advocates self-determination for Northern Ireland.

Collectively, these political newspapers give expression to Northern Ireland's most vociferous political rivals, representing the breadth and complexity of political debate in Northern Ireland. The arguments advanced within their covers are often blunt, their language uncompromising, belligerent and proselytising. Yet, they indicate the depth, strength and proliferation of deviant and dissenting views that underlie (and undermine) the official consensus about the political process in Northern Ireland.[6] Although they are far outstripped in readership by the mainstream media, they should not be dismissed. For if the constitutional and conciliatory views of Northern Ireland's mainstream media were truly representative of opinion in Northern Ireland then the peace process and the Good Friday Agreement would surely not be in a state of such permanent crisis.

A number of themes emerge from these samizdat responses to September 11, an event interpreted very much from particular local perspectives. The loyalist publications attacked what they saw as American and western hypocrisy in the face of the global threat of terrorism. In some cases, we found intriguing convergences between loyalist and republican critiques of American imperialism and global hegemony: each saying much the same thing but from antagonistic perspectives. We have also identified an underlying defensiveness among these groups, a desire to deny the use of the label 'terrorism' to describe their involvement in and support for political violence throughout the history of the conflict in Northern Ireland.

American Double-Standards in the 'War on Terror'

Loyalist publications responded to September 11 and the 'war on terror' with messages of sympathy to the US but they also turned it against their republican rivals, implicating the IRA in international terror. Under the front page headline of its October edition, 'Standing alongside the American people', the *Orange Standard* notes that although of a different scale, the attacks on America are 'no different in their ruthlessness and evil [than] atrocities committed by the Provisional IRA'. The article empathised with those injured and bereaved in the attacks, adding that: 'Our community has also suffered deeply through acts of terrorism and we understand the pain and suffering being experienced'. In turn it dismissed as hypocrisy attempts by Irish republicans to offer condolences to the victims. Given republican involvement with Colombian terrorists, attempts by Sinn Fein to distinguish republican violence from that perpetrated in New York and Washington were 'unlikely to convince any rational person' of their sincerity. The Orange Order has always suspected that some in the 'free world' (i.e. the US) have been lenient towards terrorism, specifically Irish terrorism. Now, in the wake of September 11, the *Orange Standard* was able to draw some solace from these devastating attacks: 'If there is any consolation to be gained from this dreadful act, it is that surely any lingering sympathy throughout the free world with terrorists of any kind will have finally evaporated'.

Several of these publications highlighted the degree of doublestandards in America's response to the September 11 attacks. The evangelical Burning Bush criticised US policy towards Northern Ireland, arguing in October that, 'The USA was wrong to differentiate between the IRA and other terrorist organisations simply because of the strong Irish lobby in political circles there'. In its November edition, the paper juxtaposed what it saw as the contradictory attitudes of two senior US officials to Irish republicanism. Francis Taylor, George Bush's newly appointed head of counter-terrorism, defined the IRA as 'a threat' because of alleged links to Colombian guerrillas, FARC. The *Burning Bush* surmised that by this logic the IRA was now 'officially a prime target in America's war on global terrorism'. Why, then, it asked, did Richard Egan, the US ambassador to Ireland, attend the Sinn Fein annual conference, and sit alongide representatives from ETA, the Basque terrorist organisation? These two positions, it seemed to the *Orange Standard*, were irreconcilable in any 'war on terrorism'. The Scottish-based, Ulster loyalist paper, *Red Hand*, applauded America and Britain's resolve to exact vengeance, not only on terrorists but also on the places that harbour them. It challenged them, with tongue in cheek, to be at least consistent and bomb Dundalk, a border town in the Republic of Ireland, and home to the dissident republicans responsible for the Omagh bomb in August 1998.

The New York fire fighters became potent symbols of American courage and heroism in the wake of September 11 but *Warrior* reported critically on a street collection organised by the Northern Ireland fire service in aid of the New York Fire Department (NYFD). A loyalist spokesperson complained

to the paper that, 'These people never held any street collections when innocents were massacred by the IRA'. This opened the way for attacks on the NYFD pipe band for annually leading republicans in the St Patrick's Day Parades in New York, and on the New York Police Department (NYPD) for its apparent support of NORAID, a body accused of having funded Irish republican terrorism in Northern Ireland. 'While we sympathise with the victims of the US terrorist atrocities', the paper concludes, 'we only hope that NYFD and NYPD have learned of the dangers of supporting international terrorism following the September 11 atrocities' (October, 2001).

A number of loyalist and Protestant journals directed their fire at British Prime Minister, Tony Blair's apparent prevarication in dealing with Irish republicans. The *Burning Bush* berated Blair for his double standards: 'While telling the Taleban of Afghanistan that they must give up Osama bin Laden or pay the price of concealing him, he persists in dictating to the unionist majority in Northern Ireland, that they must have the IRA bombers and killers of their kith and kin in government, as there is no other way to peace' (October, 2001).

'Yankee Imperialism' and America's 'Global Hegemony'

Other sections of Ulster Loyalist opinion resisted altogether the imperialist impulses behind the 'war and terror' declared from Washington. They considered US global hegemony the nemesis of their own separatist ambitions. The *Ulster Nation*, an advocate of an independent Northern Ireland, offered a critique of American foreign policy, both before and after September 11. It concluded that the 'tragic events of 11th of September 2001 are a direct result of Washington DC's hegemonistic policies – the attempt to impose a New World Order'. In effect, Washington brought the assault upon itself because of its 'interventionism and arrogance'. Apportioning blame to Washington DC as opposed to the US generally is significant, for *Ulster Nation* was determined to recall the divisions of the American civil war. The journal offered a statement issued by its sister organisation, the North Carolina League of the South, which urged restraint in the wake of the September 11 attacks and a retreat from empire by the Washington government. Like its allies in the southern states of the US, *Ulster Nation* proposed nationalism as a foil to a version of globalisation, driven by what they refer to as 'Yankee imperialism'.

American imperialism provided a target for the most vocal Irish republican opponents of the 'war on terror'. With its masthead slogan, 'No war but the class war', the *Starry Plough* offers an unapologetic, Marxist and anti-imperialist analysis of the conflict in Northern Ireland. Thus, its conclusion that both US imperialism and the religious fundamentalism inspired the September 11 attacks. While condemning the attacks, the paper claimed that, 'Responsibility for what happened in New York lies at the feet of the impe-

rialist politics of the governments of the USA and their allies within the EU, Blair, Chirac, Shroeder, Putin or Berlusconi.' (October 2001).

Denying the 'Terrorist' Label

On the other hand, the mainstream republican newspaper, *An Phoblacht/ Republican News* (*AP/RN*), was more temperate in its response to September 11. It condemned the attacks without a hint of equivocation but called for a 'calm assessment' of the situation to avoid 'further conflagration' (13 September 2001). The following week, its front page carried a timely statement from the leadership of the Provisional IRA, extending sympathy to the people of the US, and promising to 'intensify engagement' with the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning (IICD). It also insisted that the three men arrested in Colombia went there of their own volition, not on IRA orders. The statement treated each of these issues discreetly and separately; contrary to how they were viewed by those beyond the republican movement, who preferred to conflate the issues to incriminate republicans. Predictably, the editorial applauded the IRA statement but was careful not to link its initiative on decommissioning with events in the US. In fact, the editorial made no reference to September 11 or to the arrest of the three men in Colombia, thus avoiding any suggestion that the IRA was on the defensive in the aftermath of September 11 and the 'war on terrorism'.

The distinction between terrorists and the IRA was a key theme in the pages of *AP/RN* over the following weeks. Its regular columnist, Jim Gibney, wrote that those responsible 'stepped outside the moral frame for resistance movements' (20 September 2001). The 4 October edition published Gerry Adam's *Ard Fheis* (party conference) speech in which he denounced terrorism as 'ethically indefensible', implying that the IRA is not or never was a terrorist organisation. With the US ambassador to Ireland in the audience, he remarked that, 'We know the difference between a freedom fighter and a terrorist. And that the second can be an agent of a government and a foreign one at that […]. I am sure that even at this serious juncture America is not going to apologise for George Washington'.

From this republican perspective, the IRA follows in a tradition of freedom fighters that includes the founding fathers of the US. However, a look at the letters column in these issues of *AP/RN* reveals an underlying anxiety in the wider republican constituency that others see them in a very different light. As one correspondent put it, 'In the aftermath of the appalling tragedy in New York, it appears that certain English (and Northern Ireland) papers and commentators are seizing the opportunity to liken the efforts of Osama bin Laden...to those of the IRA and anyone who professes a belief in Irish nationalism' (*AP/RN*, 27 September). The Washington correspondent for *Saoirse* warned that 'The Irish international community must be vigilant and

not allow its support for true republicanism to be insinuated into a conspiracy somehow lumped into the bin Laden group' (October).

Loyalists also denied accusations of terrorism by including themselves with America's apparent defence of freedom and democracy. Warrior carried an article on the State Department's Report on Foreign Terrorist Organisations (FTO), including a list of the various groups named in the report. While welcoming the inclusion of the Real IRA on that list, *Warrior* expressed its incomprehension at the exclusion of the Provisional IRA. However, no comment is made about the absence of the UDA/UFF from the US State Department's FTO report at this stage. Some commentators might put this down to the journal's selective memory. Yet there is nothing necessarily incoherent or contradictory about Warrior's silence on this point when viewed from a loyalist perspective. As has been demonstrated, loyalist empathy (or lack of, in *Warrior's* case) for the US post-September 11 is articulated in terms of their own perceived 'war against terrorism', during which British and US officials were seen to appease those same terrorists. From this standpoint loyalism sees itself the custodian of freedom and democracy despite London and Washington dereliction of duty.

There is some evidence to suggest that these groups were right to be uneasy about how the US would look upon them in the post- September 11 world. In January 2002, the US envoy to Northern Ireland, Richard Haas, identified loyalist paramilitaries as the biggest threat to the peace process. And with respect to the IRA's alleged involvement with FARC guerillas in Colombia, none other than US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, told the *Chicago Times* that he viewed the IRA as a clear threat to democracy in the western hemisphere and of obvious and legitimate concern to the US (cited in the *Irish News*, 17 December, 2002).

Conclusion

This preliminary research raises a number of issues and implications that require further exploration. Firstly, it would be a mistake to assume that the responses of paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland to September 11 is a purely local matter with minimal implications or consequences internationally. Most of these groups initially supported the Good Friday Agreement, an international treaty, but their current crisis of confidence in the whole peace process has been expressed with one eye on the ground and the other on the wider international scene. The belligerent response of the US and its allies to September 11 has put republicans under pressure to disavow physical force and play a full part in the political process. On the other hand, it has proven very instructive to loyalists in the way in which they rationalise their own drift away from compromise and conflict resolution. This is by no means an isolated reaction. Even governments in such places as Russia, China,

Pakistan, India and Israel have appropriated the logic of the 'war on terror' in their own approaches to local and regional conflicts, more often than not with drastic results.[7] These regional and local consequences of the war on terror are often ignored and neglected by the mainstream news media, perhaps because of their tendency to 'make sense' of every conflict, every crisis, within the most simplistic and reductive explanatory frameworks. The grand media theme of September 11 and the global 'war on terror' serves the interests of power and propaganda rather than promoting real understanding of the local specifics of such conflicts.

There is a considerable gap in knowledge of these issues in media and communications studies that needs to be filled. This is in part a problem of methodology. Our research so far would suggest that it is insufficient to take a solely mass media-centred approach that looks solely at issues of reporting and representation. We need to also take a source-centred, comparative approach that would investigate whether conflicts such as Chechnya, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, the West Bank and Gaza expose similar contradictions to those highlighted here in respect to Northern Ireland. Such research would feed into a much-needed critique of the global media's role in making sense of the 'war on terror' and, indeed, resistance to it, as if for a homogenous mass. It would also encourage more serious academic attention to the role of alternative media in local conflicts, especially those produced by combatants themselves as forms of political communication and even resistance. We have confined our interest in this chapter to the case of Northern Ireland but we are interested in making contact with scholars doing similar work on other conflicts. We are convinced that comparative research of this nature would provide a clearer understanding of the processes by which global crises and conflicts are refracted through the prism of local agendas and perspectives.

Notes

1. Sambrook, Richard (2002) 'International News and the Media: The Impact of September 11', *Pew International Journalism Program*, National Press Club, Washington, D.C., 11 June.
2. See http://media.guardian.co.uk/attack/story/0,1301,550721,00.html
3. BBC News, Business 18 October 2001; see http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/1606025.stm
4. Sambrook, R. (2002).
5. Ali, Tariq (2002) *The Clash of Fundamentalisms: Crusades, Jihads and Modernity* (London:Verso), p.2.
6. Baker, Stephen (2002) *Imagining Ulster in The Modern World*, PhD Thesis, University Of Uster at Coleraine.
7. See, for example, Chomsky, Noam (2002*) Pirates and Emperors, Old and New: International Terrorism in the Real World* (London: Pluto Press); p.146.

Chapter 12

A Question of Partisanship?

Swedish Radio on September 11

Marina Ghersetti

In Sweden on September 11, 2001, the news that a passenger plane had flown into the World Trade Center (WTC) was broadcast on Swedish Radio at 3:00 p.m. local time, 15 minutes after the actual event had taken place. From 4:00 p.m. onward, when it was clear that what had occurred was indeed a terrorist attack, the program tableaus of two stations, P1 and P4, were wiped clean and replaced with continuous news broadcasts. Coverage of events in the US and reactions around the world continued via direct broadcast until midnight.

The events in New York City and Washington, D.C. dominated news coverage in all major Swedish media during the first 24 hours after the events, and over the following weeks the attacks received an exceptional degree of attention in the Swedish press, radio and television. Studies have shown that 90 percent of the Swedish population knew about the events about three hours after they had occurred. Almost 40 percent said they received their first information from radio[1].

In many respects, access to news material was good. The events occurred in cities with high concentrations of media resources. By the time the second plane flew into the WTC, the cameras of all the major US networks were already rolling. Several media, including Swedish Radio, had their own correspondents in both New York City and Washington, D.C.

In other ways, however, the coverage was problematic. For security reasons, American authorities were very reserved with information. Estimates of the number of dead and injured were uncertain. No individual or organization claimed responsibility for the terror attack. Air and telecommunication were partially shut down and heavily overloaded during the first 24 hours. There was a great deal of concern over the possibility of further attacks, not just in the US. The events were perceived as an attack aimed at the entire western world. Several countries, including Sweden, were in a heightened state of alert and stepped up their security measures. Speculations and rumors spread rampantly, while at the same time normally accessible official sources recoiled from the spotlight and the demand for new information skyrock-

eted. In many ways, then, both the terror attacks themselves and the news coverage of the attacks were exceptional.

Swedish Broadcasting Company (SR) is a non-commercial public service corporation financed by license fees. It operates four channels and is the only radio in Sweden with national reach[2]. Program production, content and broadcasting are regulated by Swedish law and a broadcast agreement granted by government[3].

A couple of months after the terror attacks, one of SR's board members voiced sharp criticism of SR's coverage in an article appearing in Sweden's largest morning newspaper, *Dagens Nyheter*. The Board member accused SR of being too critical of the US, and she accused certain journalists of having allowed their political views to filter into the content, using their reporting as a means to carry out their own "personal missions"[4]. Such an official public condemnation of its own broadcasting by a board member is highly unusual. Complaints about the content of public service media are usually taken up in the Swedish Broadcasting Commission, a state authority that conducts ex post facto examinations of radio and television programs to ensure that they comply with existing laws and regulations.

Prior to this criticism, one of Sweden's most prominent social debaters – editor-in-chief of one of the largest newspapers in the country, Per. T. Ohlsson – accused SR of incorrectness in a high profile article appearing in *Pressens Tidning*, an industry magazine for journalists. He said that debate panels were "rigged" in favor of US-critics, that problems and issues were related to other circumstances instead of being treated per se, and that there was a malicious undertone of pleasure over the damages inflicted upon the US. He strongly questioned the comprehensiveness, balance and substantive knowledge conveyed in the reporting. In addition, a number of editorials and syndicated columns in the morning press criticized radio's so-called "media left" for having exposed its criticism of the US in its coverage of the terror attacks.

In response to this criticism, SR's board of directors decided to investigate its coverage of the terror attacks of September 11, 2001. The task was given to the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at Göteborg University. The present article summarizes the main findings of that study.

The database includes all regular and special programming on Swedish Radio's national stations during the first three days following the attacks, in other words from 2:00 p.m. Swedish time on September 11 until midnight September 13. The aim was to map out the information given in the coverage and to study whether or not there were stories or pieces that were either inaccurate or biased.

SR's four channels have somewhat different profiles. P1 broadcasts mainly news, culture and public affairs programs. P2 features mainly classical music and programs for people speaking minority languages. P3 gears itself toward younger listeners and has an emphasis on entertainment and popular music, and P4 broadcasts sports and local radio, including music radio, from 25 local stations. With the exception of P2, all channels run news and

public affairs programs in Swedish. For this reason, P2 is not included in this analysis. SR's news program Ekot is one of the country's largest newsrooms. It airs on P1, P3 and P4, and some editions are broadcast simultaneously on two or three channels. Like Swedish Radio generally, Ekot enjoys both high credibility and high audience ratings[5]. Therefore, it seems worthwhile to examine Ekot separately from the remaining news and public affairs programming during this period[6].

Amount of Attention Paid to the Terror Attacks by Swedish Radio

One of the first questions addressed in the study was the degree of attention paid to the terror attacks. One indicator of the events' newsworthiness was the production of extra broadcasts and the changes made to the programming schedules. Only very exceptional news events motivate this type of extraordinary measure. Another indicator was of course the amount of coverage given to the terror attacks. All together, the sample consisted of 35 hours and 48 minutes of programming on the attacks, divided into 1,143 units of analysis (individual news stories), during the first three days[7]. Half of these were news bulletins from Ekot.

Coverage of the attacks began during the afternoon of September 11, and on that day, 8 hours of programming was produced on the subject. The largest volume of material was produced on September 12, with a total of 19 hours 17 minutes. On September 13, 8 hours 30 minutes' worth of material was produced. That day also saw the reintroduction of other subjects into news and public affairs programming, although most of the items continued to focus on the attacks and the reactions they generated throughout the world. In the more entertainment-oriented programs on P3 and P4, however, only a few stories dealt with the attacks.

A significant amount of material came from SR's foreign correspondents, particularly those situated in the US. Taken together, 19 percent – or 219 stories – were correspondent-based. Of these, almost two thirds were from New York and Washington. Correspondent reports were aired almost entirely within the genres of news and public affairs programs.

An important question in this study was the extent to which SR's programming had provided an informative picture, not only of the events themselves but also of the larger context within which they took place. In other words, the degree of breadth and depth provided in the coverage.

The variety of delivery formats was quite large, ranging from brief news headlines, shorter bulletins and updates to longer analytical pieces, commentary and telephone interviews and reports. The type of format influences the types of reporting and content. In this study, the sample was divided into two main format groups – those reporting on events and those character-

ized as analysis or commentary. Table 1 displays the distribution of stories in the sample.

Table 1. Types of Stories, Percent Total Stories

	Total	**Ekot**	**Other programs**
Reporting on events	**75**	96	55
Analysis/commentary	**24**	4	44
Other reporting	**1**	-	1
Sum	**100**	100	100
Total number of stories	**1 143**	577	566

Event-based stories constituted 75 percent of the items analyzed[8]. Of these, almost half were news bulletins, headlines and summaries. Ekot reports were the most heavily event-driven, with 96 percent of the stories classified as situation updates. The corresponding figure in non-Ekot programming was 55 percent. News bulletins were the most frequent, but they were shorter than the analytical and commentary items. An average news bulletin in this sample lasted 1 minute 51 seconds, while an analytical piece averaged more than double in length, 3 minutes 47 seconds.

Basic channel profiles can be identified as well. Ekot was the 'pure' news program. P1 was the channel featuring experts and serious commentary – i.e. this channel had an analytical profile. P3 was the voice of the people. It was here that the general public could express their views on what had happened. P4 had a fairly balanced mixture of short news and commentary from experts, listeners and their own staff.

Taken together, SR's coverage featured both breadth and depth, particularly for the listener who switched between the different channels. It bears repeating in this context that although the Ekot broadcasts were analyzed separately, the actual newscasts appeared widely on all channels and therefore broadened the profiles of the individual channels.

Information Conveyed

The wave of news that followed the attacks in New York and Washington dealt with more than the mere questions of where, when and how the attacks occurred. The attacks generated a news spiral where a number of people, events and relationships received attention. For example, ongoing rescue work in the US took place alongside the hunt for the terrorists. At the same time, Sweden and a number of other countries stepped up their security and raised their military and police preparedness. Simultaneously, but in different places, other aspects of the same chain of events occured. Here,

the term "aspect" is used to refer to angles or perspectives on the terror attacks reported on by SR. The informational content of coverage is measured in terms of the range and balance of thematic aspects presented on the radio.

In order to obtain as complete a picture as possible of the information provided by SR on the terror attacks, a detailed classification of story aspects was made. Up to three different aspects per story were identified. Table 2 summarizes the aspects in aggregated categories.

Table 2. Aspects of Coverage, Percent Total Aspects

	Total	**Ekot**	**Other programs**
The terror attacks	**27**	32	22
Reactions and comments from around the world	**19**	17	20
Reactions in the US	**13**	13	13
Consequences for the international community	**9**	12	7
Perpetrators, suspected terrorists	**8**	9	7
Security measures	**7**	6	8
Background to terror attacks	**4**	2	6
Media coverage	**4**	2	6
Swedes in the US	**1**	1	2
Xenophobia, segregation	**2**	2	2
Other aspect	**6**	4	7
Sum	**100**	100	100
Total number of aspects	**1 807**	860	947

Note: In the analysis, up to three different aspects were coded per story. The total number of aspects in Table 2 therefore exceeds the number of stories. The category *terror attacks* includes reports about the attacks in New York and Washington, the plane that crashed in Pennsylvania, the victims and rescue operations. The category *reactions, commentary from around the world* includes comments and reactions both in Sweden and in other countries, as well as international contacts and cooperation initiated as a result of the attacks. The category *consequences for the international community* includes effects on the airline and telecommunications industries and the international stock markets as well as issues affecting upcoming international cooperation. The category *security measures* includes actions taken in Sweden, the US and other countries.

The aspects appearing most frequently pertained to the terror attacks themselves. They constituted 27 percent of all the aspects presented and addressed what had happened, where, how and with what immediate consequences in the form of the number of victims and rescue operations. In second place with 19 percent was the aspect of reactions and commentaries in the rest of the world, mainly in the form of statements by heads of state and other political leaders. Aspects affecting the US's behavior, both the American administration's immediate measures and plans for retaliation, was the third most prominent aspect, constituting 13 percent of all aspects presented.

Together, the three largest content categories constituted 59 percent of all aspects presented. The coverage during the first three days dealt mainly with the US, American society, the American general public and the US administration. Almost three quarters of the stories, 71 percent, contained a foreign angle, in other words dealing with issues and relationships not primarily affecting Sweden, Swedish interests or Swedish citizens. This tendency was slightly more pronounced in Ekot than in the other programs.

Another way to categorize the content of reporting is to use the classic journalistic questions of who, what, when, where, why and how.

Table 3. Aspects of Coverage According to Classic Journalistic Questions, Percent Total Aspects

	Total	**Ekot**	**Other programs**
What happened, where and when	**43**	50	36
How	**4**	6	3
Who is responsible	**8**	9	7
Direct consequences	**24**	21	26
Why did it happen	**4**	2	6
Long-term consequences	**11**	9	14
Media coverage	**4**	2	6
Other aspect	**1**	1	2
Sum	**100**	100	100
Total number of aspects	**1 807**	860	947

Note: Up to three different aspects were coded per story. The total number of aspects thus exceeds the number of stories.

Table 3 shows that a total of 79 percent of all aspects addressed the issues of what, where, when, who and how as well as questions about the direct consequences of the events. The results reinforce the fact that concrete event developments dominated the coverage. Again the tendency was greater in Ekot than in the other programs.

Aspects about *what* happened, *where* and *when* constituted 43 percent. This material mainly dealt with the attacks and rescue operations, the US administration's immediate actions and security measures in different countries.

The next largest category in Table 3 is the direct consequences of the attacks (24 percent). *Direct consequences* includes how heads of state and political leaders in other countries reacted to and commented upon the events, how relatives and loved ones reacted and what the situation was like for Swedes visiting or staying in the US.

Aspects concerning more *long-term consequences* received a total of 11 percent of the coverage and constituted the third largest category. The main issues here were economic and security policy implications of the attacks, expected American retaliation and Nato's eventual role. These issues received

the greatest attention in programs where experts and the public analyzed and commented on the events.

The question of who was responsible for the attacks constituted 8 percent of the total coverage. No individual or organization claimed responsibility for the terrorist act, but from the start suspicions were aimed at Saudi Arabian terrorist Usama bin Laden and his network al-Qaeda. Just one hour after the first plane crashed, he was named as a possible suspect in Ekot. Even Palestinian groups, American right wing extremists and some Arab states were discussed in analyses and commentaries, though they were dismissed as incapable of planning and carrying out such a comprehensive terror operation. Thus the coverage of who was behind the attacks consisted mainly of judgments of likelihood, rumor and speculation, not about factual or validated information.

Aspects surrounding the issue of *how* and *why* the attacks were carried out received relatively little attention, only 4 percent each. Even here the discussion was mostly speculation, primarily over the question of why the attacks were carried out.

The coverage of the terror attacks also included the issue of *media coverage* itself (4 percent of all aspects). Some of these stories dealt with US media coverage, while others consisted of listener comments and general discussions about the degree to which the Swedish and foreign media coverage played into the hands of terrorists and how it affected the image of Muslims and Islam.

All in all, the first three days of reporting contained a broad range of information on concrete developments, both in terms of the attacks themselves as well as their direct consequences. On the other hand, background information and longer-term consequences did not receive much attention. Coverage tended to focus very closely on the immediate present.

Relevance of Coverage

SR's broadcasting agreement stipulates that broadcasts should be accurate and that SR should, to the extent circumstances allow, check and verify the information prior to broadcast. Topical focus and presentational form should reflect the aim of conveying only the most relevant issues[9].

In the broadcast agreement, the definition of journalistic accuracy is based on two criteria: truth and relevance. The criterion of relevance has to do with selection guidelines and states that all events and relationships that occur in reality are not equally important for the general public to know about. Some occurrences are more relevant than others, for example in terms of geographic and cultural distance, if the event has direct or indirect impact on citizens and their life situation and whether it can have lasting consequences. The terror attacks met all of these criteria and therefore fulfilled the requirements of relevance.

The criterion of truth has to do with how close to reality the reporting lies and can be defined as a focus on facts as opposed to values or feelings. In other words, the image of reality provided by the news and public affairs programs must be credible. If coverage contains or implies false or doubtful assertions, its credibility suffers. If a story contains information that directly or indirectly gives the listener a distorted view in relation to reality, it can be said that story contains inaccuracies. In this study, accuracy is measured in terms of the degree of speculation appearing in a story.

Speculation

An instance of *speculation* is defined as an assertion. Each time an actor[10] or reporter "believed", "thought" or "suspected" something or tried to predict future developments, this was classified as an instance of speculation. Speculation was divided into categories or types. The occurrence of each type of speculation was coded only once per story, regardless of how many times it was repeated.

On average, each story contained 1.6 speculations. The portion was somewhat lower in Ekot than in other programming. In the news stories, speculations tended to be made by more or less vague or unidentified actors whereas in public affairs and debate programs they were mainly made by researchers, the media, journalists and politicians who speculated in connection with analysis and commentary.

Table 4 divides speculation into two main categories: those pertaining to events and those pertaining to consequences. Speculation about events constituted 60 percent of all speculation and was clearly the most common form, while speculation about consequences constituted 40 percent.

The most frequent type of speculation concerned the number of victims. During the first three days, there were no definite figures on the number of dead, missing or injured, but there was talk of tens of thousands of victims. The second most frequent type of speculation dealt with US retaliation, i.e. whether it would happen, when and against whom. In third place came speculation about who had planned and carried out the attacks.

Taken together, speculation was common in the stories analyzed here, both in terms of the events that had taken place and in terms of their consequences. It is, however, impossible to determine the extent to which speculation was excessive. The circumstances surrounding the terror attacks were characterized from the beginning by many uncertainties. In many cases, therefore, it was difficult or impossible to check or verify information. First, as mentioned above, no individual or group had claimed responsibility for the attacks. Suspicion over who was behind the acts was – and essentially remains at the time of this article in spring 2003 – unproven. Second, the enormous scope of the attacks and the risk of further collapse of nearby

Table 4. Frequency of Speculation, Percent

Speculation about the events:	Total	Ekot	Other programs
… about numbers of victims	**23**	29	18
… about who planned the attacks	**20**	23	18
… about the hijackings	**9**	12	7
… about the terrorists' motive	**2**	-	3
… about reactions from the US administration	**2**	2	1
… about the hijackers/perpetrators	**2**	3	2
Other speculation	**1**	-	2
Sum speculation about events	***60***	*69*	*52*
Speculation about consequences:			
… about retribution actions	**21**	13	28
… to the international community	**7**	6	9
… about economic consequences	**5**	8	2
… about segregation between religions	**2**	0	4
… about more terror attacks	**1**	1	2
… to the Middle East	**1**	2	1
… about xenophobia against Muslims	**1**	0	1
Other speculation	**2**	1	3
Sum speculation about consequences	***40***	*31*	*48*
Sum	**100**	100	100
Total number of speculation	**1 677**	780	897
Speculation per story	**1.6**	1.4	1.8

Note: All types of speculation that occurred in each story were coded. The number of speculations in Table 4 therefore exceeds the number of coded stories.

buildings prolonged and exacerbated the rescue work. Reliable information about the number of dead and injured was not forthcoming during the first three days. Third, for security reasons, the US administration was reserved with information on immediate consequences and planned retaliation. Fourth, there was uncertainty about how the hijacks had occurred, as all flight crew and passengers were killed along with the hijackers.

At the same time that the supply of reliable information was low, listeners' need for information was very high. In an effort to meet this need, speculation was to a certain extent unavoidable. It would be unreasonable to expect the criterion of accuracy to dictate content at the expense of the criterion of relevance. For example, it is not a logical news judgment to completely omit some of the most relevant aspects of the attacks – such as who was responsible, how they were carried out, the scope of the US retaliation – simply because the information could not be verified. Rather, the question here is the context within which speculation was presented.

For this reason, the study also measured the degree to which speculation was qualified. Each time an actor or reporter stated that the information was uncertain or non-verified, this was coded as an instance of qualification. The

particular voice of the qualification – i.e. whether it was made by a journalist or actor – was not identified.

Table 5. Qualified Speculation, Percent Total Speculation

Qualified speculation	Total	Ekot	Other programs
…about current events	**36**	33	40
…about future consequences	**29**	34	27
Percentage qualifications to speculations	**34**	33	33
Total number speculations	**1 677**	780	897
Total number qualifications	**561**	261	300

As indicated in Table 5, a total of 34 percent of speculations were qualified. Almost two thirds of the speculations were thus unopposed or unqualified. Generally speaking, qualifications were more common in connection with speculation about factual developments than about future consequences.

Completely unqualified speculation tended to occur in relation to the terrorists' motives, the implications of the events for the situation in the Middle East and the degree to which the attacks fueled xenophobia toward Muslims in Sweden and other countries. On the other hand, there were many qualifications (44 percent of the total) pertaining to speculation about potential consequences for relations between Christians and Muslims as well as who might be responsible for the attacks. Furthermore, one third (33 percent) of the speculation about US retaliation was qualified.

Vague and Unidentified Actors

Yet another indicator of accuracy in reporting was the degree to which actors appearing in the stories could be identified, or, from a reverse perspective: to what extent was the identity of actors either vague or unidentifiable? Actor is defined as the person, organization or institution that either speaks directly, is referred to or is named in a story. Examples of references to vague or unidentifiable actors include labels such as "many consider", "according to some experts", "it is said" or "unidentified sources claim".

All together, 7 percent of all actors were vague or unidentified. In Ekot the portion was 10 percent. Almost two thirds (61 percent) of these instances occurred in correspondent reports. One possible explanation is that the correspondents largely based their stories on the American media coverage, and they repeated rumors and speculations made there. Thus it was not unusual for actors to be described as "well-informed sources", "reports are coming in" and "in the US one talks about". Another explanation is that the correspondents summarized general opinion with formulations such as "many

consider" and "most people think". A third possible explanation, of course, is that actors or sources were simply not available. In all cases, the presence of unidentified actors suggested a vagueness in the reporting that reduced the accuracy and therefore even the credibility of the reporting.

Table 6. Identified/Named and Non-identified/Vague Actors, Percent Number of Actors

	Total	**Ekot**	**Other programs**
Identified/named actors	**93**	90	95
Non-identified/vague actors	**7**	10	5
Sum	**100**	100	100
Total number of actors	**2 412**	1 126	1 286

Position Taking in Reporting

Against the backdrop of the criticism directed at SR's coverage, perhaps the most important question in the study was the degree to which journalistic bias was present either for or against actors who were central to the events and developments.

The indicators used in this study are related to the journalistic concept of impartiality as defined in SR's broadcast agreement[11]. According to the definition of journalistic objectivity established by Swedish political scientist Jörgen Westerståhl, impartiality can be measured in terms of balance and presentation[12]. Balance is concerned with the extent to which the coverage provides room for all main actors and their arguments. Presentation is concerned with the extent to which coverage is neutral in the sense that it does not take a stand either for or against one or the other side via biased descriptions or other presentational forms.

In this study, balance was measured in terms of how many different types of actors appeared in each story. Presentation was measured according to the presence of biased journalistic statements, i.e. positive or negative judgments about the main actors appearing in the coverage.

Actors

All actors appearing in each story were analyzed. In Table 7, actors have been grouped into larger categories, including the two main categories of Swedish and non-Swedish actors.

Taken together, foreign actors outnumbered Swedish actors, constituting 57 percent and 36 percent, respectively. The difference was greater in the

Ekot reports, where foreign actors constituted two thirds of all actors. This can be largely explained by Ekot's event-driven coverage aimed primarily at developments in the US, as the study has already shown.

Table 7. Swedish and non-Swedish actors, percent total actors

Swedish actors	**Total**	**Ekot**	**Other programs**
G**eneral public (man in the street)**	**11**	5	18
Media/ journalist	**6**	5	8
Local or central government	**5**	5	5
Politician	**5**	4	6
Researcher	**5**	2	7
Swedish Church	**1**	0	1
Enterprise/ business	**1**	2	1
Institution/organization	**1**	1	1
Sum Swedish participants	***36***	*24*	*47*
Non-Swedish actors			
American actors	**34**	40	29
Suspected terrorist/supporter	**11**	14	8
Other non-Swedish administration/ institution/organisation.	**5**	5	5
Other non-Swedish politician	**4**	5	4
Other non-Swedish media/journalist	**2**	2	2
Other non-Swedish enterprise/business	**1**	0	0
Sum non-Swedish actors	***57***	*66*	*48*
Non-identifiable/vague actors	**7**	10	5
Sum	**100**	100	100
Total number of actors	**2 412**	1 126	1 286

Note: All *American actors* have been grouped into one category. This includes politicians, the general public, administrative/bureaucratic, business, media and other Americans. The category *suspected terrorist/supporter* includes Usama bin Laden and the hijackers as well as Palestinians, Taliban and other actors expressing support for the terrorists and terrorism.

Both in Ekot's news reports and in the other radio programming, *American actors* and *suspected terrorists/supporters* were the two largest categories of non-Swedish actors. One can therefore say that they were the *main actors associated with the event*. They comprised 34 and 11 percent, respectively, of the material studied here. In other words, American actors were three times more prominent than the terrorists and their supporters.

Among the persons who appeared most often, US President George W. Bush came in first place, appearing in 161 stories. In second place came Saudi terrorist leader Usama bin Laden, appearing in 139 stories. A large difference between them was that in 43 percent of the cases, Bush either spoke directly or was cited in the story, while 94 percent of bin Laden's appearances occurred in the form of mentions – i.e. someone else mentioned or talked about him. The most overt explanation for this is that the American

president was available to the media while the suspected terrorist leader was not.

Table 8. Actors Top Ten List, Frequency of Appearance in Stories, 9/11-13

George W. Bush, US President	161
Usama bin Laden, suspected terrorist leader	139
Rudolf Giuliani, Mayor of New York	60
Göran Persson, Swedish Prime Minister	37
Colin Powell, US Secretary of State	21
George Robertson, Nato Secretary General	19
Yasser Arafat, PLO Chairman	16
Ingvar Carlsson, former Swedish social democratic prime minister	11
Mike Winnerstig, Swedish international security analyst	10
Carl Bildt, former Swedish right-wing prime minister	8

The largest category among Swedish actors was the general public, who appeared in a total of 11 percent of the stories. This group was most prominent in the programming featuring telephone call-ins and listener e-mails.

The media and journalists appeared as actors in relatively large proportions. In Table 7 they appeared in part under the category *Swedish media/journalists* and *Other non-Swedish media/journalists* and partly under the category of *American actors*, which included all American actors. As per the definitions in this study, general reporters were not categorized as actors. Exceptions were made, however, for journalists who were themselves actually observing or taking part in the events – i.e. not only referring to sources – providing commentary or an analysis of developments.

Table 9. Media and Journalists as Actors, Percent Total Media/Journalist Actors

	Total	**Ekot**	**Other programs**
American media/journalists	**36**	39	34
SR-journalists	**27**	34	21
Other Swedish media	**11**	11	12
Other non-Swedish media	**14**	17	11
Expert reporters	**11**	0	23
Sum	**100**	100	100
Number of media/journalist actors	**299**	119	180
Percentage total actors	**13%**	11%	16%

Of those media and journalists who appeared as actors in stories, the Americans constituted 36 percent. They were more frequent in Ekot than in other programming. In most cases they appeared in the form of references to American media, but American journalists were also interviewed by Swed-

ish colleagues. In second place came SR's own reporters. Most typically they appeared in Ekot (34 percent), where in several stories they served as sources, for example when the New York correspondent walked around Manhattan and described what he saw and felt after the collapse of the World Trade Center. In public affairs and cultural programming the largest category of journalistic actor was the expert reporter, i.e. reporters invited in to analyze events.

Taken together, media and journalist actors constituted 13 percent of all actors. The results raise the question of circularity in coverage. In other words, the picture given to listeners by SR during the first three days of the events to a large extent consisted of material and comments from primarily American but also other Swedish media and journalists. Coverage tended to be uniform in that the same selection appeared in both Swedish and foreign media. This is in no way unique in the reporting of terror attacks. The structure of international news distribution – i.e. a small number of large American media who dominate the global distribution of news – contributes noticeably to a uniform picture of news events in press, radio and television around the world.

Treatment of Main Actors

In order to answer the question of how the main actors in the events were treated in the coverage, all statements containing support or criticism were classified. Such statements are called value judgments. Each statement was coded one time per story, even if it was repeated several times. All positive and negative judgments about each side were then aggregated.

Taken together, 241 stories contained value judgments about American actors (see Table 10). About two thirds, or 67 percent, were positive or supportive of the US.

Table 10. Value Judgments about the US and US Actors, Percent

	Total	**Ekot**	**Other programs**
Support, positive judgments	**67**	77	58
Criticism, negative judgments	**33**	23	42
Sum	**100**	100	100
Total number of judgments	**241**	93	148

The US received the most support in Ekot, measured in this way, with 77 percent of all value judgements being positive. Most balanced was the reporting in public affairs, cultural and debate programs, where the proportions of positive and negative judgments were roughly equal.

Table 11. Most Common Judgments about the US, Percent Total Judgments

The US has support and help from around the world	25
The US will find and punish the terrorists	18
The US is arrogant, gets to taste its own medicine	11
The US is united, supporting the President	8
US security forces have failed	8
The US has the right to defend itself and retaliate	7

The most frequent type of comment, constituting 25 percent of judgments, was that the US had the support of and could count on help from the surrounding world (see Table 11). This statement was frequently made by American politicians themselves in news stories from the US, though it was also made by Swedish and European leaders who repeated on several occasions that Europe, and in some cases NATO, stood behind the US government.

The next most frequent category of statements about the US, with 18 percent, was that dealing with the issue of finding and punishing the guilty – that the US with skill and determination should hunt down its enemies and avenge the loss of innocent life. The third largest category was a type of negative judgment. These were statements surrounding the theme that the US was arrogant and that Americans now had a taste of their own medicine. Such statements constituted 11 percent of value judgments toward the US and US actors. These statements appeared mainly in public affairs and debate programs, which tended to feature expert analysis and opinions expressed by the general public.

In the classification of judgments supportive of or critical towards terrorists and their supporters, it was sometimes difficult to distinguish the persons (terrorists) from the act (terrorism). All statements in support of or against terrorism have therefore also been classified in this part of the analysis. The concept of "positive judgment" is somewhat relative in this context. In some circumstances, the absence of criticism or the distancing of one's position has been interpreted as support.

Table 12. Value Judgments about Terrorism/Terrorists, Number and Percent

	Total	**Ekot**	**Other programs**
Support, positive judgments	**5**	0	9
Criticism, negative judgments	**95**	100	91
Sum	**100**	100	100
Total number of judgments	**183**	75	108

The number of value judgments about Usama bin Laden and his supporters was significantly lower than the number of judgments about the US, 183

compared to 241. Another noticeable difference was that a total of 95 percent of all judgments about terrorism/terrorists were negative, compared to 33 percent of judgments about the US. There were, however, some differences between the programs. Ekot, with 75 value judgments, contained the highest number of statements about terrorists and terrorism. All were negative. Most of the positive statements appeared in the entertainment-oriented programs where musical numbers were interwoven with short commentaries from program hosts or other journalists, e-mails or listener call-ins.

Table 13. Most Common Judgments about Terrorism/Terrorists, Percent Total Judgments

The terrorists/terrorism is ruthless, evil, cowardly	31
Terrorism must be defeated	27
Terrorism is a threat to open, democratic society	19
The terrorists shall be punished	12

As shown in Table 13, value judgments about terrorism/terrorists took the form of condemnation of terrorism in general and condemnation of the attacks on US in particular. Terrorism was described as evil, reckless and a threat to open democratic society.

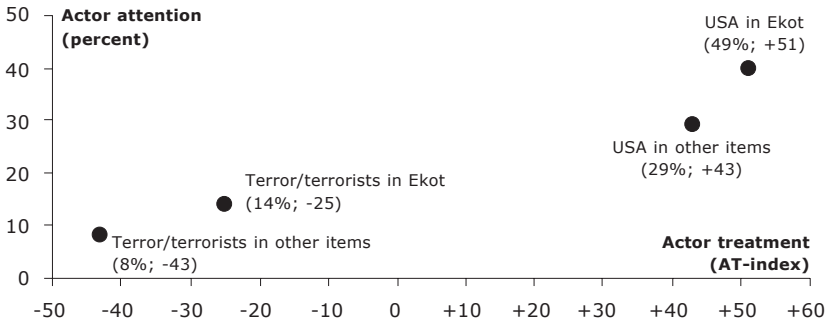
A clear result of the analysis was thus that the US was favored in terms of the number and distribution of positive versus negative statements. Figure 1 provides a summary picture of the attention to and treatment of the main actors – the US and terrorism/terrorists – in SR coverage during the three day period. The measure of attention given to each actor is based on the percentage of total actors appearing in Ekot and other programming. The measure of treatment is based on an actor treatment index (AT-index), which reveals the relationship between the degree to which an actor appears and speaks, the degree to which an actor receives criticism and the degree to which an actor receives support.

As indicated in Figure 1, terrorism/terrorists received relatively little attention and consistently negative treatment in the coverage (negative value in the AT-index). The programs analyzed thus gave a generally unfavorable picture of terrorism and terrorists.

The treatment of terrorism/terrorists was most negative, and attention least, in the features that were not pure news items. In Ekot, on the other hand, terrorism/terrorists received somewhat more attention and somewhat less criticism. Ekot's treatment was thus more favorable.

By contrast, the other main actor, the US, generally received favorable treatment in the programs analyzed. Most favorable was the picture in Ekot, which gave the US the greatest attention (40 percent) and most positive treatment (AT-index=+51). The remaining programs – public affairs, cultural and debate programs – were least positive to the US.

Figure 1. SR Treatment of US and Terrorism/Terrorists in Coverage of Terror Attacks September 11-13, 2001



Note: The first figure in parenthesis reflects the degree of attention given to the main actors in percent, and the second figure reflect the respective actors' treatment index score (AT-index). The actor treatment index is based on the following components:

(1) the number of times the actor comes forth

(2) the number of times the actor receives praise

(3) the number of times the actor receives criticism

(4) the number of times the actor is mentioned without a value judgment being made.

Total actor exposure is thus comprised of four component parts, where the first two are seen as an expression of positive treatment, the third as negative and the fourth as neutral. The AT-index is calculated as the difference between the number of times an actor receives positive treatment (1+2) and the number of times an actor receives negative treatment (3), divided by the total number of times an actor is exposed (1+2+3+4). The index can range from –100 to +100.

Taken together, the picture of the two main actors was very different in all the analyzed programming on the 11-13 September 2001. The difference in the coverage of the two actors was large both in terms of attention and treatment.

Based on these results and SR's broadcast agreement, one can ask whether SR was non-partisan in its coverage of main actors associated with the terror attacks. The answer of course is not simple. Among other things, it depends on the definition of *partisanship*[13]. The question of the media's *actual* partisanship must be distinguished from the normative question of whether the media have favored or disfavored one set of actors in a *reasonable* or *unreasonable* way.

Results suggesting partisanship, then, provide only a *basis* for conclusions about whether favorable or unfavorable coverage can be seen as reasonable or not. Conclusions about SR's actual partisanship are thus not automatically applicable on the normative level. The purpose of this study has been to answer questions about SR's *actual* attention and treatment of the US and terrorism/terrorists, not the attention and treatment it *ought* to have

given these actors. Addressing the latter issue would presume ideological assumptions that are not relevant in the context of this study.

It should also be mentioned that only the final output of journalistic work was studied, in other words programs that had already been broadcast. The study did not examine the intentions of either Ekot or the other programs. Their intentions could very well have been to be impartial, but not have been, just like media can be impartial even if their intention was to favor or disfavor an actor. The fact that a medium has acted in a partial manner does not therefore mean with certainty that this was the journalistic intent.

To return to the catalyst for the study summarized here – i.e. the criticism directed against Swedish Radio coverage of the 9-11 terror attacks – the analysis has shown that both speculation and criticism of the US occurred in the reporting during the first three days of the event. However, the main result of the study is that these instances were not dominant. On the contrary, the overall picture was clearly supportive of the US and condemning of the terrorists and their acts. The results of the study do thus not support the accusations of SR having been biased and inaccurate in disadvantage to the US.

Notes

1. *Terrorattacken vid World Trade Center, en analys av mediekonsumtion efter attacken*. RUAB, projektnr 011909, 2001.
2. During 2001, 55 percent of Sweden's population listened to SR on an average day according to www.ruab.se, 030412
3. Swedish Radio is a public service broadcaster, owned by a foundation and wholly funded by license fees. It is headed by a board of directors and a Director General/CEO. The board consists, among others, of politicians and labor union representatives. The CEO is appointed by the government. Among other things, the broadcast agreement formulated by the government stipulates that the operation must be run independently of special political and economic interests. One of the introductory paragraphs of the agreement, §7, states that "Broadcast rights shall be executed in an impartial and truthful manner and a broad freedom of expression and freedom of information shall take place on radio. Prior to broadcasting a program, SR shall verify the information in the program as much as circumstances allow. Choice of topic and presentation shall take into consideration the issue of providing information that is most essential.".
4. *Dagens Nyheter*, November 18, 2001.
5. Medieakademin/NFO Infratest, 2002.
6. Stories aired simultaneously on different channels during the analyzed period are counted as a single broadcast in the sample. In other words, the unit of analysis is each *produced story* and *produced program time*, not the actual number of times each unit was aired.
7. *Story* is defined as thematic unit, each of which takes a particular angle or aspect of the terror attacks and the sequence of events generated by them. This implies that the headlines in the beginning of the program are included as separate stories in the analysis along with reports, studio interviews, bulletins and program summaries. The boundary between stories is based on content and presentation form. Stories appearing in several broadcasts, for example in Ekot's different editions, were coded each time they appeared.
8. *Event-based stories* include news bulletins, updates, headlines and summaries. *Analytical/commentary* stories include expert commentary, telephone call-in programs and lis-

tener mail, studio conversation (i.e. when the anchors made small-talk or reflected over what had happened) analysis from reporters and summaries of newspaper editorials.

9. Sveriges Radios sändningstillstånd, Kulturdepartementet 2001-12-20.
10. That is a participant in the news story.
11. Sveriges Radios sändningstillstånd, Kulturdepartementet 2001-12-20.
12. Westerståhl, Jörgen (1972): Objektiv nyhetsförmedling. Stockholm: Norstedt & Söner.
13. See Kent Asp's discussion in "Medierna och valrörelsen" in Gilljam, Mikael (1990): *Rött, blått och grönt: En bok om 1988 års riksdagsval.* Stockholm: Bonniers.

Chapter 13

Media, Ethics and Terrorism

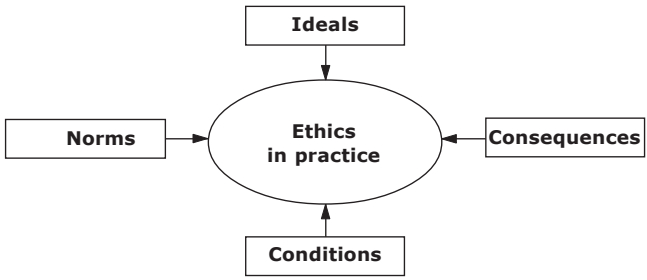
A Study of Swedish Media's Ethics in Relation to September 11

C. Anders Johansson

Scholars have explored the media's relation to terrorism for several decades and the attacks on September 11, 2001, will most certainly fuel renewed interest in this field. Hopefully this renewed interest will contribute to answers on several questions that remain unanswered. Media ethics in correlation to terrorism has also been widely debated, but has not been thoroughly explored in all its important dimensions. When the media give access to insurgent terrorism, display the horror of terrorist acts or contribute to political embarrassment, the media and its ethics become a target for both factual and emotional criticism. A central theme on media and terrorism is therefore regulation of media reports, media ethics and finding arguments that support this ambition. In 1986 former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher claimed that the media provide "the oxygen of publicity on which terrorist depends".[1] Suffocation of terrorism in this fashion is in conflict with the media's democratic obligation to inform the public and is not a viable option to the news media. Another argument to limit media reports on terrorism is that these are responsible for the contagion effect on terrorism.[2] Professor Robert Picard, however, categorically denies this in his research and is critical of how other scholars have made unscientific conclusions about the news media's role in the contagion effect.[3] Here, my research ambition is to widen the perspective based on empirical material that represents the media's point of view. This attempt at a more holistic approach will test some of the conclusions made in earlier work in relation to Swedish conditions. This article on terrorism and media ethics in every-day journalistic practice primarily makes use of the events of September 11, 2001, as an actual case. For the analysis, I have chosen a flexible model that expands the field of interpretation for how ethical decisions are made in the newsroom and in the field. The analytic model (figure 1) holds four sets of categories. Besides journalistic ideals, the categories also include the media company's formation of norms and policy, editors' and reporters' working and situational conditions, as well as the consideration to what consequences a certain reportage may have in relation to ethics and the interests of stakeholders or the own media organisa-

tion. The model described was developed by the research team Ekström and Nohrstedt in a project on journalistic ethic standards in Swedish daily papers.[4]

Figure 1. The Ekström and Nohrstedt analytic model of media ethics in every-day journalistic practice. Minor alterations made from original model in translation and interpretation.



The categories in the model are, at times, in conflict with each other. The model thus suggests that every-day ethical standpoints made in conjunction with editorial and journalistic decisions are rather a product of negotiating the four different categories than a fixed view on what is right and wrong. The model is advantageous in research with the aim of trying to get underneath the skin of the complex, often fast and somewhat non-reflecting, process of making ethical decisions in journalism and editorship. When focusing on ideals, rules and regulations it is easy to get caught in a reasoning of right and wrong rather than trying to find answers to the question why media reports look the way they do in spite of the codified ideals that should guide the media on how to report. The analytic model used for this paper thus provides a theoretical framework, applicable for each and every media organisation's own situation. The model works best when using factual cases in relation to participatory observation or interviews. As a result, each case can be mapped with respect to the criss-cross path of considerations taken into account in every-day news reporting and editorship. In my study I applied the model to analyse the responses from fourteen selected respondents at national radio and TV stations and daily papers (tabloids excluded). The analysis explores what and how ethical considerations influenced editorial decisions in the reporting of the September 11 attacks and follow-on events during the autumn. The model proved a valuable tool in making both general, as well as, more specific conclusions on what factors dominate reporting and publicist decision-making in correlation to insurgent terrorism. However, the four categories in the analytic model will first be introduced before we reach the conclusions made in this research project.

Journalistic Ideals in Relation to Terrorism

The journalistic ideals may in its details in many cases be seen as a national concern. The ideals are often codified into a set of standard ethic principles. They help both reporters and editors to take sound ethical standpoints in relation to a news story. It can, however, be claimed that reporters in Western democracies share a basic set of journalistic ideals that are generally expected to be recognised as a minimum level of ethical consideration. They include the following elements:

1. to report truthfully (that is, honestly, accurately, objectively, and reliably);
2. to report comprehensively so that the public gets the best information available in order to develop understanding of conflicting viewpoints and to reduce ignorance of significant issues;
3. to report impartially (that is, with fairness to all sides who have a point);
4. to maintain editorial independence against all interest groups;
5. to separate news from commentary ("Facts are sacred. Comments are free.") so that one's bias towards a person or institution does not influence the news report[5].

These ideals could be described as a sort of basic instinct with reporters of what is right and wrong and are therefore seldom questioned as principles within the media corps. That is, unless journalistic ethics as such are under attack from the public or government officials after an upsetting report was published or aired. Criticism is especially common in conjunction with reports on insurgent terror attacks and hostage situations where media organisations have been perceived to play an active role in the outcome of the events. (The among scholars most thoroughly documented incident is the hijacking of TWA flight 847 in 1985, which received an intense media interest that in turn affected the outcome of the incident. Media reports and conduct was heavily criticised by US government and political officials.)[6] Apart from the basic ethical principles, reporters might adhere to additional sets of ethical principles. They are in most cases set up by a national committee or a professional association. The principles might also be codified as a part of a governmental broadcast permit for, in particular, public service media organisations such as the case in Sweden. When writing about terrorism and the media as a topic it should be pointed out, that in states with repeated first-hand experience of terrorism, governments have, in rare cases, gone as far as to impose special laws regulating media reporting on terrorism. It is however more common that political pressure results in persuasive attempts of the government to influence the mass media to enhance self-regulation by adoption of an additional standard set of voluntary media guidelines on terrorism, such as in the United States. A note should be made however that

few independent media companies have accepted these voluntary guidelines on terrorism.[7] The most probable reason for this is that the prevalent liberal media ideology in the Western world does not let outside interest define professional ethics, and that any outside attempts to regulate are perceived as an imposition on the freedom of speech.[8] The guidelines have been widely discussed since the terror wave in the 1970's among both scholars and journalists. It is therefore a central theme in the regulative discourse on media and terrorism. Of importance to the empirical work in this paper is that no specific ethical principles or guidelines exist that govern Swedish news media in relation to terrorism. There is no obvious reason for this but it most likely relates to the fact that Sweden has minimal first-hand experience of insurgent terrorism. The non-issue status of the matter also means that there has been little incentive to codify additional principles that support reporters' and editorial decision-making. Curiously, not even the intense international debate on media guidelines on terrorism had any traceable impact in the debate at Swedish media institutions.

Media Norms in Relation to Terrorism

The second category in the Ekström-Nohrstedt model is constituted by norms, conventions and policies that apply to general news media, but also to specific media organisations. (If a media organisation for instance adopts the voluntary guidelines they would fall into the latter category). There are both general and specific norms on what is to be considered as news-worthy, what is accurate or non-biased news et cetera. Norms and conventions tend to shift over time and influence the negotiation with journalistic ideals. Policies are specific to the media organisation and are important in the formulation of the organisation's self-image. In most cases the management at the news media organisation formulate policy. It seldom contains direct guidance on how to report, or what specific considerations editors should take into account when they make editorial decisions. Policies are instead of a more general nature since micro-management of reporters and editors, through specified rules, tends to give the management a bad reputation for not recognising the staff's professionalism.[9] There are however often unwritten rules that editors are to take into account when they make editorial decisions in order to safeguard the interest of their news media organisation. The two most important factors that drive the formulation of policy, and thus the norms and conventions found within, are today's reader and commercial interests. In order to attract the public's interest, the media companies use policy as a tool and attempt to design the public-driven product that competes well on the market. This development is closely attached to the liberal media ideology, first described in a report from the Hutchin Commission in 1947.[10] An important conclusion to be made here is that the media today tend to favour

more speculative, event-driven reporting and thus move modern journalism away from the explanatory ideal that is a basic principle for independent journalism in democratic states. This principle is more fundamental to the media ideology of social responsibility, which is also described in the Hutchin report. Interesting for the Swedish conditions in regard to this is that the media work under a dualistic system that is a combination of both the liberal and the social responsibility ideology. By combining international studies in this field with my own empirical work, I have come to develop the hypothesis that the dualistic system provides a stronger incentive to safeguard public interest in understanding the reasons behind insurgent terrorism. Thus, many scholars' pessimistic point that the media in the Western world, to a large extent, fail to provide contextual reporting that orientates its public generally seems not to apply to the Swedish conditions.[11]

Media's Conditions in Relation to Terrorism

The third category in the model consists of conditions that dominate the context in which reporters and editors work in relation to a news story. There are several conditions that constitute limiting factors on how ethical considerations can be applied in practice. Such conditions include time, workload and degree of specialisation. For instance, if there is very little time available before a deadline and there is a problem to confirm a story through an independent source, conditions can still determine that it is right to publish the story although it is against established norms and basic journalistic ideals. Limited time, together with profound uncertainty of what really was happening in combination with uncritical reporters and editors seem to have been important factors in spreading false information during the 9/11 attacks. Erroneous reports from CNN on car bombs outside the State Department in Washington DC were for instance referred to repeatedly in Swedish national radio news broadcasts during the initial hours after the attacks. But for Swedish conditions, the truly limiting factor that influences decision-making and news interpretation in cases of insurgent terrorism is access to in-house and official expertise in the field. The lack of expertise tends to lead to exaggerated assessments of a certain item's news value. Some of my respondents have explained, for instance, how they made decisions to upgrade a news item's worthiness of attention and to publish it. In retrospect, when they had more information, they deemed their decision ethically faulty. The media have during the last twenty years gone through fundamental changes to remain competitive. The changes include dramatic downsizing in news desk staff, researchers, specialised reporters and in the network of correspondents. It leaves the news media poorly equipped with resources to evaluate and reflect over news items and to provide contextual high-quality news reporting which is in the public's interest. This change has a negative effect on the conditions

that were of importance in the case of the 9/11 attacks. In effect, the news media were left more dependent on outside expertise. Expertise in the field of terrorism is often tied to government interests and hence subsequently shapes news in the direction of those special interests. Poor topical understanding from non-specialised reporters therefore enhances the fact that the important challenging questions are never asked. An important factor to take into consideration in the 9/11 case is the so-called rally-around-the-flag-effect that dominated US news media reports. It is a well-known phenomenon that a society under attack closes in on itself to meet the aggression. The media as an institution included. It is also well-known that the news media tend to prioritise event reporting and vital information to the public in more urgent situations and downplay their questioning role.[12] During that initial period of national survival instinct, the media is prone to support its national leader and will not remain unbiased. International studies have shown that the Western world news media are receptive to US propaganda in cases close to war or international conflict.[13]

Consequences of Media Reports and their Relation to Terrorism

The last category, consequences, is of particular interest to reports on insurgent terrorism. An axiom among reporters in the Western world is that they should remain neutral to what consequences a report may have on persons or on political and commercial interests. As a liberal ideal, this is honourable – journalism serves the public's right to know, nothing else. However, as a principle for journalistic practice, it is more or less impossible to adhere to. In Sweden, for instance, the journalistic ethic code itself is in conflict with this ideal since it establishes a strict principle to withhold the identity of persons arrested or indicted for various crimes unless there is an indisputable argument for the public's right to know. (This is in stark contrast to the relaxed attitude on publishing names that is dominant in British news media). In cases where national security is at stake, the news media in most countries are, by law, liable to breaches of security through publication. A news media organisation might also be sensitive to the consequences of a report for their own commercial interests. For instance, the owner of the Texas City Sun fired a journalist for having written a derogatory article on President George W. Bush shortly after the September 11 attacks. The owner felt he could not neglect the furious reader reactions to the article and therefore made a public denouncement in his paper to respond to the public anger.[14] According to the investigation from Reporters Without Borders, it is clear that when writing, American reporters are expected to consider the possible consequences of an article on a paper's commercial interests. The list of different situations where the principle of neutrality to consequences is

questionable as such could be made much longer, especially in conjunction with ethical principles. A common saying among reporters that further illustrates the dilemma is "damned if you publish and damned if you don't". A more productive way to explore the category has been suggested by Kepplinger and Köcher who have established that reporters have a selective approach to the ethics of consequences.[15] Journalists tend to deny ethical responsibility for negative consequences and claim responsibility for positive ones. This strategy to deny and justify reports selectively can be seen as a way to fence off criticism and prevent outside interests from running news reports. Kepplinger and Köcher's findings thus kill the myth of neutrality to consequences as a practice and point out that it is more to be regarded as an abstract ideal.

Analysis of the September 11 Attacks and Media Ethics in Practice

Although insurgent and international terrorism are not new to the world, on September 11, 2001, it struck the United States in a hitherto non-anticipated way. The vast experience in counter-terrorism, including more than two decades of hard work to formulate and implement ethical principles for media reports on terrorism did not pay off in the initial attacks. The media guidelines merely set reporting standards for the news media in cases of insurgent terrorism, high-jacking, hostage situations and extortion situations of different kinds. No guidelines whatsoever were designed to deny terrorists media access of on-going terror attacks of this magnitude. Since Swedish media lack guidelines on coverage about terrorism in the first place, the absence did not affect the news reports in this case. When the attacks occurred, all media initiated their event reporting and focused on the ongoing events and the magnitude of impact it had on people. Little of the research and experience found in the discourse on media and terrorism is relevant in respect to what happened on September 11. A researcher will find it more helpful to study examples from war journalism and propaganda studies in conjunction with the concept of strategic surprise. For example, contrary to many terrorist organisations' modus of operandi, none claimed substantial responsibility for the attack. The two most important questions thus remained unanswered; who and why? Through news media speculation, with the help of security agencies and law enforcement, an answer was soon established to the first question. My respondents found this problematic since it could be wrong and the initial indications and evidence were of poor quality. A majority of the Swedish media therefore preferred to refer to Osama Bin Laden as a suspect or alleged perpetrator. The second question is more complex and has not yet been fully explained. Despite the lack of in-house expertise, none of my respondents felt that they had poor conditions or lacked

significant resources in order to fulfil their duty to the public during the first acute stage concerning the attacks. Naturally, they all wanted to scramble more reporters to the scene in order to get better quality first-hand reports on the unfolding events. Most Swedish media initially had to rely on outside expertise on terrorism and the competition between media to use these experts in commentary was fierce. The period directly following the attacks is more in line with the war journalism discourse since a warlike situation developed where two parties confronted each other with propaganda. Such a situation is problematic for independent media since perspectives are limited and it is difficult to remain impartial and prevent the reporting from being victimised by propaganda. My respondents were aware of the situation and claim, in all cases but one, that they had not been subject to pressure from strong interests to report in a certain way (and then ignored the plead). Maybe this is, as one respondent pointed out, because Sweden has a rather insignificant influence over transnational news flow and international politics. All respondents felt that they, all things considered, could remain impartial and freely pursue contextual reporting and elaborate on the problematic sides of the development. In their aim to report from both sides, the respondents showed that they were aware of the risk of becoming a part of US propaganda interests, since it was difficult and expensive to obtain relevant material from the al-Qaeda that could contribute to balanced reporting. However, when asked directly, they claimed that they had not reflected so much over al-Qaeda's possible motives and propaganda interests. (It seems that the propaganda was aimed mainly at Arabic audiences in order to stimulate a popular fundamental Islamic up-rising). From a terrorist's perspective, the attack and lack of hard evidence of al-Qaeda involvement was also successful in making the Western world media actively question US foreign policy and its role in the Arabic world. Such background reports would not otherwise have become a part of the event-orientated news flow. According to one editor, however, who tried to put the terrorist attacks in context, in-depth reporting about the conditions for example in Egypt and Saudi Arabia was difficult. Those countries proved to be negative to foreign reporters who wanted to practise investigative journalism. The comparatively low media activity with Osama Bin Laden and al-Qaeda is also an interesting problem in this context, since it seemed to be an advantageous strategy on their part. It added to the mystification of al-Qaeda and of the few things they did put out, all seemed to make the news reports. To a hypothetical question, whether they would allow Osama Bin Laden media access, all respondents replied that they would be prepared to do so even if there were strings attached. The general attitude was that a reporter should never say no to information, but sometimes should consider if the strings would make the effort to interview worthwhile. They specifically pointed out the need to evaluate the substance in what would come out of the interview before a decision to publish could be made. The scarce access to the al-Qaeda perspective was an important motive for one editor at a public service TV news program.

The editor felt that this justified granting a live interview even if that was the only option available. When it came to public interest that might influence reporting, the interviewees showed little concern with negative reactions from their public. They asserted that there is always criticism from their public and that they cannot let that run their news reporting, as in the case with the Texas City Sun. The ideal to achieve balanced reporting was more important. One respondent, at the conservative morning paper *Svenska Dagbladet,* even found it somewhat amusing that readers interpreted background information on the situation in the Arabic region to imply that the paper was pro-al Qaeda. No report in Swedish commercial media in relation to the 9/11 attacks caused the same kind of public criticism leading to a denouncement. It is therefore uncertain how a Swedish news organisation would make considerations to consequences in order to safeguard own commercial interests. A comment on public service radio, however, did lead to an unusual and negative remark from one of the members of the company board. The editor-in-chief, who thought it was an inappropriate intrusion on his leadership position, heavily criticised this public announcement from the board member (c.f. chapter 12).

The Anthrax Case and Media Ethics in Practice

I also interviewed my respondents on the anthrax case that followed in October, 2001. This case is much closer to the discourse on media and terrorism, although no motive to the anthrax letters had been presented. The media were not sure whether or not this event was linked to that of September 11 and al-Qaeda. The media were once again forced into speculation. This case presents a three-dimensional problem for the respondents to handle in regard to distance to terrorism. It started far away in the USA, suspected letters came to Sweden and eventually the media itself proved to be an actual terrorist target. When the anthrax letters were confined to US territory, Swedish reports seemed factual and rather unexaggerated. When letters were sent to US news media organisations there were concerns that Swedish reporters might be victimised as well. Protective masks and prescribed antibiotics were sent to the foreign correspondents in the USA as a precautionary measure. The problem hit home when the first cases of envelopes with white powder showed up at a Swedish postal office in Norrköping. At the public service stations (one radio and three TV news programmes) orders were given to handle suspected letters as if they were infected and transport them to the roof of the buildings until they could be examined by laboratory professionals. The news media now found itself tangled in acts of up-close terrorism. The previous geographic and institutional distance that helped them to keep an ethical distance was now gone and it threatened to affect the reporting adversely. Appeals to public fear do sell news stories, but to exploit it is immoral. The correct ethical standpoint would seem to be

to downplay the importance of the news stories, to only report factually and moderately, and to consider the public interest. On October 18, when the post office in Norrköping closed because a white powder was discovered with the mail, a few days of frenzied reporting about the anthrax threat in Sweden developed. Some reporting was speculative and did not consider any consequences for the public. According to a poll, unstinted reports may have contributed to fear with the public and inspired some people to send letters with white powder as a practical joke or as an attempt to scare people.[16] Most respondents were aware of the problem that reports might induce fear among the public and that they might lead to an increase in fake anthrax letters. But public concern did not prevent editors from generally ranking the news of suspected cases in Sweden high on their news item lists. Editors' publicist decisions were thus not particularly influenced by the category in the model that represents the ethics of consequences. The reasons why my respondents felt that it was difficult to relate to their role in the anthrax scare hold several explanations. The most important is that all but one respondent had apparent problems in making a fair probability assumption on the chances of finding anthrax in letters for Sweden. The fact that authorities had to take the threat seriously until laboratory results came back, some media interpreted as if the probability for it being anthrax was high or as if the threat was serious and therefore an important news piece. There was relatively little reflection over the fact that this was standard operating procedure with the relevant authorities and that the actual probability for it being anthrax was considered low. One respondent claimed that security measures at his/her own media company reinforced crisis awareness on a personal level, which in turn made it difficult to keep the distance to what they were reporting about. Another respondent at a morning paper pointed out that it was impossible to downplay the event too much since the competing evening tabloids had already published several stories on anthrax in Sweden. If the morning paper had made a completely different evaluation of news value on the anthrax letters, the respondent thought it would have seemed strange to the papers' readers. Competition thus influenced the news standard of all media and a one-sided deviation by one news media might be considered problematic. However, it seems that the failures to make proper probability assumptions about the anthrax risk in combination with a will to satisfy the public's right to know were the main factors leading to the meltdown in application of ethic principles. It was instead up to the public themselves to make probability assumptions and to take of responsibility for possible consequences instead of the journalists. However, an intense internal debate started at several news media on what effects the reports might have caused and how they had done their job. Internal criticism led to a correction among most of the news media and they collectively started to downplay the anthrax threat at about the same time as the first negative laboratory test results were announced. The collective self-corrective behaviour was something that the respondents emphasised as a positive conse-

quence of a faulty judgement on news evaluation. In regard to the category of consequences, it should be pointed out that my empirical findings resulted in a longer list of how the respondents denied or claimed ethic responsibility for various consequences that a report might have induced. Although concern with the public's interest in some cases seems to be negotiable, the category generally did score high on the list. In contrast, the respondents would in general deny ethic responsibility for the consequences a report may have on commercial interest, such as the decline in business for airline companies. The news media's every-day situation, in which ethics is to be applied in reality, is very complex. I have come to the conclusion that there is both room and need for improvement. I will next argue for improvements based on the categories ideals, norms, conditions and consequences from the analytic model.

Suggestions for Improvements I: Revision of the Ethical Principles

The anthrax case proves that the media use different standards of ethics in different situations. The closer terrorism comes to the news media company itself, the greater the risk that media becomes part of the problem, as an actor. A thought-through plan for how to handle situations that involve the media would enhance the ability to maintain due distance in order to preserve public confidence in their independent investigative role, regarding both terrorists and counter-terrorist authorities. International experience shows that failure to do so makes society's institutions question the media's role and urge for regulatory legislation. Like their US colleagues, my respondents were generally negative to external initiatives on media guidelines on terrorism. My interpretation is that they felt that ethical self-regulation should not include external "help" since it would compromise their role as independent news media. A majority of the respondents felt that the existing ethical principles were adequate as they were, and they were confident that they would be able to handle future up-close terrorist situations when and if they occurred. This might be true given proper prior preparation. However, the lack of strategy is apparent. Several respondents claimed, for instance, that they with respect to hostage situations felt that the lives of the hostages should be the prime concern and that ethical principles somehow seemed very academic in such cases. Such an attitude is honourable in itself, but also suggests that Swedish news media may be vulnerable to terrorist purposes and that the risk of becoming an actor in actual terror drama is improperly assessed. It seems that they would benefit from a review of the ethical principles that are supposed to guide them today, since these principles make no mention of these kinds of situations. The Swedish mass media's self-regulative system dates back to 1905. The first ethical principles

were adopted to avoid intrusive legislative measures, enforcing a sense of increased ethical responsibility. Although the system displays a tradition of self-regulation, the set of ethical principles is today very rigid. Even attempts from within the media corps to reform the ethical principles have proven difficult.[17] This should, however, not prevent an important debate on media ethics. Britt Börjesson, who has studied the Swedish system of self-regulation, concludes that the ethical principles' most important contribution is that they inspire an on-going debate on media ethics.[18] So, even if an attempt to review the ethical principles in regard to terrorism does not lead to significant changes, at least an important discussion could be stimulated and enhance the chances of preserving public and governmental trust in the ability of the news media to maintain their independence.

Suggestions for Improvements II: Revision of Norms

Policy work within the news media can contribute to the media's ability to self-reflect on ethics in relation to terrorism. Considerable knowledge improvements in the complex problems of terrorism and the media can be obtained by an active discussion and role-gaming, using the norms set up in company policy. If the norms are tested beforehand, the media will know if they will stand the test in a real situation and allow identification of situations that can become problematic. To start the process, a strong leadership at the news company is needed since there is no incentive among editors and journalists themselves to take such initiatives. My respondents also seem more open to initiatives from their management than to outside initiatives. A downside to company-specific initiatives is that they will not necessarily generate collective learning in the news media corps. However, my study shows that there is contact between different news media on ethical and editorial issues on an informal basis. When a new problem is encountered, discussions appear and encourage a common ethical policy.

Suggestions for Improvements III: Revision of Conditions

The conditions category seems to be the most important in order to enhance possibilities for reasonable improvements of media ethics in practice. Ironically, it is also the category that seems to be the most difficult to effect. First-hand experience of terrorism hopefully will remain unusual in Sweden. Thus, there remains little incentive for the media to develop qualified expertise in the field of terrorism through specialised reporters. Fierce competition marks the development of the organisational structure of news industry and also strongly influences the public service media. The strategy to rely on the ability

to deal with new problems as they are encountered is therefore not likely to be successful without an increased willingness to learn from international experience. However, there seems to be little incentive for this. A common standpoint among reporters, shared by some of my respondents, is that one cannot use old experience for new problems.[19] September 11 proves them right in one sense; no previous experience of terrorism seemed sufficient. However, much of the experience of how to report on a catastrophe, war and so forth, was valid and facilitated editorial decision-making, according to my results. If Swedish media would for example encounter a hostage situation at home, it is plausible that knowledge about international experience would be helpful.

Suggestions for Improvements IV: Matured Understanding of Stakeholders and Consequences

The last category, consequences, is also a problematic category in relation to terrorism. No matter how the media report, there will always be criticism. Kepplinger and Köcher's findings show that reporters have a strategy to deal with such criticism. However, if it is applied as a reflex rather than as a well conceived strategy, it becomes problematic for the news media's moral standing with the public since the public expects the media to be responsible. The news media therefore need to assess properly the most common criticism on the basis of its arguments and relate to it in a more intelligible fashion. In regard to terrorism it is my opinion that media representatives would benefit from exploring two sets of consequences before deciding on a reporting strategy. These are the contagion effect and the effects on the citizens' sense of a secure society. Robert Picard has categorically ruled out the news media's role in the contagion effect of terrorism. His research is heavily supported by several reports which show that the increase in terrorist organisations and the diffusion of tactics have other explanations; communication and sharing of expertise between terrorist networks being one of the most important factors for the contagion effect.[20] A quick survey of articles on events after the 9/11 attacks shows that there are at least two incidents where planes have been flown into tall buildings.[21] We also have the copycat anthrax letters to take into consideration. These facts support the critique of Picard's conclusions.[22] My conclusion is that the news media will continue to be held partly responsible for the contagion effect. Only through systematic research can we explore the news media's role in how they may have contributed, and can be manipulated into contributing, to copycat acts and whether it is possible to reduce such negative effects by more responsible reporting by the news media. It would be naïve to think that violence and terror will suffocate without news media reports on that topic. Research, however, does show that speculative and exaggerated reports on violence

and terror itself may cause long-term effects on citizens' sense of a safe and secure society.[23] If a public sense of being at risk grows out of proportion it contributes to the development of a closed society, where suspicion would dominate over "good" values such as neighbourly cooperation and coexistence. My respondents generally seemed to be aware that exaggerated reports might cause some of these unfavourable effects. They claimed the need for contextual reports to counter negative effects and found it natural to pursue this line in their reports on insurgent terrorism. It should be pointed out, however, that despite the assertions of the importance of contextual reporting, the media have failed on this point in Sweden on other issues that are closely related to violent political insurgency. In a recent reception study on the Swedish public's perception of media reports on the EU summit meeting in Gothenburg 2001, the interviewees claim that the media focused too much on the violent clashes between the police and the political activists.[24] The outcome of the actual meeting and the reasons as to why it was demonstrated against, remains in a blur with the public. Also in recent cases where neo-Nazi and antifascist movements have used violence and terror in their manifestations and actions, the media have shown apparent problems in developing a feasible strategy on how to report about the phenomenon. The tendency is that the media initially resort to event-reports and fail to remain factual in the description of the actual problems that lay behind the violent manifestations. Not surprisingly, it is mainly the morning papers with a steady income through subscribers that have taken the trouble to do so. Lengthy contextual reports do not fit the TV news format very well and the evening papers tend to focus on drama since drama sells papers. Interesting to note is that the lack of strategy on how to report about extremist movements even was reflected in the articles in the morning papers. Initial articles called for intensified governmental action against the groups and later reports showed restraint on repressive action and called for fundamental social understanding of how stigmatisation of the groups may be harmful to a democracy, since it justifies and prolongs the groups' violent behaviour. Although my respondents have shown that they have, at their best, a fair ability to report about international terrorism as a phenomenon when it happens abroad, it is very different than doing so if terrorism would occur in a domestic situation. In order to be successful in the fulfilment of their role as a democratic and public advocate, Swedish news media would benefit greatly from the learning experience that their colleagues in countries that have struggled up-close with reports on insurgent terrorism are subjected to. The lack of experience, understanding and strategy on how to report about insurgent terrorism is reflected in the way my respondents have related to my questions. Although they are semi-aware of the problems involved, near enough no attempts have been made for a collective learning experience or to develop an overall strategy on how to relate to the consequences reports on insurgent terrorism may have. If Swedish news media will keep the prevailing attitude that new problems are something that need to be taken on as they occur, the

chances of getting things right from the beginning remain slim. Considering this attitude with the media, their unpreparedness to report on the issue of terrorism may become very problematic, not only to the media as an institution in itself but also to society as a whole. The worst-case scenario would be an incident that includes the media itself as a target for terrorism. This would increase the risk that the interests of other stakeholders are neglected in editorial decision-making; the most obvious being the interest of governments and their agencies to maintain public safety and respond to the incident. Uncunning media reports may cripple this response. Erroneous editorial decision-making may also inflict long-term effects on the public's trust in the ability of societal institutions to provide public safety and to govern, while at the same time safeguarding the democratic ideals on which society rests.

Notes

1. New York Times, June 16, 1986, in Gerrits, 1992, p. 29.
2. Schlesinger, 1991, p. 25.
3. Picard, 1993, pp. 71-72 and Picard, 1991, pp. 49-62.
4. Ekström & Nohrstedt, 1996, p. 24.
5. Schmid, 1992, p. 125.
6. See among many: Nacos, 1994, pp. 66-67; Hoffman, 1998, pp. 132, 146; and Finn (1990) pp. 50, 52.
7. Gallimore, Timothy, 199, pp. 103-118.
8. Terrell, Robert & Ross Kristina, 1990, in Alexander & Picard, 1991, p. 87.
9. Underwood, 1993, p. 142.
10. Hadenius & Weibull, 1999, pp. 19-21.
11. Picard, 1993, pp. 84-88.
12. Nohrstedt & Tassew, 1993, p. 31, and Flodin, 1993, pp. 47-49.
13. Nohrstedt, 2000, pp. 176-177
14. Levy & Bugingo, 2001, p. 7.
15. Kepplinger & Köcher, 1990, in Ekström & Nohrstedt, 1996, pp. 25-26.
16. Bennulf, 2001, p. 26.
17. Eriksson, DN, October 11, 2001, p. B6
18. Börjesson, 199, p. 175.
19. Gallimore, 1991, pp. 103-118.
20. Picard, 1993, pp. 71-72. and Picard, 199, pp. 49-62.
21. Carlbom, 2002, and Jändel & Truedson, 2002.
22. Weimann, 1990, in Paletz & Schmid, 1992, pp. 18-19.
23. Picard, 1993, p. 116.
24. Olausson, 2002, pp. 58-59.

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Chapter 14

Disconnection

On Mass Media and 9/11[*]

Peter Berglez

Two Aspects of Hegemony

9/12-14 2001. It is the beginning of a new century and again there is a wave of critique directed at what is considered the imperialist ambitions of the United States of America. When reflecting upon the hegemonic identity of the United States, first and foremost, what comes to mind? Does one immediately go for the standard symbols, such as the White House, the Pentagon or the US Congress? Or is it rather brands such as Coca-Cola, CNN, Hollywood or McDonalds that come first? Undoubtedly, it is easy to generate a great number of notions of where and what hegemony actually *is*. As far as I understand, the generated cocktail of possible power entities actualises one of the most central questions within the theory of hegemonic power: the very location and character of it. Where does hegemonic power exist and where does it primarily operate? Does it show its ugly face only on certain occasions and in specific contexts, in terms of existing within, and emerging from, certain *institutions*, or does it lack a concretely distinguishable face while rather existing *everywhere,* in every pore of the social body more or less *all the time*?

In this analytic context, two main aspects of the way in which US hegemony operates in the media will be taken into account. More precisely, it concerns what shall be called a) institutional and b) structural hegemony. To begin with there is an *institutional* aspect of hegemony. Hegemonic power is supposed to emanate from certain, nowadays more or less imploded, domains; from political (the White House, the Pentagon) as well as from economic (Silicon Valley, Wall Street, Nasdaq) and cultural ones (Hollywood). Together they constitute the United States as a defined whole within the world capitalist system (Wallerstein 1974), competing and co-operating with nation states as well as with numerous political, economic and military organisations (G8, IMF, NATO, WTO etc.).

From an alternative Marxian point of view, however, one rather wants to go beyond these empirically 'obvious' and clearly *visible* power entities in order to analytically embrace and grasp the overall structural hegemonic

conditions in the world. Under these circumstances, hegemony is no longer synonymous with the ruling force of certain institutions or particular persons. Hegemony is rather the economically, politically, technologically, culturally and socially intertwined structures named global capitalism. On the one hand this indicates that the US should be interpreted as a particular part of an overall structural condition. On the other hand, this does not indicate that the US suddenly transforms into an 'anonymous' variable, as the US could rather be considered as the 'head architect' of the capitalist system; as the grand inventor and generator of capitalist conditions that sooner or later tends to exist everywhere else (Schiller 1972, Baudrillard 1988), no matter if it concerns the expansion of the private property principle, consumption or individualism.

Structural hegemony indicates that a Gramsci-oriented notion of hegemony is to some extent abandoned in favour of what rather seems to be ideology in the Althusserian sense. At least in the sense that structural hegemony is a faceless and more anonymous power, which gnaws its way though our bodies and souls, becoming synonymous with the so-called 'everyday life' in a similar sense as when Althusser points out the structurally complex character of capitalist social reality, in which power operates "as a body…not immediately visible" (Althusser 1971, 97). Thus, in comparison with empirically 'obvious' institutional hegemonic power, structural hegemony is somehow trickier to identify, to 'communicate with' or to oppose. One might exemplify this by comparing the possibilities of opposing these two 'types' of hegemony. On the one hand, it is clear that the US policy, operating through institutions as the Pentagon or the Congress, as well as through certain individuals (Kissinger, for example) could be held directly responsible for the human catastrophe in the Vietnam War. On the other hand, can one in a similar sense imagine some persons or institutions being held responsible for the ever-continuing global expansion of 'commodity-fetishism' and 'neoliberal individualisation'?

If the response to this is a clear 'no', does this then necessarily imply that one cannot blame specific persons as, for example, Thatcher or Reagan for the breakthrough of neoliberalism in the eighties? And is it then useless to criticise particular corporations, such as H&M or IKEA, for their continuous exploitation of Indian and Indonesian labour? For several reasons, which will be discussed further on, this is *not* the case. What should still be pointed out, however, is the fact that when criticising hegemony structurally (taking into consideration global capitalism as a whole), one is somehow doomed to end up in an analytically difficult situation in which the designated persons or institutions simply become *particular* aspects of the hegemonic order. Particular, in the sense that hegemony is always something more and partly something else than the actions of the designated person or institution[1]. This indicates that no matter how relevant it might be to invest oppositional energy on particular designated faces or institutions – as the US President or perhaps *Adidas* – we are still dealing with hegemonic power on the surface level. Even if these subjects and objects do uphold real power,

still, they are (only) particular representatives of a universal condition operating as an impenetrable, complex web of different practices existing more or less 'everywhere'. Here we rather speak of a powerful force that exists on all possible structural levels, in our minds and bodies, imploded with our everyday life, while linked to our obligated roles of acting as 'individuals', producers, capital accumulators, consumers etc.

A spontaneous reaction to the suggested division into institutional and structural aspects of hegemony is perhaps to consider it as an analytic fallacy, as a theoretical mistake. Am I not committing an analytic error due to the fact that these two categories – institutional and structural hegemony – are actually two sides of the same coin? Is it not somehow pointless to engage in structural hegemony, if one is not taking into consideration the particular institutions that actually constitute the structural conditions? In fact, is not structural hegemony actually the long-run product of institutional power and action? The forthcoming media analysis will definitively agree on these critical remarks. The point is not to challenge the relevance of institutional aspects of hegemony. What is rather at stake here is the way in which the mass media discursively *separate* these two aspects of hegemony (rather than treating them as complementary). Instead of emphasising the mutual relation between institutional and structural hegemony, these two aspects of hegemony rather become antagonistic in terms of representing two competitive views on how to deal with the political reality.

Ambivalence

More precisely then, this topic will be analysed in relation to the media coverage immediately after the 9/11 event. Specifically, it concerns Slovenian (*Delo*) and Swedish (*Dagens Nyheter*) news media. To begin with, what is noteworthy with the coverage of these events is that the hegemonic code is mainly built upon the elimination of *identification* procedures. The support of the US is constructed in accordance with the assumption that there is no 'us' and 'them' whatsoever. Supporting 'them' does hardly require any identification as, already from the beginning, 'we' (the Swedes, Slovenes, Europeans) were 'them'.

The implosion of 'us' and 'them' is far from wholly colonising the Slovenian and Swedish media discourse. The mass media also generate gaps between the domestic culture and the American one, that is to say, a distance between 'us' and 'them'. Within the logic of the oppositional code, and the code of negotiation, the media also offer the media audiences opportunities to *choose* to what an extent they actually feel American at this very moment. By this counter-hegemonic procedure, the media in various ways ask their audiences to what an extent 'they' want to identify with 'them' (the Americans)?

This media analysis suggests that this kind of negotiation and opposition against the US is a socio-culturally and media-culturally established tradi-

tion, in this context, appearing as ambivalence, or rather *Ame-bivalence.* The ambivalence towards the US concerns the continually mixed feelings about this strong 'personality' well known for its good *and* bad sides. Media-discursively, ambivalence operates in terms of the obligatory questioning of the US policy or the US culture. No matter how much the mass media may promote the US policy, still, this ideological support is always complemented with some reservations or critical standpoints, upholding a relative distance, or a cultural *gap,* between 'us' and 'them'.

On the one hand these mechanisms of negotiation and opposition could naturally play an emancipatory role in terms of challenging US hegemony, on the other hand, this is actually where the actual problem begins. The point is that the constructed ocean between 'us' (Slovenes, Europeans etc.) and 'them' ('the Americans') stimulates an *anthropologisation* (see Martín-Barbero 2002) of the whole hegemony matter, that is to say, an exaggerated fascination with 'their' particular culture and 'their' behaviour. When the counter-hegemonic energy explicitly focuses on US power, the codes of negotiation or opposition turn into behavioural analysis of 'them' and their 'personality' ('their' patriotic vulgarity, 'their' imperialist image etc.). The question consequently concerns to what an extent this 'gap' de-stimulates or even prevents the counter-hegemonic and oppositional energy from reaching a 'higher level', in which case the very system of capitalism might rather attract central attention. For example, in the case of the 9/11 event, when the mass media demonstrate images of patriotic Wall Street yuppies, homeless people, firemen and nurses as well as of 'ordinary citizens', together embracing the American flag, it is as if the mass media actually somehow *stimulate* their audiences to criticise the US (and to question US patriotism). However, the point is that the *exclusive zooming* on the US might navigate the potential critique and resistance in the 'wrong' direction. More precisely, the explicit focus on this specific *'character'* or *'personality'* (the US) might potentially *disconnect* the concern for the far more 'depersonalised' aspect of all this, which is, the structural conditions of the capitalist system as a whole (characterised by the question: to what an extent are 'we' involved in this event, 'we' who essentially belong to the Western Culture and the capitalist system?).

Capitalist Media Discourse

Before proceeding with the results of this study, I intend to briefly present the methodological approach. This article brings about a qualitative analysis of the leading newspapers of the nation states of Sweden and Slovenia. Sweden, on the one hand, is characterised by a long tradition of liberal democracy and political stability and is well known for its (social democratic) welfare model as well as for its neutrality and non-alignment approach in international political contexts. Slovenia, on the other hand, declared itself

independent from Yugoslavia as late as 1991, and is now, as several other post-socialist countries of Central East Europe, heading for NATO as well as EU membership. Undoubtedly, these two nation states have different historic and cultural backgrounds. However, the research project, which this particular analysis belongs to, also has the aim to demonstrate the way in which two small nation states, irrespective of their differences, become objects of similar political and socio-economic conditions. Consequently, in this specific analytic case, the point is to pay attention to the way in which the Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* (independent liberal) and the Slovenian newspaper *Delo* (independent social liberal) generate similar kinds of ideological mechanisms.

The theoretical and methodological field of critical discourse analysis is the main inspiration of this analysis (see Fairclough 1995). The essential principle is to analyse media at several different structural levels. At the concrete, empirically 'observable' level, we find the actual media text. The analysis of implicit ideological implications is then a matter of analysing the media text linguistically, in terms of grammar and vocabulary. Simultaneously, the text should be analysed as a discursive practice (elsewhere defined as the 'meso-level' of the text), which concerns the specific structures of media production and media reception (for example, the 'rooted' genres, styles and modes of media production/reception). Furthermore, these two levels should be interpreted in relation to an even more deeply rooted structure, which Fairclough defines as 'sociocultural practice'. This is related to the following question: In what ways are the empirically observable linguistic elements, as well as the actual media discursive practices, 'products' of (and simultaneously, producers of) certain socio-cultural as well as socio-economic conditions?

The different structural levels exist mutually, constantly constituting each other, while the sum of the structural levels constitutes a so-called 'communicative event'. However, without going deeper into the advantages and the disadvantages respectively of Fairclough's approach, this media analysis tries to take into consideration the mentioned structural aspects of the media text. To begin with, the section *Neutralisation versus Personalisation of the US* analyses linguistic features of the media text (primarily lexical elements and logic of argumentation) while the following section, *Ambivalence,* analyses these empirical observations from a media structural point of view. Further on, the section *This Cultural 'Thing' or 'Personality' (the US)* pays attention to the 'deep-rooted' socio-economic mechanisms, which, in the last instance, are assumed to influence the textual and discursive characteristics of the actual communicative event[2].

Neutralisation versus Personalisation of the US

In order to systematically investigate the way in which *ambivalence* operates, what will be analysed is first the media construction of 'them' (the US).

The US is constructed in two main ways. On the one hand the US is neutralised in the sense that the US population tends to appear as 'human beings in general' (rather than beings with a certain ideological 'content'). On the other hand there is also the opposite condition in which the US is constructed in a far more well-known and stereotypical manner, that is to say, the US as a 'strong character', as a country that says and does things with clear ideological consequences. The second step in the empirical analysis is to relate the way in which the construction of 'them' (the US) stimulates identification as well as opposite processes. The mass media provide the audiences with several different ways of dealing with or relating to the US, defined as superfluous identification, 'voluntary' identification and disidentification.

Washing Away Differences (the Neutralisation of the US)

During his night shifts as a N.Y. cab driver, the 'Viet-vet' Travis (Robert De Niro) in Martin Scorcese's film, *Taxi driver*, fantasises about 'washing away' all sorts of 'filth' from the Manhattan streets, including criminality, prostitution, drugs etc. in order to make a difference, which is, to transform society into this 'clean community' of decent and care-taking citizens. Travis is the individual-psychological version of what could simultaneously operate on the collective level in terms of ideological extremism such as fascism and Muslim fundamentalism. Particularly the kind of extremism that defines itself as the opposite of what is considered as the weak Western culture and its degenerative 'moral slackness' in terms of corruption, consumption, sexual promiscuity, female emancipation, homosexuality etc.

To begin with, an important observation regarding the media coverage of 9/11 concerns the way in which Manhattan is transformed into a culturally 'cleansed area'. This 'cleansing operation' shall be defined as the *neutralisation* of the US. To begin with, New York is somehow stripped of its well-known identity as the centre of 'swirling differences' and plurality. Manhattan is now busy with a moral awakening and rising to the extent that the well-known 'Zero-Tolerance' programme of the N.Y. Police Authorities (initiated by mayor Guiliani in the nineties) somehow becomes superfluous. In this 'cleansed' version of Manhattan, all sorts of 'disturbing' elements are gone; junkies, criminality and egoism do not exist anymore. Everybody is 'the same'; everybody is good-hearted and compassionate, doing similar things (volunteering, mourning).

> The lawyer Tom Hogen and the teacher Al Szigethi are both trained in emergency treatment, and they are both here as *volunteers*. When DN meets them, they have been working for twenty-four hours. Will New York ever be the same, we wonder? – Absolutely. It will be a better city, *this will bring us together*, Al says (extract from front page article, DN 12/9; unless otherwise specified emphasis in quotations are made by this author).

> On television, there is an info ad about blood donation. – Let's go, let us donate some blood, Eva says, even though she usually has a fear of needles (extract from a column, Delo 13/9).
>
> In the remnants, *everybody is helping each othe*r (headline). He is dirty, sweaty and tired. – I have seen horrible things, but I have also experienced an enormous corporate will and *feelings of belonging between everybody* who were there. Firemen, paramedics as well as volunteers are taking great risks in order to help people, he says (extract from a column, DN 13/9, front page).
>
> Neighbours, who usually choose to fix their gazes into the corner of the tiny elevator instead of at least achieving a mumbling 'hi', *now try to talk to each other*. Slightly, but still. A notice on the elevator mirror gives them something to think about: the nearby hospital draws attention to its lack of needles for blood donation. Simultaneously, it provides information on where to call, if being ready, tomorrow or some other day, to donate some blood. When going for the morning paper, I realise that the notice in the elevator is already gone. I hope that the *awakening solidarity* has not diminished as well. Television convinces me that my fear is exaggerated. *A vast number of people offer their help. Any kind of help* (extract, Delo 14/9).

'Let's go, let us donate some blood, Eva says', portraying the myriad of efforts to bring community back to life. Implicitly indicated, before the attacks there was isolation, hostility and 'distant tolerance' between all kinds of differences, while now, this negative curse has been broken as 'In the remnants, everybody is helping each other'. Consequently, this extreme event will "bring them together" generating 'feelings of belonging'. The appearance of this thick *Gemeinschaft* harmoniously interplays with the construction of Manhattan as a place for the reappearance of a 'primitive culture' or a 'pre-modern' community. It is as if it would be a case of the 'return of the essential'. In other words, the mass media explicitly focus on the most fundamental aspects of human existence (the struggle for survival) and the practical dealing with this fundamental matter (the rescue teams, paramedics, police officers, the volunteers) as well as on the most basic and original states of being one might possibly imagine – 'discourse' on life and death (despair, mourning, sorrow).

> Picture of a rescue operation in the dust. Caption: Will he survive? A rescue team is carrying a wounded person out from one of the WTC towers in New York, (Delo 12/9).
>
> Picture of two afraid women; a younger woman is hugging an older, crying woman. Caption: Unbelievable. This Tuesday, tears and vain panic dominated the streets of Manhattan. The two women have just witnessed the collapse of one of the World Trade Center skyscrapers (DN 12/9).

> Picture of a searching husband. Caption: He is standing outside Bellevue Hospital on First Avenue and 27th Street on Manhattan, holding up photos of his beloved. He cries: We have been engaged for twelve years. – We were planning to get married later this autumn. Now she is gone. I have called twenty hospitals, and now, I have started to call to the mortuaries. I want her to come home. In one way or another, says Al Rubin (DN 13/9, front page).

The mass media emphasise human beings occupied with their most *basic instincts*. From this point of view, the conventional everyday heterogeneous multi/trans/intra-cultural flows of ethnical/sexual/class identities somehow disappear, or transform into artificial products of 'cultural studies'. More precisely, cultural theory always stresses the contingent and ever-changing potential of the human being, although, this event (the terror attack) is rather bringing back the raw *reality*, demonstrating exactly the opposite condition of humankind – the return of the biological essence of man. This essentialism is most clearly shown in the case of the construction of *gender*; what collapses along with the WTC twin towers is politically correct behaviour regarding gender difference. The political correctness of contemporary bourgeois mainstream media and their urge to educate the masses on anti-patriarchal and anti-sexist values are temporarily *cancelled*. This extreme event (the terror attack) transforms the prototypes of contemporary political correctness (such as the new 'feminist' James Bond etc.) into unrealistic inventions, manufactured by the 'progressive' cultural bourgeois elite, as the fact is that, suddenly, society is showing its real nature where men are 'allowed' to be 'real' men (rescuers, caring husbands, heroes) and women are 'allowed' to be 'real' woman (to mourn, to cry, to first and foremost 'act out' as worried mothers and wives). The male volunteer is '…dirty, sweaty and tired' after '…taking great risks', while, in another context, there is a picture of how a '…younger woman is hugging an older, crying woman'.

'Personal' US

In order to further investigate the construction of the US, one has to take into consideration the appearance of another *less neutralised picture* of the US. In the coverage of the US policy, the neutral and universalistic image of the US is clearly contrasted.

> President George W. Bush immediately cancelled a visit to Florida. In a statement from the Barksdale base in Louisiana he said that the US will *"trace and punish the people who committed this act*" (extract from front page article, DN 12/9).

> In his first comment to the public on Tuesday morning, the American president George Bush expressed that the US is facing a shock after this great national tragedy. In his afternoon speech from the Barksdale Airport in Loui-

> siana he, among other things, pointed out: "This morning some indefinite cowards attacked freedom, but we will defend it. To avoid misunderstandings: *the US will hunt down and punish those folks who committed this pusillanimous act. We have taken all necessary measures to guarantee the security of the American people. The determination of your people is being tested. But, remember this, that we will show the world that we shall overcome this burden too"* (front page paragraph, Delo 12/9).
>
> Many people have followed Senator Charles Schumer's request to *fly the flag as much as possible and to hang up the American flag*. We see flags on houses and car antennas. A driver in a pick-up truck has hung up a big sign on his car: *"Fuck you Bin Laden"*//Al Rubin also feels fury against the ones responsible for the outrage against New York. – *I want President Bush to retaliate. Please, please Mr President. Retaliate*. The monsters that did this took my wife away from me. She was the best person I have ever met. She was a living angel. I want my angel to come home (extracts from front page article, DN 14/9).

Other elite sources presented in this media coverage context (Colin Powell, Bill Clinton etc.) are delivering soft, more sophisticated versions of the message delivered by Bush. The core observation here concerns the fact that the US appears as a defined *personality* with a clear ideological identity. The US president is presented in accordance with the stereotypical or traditional behaviour of the US presidency, that is to say, in accordance with the way this 'personality' or 'role' usually appears in Hollywood films and in other media cultural contexts. The stereotypical demonstration of power is easily recognised, the clear references to God and the 'wild western' rhetorical logic urging for immediate retaliation: '… the US will hunt down and punish those folks who committed this pusillanimous act'.

The Neutralisation of the Least Neutral?

Neutralisation operates in two respects. Firstly, the capitalist identity of Manhattan is neutralised, as this place no longer appears as the very heart of individualism and money. Manhattan is rather a strong community where the importance of money is neglected in favour of emphatic actions and solidarity. Secondly, the US culture, as a whole, becomes neutralised. In contrast to the everyday media cultural experience of the US, the American 'subject' is not doing some stereotypical American 'thing', whether it concerns advanced baseball discourse, visiting the Grand Canyon, or taking a spontaneous road trip to Las Vegas. More precisely, in this context the American subject is restricted from promoting and cherishing its own culture. The mass media are rather 'holding back' the strong personality of US culture, peeling off its extrovert character so that the American subject may appear more as a universal every-day being.

This media construct is entropic, that is to say, it is opposing more conventional pictures of the US. The entropy is constituted upon the fact that the media neutralise the culture that is least of all considered neutral in the eyes of the world (it is hard to imagine a neutral relationship to the US). The US people could never end up in the same situation as so many other peoples do (the Rwandan people etc.) who are constantly treated by the surrounding world in terms of indifference and apathy. This particular victim (the US) is rather a well-known personality with a well-known face. No matter the location of the audiences, no matter whether they are European, African or Russian, they for sure 'know' the US. This victim is heavily loaded with ideological meaning, as for the surrounding world, the US is more or less like an everyday love-and-hate companion (in terms of the constant flow of American popular culture, television, commodities etc.).

Referring to Chomsky & Herman (1988) then, to what an extent is the US constructed as a 'worthy victim'? It is not primarily the US as a federation or as a defined culture that is portrayed as a victim, but rather its people, and particularly the actual victims from the plane crashes and the WTC inferno. The mentioned neutralisation generates a gap between the US people and other 'meanings' linked to the US signifier (the policy, culture), in the sense that the earlier is 'de-hegemonised'. Neutralisation turns US people into *people*. However, the emphasis on the reactions of the political elite and the clearly ideological elements ('I want President Bush to retaliate. Please, please Mr President. Retaliate') automatically counteracts the neutral image of the US people. The entropy fades away and what rather appears is the far more known identity of the US; the US with a 'hegemonic attitude' in combination with a Christian dualistic way of dealing with politics and anxiety (goodness versus evil). However, this mixture, this mishmash of 'neutralisation' and ideological 'personalisation' of the US, paves the way for different ways or 'solutions' for the media audiences in terms of *identifying* or *disidentifying* with the US.

Identification or Disidentification (with the US)

'Superfluous' Identification

Firstly, the most empirically concrete aspect of *identification* (with the US). The above analysed neutralisation of Manhattan and the neutralisation of the American human being as such is ideologically supporting the kind of political discourse, which makes the US 'disappear'. More precisely, it concerns the political discourse in which the US and the whole democratic world are mentioned in the same spirit. This is then when there is emphasis on suffering *people* rather than on suffering Americans, transforming the event into a universal matter rather than a particular one (this is an attack against the democratic and civilised world rather than an attack particularly against the US):

> "The War against *Democracy*" (headline, DN 12/9), "The terror attack against the US shows the vulnerability of the *open, democratic society*" (extract, DN 12/9), "*We are all victims of the terror*" (headline, DN 12/9), This is *a war against the civilised world* (extract, Delo 12/9), *The world has declared war against terrorism* (headline, Delo 14/9).

> These are brutal terror attacks, which are *not directed at the US, but rather at the whole world, at democracy and social security* (extract, Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel in Delo 12/9).

> *When Sweden felt its origin* (headline). *The attack against New York and Washington was also an attack against Sweden…*//The air attacks were directed at a 'form of life', the expression may seem old fashioned, but there is no better way of defining our society than with the words used by the philosopher Karl Popper half a century ago. This is why a wave of shock and horror swept through the Swedish society, this is why *we* will remember how *we* were first reached by the news about the attack on the World Trade Center in the same way as when hearing the news about the murder of Olof Palme and John F Kennedy…// (extracts from editorial, DN 13/9).

> As so many have concluded during the last forty-eight hours, the purpose of the perpetrators was not only to humiliate the US and to kill Americans, but also to disseminate horror and confusion in the whole civilised world. That *is an attack against New York is an attack against Stockholm* (extract from editorial, DN 13/9).

However, the process of *identification* is dependent on an original *distance*. Identification happens when an original gap between A and B is reduced, when for example A expresses empathy and understanding towards B. In the textual cases or examples above, identification is not supposed to really happen. The media emphasise the common things between 'us' and 'them' to the extent that there is no distance in the initial stage whatsoever ('An attack against New York is an attack against Stockholm'). Identification is somehow superfluous, it goes without saying. There is no necessity of negotiating the question whether or not 'we' are 'them' as 'we' were 'them' already from the beginning. The media audiences are already from the beginning considered as co-victims or 'semi-victims' of the terror attacks ('The War against Democracy'). Eventually, some people need to refresh their *memory* on this matter, and the fact that what sometimes seems to constitute a distance between 'us' and 'them' is rather mere appearance, since when it really comes to it, there is no distance whatsoever ('When Sweden felt its origin').

From 'Voluntary' Identification to Disidentification

> The attack *against the US* (first page headline, DN 12/9), The terror attack *against the US* (front page headline, Delo 12/9).

In this context it is pointed out that the attack exclusively concerns the US (not Slovenia or Sweden, not Europe, not the democratic world as a whole etc.). The mass media chisel out a defined 'them' (the US) which is clearly distinguished from 'us' (the Swedes, Europeans etc.). Consequently, in the media coverage, the previously analysed cases of thick 'we' constructions exist side by side with discourse that rather question exactly this united 'we'. In this section, then, the main point is to focus on the kind of media discourse in which identification with the US is a matter of initial *distance* and *negotiation*:

> *"Today we're all Americans"* (headline, news article, Delo 13/9), *On America's side against terrorism*, (headline, editorial, DN 13/9), *"It is not difficult to feel American today"* (headline, article in culture section, DN 13/9). "…it is of vital importance that the world *shows its solidarity* with the affected individuals and the affected nation (extract from editorial, DN 13/9). *"It is time for Europe to help the US"* (headline, news article, DN 13/9).

Even though these statements are clearly supportive of the US, identification is not supposed to come immediately. Identification is rather expected to be the actual end product of some emotional and/or intellectual 'work'. Consequently, there is an initial *distance* in relation to the US, a distance that the media audiences are supposed to reduce on a *voluntary* basis. The important matter here is that identification does not appear as a repressive imperative. The identification procedure is relatively 'open' as the media themselves somehow take into account the ideologically controversial aspects of the US policy and the fact that there is a lack of consensus among the media audiences on how and what to think about the US in general. 'Today we're all Americans' is a rather 'soft imperative', while 'It is not difficult to feel American today' rather appears as a modest proposal, implying that on all other days of the year, feeling American might be a difficult thing. The media audiences are urged to stand on America's side, while this demand still implies the possibility of alternative decisions and outcome. The identification with 'them' is supposed to concern this particular moment ('*Today* we're all Americans') and this particular political question (to fight against terrorism), while for the rest of our time 'we' are allowed to go on culturing 'our' domestic and national identities as much as 'we' possibly want. Furthermore on this matter, this explicit invitation to uphold a relative *distance*, and to rather negotiate with the US, is even more vividly visible when the ideological support of the US is complemented by critical reservations or *counter-arguments*:

> The civilised response (headline). After the dreadful act of terror, the world has to stand by the US. *But it is a matter of avoiding collective punishment, persecution and a war between civilisations* (extract from editorial, 13/9 DN).

> *We may have many reasons to criticise the US policy and US politicians and enterprises*, but the attack on September 11 was not about all that, not about achieving another kind of politics. It is about the elimination of a social model, which has made us realise how much we have in common with the American society. *The people behind the hijacking of four American airplanes are our enemies too* (extract from editorial, DN 13/9).

> It is not difficult to feel American today: the guilty ones should be captured and brought to justice. *But hatred should not be answered with hatred* (extract from cultural column, DN 13/9).

'It is not difficult to feel American today' *but* if the US policy is pushed in the wrong direction ('…hatred should not be answered with hatred') these feelings may quickly fade away. The counter-arguments consequently accentuate the already established distance between 'us' and 'them'. Finally, regarding the diverse aspects of identification with the US, we should also include the media discursive material that explicitly stimulate disidentification in terms of explicitly *opposing* the US/US policy. This material, however, primarily occur in the margins of the media coverage (the culture section, letters to the editor and personal columns):

> *World-wide scepticism about the US* (headline from column, DN 13/9), *The US policy leads to terrorism* (headline cultural section, DN 13/9), *The Empire will strike back* (headline, Delo 13/9). *The US and NATO pose a threat to democracy* (letter to the editor, DN 14/9).

> *The support for the US may turn* (headline). The world's support for the US may quickly evaporate *if the US chooses to strike back with military aggression against another tiny and poor nation* in the Middle East, Africa or Latin America…" (extract from column, DN 13/9).

> An everyday-life thing, but under these circumstances, at least for me a shocking sight: in the market stall on the edge of the pavement, *T-shirts with prints about the tragedy which is going on in front of our eyes are already for sale!* It seems to me that the tragedy has perhaps not to any greater extent penetrated the thick skin of Manhattan, under which a tender heart may be hiding. Or, maybe, there is nothing that could dislodge the *entrepreneur spirit*, so characteristic for the Americans (extract from column, Delo 14/9).

This is the kind of discourse that in a rather explicit manner is pointing out the ideological 'personality' of the US, upholding a *cultural gap* between

the particular nation states (of Sweden and Slovenia) and the US. Concerning these mechanisms of *disidentification*, what is noteworthy is the twofold aspect of oppositional discourse. On the one hand the kind of opposition that exclusively focuses on the US foreign policy, and on the other hand, the more ideologically widened criticism, also emphasising the commercial and capitalist spirit of the US ('…T-shirts with prints about the tragedy…'). Finally, then, it is possible to find particular examples of media discourse in which the critical dismissal and disidentification with the US develops in a different direction:

> The closer the answer comes to the third solution, the smaller the chances for Samuel P Huntington's theories to come true in the 21st century within the world of economic globalisation (*the global market*), where the *global ideology of profit increasingly also leads to a specific kind of global warfare* (end paragraph in the political column 'It all depends on the (right) response', Delo 13/9).

> *The capitalist system creates repression and injustices* (headline). A real democracy should build on people's participation in and responsibility for all important areas in society. What is needed is a total reform of a society that creates injustices, repression and terrorism, in order to rather build a truly modern democratic society that is based upon justice and ecological tenability, internationally as well as in each and every country. In the long run, globalisation makes it impossible to continue with *the capitalist industrial society* and its increasingly watered-down version of democracy (extract from letter to the editor, DN 14/9)

In these examples the US is not an autonomous actor as they rather implode her with Western culture. There is a Western 'we', although not in the way that was manifested earlier – in the sense of 'we', the democratic, open and liberal world – *but 'we' in terms of the Western capitalist system* ('the global market', 'the capitalist system'). More precisely, the disidentification with the US is simultaneously a question of disidentification with the capitalist system as a whole (a system consequently containing 'us' too – Swedes, Slovenes, Europeans).

Ambivalence (on a Media Cultural Tradition)

Discussed above is thus a twofold construction of the US (the neutral and the 'personal' US) and its generation of *multiple identification positions* – how should one then interpret this *ambivalent* treatment of the US from a media cultural or media structural perspective? The processes of plurality should be placed at the centre of analytic attention, and consequently, the fact that the media provide their audiences with a *market* of different solu-

tions on how to relate to the US. First and foremost, the presence of plurality makes it necessary to formulate the question whether this is a case of, what has elsewhere been defined as, media *reflexivity*? Should one consider this as an example of the increasing 'self-consciousness' of the mass media, where the mass media explicitly want to demonstrate their ability to liberate themselves from propagandistic pro-Americanism in terms of providing their audiences with a rather plural and complex picture of political reality? For certain, at least in the Swedish case, one should take into consideration that each and every new conflict with American involvement (from Vietnam to the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and so forth) has generated critique of the mainstream mass media for being too propagandistic, which then may have stimulated attempts among the media to 'repair' previous mistakes. However, according to my interpretation, one should still avoid considering this simply as an example of the general trend of 'reflexive consciousness' among 'second modernity' institutions (Beck, Bonss & Lau 2003). This explicit ambivalence towards the US is partly *something else* as it is rather the result of particular historic conditions. More precisely, it concerns the historic relationship between the US and Europe and the way in which this relationship has developed due to the controversial post-war foreign policy of the US, due to the economic world superiority of the US as well as due to the world hegemonic aspirations of the US in the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall (Debray 2001, Sardar & Davids 2002). Consequently, certain concrete political and economic conditions have transformed ambivalence towards the US into a well-known *tradition*. In this media coverage, then, this socio-culturally established tradition operates through the plural and *complex* treatment of the US, in terms of the generous inclusion of material for negotiating with, as well as opposing, US hegemony (defined as *voluntary identification* and *disidentification*).

From a media cultural perspective, these 'energies' of ambivalence towards the US are continuously practised in various reception contexts. For example, is not American media culture as such (films, television, news etc.) defined by its ability to somehow *simultaneously* generate pleasure *and* strong criticism? To begin with, Adorno and Horkheimer (1944) as well as representatives of the cultural imperialist thesis (Schiller 1972) once assumed that the American culture industry would colonise the minds of the media audiences, abolish autonomous thinking, and in the long run, the possibilities of a pluralistic democratic system as such. However, for the last thirty years it has in various ways been shown that these processes are rather more complex and that the media audiences are able to produce a great deal of interpretative autonomy (Hall 1980) and ambivalence (Höijer & Olausson 2003). In media culture in general there is rather a *tradition* of 'practising' ambivalence towards the US, of 'negotiating' with its ideology and culture, and this takes place, not least in terms of what could be defined as the *standardisation of counter-hegemonic attitudes*, regardless of whether it concerns critical interpretations of such texts as the *Oscar Awards*, *CNN* or the *Jay Leno Show*.

Furthermore, American texts such as *Top Gun, Independence Day* or *Deep Impact* – are not these texts somehow explicitly 'begging' for critical interpretations? Even though oppositional reactions of such texts might generate relevant critique of the US policy and culture, the point is that counter-hegemonic interpretations of this kind might nowadays rather be considered as *pre-determined* or at least *expected*. The hypothesis in this context is that the market value of US propagandistic texts such as *Independence Day* partly depends on their ability to also satisfy certain counter-hegemonic interpretative 'needs' among certain consumer groups (not least among non-American ones). The exaggeration of patriotism and hegemonic attitudes (the US-rules-the-world mentality), complemented with technological spectacle, is an essential ingredient of the manufactured text, generating happiness and satisfaction for some, and a more critical mode of enjoyment for others based on irony and cynical distance (Sloterdijk 1988). At the same time one could possibly – in order to connect to the mechanism of ambivalence – also imagine a *mixture* of these different positions within the mind of one and the same interpreter (enjoyment *and* critique, or critique as the actual enjoyment).

Does not all this also indicate that the actual *meaning* of 'the US' is fundamentally split and ambivalent? Every possible power or hegemonic rule is necessarily connoting certain conditions. The 'EU' connotes bureaucratic nightmare, 'Stalinism' connotes terror while 'Osama Bin Laden' connotes pure evil. Noteworthy is the fact that these connotations do not generate 'diverse meanings' and complexity, and therefore there is no ambivalence. That is to say, Osama Bin Laden *is* Evil and *that is it* (according to the Western stereotype). In comparison with these examples, the US stands out from the rest, as, in fact, even the most 'basic' meaning of the US, the *denotative meaning,* seems to be rather split. The US is denoting freedom *and* repression, imperialism *and* democracy, while being fundamentally associated with annoyance *and* pleasure. This ambivalent condition of the very meaning of the US is then 'practised' in the actual 'usage' of various American media texts. For example, *Deep Impact* is an annoyingly patriotic text although simultaneously it is a provider of enjoyable technological spectacle as well as of *counter-hegemonic pleasure*, stimulating oppositional reactions and ironic comments. This condition by necessity brings us to Fiske (1989) and his thesis on the popular text. Fiske, mainly inspired by Gramsci, claims that the popularity of a text is dependent on its ability to generate *polysemy*, that is to say, to generate a plurality of different meanings, attracting different desires and preferences among different groups or identities. Thus, the point here is to consider the US as popular text of the most polysemic kind. If we follow Fiske, this text – the US – is not popular in terms of being a text appreciated and loved by more or less everybody. It is rather popular in a more fundamental way; it is a popular text due to its ability to generate mixed feelings, diverse and contradictory reactions; constantly stirring up emotions in various directions (admiration, jealousy, anger, hate etc.). Polysemy, then, is what activates ambivalence; it is the thing that makes ambivalence 'work'.

This Cultural 'Thing' or 'Personality' (the US)

The spectra of various identity-positions (on the US) make this media coverage seem less hegemonic and propagandistic. These concepts – ambivalence, plurality, polysemy – all indicate that the media texts are relatively 'open'. However, and this is the central suggestion in this context, the critical energy stimulated by this 'textual openness' may rather counteract its own purpose. It might rather stimulate capitalist status quo. In this media analytic case there is a tendency of exactly this condition, and this is due to the fact that the mass media stimulate *fixation* on the US. The suggested point here is the following: the media texts on 9/11 *are* undoubtedly diverse and 'open', although they are 'open' strictly in terms of providing us with various or multiple solutions on how to deal with the US (to what an extent should one identify with the US?). Therefore, irrespective of this 'openness', the mass media are still somehow closing or suturing the discourse due to this fixation on the US itself. The mass media transform the question of *identification* into a matter of identifying or disidentifying with 'them' (the US), instead of navigating the discourse towards the fundamental question on *whether or not 'we' identify with the hegemonic structures that rather include the US as well as ourselves* ('us' the Swedes, Slovenes, Europeans), that is to say, the Western capitalist system.

On the one hand it is true that the mass media actually construct a 'we' world, placing the US and the rest of the Western world under the same ideological roof. Consequently, it is correct that the mass media emphasise that this was not an attack explicitly against 'them' (the US) but also against 'us' (the Slovenes or Swedes as well, the 'open' liberal democratic world etc.). On the other hand one should observe more closely the character of this actual 'we'. More precisely, the interesting thing is the fact that this unifying 'we' appears in the mass media only when the non-controversial and positive aspects of this 'we-world' are emphasised: '…the open, democratic society' or '…the civilised world', while, on the other hand, the negative and dark side of this Western 'we-world' is rather represented by the US – *alone*. When the mass media construct and deal with the conditions of world *hegemony*, hegemony is not primarily 'us' (the Western culture, the capitalist system) but exclusively 'them' (the US, the US policy). Furthermore, then, this fixation on the US not least appears due to the fact that the mass media make 'counter-hegemonic' resistance and opposition strictly a matter of disidentifying with this defined cultural 'thing' (the US).

The problem here mainly concerns the way in which the mass media *disconnect* the natural link between the US and what the US basically represents (the world capitalist system). The omnipotent *presence* of this 'identifying or disidentifying with the US' simultaneously 'causes' the *absence* of a media discourse in which the US could potentially appear, not as an autonomous cultural 'thing' (as something in itself), but rather as an cogwheel within the capitalist system as a whole; as a representative of a structural condition. The more the media explicitly identify 'them' (the US) as Hegemony, as the one

and only 'bad' Western party or actor 'involved' in this terror event, the more this automatically draws attention away from the structures of capitalism.

One might put it like this: The mass media go for *agency* rather than for *structure*. On the one hand the US is an independent *agent* with a great deal of power, strength and personal ambitions, while, on the other hand the US is rather an 'aspect' of a *structural condition* (the capitalist system) – a structural condition that could potentially be brought to the fore as relevant *material* for further interpretations and explanations of the terror attacks (discourse on the relation between terrorism and the state of world capitalism). As a suggestion, let us imagine the following discursive situation. If one is exclusively talking about structures, this talk will sooner or later become irrational and meaningless. In order to obtain the status as a legitimate discourse participant, one is somehow *forced* to provide the structures with human faces and actors. One cannot talk about capitalist structures in some exclusively abstract manner in which the agents involved in the reproduction of the structures are somehow excluded from the discourse. This seems to be a fundamental cognitive condition that one hardly can escape. On the other hand, let us say that discourse rather begins with and then continues with a discussion held strictly at the concrete, empirically obvious, level of agency – for example discussions on a particular person or a particular event. The point is that, in this context, there is no *reflex* or *ritual* to be found here that by necessity transports the discourse in a 'structural direction' – as in discourse in general, there is no fundamental need for transcending the level of agency. Consequently, in discourse and talk in general, agency is an attractive 'level' of discussion, and this is a fact, simply because agency has something structures do not have, which is character and personality. A structure is not a living being but rather the long-term effects of being; a structure is an analytical category to 'think with' while it has no distinguishable *face*. The lack of *life* and charisma among structures is what makes agency so *seductive* comparatively speaking. As far as I understand, this is why, in different political discursive contexts, discourse on a particular person, government or historic event may steal focus to the very extreme, taking over the scene to the extent that structural and abstract aspects of the discussed matter never really manage to enter the discourse. In this context one could compare the mass media with the practice of *science*. In a scientific context, the empirically observable phenomenon is by necessity interpreted and explained *structurally* – otherwise the actual thought is not valid. In the case of the mass media, on the other hand, there is no similar kind of routine or 'reflex' that by necessity transports discourse into a more 'structural direction'. In the mass media, structural explanations of social reality rather appear as *surplus meaning*. The coverage of a particular event or person could be 'complemented' by 'additional information', 'historical background', 'contextual facts' etc. *although not necessarily*. Thus it is as if in the mass media, agency always seems to win against structure, as well as the particular against the universal, the unique against the common etc. (however, this is, eventually, what fundamentally *defines* media discourse).

Consequently, this actor or agent named 'the US', is discursively more *attractive* than 'capitalist structures' as the US has undoubtedly a distinguishable character and a 'personality'. While discourse on the capitalist structures generates apathy and despair, discourse on the US tends to create 'passionate energies' in various directions (note the discourse on *ambivalence*). The US seems to be an ultimate resource for the politics of *passion*, if we make use of Chantal Mouffe's (2003) Gramsci-inspired conceptualisation. The US is a polysemic text with a fundamental ability to stir up the minds and the hearts of the surrounding world, 'doomed' or rather 'blessed' with the ability to suddenly turn otherwise slacking and lazy consumers into passionately engaged political citizens and even into anti-imperialist revolutionaries.

However, if one is referring to a psychoanalytically oriented vocabulary, the problem with the (sexual) attraction of the US seems to be how to keep ones head cool. How to stay 'rational'. It is well known that a passion somehow presupposes a certain degree of *blindness* (otherwise it is not real passion) and that a passion by necessity presupposes *total absorption in the subject/object of political criticism/desire* in which the surrounding world more or less disappears (or becomes *disconnected*). To relate this to the media coverage of the terror attacks: the mass media stimulate certain counter-hegemonic 'energies' exclusively made for engagement in this particular power (the US). Simultaneously however, in this passionate involvement with this ideological 'personality', what is disappearing – what is being *disconnected* – is the structural hegemonic conditions of world capitalism. Consequently, at the end of the day 'we' do not 'see' the abstract and structural matters anymore as 'we' have become so blinded by our passionate engagement in this unique 'personality' (the US).

To sum up, this media coverage is constructed as an *event* (9/11) provided with a defined beginning and end (rather than an ongoing process), connected to a particular *state* (the US) rather than a constant condition (world capitalism). This kind of narrative logic emphasises what has previously been defined as institutional hegemony, that is to say, the kind of thinking that exclusively focuses on how hegemony is built up in relation to well-defined events (wars, political decisions), persons (dictators, particular politicians), and entities (states, governments, organisations). Beyond or rather *underneath* this world of empirically observable phenomena there is another dimension of hegemony, previously defined as *structural hegemony*. This structural condition could certainly be 'portrayed' or 'exemplified' by particular empirical 'things' (events, individual acts etc.) but could never be entirely grasped and explained – as a totality – through the explicit gazing on particular persons (Bush), governments (the Bush administration), or states (the US). Hegemony in this strictly structural sense is rather a condition that happens all the time and everywhere, existing in total symbiosis with our day-to-day life (consumption etc.), characterised by constantly ongoing *relationships* (between people)[3].

Disconnection

> Disconnection: 'To sever or interrupt a connection'. Referring to electricity: 'To shut off the current in (an appliance) by removing its connection to a power source'[4].

Disconnection happens when a particular *representative* of a societal order (as the capitalist system) 'overtakes' or colonises a discourse to the extent that the natural link between the representative and the order is challenged. The focus on the representative *itself* 'counteracts' further consciousness on what the representative mainly represents (the overall order, system, structure etc.). This is the case in this media analytic context where the US, the representative of a structural condition (Western culture, the capitalist system), is disconnected from the reality of structures due to its particular, extrovert character (or 'personality'). This is manifested in the media discourse in terms of the generous provision of political discourse on the US itself, and more precisely, the generation of *contradictory* and *ambivalent* discourse on the US, in which the media provide the audiences with *multiple ways* of identifying and disidentifying with the US.

As an extended conclusion of this, disconnection happens when the mass media focus on subjects and objects *themselves* rather than on the *relationships* between subjects and objects. As in this particular case, where the oppositional resources and emancipative capacities of the media audiences are 'navigated' towards a defined and isolated object (*the US itself*) rather than towards the *relationships* between necessary interwoven matters such as the US, Western Culture, the capitalist system, consumption, the exploitation of the Third World – *me as a consumer*[5].

Notes

1. This matter touches upon the traditional philosophical discourse on the relation between the universal and particular. Regarding the universalism-particularism debate, see for example Butler, Laclau & Zizek (2000).
2. This qualitative analysis is part of a larger critical discourse analytic study regarding the media coverage from the terror attacks in *Dagens Nyheter* and *Delo* (September 12, 13 and 14, 2001), originally consisting of 256 articles (177 from DN and 79 from Delo). The analysis includes all kinds of published articles (not only regular 'foreign news' articles). The empirical material is within different defined ideological themes. In this context, the theme concerns the media discursive construction of the US. That is to say, this particular analysis consists of the articles that could be related to this theme. For a more detailed description of the method and the ways in which the articles are (systematically) analysed, see Berglez (2000). For a more general view of the theoretical-methodological approach, see Berglez (2001).
3. See footnote 5.
4. From http://www.yourdictionary.com/
5. There is a strong connection here to the Marxist thesis on commodity fetishism and particularly the way in which Althusser (1971) discusses these matters: Ideology is not unmasked until the clarification of the *relations* between 'men' and their 'things', or if we refer to

the suggestion from Althusser, the relations between 'things' and their 'men' has been made (see Althusser 1971/2001, 158).

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* In the main text date references are given with the American English standard format. However, in references to quoted newspaper material the British Engish format is applied.

Chapter 15

Warfare and Dual Vision in Media Discourse

Elisabeth Eide

February 2002. I switch to BBC World to get the latest news, a routine I have followed for many years as a necessary supplement (sometimes corrective) to Norwegian media. A guerrilla organisation in Nepal has revolted. The reporter's voice tells that the government is crushing the uprising. And here we find this special expression; *mop up*, applied to describe the job that has to be done. It is related to *flush out*, both of them have been used time and again by the military and political leaders in the U.S. during the war in Afghanistan. The reporter in this case appropriated such an expression. In Nepal a cleansing is going on. As in Afghanistan, where the 'cleansing' seems to develop into a long-term project.

Before, a frequently heard expression was to 'smoke out' the enemy. It is still used, together with the new, more sanitary ones. *Smoke out* is an expression from the hunting discourse. One puts fire to one of the entrances of the fox's hideout, and thereby forces the fox to escape through the other one. And the fox is a smart animal: The enemy is tacitly understood to be smart as a fox – and thereby more respected than an enemy who will be mopped up. The smoke metaphor does not in the same way imply a negative estimation of the enemy, of the 'unknown Other'.

The dirt (connected to *mop*, applied to the rebels) on the other hand, or the human waste/excrements (connected to *flush*) has to be cleaned up, flushed out. Between the lines we understand that it is the pure cleaners, the larger Western 'we' that has to do the job. The introduction of these metaphors in international war rhetoric represents one of several contributions to a representation of the Others as worthless human beings. Such a dehumanisation is efficient in warfare. And in this process of spreading the word, reporters may also be seduced.

The Barbarian Other

During the same week BBC showed a heartbreaking reportage from Bagdhis province in Northwestern Afghanistan. The people there have been starv-

ing for a long time, and the situation has worsened after September 11th, says the reporter. We *see* that people do not have much food, even if clothes conceal the lean bodies. Families eat a grass stew of sorts. We are told that a desperate family father has promised his nine-year-old daughter and obtained the bride price – to try to keep all his dependants alive. The reporter suggests that others may do the same thing.

In one of BBC World's own trailers that week – where they demonstrate their superiority when it comes to reporting from all corners of the world – just a short fragment of the Bagdhis reportage is cut out: Hunger is rampant in Afghanistan; *"and now they are selling their daughters"*. It may be read: Oh yes, those barbarians, this is the way *they* are. Whereas the full reportage contextualised the desperate acts of the hunger-stricken Afghans, the BBC-trailer only showed an irrational deed. With such trailers and metaphors of cleanliness journalism may contribute to an increased gap between a presumed *us* and the 'distant Others', communicating *their* lives as having a lower value than Western victims or Western élite soldiers.

The Hierarchies of Orientalism

The exiled Palestinian Edward Said, writes of an *orientalist* way of representing the Other (Said 1995). According to Said this representation is built on political hegemony. Researchers, writers, travel writers and journalists who travelled to the world East and South of Europe, represented the Others as belonging below 'us' on an imaginary ladder of evolution. *They* were despots, *we* democrats, *they* despised the individual and enhanced the collective, while *we* defended the individual; *they* lived in a static and unchangeable past while *we* were continuously developing, both technologically and spiritually. According to Said this way of representation also was well fit to legitimise colonial injustices and military violence.

The Kenyan author Ngugi wa Thiongo writes that the many denigrating representations of the 'West's Others' contributed to the way in which the Others, in this case African people, saw their own cultures as a "Wasteland of non-achievements" (Shohat & Stam 1994). If media representation of the non-western Others are often linked to cleansing operations and 'barbarism', we may glimpse the contours of two consequences. The Media representations may stimulate negative self-images among the Others, and dehumanisation may make it easier to gain public acceptance for a view of the necessity of Others dying for 'our' freedom.

Also in Norwegian journalism there is a hierarchical tradition in which the 'non-European Other' is represented as less 'developed', more threatening, as 'problematic population growth', as primitive and superstitious. It might be labelled a 'missionary discourse', since the message derived from many texts have to do with an 'us' having to contribute to 'their' enlightenment, as

well as material needs. This meets with opposition from more symmetrical approaches, but it is still an important tradition (Eide 2000, 2002).

The 'non-European' human being has from the early colonial days till our time been described as 'barbarian', as a contrast to 'our' civilisation and thereby easier to despise. Thus the Other becomes less human, more abstract, remote and inferior. How did these representations take shape? Among others by the way the representing and powerful people may operate with binary oppositions, *our* classical music against *their* folk music ('ethnic music'), *our* art versus *their* crafts, *our* religion versus *their* superstition (animism) (Shohat & Stam 1994). This perspective of the power of definition is important for an analysis concentrating on the media representation of the Others.

An Early Dual Vision: Montaigne

Christopher Columbus and his seafarers returned to Europe with tales of the 'wild' in what they thought of as India. These narratives legitimised their own injustices (atrocities?) and gradual colonisation. The French philosopher and essayist Michel de Montaigne represented an early voice that accused the colonisers of double standards. After having studied several of their stories, he wrote an essay; *Sur le Cannibalisme*, in which he combined comparison and reflection.

> I think there is more barbarity in eating a live than a dead man, in tearing on the rack and torturing the body of a man still full of feeling, in roasting him piecemeal and giving him to be bitten and mangled by dogs and swine (as we have not only read, but seen with fresh memory, not between old enemies, but between neighbours and fellow citizens and what is worse, under the cloak of piety and religion) than in roasting and eating him after he is dead. (English translation, Shohat & Stam 1994: 82).

Montaigne was of course referring to the Christian torturers and their barbaric treatment of the victims of Inquisition, the ones that in the view of the church leaders were witches, heretics or non-believers, another variety of the 'clean' against the 'unclean'. Almost twenty years ago I visited a very special exhibition in Rome, showing utensils of torture applied during Inquisition. It made a strong impression, and taught me that it is dangerous to see your brother's faults (or barbarism) while not seeing your own. If we are to cultivate a dual vision it seems necessary to learn more also about our own history of 'othering', and the media need to fulfil their responsibility of enlightenment. We also need to see ourselves as objects, whether we are journalists, researchers or 'experts', to adhere to what Pierre Bourdieu calls critical self-reflection. At times this amounts to seeing our own 'uncleanness'. Or to see that a conflict is not as purely 'we/them' as

the actors claim. In many families suffering from starvation, no one is willing to sell a daughter.

Identification?

Every war to a certain degree presupposes that the warring parties do not understand or see the situation of the Other, and that they bar themselves from the possibility of even slight identification with their potential victims. This must be true for the terrorists who directed their planes towards World Trade Centre and Pentagon, and also for the ones who planned the retaliation against one of the most war stricken peoples of this world. And for the ones who still plan other wars.

The media may to a certain degree contribute to degrees of identification across borders, countering the enemy images of the politicians; or they may strengthen the lack of feeling of coexistence already existing 'out there', among warriors who are taught to look at their adversaries as non-human. A one-sided focus in the media on what divides 'us' and 'them' contributes to the 'Other' not being seen as an individual. A fresh example is the strong focus in Norwegian and other Western media on raging Pakistanis taking to the streets after the first U.S. bomb raids over Afghanistan. They shouted, they burned flags and in general conducted themselves in a way easily apprehended in the West as 'non-civilised'.

One may ask: Were they just more spectacular than the majority, or were they representative of the population at large? Was this kind of reportage followed up by interviews with sober-minded Pakistani intellectuals who might have contributed to the analysis of the situation? Did the audiences learn that Pakistani men and women are able to articulate themselves in other ways than shouting and waving their fists? In this case, the media to a large degree seem to have repeated the 'horde angle' from the streets of various Arab capitals so much applied during the Gulf War of 1990-1991. The Other is represented as aggressive and irrational, as a shouting, non-reflecting collective, corresponding to mainstream Orientalist traditions.

Who is Allowed to Speak?

This 'horde tendency' in reporting is also linked to the question of who is allowed to speak, and thereby contribute to the definition of a situation through the media. Who is invited to speak by the reporters in a war situation?

When the powerful speak about peace/people down below know/there will be war/

When the powerful denounce war/ the draft papers are already written.

During the prelude of the Second World War Bertholt Brecht wrote this poem. It may be seen as a comment to the fact that the leaders had to seduce their peoples – among others through the media – by pretending that the great powers wanted to secure peace on Earth. Are such seductive measures still necessary? It may rather seem as if the strong focus on conflict in the media to a certain extent excludes or marginalises peaceful strategies and the persons who support these strategies. If most media focus one-sidedly on warfare and articulated, distinct belief in war and force as *The* solution (as opposed to negotiations, pressure and diplomacy), just speaking or writing about peaceful solutions may be perceived as acts of subversion from the leftist margins of politics or as naïve tendencies to be disregarded.

Was the war against Afghanistan unavoidable? Two journalists of the *Washington Post* describe the negotiations that took place between the U.S. government and the Taliban, concerning extradition of Osama bin Laden (Ottaway & Stevens 2001). These took place until late summer 2001. The Taliban were complicated negotiation partners, but might one still have achieved something? This question is asked by several of their sources. An important reason why these negotiations came to a halt, according to Ottaway & Stevens, was a lack of cultural understanding shown from the U.S. representatives, who totally rejected the proposals of compromise put forward by the other part – and also their way of reasoning. Of course, now we will never know if an extradition (or a co-operation leading to the capture of bin Laden) would have been possible before September 11th. This perspective – the possibility of a peaceful solution – was almost invisible in the Norwegian press. Apart from the above mentioned article, it seems to have been invisible also in the U.S. press.

We know, however, that even after substantial warfare in Afghanistan – in which thousands of civilians and thousands prisoners have been unlawfully killed – the U.S. and their allies have not been able to capture bin Laden or Taliban-leader Mullah Omar (September 2003).

Arafat and bin Laden

New images of the Enemy were quickly spread after September 11th. In Israel, on the West Bank and in Gaza, Israeli soldiers posted a constructed image of Osama bin Laden and Yassir Arafat together. For many Israeli citizens this may have functioned to strengthen their particular view of terrorism, while for the Palestinians they may rather have contributed to increased sympathy for bin Laden than hurting Arafat.

For the situation in which people live, or are forced to accept, contributes to they way in which they think. Therefore, it is important that people who work with journalism, as practitioners or as researchers, learn to know the premises for other ways of thinking, from other locations – and that we learn to see the world with other eyes than our own. More than twenty years

ago I was reminded of this necessity when visiting one of the largest Palestinian refugee camps, outside of Amman, Jordan. There, I met people who would not believe that Adolf Eichmann, tried and convicted in Jerusalem in 1961 for mass murders of Jews, was guilty. For how could it be true that the Jews had suffered as history tells, when they themselves – later – were able to cause so much suffering for them, the Palestinians? I was shocked. The irony of history may be cruel indeed. On both sides of a war one sticks to untruths and part-truths making it more difficult to see the world also from the position of the Other.

The First Casualty – and the Others

"The first casualty when war comes is the truth", U.S. senator Hiram Johnson said in 1917 (Knightley 1989). It is an abstraction – the first casualties are invariable ordinary people. Most of the people, who died during the first world war, lost their lives at the battlefield. They were soldiers. In modern warfare most of the casualties are *civilians*. This fact is a challenge for the media, in addition to the ones posed by the truth being avoided or concealed by political and military leaders. The fact that most casualties are civilians should inspire – and has inspired – reporters to think more of the civilians and their suffering, *and* to think in a more universal manner when it comes to human lives; that all human beings, all victims are of equal value. It seems unnecessary to repeat this self-evident fact, since it is also stated in the UN Charter of human rights. But when Western media are estimating what the U.S. risks at the brink of a new 'operation' (mark the surgical metaphor, in frequent use), they have repeatedly pointed at U.S. losses in the Vietnam War, without mentioning how many more Vietnamese were killed (and still are, by Agent Orange).

Such an asymmetrical representation of the value of human lives we witnessed when BBC on March the 14th 2002 told that eight U.S. soldiers were killed and 49 wounded in "action" in Afghanistan, in addition to "several Afghan allies". The latter ones – killed or wounded – were not counted. Is it so much more difficult to keep track of the 'local' casualties?

Modern wars challenge the abilities of the reporters to look behind the technology of warfare, to look for civilian casualties, both the ones directly hit by acts of war and the ones that are forced to flee, or that are traumatised or damaged for life in other ways.

The Ownership of Words: Terror and Revenge

Everybody's right to be valued represents one challenge; another one is the designations applied when people are represented. What about terror and

terrorism? In the U.S. an interesting debate has taken place in Minneapolis between a group calling themselves "Minnesotans Against Terrorism" (MAT) and the Minnesota newspaper *Star Tribune* – about the application of the word *terrorism*. MAT attacked the paper for not applying the noun terrorism often enough. The editor replied that he preferred to describe what happened, for example in the Middle East, so the audience could judge for themselves. But when asked, the editor made it clear that he reserved the word *terrorism* for "non-governmental groups". MAT, on the other hand, felt that he represented a double standard, since all attacks aimed at innocent civilians should be called terrorism.

FAIR (Fairness in Accuracy and Reporting), a network of media critics, asked MAT whether the bombing of Hiroshima should be called terrorism. They responded negatively, although the city had no military targets. The usage of weapons of mass destruction during World War II against an evil power that had engaged in mass homicide, was not something this organisation could condemn, was the official answer from MAT. In other words, the killing of civilians by a large powerful state stops being terrorism when it happens to fight an 'evil power'. In our age of globalisation, one needs to be up front when the power of definition is distributed, and thus be able to distribute labels of *good* and *evil*.

FAIR on the other hand felt that the only consistent definition of terrorism was that it has to do with planned murder of civilians to obtain political goals, regardless of the killers being supported by a state or not, and regardless of the methods of assassination. But this definition is hardly used by any mass medium, writes FAIR. For if it were, the writers of world history would have to apply terror not only when describing Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but also the U.S. support of a row of regimes in Latin America and the attacks on infrastructure in Iraq – or as a description of both sides in the war between Israel and Palestine.

Or as a description of several parts of the last war in Afghanistan?

Technology = Truth?

One special characteristic of modern media development is that "what is technology becomes truth", writes the editor of *Le Monde Diplomatique* (Ramonet 1999). When newspapers and TV channels contribute with war graphics or represent the war as a Playstation game, we are left calm and safe assured of 'our' marksmanship, which may develop into a feeling of facticity. The graphics are impressive and distinct and make an impression of systematic order. Technology also influences journalism in other ways. In modern warfare what Ramonet calls 'directification' increases. Incidents (or pseudo-incidents, as when journalists trigger some warriors to fire their kalashnikovs[1], or the plain fact that the journalist *is there* talking to the cam-

era, to us) are transmitted directly, momentarily, and thereby create a separate illusion of truth – at the same time as the direct transmittance partly makes the reporter abundant, since the 'facts' may be transmitted via hi-tech, and less by good old-fashioned legwork.

Everything is subordinate to the 'network'. Ramonet also shows how the news anchors, sitting with a "wall of screens" behind their backs, communicate an impression that "we are everywhere". And the ones who "are there" manage a truth of sorts by their mere presence, on behalf of 'us here, at home', tucked inside our safe, not-very-challenged frames of interpretation.

Reporter Deserving a Beating?

War and conquest, occupation and harassment need to be faced by a point of view that works both inwards and outwards. To understand the present world, we who are based in Europe may need to work ourselves out of a one-sided Eurocentrism, where we see ourselves as bearers of a moral excellency. We also need to see ourselves as the Others, 'down there' see us. An extreme case of this exercise of introspection is shown by *Independent's* reporter Robert Fisk, who was beaten almost unconscious by raging Afghans in a refugee camp near the Afghan-Pakistani border, in December 2001:

> And even then, I understood [them]. I couldn't blame them for what they were doing. In fact, if I were the Afghan refugees of Kila Abdullah, close to the Afghan-Pakistan border, I would have done just the same to Robert Fisk. Or any other Westerner I could find (Fisk 2001; see chapter 3).

Robert Fisk is forced to reflect over the fates of these refugees. He tries to put himself in their place, to enter the thoughts of those who have tried to survive there for years, and of the new-arrivals, who are brutally traumatised after having seen their closest kin been killed or maimed for life. Any line between 'clean' and 'unclean' is hard to draw in this case.

Edward Said writes that the voice of the intellectual is a voice in opposition, critical of the high and mighty; a voice that consequently needs a restrained and precise consciousness and a *comparative perspective*, so that the victim will not be blamed, which often happens, while the real powers are encouraged to put their will through (Said 2002).

When one's own nation and allies are at war, media researchers and critics need the entire sobriety and critical attitude recommended by Said. Which questions should then be posed to the media in such a situation? At least some of the following:

Learning from Experience?

Do the media learn from the way important facts often drowned in previous wars? Is it part of the collective consciousness to remember how the warring parties produced outright lies to gain support. The examples from the second Gulf war (1991) are well known. In Afghanistan, representatives of the 'coalition forces' have repeatedly denied civilian casualties before being forced to admit them after evidence has been produced (Herold 2001, Lamb 2001, Parry 2001). The bombing of Al Jazeera's office in Kabul, of a group of elders on their way to the Loya Jirga, and of the wedding in Urozgan, were not easily admitted. Some international press reports brought the information. On the occasion of American soldiers killing four soldiers from the Afghan national army, the U.S. have consistently told the media that the Afghan soldiers were aiming at them.

It is also necessary to issue warnings against special highly-strung reactions towards the war coverage. From Brasil a message was spread over the Internet in the days following September 11th, indicating that the cheerful Palestinians in the streets shown on TV was a ten-year-old videotape. This was a false assumption. On the other hand, Dagens Nyheter (Sweden) interviewed the woman who was especially focused in this news item, and she told that she was misinformed, claiming that if she had known about all the innocent people dying in Manhattan she would not have cheered at all. The Norwegian media did not interview her. Another myth spread by some of the war critics, was the 'news' that several thousand Jews, who had their work at WTC, should have avoided coming to work on September 11th.

We do Not Always Know …

Do reporters – during times when the situation is acute and the pressure to be first out with the news is high – have the courage to say that there are a lot of things they *do not know*? Some Norwegian media – at an early stage after September 11th – were eager to examine their own role in the coverage of terror/war. This signified a reflexive attitude supporting a critical public sphere against claims of being unambiguous and lazy. But simultaneously we observe that certain media present as facts 'information' which they do not really have access to.

In March and April 2002 U.S. soldiers and Norwegian élite troops fought side by side in the Paktia province. In various media one could read that they fought against several hundreds (some wrote several thousands) al-Qaeda soldiers who have stayed there. Others claimed that these forces might as well have been remnants of the Taliban forces, and others that it might be forces belonging to rivalling commanders and that the U.S. forces were fooled into their local hostilities. Paktia has been one of the provinces where

many commanders have resisted being on the payroll of the U.S. or the new Afghan government, and the rivalries continue (January 2003). *Washington Post* told on March 14th 2002 that their correspondent had hardly seen any dead bodies in an area where the military had earlier claimed to have killed many. In situations like this, working at the mercy of one warring party, a good portion of reserve is necessary.

Myths of War

Which myths are able to survive since they fit the 'frame of truth' belonging to one of the warring parties? I shall here mention three central myths from the war in Afghanistan:

1. Bombing for women's liberation. This has been a crucial part of the arguments for the U.S. war against Afghanistan, maybe the most crucial one. When it became evident that U.S. and their allies would not easily catch the al Qaeda and Taliban leaders, pointing at the miserable situation of Afghan women under Taliban became necessary to produce the image of victory. 'Now the burkha disappears, the women have got their freedom'; in the fall of 2001 this became one of the main narratives about the 'success' of the war.

In his speech to the U.S. Congress, President George W. Bush declared that "Today women are free…" when commenting the situation in Afghanistan. To the degree that the media accepted such allegations, it certainly helped the new leaders in Afghanistan to build up legitimacy and conceal their violent past. But images produced from the 8th of March celebration in Kabul showed the same light blue burkhas that we remember from Kabul under the Talibans. And during the meeting of the grand Afghan National Council (Loya Jirga) in June 2002, the minister of Women's Affairs, Dr. Sima Samar, was threatened by male delegates for having 'insulted Islam'.[2] Reporter Jonathan Steele called these delegates 'closet Taliban', but the situation is even more complicated. Also among the 'U.S. friends' (for example in what used to be the 'Northern Alliance') there are people who harbour strong negative feelings towards women.

On the other hand, saying that the change of power in Kabul has not meant any difference for women in the capital and other larger cities, would also be a mistake. But many women still fear for their future and have taken up a waiting attitude. This might have been better reflected in the reporting. Besides, very few commentators have been concerned with the consequences of the argument 'bombing for women's liberation'. Saudi-Arabia is to a large extent Afghanistan's ideological and practical master teacher. In this country they have for long had a 'vice and virtue' police with the same tasks as Taliban's Department for the prevention of vice and protection of virtue.[3] Death sentences are passed at an average of almost 200 a year, and accord-

ing to Amnesty International, stoning and beheading as punishment for infidelity is usual. An almost total segregation of the sexes is practised, and women are not allowed to drive a car. But in the eyes of the U.S. leaders – and in some Norwegian media – Saudi Arabia has been considered a 'moderate' state in the Middle East, and the atrocities inside its borders have only to a small extent been highlighted.

The women being silenced – again: Which voices were heard in the media at home about Afghan women? A part of a critical media analysis (and of a dual vision, reflexive journalism) is to see through the polarised representation of 'good guys' and 'bad guys'. In the war against Afghanistan President Bush and his allies quickly appointed the Northern Alliance as "our friends", and the media did not sufficiently analyse who these 'friends' were and where they came from. However, 'out there' lived persons who could have told them – if they had been asked. The radical women's organisation RAWA, that contributed to one of the most shown TV-documentaries about the Taliban (*Beneath the veil*) by secretly videotaping an execution at Kabul stadium[4], lost attention after 7th of October 2001, when USA attacked Afghanistan. By mainstream media they were not considered a valuable source of information regarding the years of mujahideen rule in Kabul, in spite of having first-hand experiences. RAWA expressed strong critical views on the Northern Alliance when they, aided by U.S. bombing, took power in Kabul. These views may have corresponded badly with the dominating images presented of 'friends' and 'enemies' during and after the capturing of Kabul in November 2001. To this day, RAWA operates illegally both in Kabul and other Afghan cities, as I could witness when visiting the country in March 2003.

In general, women's voices are often ignored both in peace and war. An American media professor has introduced the notion "symbolic annihilation" (Tuchman 1978) to illustrate the general marginalisation of women in the media. This war is no exception. On November 7th 2001, Afghan Women's Network, an umbrella organisation for 19 women's organisation in and around Peshawar, issued an appeal of stop to the warfare – also the warfare of the U.S. forces and their allies.[5] They asked the international community to take the situation of Afghan civilians into consideration. Their pleas attracted little media attention. It is also striking that none of the large newspapers of Oslo covered the 8th of March rally in Oslo or interviewed one of the main speakers, the leader of Afghan Women's Network, Khurshid Noori. It seems as if the media, with a few exceptions, were more concerned with the myths and allegations *about* Afghan women than listening *to* them, at least when what they said did not correspond with the general 'wisdom' of the war.

2. Accurate targeting: The myth of surgical accuracy during U.S. bombardment is a remnant from the second Gulf War 1991. In its aftermath, it was solidly refuted. According to Pentagon's own statistics, only around seven per cent of the bombs over Iraq were of the 'smart' category, from which one would expect a great accuracy, and even among them, twenty per cent

missed their target (Ottosen 1994). No single source has been able to produce an accurate number of the civilian casualties from the recent war in Afghanistan, but even conservative estimates today reckon the number already in 2001 exceeded the number of Americans being killed in World Trade Centre and Pentagon. In addition come all those who lost their lives when fleeing the bombardment, or due to lack of humanitarian aid, or due to the miserable conditions of the new refugee camps being filled beyond capacity. UN sources estimate that between 100 000 and 200 000 people became refugees as a result of the bombing, while before October 7th, there were already almost 900 000 internal refugees in Afghanistan. Among people living under such extreme conditions, the death rate is far beyond the 'normal' one, which in Afghanistan is among the highest in the world.

3. Humanitarian assistance – stopped by whom? When did assistance reach the needy ones? A third myth is that during Taliban the humanitarian aid work was much more complicated than after the U.S. started their warfare. It is impossible to confirm or contradict this myth. It may be closer to the truth to say that humanitarian assistance was not easy during Taliban, but the armed, self-appointed 'custom officers' and commanders now having it their way at border posts and highway checkpoints, were not there then. The new refugee flow after the bombing, and the U.S. need for border control to catch up with al-Qaeda, created a situation with partly closed borders. The closure of the borders in the north-west between Turkmenistan and Afghanistan had serious consequences, since the people in those areas depended on cross-border assistance, living in areas strongly affected by drought and hunger. The ones who had enough strength, found their way into the overcrowded refugee camps in Herat, where many died. Others stayed behind, and no one knows how many of them died and are still dying in these areas, but reporters from British newspapers have suggested the numbers are substantial (Lamb 2001).

Non-Disclosure Better than Lies?

According to Aldous Huxley the greatest triumph of propaganda is to kill the truth by silence. It may well hold true that telling lies is a poorer strategy than holding one's tongue on certain issues, simply because a lie is more easily exposed? An important question, therefore, is what space is allotted to what exists *underneath* and *behind* the daily news. Events and circumstances, which may contribute to explain acts of war, might easily drown in the daily routines of press conferences of the powerful and the sorties of the warriors. This also corresponds with a more general tendency in the media of *clustering*, in which the coverage of one event often becomes so massive that it threatens to overshadow others. In December 1989 the media cover-

age of the fight against Ceaucescu and his fall in Romania to a large degree overshadowed the U.S. invasion of Panama, which took place at the same time.

This has to do not only with events, but also with background information and historical knowledge, that is, with whether the media should provide for the citizens a foundation for explanation and interpretation of the events that become news. Some of this information has found very little attention in the Norwegian press.

Bin Laden and his background: It is more than likely that bin Laden is one of the main brains behind the terror of September 11th. But how about the larger scene? 15 out of the 18 suicide bombers were of Saudi Arabian origin. How important is this fact in a contribution to explain what happened on September 11th? In Norwegian newspapers we have to a very limited extent read about the humiliation of Saudi-Arabia represented by the presence of permanent U.S. military presence (20 000 soldiers), established during the Gulf War. Little emphasis has been made of the fact that Osama bin Laden proposed a strategy for helping Kuwait out of Iraq's claws, based among others on forces with experience from Afghanistan – as an alternative to inviting in the U.S.

How important are these historic events and facts to understand the motivations behind the acts of terror on September 11th? How was the potential created that made it easy for bin Laden to recruit young men who are willing to sacrifice their lives and take with them several thousands of innocents? In the war between Israel and Palestine we have observed this at close range: The more manifold and massive the oppression, the more suicide bombers, and then again, more blind attacks on the Palestinian refugees, this seems to be the conclusion of peace-longing writers, both of Palestinian and Israeli background.

Sudan and Libya: Next question is: Given that Osama bin Laden is as central a person to the recent history as presumed, what options were there, prior to September 11th, for the U.S. and its Western allies to get hold of him at an earlier stage? Two French journalists show that both governments of Sudan and Libya were eager to co-operate with Western forces to find him – at the time when he resided in Sudan (and financed/supported a terrorist group in Libya, aiming at President Ghadafi, who had denied him asylum (Brisard & Dasquié 2001)). But nobody seemed interested. The problem by then was that British MI5 had connections with bin Laden's terrorist group, they were seen as possible allies against arch enemy Ghadafi, according to the French journalists. Five months *before* the terrorist attacks on the U.S. embassies in Dar-es-Salam and Nairobi[6] in September 1998, Ghadafi contacted Interpol to initiate a search for bin Laden, suspected for murder and illegal possession of arms. Nothing happened.

al Qaeda = Taliban? After September 11th, the media have concentrated little effort on in-depth analysis of the relationship between the Taliban and al-Qaeda and in-between the Taliban themselves. Bin Laden had close ties with the supreme Taliban leader Mullah Omar, but several sources suggest that there were other Taliban-leaders who did not appreciate their friendship nor the Arab presence and influence in Afghanistan. And if one is to believe the two above mentioned *Washington Post*-journalists, the negotiators of Taliban were willing to surrender bin Laden – provided certain conditions were met – in their meetings with the U.S. negotiators. The journalists quote experts who claim that the U.S. was not able to see what kind of concessions was required to actually deliver the man. That the Taliban regime seemed to crumble so easily, may among other thing be due to the fact that many outside of the firm centre (which did not even include the whole government) were what may be labelled 'situational Taliban'. Some joined their ranks because they were tired of the contradictions plaguing the previous mujahideen government, some because they were Pashtun and did not like the Tajik dominance in the government. Still others joined because they believed that Taliban would provide peace and security by disarming all warriors and put an end to highway robbery which had made all travelling extremely dangerous.

Do all these people deserve to die due to their choices, their delusions? Many (also here we do not know the exact number) ordinary Taliban soldiers have died due to subhuman prison conditions. Some of them are not Afghans, but this does not necessarily mean that all of them are members of al-Qaeda. Without nuances the U.S. and their allies' 'license to kill' has been enlarged to comprise all those who have supported the Taliban. If we for a moment try to put ourselves in the place of the Other and tries to imagine how poor Pakistani families have delivered their young boys to religious schools to give them a future of sorts, we may perhaps be able to see that also on this other side of the war, there are victims. This perspective has been rather absent in the media coverage of the war. A good exception is a *Newsweek* cover story on mass graves for hundreds of Taliban soldiers who were suffocated during transportation after the fall of Kunduz in november 2001. The Americans were there with team 595 from Fifth Special Forces, and *Newsweek* asks a timely question of whether this is not also *'our'* responsibility. This was followed up by a film documenting that General Dostum, one of the central Northern Alliance commanders, were responsible for the killing of more than 3000 soldiers, presumably buried in Dasht-e-Leila, near Shibergan (filmed by Jamie Doran, 2002)[7].

Background and Foreground

Discourse analyst Norman Fairclough applies a scale between what 'is there' and what disappears in a model for examining media texts. The scale starts

with 'absent', via 'presupposed' and 'backgrounded' – to what is foregrounded. All texts are combinations of such explicit and implicit meanings (Fairclough 1995:106). Also in what is 'not there' or overshadowed, one may find meaning. The lowest step is absence. Often, the historical context will be absent from media representation, for example Afghanistan's past or the fight for control over the oil resources in Central Asia.

The next step is what is presupposed when addressing a certain audience. This is what the writer and the reader of a text are supposed to share, agree upon. For examples when several media presuppose that the audience share a certain view of the U.S. (or a larger 'we') as a represent of the good, common sense, civilisation – in contradistinction the Other's barbarism. The above mentioned article written by Robert Fisk tries to break this presupposition – by analysing a seemingly 'barbarian' attack on his own person – and surprises the reader by saying that he – in contradistinction to in their place (being poor refugees suffering from deprivation and bombardments) would have done the same thing. Another tacit presupposition is when the politicians (often helped by the media) represent a conflict as being impossible to solve without violence or outright war, and thus assume that the fight against terror has to be won with rough cleansing utensils ('mopping' and 'flushing', with heavy weaponry), not at the negotiation table. In this way, the peaceful alternatives are marginalised. An example from the Norwegian press: In an article about the failure of interrogation in Guantanamo Bay, a reporter writes about unqualified translators and leaders of interrogation:

> This failure results in the military prosecution authority not having sufficient evidence against the individual prisoner to present a valid accusation for war crimes (Dagbladet 24.04.2002).

Implicit in this innocent sentence there is a presupposition: That all prisoners of Camp X-ray on Cuba are 'guilty': it is only the incompetence of the prosecutors that causes a problem. This way of explaining the story is surely widespread in U.S. media. But here it seems as an explanation authorised by the reporter.

Next step is those events or persons that are visible, but still backgrounded. A perspective that has been backgrounded from October 7th 2001, when U.S. and allies began their bombing of Afghanistan, is the Afghan women's perspective. To point at the burkha-clad women in the streets of Kabul and use these images to defend an attack served a purpose, but if one had interviewed more women, other critical perspectives might have occurred, as I have discussed above. It would also occur to the audiences that not all Afghan women are illiterate and totally at the mercy of their men – there are many strong, highly educated and articulate women in Afghanistan.

And at the top of the ladder: the perspective that is foregrounded. In Norwegian media, especially after Norwegian units were mobilised in support of

the U.S., this perspective remains largely Western. With the TV medium playing a dominant role, as happens especially during representations of warfare, also the reporters themselves are heavily foregrounded (in dangerous situations, clad in bullet-proof vests). Often these are the only voices we get to hear, or they may be supplemented with the voices of elite persons.

Invisible Killings: Uranium Weapons

To report on the more invisible and long-term sides of a war represents a special challenge. The reports on the consequences of the usage of depleted uranium (DU) during the Gulf war, were filed several years after the war was 'concluded'[8]. Some reporters and experts have linked the substantial increase in cancer cases in the Basra area, Southern Iraq, to the massive usage of missiles armed with DU, in the spring of 1991. In addition, doctors report significant increase of stillborn or deformed babies. That the U.S. has used some kind of uranium weapons also in the war against Afghanistan, now seems established. According to *Le Monde Diplomatique* they may have used newer and larger bombs with more varieties of uranium than was used during the wars in Iraq, Bosnia and Kosovo (Parsons 2002). The uranium dust may not be seen, and the medical consequences are mostly not immediate. Thereby the media face the extra challenge of illustrating and explaining these phenomena. The Japanese journalist Akira Tashiro, born and raised in Hiroshima, is one of the few media persons who, through broad-based investigative journalism has documented alleged results of DU. He has met with war victims, soldiers and people living in the war zones – in Iraq, Kosovo, Serbia and Bosnia – and with workers employed at the factories producing DU-weapons. He concludes:

> My primary finding is that, while DU munitions are certainly not comparable to bombs involving nuclear fission or fusion, they are made of radioactive waste and are similar to nuclear weapons in that their effects on human bodies persist long after the end of the battle in which they are used. My coverage of this story removed whatever doubt I may have had. These weapons are cruel and inhumane and should be banned (Tashiro 2001:142).

Defence politicians and military spokespersons have tried to transfer the burden of proof to the critics when it comes to eventual dangers caused by the usage of DU arms. They have emphasised that the soldiers taking part in the Gulf war were also exposed to other poisonous pollution. Tashiro argues that he has found health damages also among people working at the factories where these weapons have been produced. The Norwegian press has to a very limited extent covered the use of DU weapons. A timely question might be if the burden of proof should be the responsibility of the warriors

– and ought one not to ban these weapons when the medical consequences of the usage is at least strongly disputed, that is; let the civilians who do not even know what they may risk, have the benefit of doubt?

One journalist in Norway, Ingeborg Eliassen in *Stavanger Aftenblad* – a large regional newspaper – has worked systematically on this case, interviewing Norwegian veterans from the Gulf war. Of hundred interviewees 47 had health problems ten years after the war. Her reporting has contributed to a debate about the usage of DU in warfare, but her stories were little commented upon by nation wide media (Ottosen 2001:225).

Although it is still denied by some war officials, it seems more than likely that uranium weapons have been applied in the war against Afghanistan. Uranium Medical Research Centre reports from two field trips to Afghanistan, that they found "abnormally high concentrations of *Non-depleted Uranium* (NU)" in the urine of a number of people in several areas of the country (Durakovic 2002, 2003). A question in need of investigation, and also asked by Parsons above, is whether the U.S. have partly replaced DU by other, experimental kinds of Uranium enriched weapons.

The Bombing of Al Jazeera

Philip Knightley holds the war in Vietnam to be the last 'uncontrollable' war when it comes to media coverage. Censorship was not fully in place, it was easy also for young freelancers to travel in Vietnam gathering evidence of the war. Thus, this war represents in the history a negative example for the U.S. regarding media control. Increased vigilance, pool-arrangements and censorship have been the remedies for "improvement".

Which media have been considered 'clean' in the corridors of the powerful? Which media have been considered threats? In recent history we have seen how national media have been bombed during war. The bombing of the Yugoslav TV station in Belgrade was part of U.S. war strategy against the regime in Belgrade. Bombing the Palestinian TV-station in January 2002 must have been an essential part of Ariel Sharon's strategy. In Afghanistan, the Taliban did not even have a TV-station, since they rejected live images as blasphemy. But the Arabian channel Al Jazeera was able to send images from Kabul and other Taliban-controlled areas – in one period this TV- station was the only one on the Taliban scene.[9]

The bombing of Al Jazeera's office in Kabul in mid-November 2001 went by largely unnoticed by Norwegian media, even if a BBC-reporter (William Reeve) staying in the same street, almost got hit. Spokesmen of Al Jazeera naturally reacted strongly and claimed they had alerted the U.S. about their whereabouts in Kabul, to avoid an attack. Still, their house was bombed. BBC has worked to find out more about the background of this event. The U.S. have repeatedly claimed that there were al-Qaeda members residing in

the same building as Al Jazeera, but without being able to prove their allegations. Rear Admiral Craig Quigley tells BBC that if "there is a legitimate target near a broadcasting unit, this fact will not prevent us at all when it comes to take out our legitimate target. Not at all."[10] The question remains: May an Arabian TV- station be considered a 'legitimate target'?

BBC's correspondent says that this new Pentagon policy increases the dangers of war reporting drastically, since war coverage often has to do with being near the warring parties. Besides, it was not only Al Jazeera being threatened by the bomb attack, but several international TV-stations – German, Australian and Turkish, all transmitting their stories through Al Jazeera's office. Al Jazeera spokesmen say they forbade their correspondents every kind of contact with al-Qaeda, but that they, while Taliban were still in power in Kabul, had to have a certain contact with the regime. During the Gulf war CNN's Peter Arnett was praised and became famous for reporting on the U.S. bombardment of Baghdad. Is this the kind of reporting that the U.S. does not want in the future? BBC writes that with these new warnings from Pentagon, news agencies fear that the U.S. military intelligence may after September 11th see this kind of legitimate journalism as a 'military significant' activity, especially if the reporting indicates contact with the 'enemy'.

The situation repeated itself in Baghdad in the spring of 2003, with the killing of two reporters from Al Jazeera, and here, also other, Western journalists came under attack. During the Nordic TV days in Bergen in June 2002, a representative of CNN refused being in a panel together with a representative of Al Jazeera, an obvious attempt at marginalising this TV-channel, probably one of the freest and most modern in the Arab world.

These pieces of history shed light on the declared and official plan of the U.S. of investing some billion dollars in an Arab TV-channel which might better communicate their own 'truths'. These plans have also been largely ignored in Norwegian media, but are strong evidence of how highly warring parties estimate the media. In Afghanistan, the U.S. forces have created their own radio station at the Baghram base (outside of Kabul), from where they broadcast continuous stories of Taliban atrocities and thereby 'legitimising' their own presence, to the Afghan population.

Poverty, Oil and Humiliation

Simplified 'truths' always represent misinformation, regardless of where they originate. Poverty is not the only – may be not even the most important – cause of terrorism. Lack of prospects for the future may be more relevant, as seen with the Palestinian suicide bombers. To observe a rich and powerful state in the Middle East becoming more of a puppet for the U.S., pursuing an impotent Middle East policy and accepting permanent U.S. bases, has been provocative seen with the eyes of Saudi Arabian opposition.

Humiliation, personal and national, may be an underestimated factor in explaining the high proportion of Saudi Arabian men behind the terror of September 11th. Psychologist Evelin Gerda Lindner holds that ethnicity is a less important factor behind violence and war than humiliation. She tells of her fieldwork in Somalia, where she was at first met with a lot of scepticism:

> I started talking to people about my experiences – and of theirs. I then understood that they see us from the West as arrogant and collectively responsible for the bad treatment they have experienced. Their messages were clear: "You colonise us, and then you introduce a so-called democracy, which is alien to us. Then you are surprised at seeing dictators seize power. Then you give them weapons, so that they can kill half of us, and then you come here to 'measure' our suffering. (Hammersmark 2001)

This kind of humiliation is, the way the psychologist sees it, an important cause of political extremism and terrorism. She emphasises how Nelson Mandela has turned the humiliation of the victim into something positive. But as important it is to see how the world may avoid situations in which some leaders exploit feelings of humiliation and of 'lost future' to recruit new members of terrorist networks. These perspectives have not been highlighted much in the mainstream media.

The 'great game' in Central Asia – the fight over oil resources – is one out of several explanations for the heavy engagement of the U.S. in Afghanistan. The roots of today's realities are complex. But the U.S. dependency on Saudi Arabian oil, and its corresponding vulnerability needs to be examined more in-depth. If the Saudi royal family should be overthrown, this might cause a catastrophe to the energy supplies of the U.S., that is, if they do not secure alternative reserves, as in Central Asia. Here the reserves of Turkmenistan and a pipeline through Afghanistan have great value. The American Oil Company UNOCAL has now contracted their rights in the area. For them it must have been of special significance to do business with one that knows both the company and the Afghan scene, as president Karzai. According to *Le Monde Diplomatique* (Abramovici 2002) Karzai for a period served as a consultant for the Texan Company when they negotiated with Taliban in the 1990s. It does not necessarily for ever guarantee his friendliness to the USA, but all the same it is interesting information – however not brought forward by the Norwegian media.[11]

'Our' Soldiers Participate

In the beginning of March 2002 the U.S. began a new offensive against Afghanistan after some weeks of lull. They carpet bombed an area in the southeast of Afghanistan, in which an unknown number of Taliban and al-Qaeda-soldiers – according to BBC with their families – were hiding, and where there were also civilian Afghans. Norwegian soldiers were now mobilised

to take part in the war. Such a direct involvement ought to require a high degree of national consensus – as a support to the politicians who are responsible for the decision-making. The challenge for Norwegian media increased accordingly: Were they to be a 'natural' part of such a consensus?

What we have seen so far (June 2003) is not a one-sided patriotic coverage. Critical questions have been raised concerning what it means to be under American commando and concerning the extreme secretiveness surrounding the Norwegian participation. But a critical coverage of the wider context, the new Norwegian war strategy (part of Nato's 'out-of-area', and also linked to deployment of Norwegian soldiers in Kyrgystan), is to a large extent missing in the mainstream press. The stories to be expected, of Norwegian heroic mine clearers, have been printed, while the Afghan (Other) mine personnel having long-term contracts (more than three months) and receiving far less salary – are backgrounded, according to the logic of the 'Norwegian angle'. In the beginning the strength of the Norwegian units were underlined without critical questions by some of the mainstream media, and politicians have not been much challenged by the reporters.

On the first day after the news were broken, the story about the Norwegian contribution in Afghanistan, is accompanied by photos of winter clad soldiers with backpacks and arms, or more lightly clad soldiers with advanced equipment. They may be interpreted as reassuring messages to 'us at home', communicating that the soldiers are especially trained for their purpose: "The Norwegian special soldiers are among the very best in the world when it comes to war operations in areas like Afghanistan" (VG, Norway's largest newspaper, March 5th 2002). Norwegian media have not in general shown a hysterical-patriotic attitude, but the politicians were invited to tell how worried they were for 'our' soldiers "down there".

Apart from speculations about these troops taking part in combat, there has been little coverage, since the military and political leaders are keeping the details of the 'mission' very secret.

Globalisation and Provincialism?

In May 2002 the Ministry of Defence invited a group of Norwegian journalists for a week's press excursion to Kyrgystan and Afghanistan. Their aim was to give an account of the "Norwegian contribution" in the two countries. The trip was strictly planned, leaving little room for journalistic improvisation. The journalists contributing with stories from the two countries, refrained from launching a meta-perspective telling the readers what kind of 'guided tour' they had joined. Sometimes playing with 'open cards' – informing the reader about your methodological dilemmas may help the readers better understand what limitations are behind the journalistic expressions.

We live in a part of the world in which people who want to, have plenty of access to the global-hegemonic media, CNN or BBC World – and to a great number of other international media. But the proportion of people turning to these channels regularly is small. We experience that part of the nuances in the coverage of the ongoing war found in larger Western media (for example British, German or French press, at times also *The Washington Post* or *The New York Times* – and in the media of the rest of the world) do not trickle into Norwegian media. A future challenge for Norwegian media, in the era of globalisation, is to avoid the provincialism represented by simplification and shallowness. Does the fact that Norway is a small country mean that we are less well informed and thereby less able to function as active participants in a democracy when it comes to the great and serious questions of the world's future?

Notes

1. Reporter and writer Åsne Seierstad says she witnessed this type of falsification on several occasions during her stay in Afghanistan in the autumn of 2001.
2. She is no longer a minister, and she was also dismissed as Vice President. At present she is the head of the Afghan Human Rights commission.
3. According to *Aftenposten* 18th of March 2002, a group of Saudi Arabian girl students were burnt alive when their boarding school caught fire. The vice and virtue police would not allow them out, since they were not properly clad.
4. The documentary is produced by the British-Afghan reporter Saira Shah, and was presented three times in Norwegian Public Broadcasting (NRK) during the fall of 2001)
5. Excerpts from the appeal of Afghan Women's Network: "Military actions in Afghanistan should come to an immediate halt. The anti-terror campaign should not be fought at the cost of the human rights of Afghans by these being limited or violated." …"Afghanistan should be supported in a peace process and attempts at nation building in such a way to secure the respect of all ethnic and religious groups, women and children. Afghan women must be secured a participation in the peace process. The creation of a future government in Afghanistan must come as a result of the solidarity of the people, without any form of foreign interference."
6. This may be seen as a turning point: From now on the West starts the hunt for bin Laden.
7. It may be added that collecting of such evidence is a risky business. Doran's Afghan cameraman was almost assassinated by (presumably) Dostum's gunmen, and a U.N. commission on their way to investigate the mass graves of Dasht-e-Leila, had to return, considering the situation too dangerous.
8. It is of course false to say that this war was ever 'over', since Iraq has experienced continuous bombing of its territory since 1991 till this day.
9. During the weeks between September 11th and the change of regime in Kabul, also Reuters and AFP had stringers in Kabul.
10. In an interview with BBC's Nik Gowing 08.04.2002.
11. My investigation here is built on electronic search in the archives of Norway's leading newspapers, for *Karzai* combined with *oil*.

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Chapter 16

Afghanistan: The War and the Media

Jörg Becker

Despite the fact that Afghanistan has not figured in US or World Bank statistics for years now, and that the country is so devastated after almost thirty years of war that things like economic power, production, industrial and agricultural output can scarcely be assessed, and despite the fact that less than 1% of the population owns a radio, television does not exist, and paper consumption per head of the population is as difficult to measure as the number of telephone, fax or PC connections …[1], despite the fact that all these "normal" quantitative western numerical criteria based on media and information density no longer apply, this still does not mean that functioning social communication did not exist in Afghanistan under the Taliban.

Social communication is an anthropological constant, and in the absence of western media technology it expresses itself in various forms of oral, informal and direct communication. And as numerous research studies by historians, ethnologists, regional geographers and folklorists have been able to show, these forms of communication can function in a manner that is target-group oriented, fast, precise, reliable and secure. An old Cypriot idiom rightly claims therefore that, "Two things spread rapidly: gossip and forest fire." So if western media technologies are not, not yet, or no longer known, then people's communication needs express themselves in a way that is alien to us. In Afghanistan, the people captured, documented, and processed the continuing brutality of the civil war, its inconceivable horror, and terror, tortures, insults, degradations and privations in hand-woven carpets. Traditionally, Afghanistan has had a rich and also economically important textile industry, and in that country textiles replace articles of furniture used in other places: They constitute living spaces (tents and yurts) and also decorate them; woven fabrics are used as wall hangings, prayer mats, bags, etc.

War and Peace as Reflected in Figurative Afghan Carpets is the title of a small book published in Switzerland in 2000 describing the respective carpet collection of Hans Werner Mohm.[2] The main motifs on these carpets are tanks, helicopters, fighter planes, missiles, cannons and machine guns. In addition, there are radio and radar antennae. In many cases, the heavy mili-

tary equipment of the Soviet army is set off against the light fire arms of the Afghans, or else the Soviet air force is contrasted with the Afghan ground troops. The filler motifs and ornaments on these carpets are mines, hand grenades and armoured vehicles. These Afghan war carpets blend religious and military contents (and in this they resemble the popular 19th century coloured picture prints from Epinal in Alsace/France and Neuruppin in Mecklenburg/Germany). In an unusual aesthetic comprising repetition, decoration and arabesques, this juxtaposition of war and peace patterns certainly makes more of an impression on a European observer than, for example, the motif of a crying mother warding off a bomb with her hand (as in the famous poster "No more war" by the German artist Käthe Kollwitz, 1924).

For the Afghans, these carpets fulfil the following social functions: 1. Instead of glorifying the war, they narrate it, capture it, preserve it from being repressed and forgotten. 2. The Kalashnikov carpets in particular symbolise freedom, identity and the violent jihad. They embody the striving for independence, heroic courage, masculinity, bravery. 3. When such carpets depict families fleeing with children, animals and household goods, and dead people lying by the roadside, and even thematize night air raids, then the pictorial motifs are intended to have a cathartic effect, to hopefully banish trauma. 4. Arborvitae, water and tea vessels, and above all mosques are a visual expression of the hope for peace, citations of a paradise beyond this world.

Pictorial carpets such as those from Afghanistan, but also marionettes in India or the Wayang game on Bali are expressions of traditional communication, and it is an altogether systemic blind-spot of both western politicians and western social scientists, of the western high-tech-oriented military and western secret services not to have taken account of the social relevance of such informal media and their communication in non-European countries. In Afghanistan, therefore, those same circles repeated the same systemic failure as in Iran, where they failed to estimate the social significance for the 1979 revolution of the communication network made up of 90,000 mini-bars and the pulpits in the mosques prior to the toppling of the Shah of Persia by Ayatollah Chomeini. In the perception of Afghanistan, Edward Said's thesis of Orientalism[3] is perpetuated to the point of becoming ahistorical, eternal. "Oriental" projections of wild warriors in mountain gorges, of bearded men and indomitable "tribes", differ very little from Karl May's tales *Von Bagdad nach Stambul* (From Baghdad to Istanbul, 1892).

The Afghan war carpets could have been understood in Europe and the United States as an expression of a maltreated and tortured people. And using the imagery of the German poet Andreas Gryphius' in his poem *Tränen des Vaterlands* (Tears of the Fatherland) from the time of the European Thirty Years' War of 1636, it could have been possible to say the following about Afghanistan over the past thirty years: "das vom Blut fette Schwert" (the sword thick with blood), "Türme in Glut" (towers in flames), "geschändete Jungfraun" (raped virgins), "Feuer, Pest und Tod" (fire, pestilence and death), "allzeit frisches Blut" (fresh blood everywhere), "von Leichen fast verstopfte Flut der

Ströme" (the rivers almost clogged with corpses), and, "Doch schweig ich noch von dem, was ärger als der Tod, was grimmer denn die Pest and Glut und Hungersnot: Dass auch der Seelenschatz so vielen abgezwungen." (But I will remain silent on something worse than death, worse than pestilence and fire and famine: that so many were robbed of the treasure of their souls.) Or to put it in a way that is more appropriate to the present: One could have perceived the Afghans as a people whose dignity was being severely injured and destroyed.

The Brazilian photographer Sebastiao Salgado provided a drastic description of his experiences in Afghanistan after his last visit to the country in 1996, portraying a state of affairs that lacked all meaning, perspective, identity, dignity and self-esteem: "Afghanistan was completely destabilised when the Taliban acceded to power. […] The whole population was in flight. No one was living where they had been born. Most of the radicalised Taliban are orphans of the war who grew up in camps. […] The people in the camps have no perspective. And that gives rise to great destabilisation. Here in the North we have not taken adequate account of this. It was all too far away. But now the topic has caught up with us, and we have to react. But we must react in another way than with war. The frustration is enormous. Most of the people living in the camps […] were peasants. They were driven from their fields and from their way of life, and were urbanised, even if only at the lowest level. They live in a strange city, without real houses, with neighbours who perhaps speak another language, another dialect. There is protection but it is not complete. The camps are being attacked, a lot of people are dying. The people move on from the camps to the cities, only rarely do they return to the country. I wonder if, as a result of these developments, a great deformation is not currently in progress throughout the world."[4]

Salgado, who gained fame in Germany with his exhibition "Photographs of Flight and Homeland" at the Deutsche Historisches Museum in late 2001, is right when he says that Afghanistan was so far away that we did not perceive it. Meantime it is a well-known fact, demonstrated in many scientific studies, that developing countries are as good as ignored in our mass media. Afghanistan was never "agenda setting". The German political scientist Heribert Schatz even claims to see a "new provincialism" in the German media: Over the past decades he has detected an increasing lack of interest in international themes in German television programmes.[5] If Afghanistan was still mentioned in passing, then from a selective morally-indignant perspective focussed on just two phenomena, namely, the repressed woman in her obligatory burka, and the radical-Islamist fundamentalism of bearded Taliban warriors. Such selective perception and reductionism are components of anti-Islamic enemy images in the US American and European media, which will be dealt with later at greater length.

After almost ten years of intense debate as to what cyber and/or information war is, and after the ground-breaking essay by John Arguilla and David Ronfeldt of the RAND Corporation[6] in the early 1990s, one can state that,

after the success of the wars in the Gulf, in Kosovo, Macedonia and now Afghanistan, the Afghanistan war in particular was most definitely an information war. Thus in one of his speeches, the US American president George W. Bush emphasised that knowledge was "power in the war against terrorism". In this context on October 1, 2001 the Pentagon's Quadrennial Defense Review states that, "The capacity to carry out information operations has become a core competence for the Defense Ministry". Prior to that the chief of the general staff of the US forces had written: "Information operations involve influencing enemy information and information systems, while defending one's own information and information systems."[7] At the start of the Afghanistan War, a high-ranking representative of the US American military was even more specific in the *Washington Post:* "We will lie about certain things. If this is an information war, then the bad guys will certainly lie."[8]

In terms of personnel policy, the USA's information war became manifest in the appointment of Charlotte Beers as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy in October 2001. As a former director of several advertising agencies, Beers sees her task as being particularly challenging in two ways: First, she defines her works as a 21st century version of what the USA had achieved in the Second World War, "muscle flexing" propaganda work. Second, she remains faithful to her old advertising trade when she envisions making the USA a global brand of the free, similar to a brand article like McDonald or Ivory Soap.[9]

In the Afghanistan War, propaganda, deliberate disinformation, lies, falsifications, cover-ups, manipulation, withholding of information, censorship, pressure on critical journalists and disagreeable media owners, state tapping of telecommunications, video films of fighter jets made in advance by the Pentagon etc. had finally become the norm. The extent of these activities was quite expensive: Between the end of September and the end of October 2001 alone, the USA launched three new military espionage satellites, and in just the first week of the war, all the US media together spent the additional sum of 25 million US dollars on war coverage. Against a backdrop of structurally-determined censorship, manipulation and lying, the otherwise almost sacrosanct First Amendment (freedom of expression) in the USA, and in Germany Art. 5 of the Basic Law (freedom of expression and of the press), were (factually) no longer in force. Freimut Duve, OSCE deputy for the freedom of the media, commented on that situation as follows: "Shortly after the 11 September, the state based on the rule of law came to an end in the United States and in Europe"[10]. Without there seeming to be any reason to question this, many western politicians ranked the (in itself legitimate) need for national security far ahead of respect for human rights, which, after all, is what freedom of expression is all about.

For a scholar reflecting on these connections, censorship presents a methodological problem. Can he see through the very same manipulated information that is intended to manipulate the general public? Only to a certain extent. The scholar can only break open his hermeneutic ring by using tricks – he can point to immanent contradictions and inaccuracies on the part of

the manipulators, he can work with historical and other analogies, he can process diverse, alternative information data, he can also receive the media and opinions of those opposed to the war, and, as a scholar, he possibly has at his disposal a better-qualified sense of the respective connections than the so-called man in the street – ultimately, however, in the absence of transparency he remains a part of the overall context of deception.

In terms of the information war in and around Afghanistan, the complex interplay between war and communication will be described and analysed in the following under ten headings.

Enemy Images and Dichotomies

There can be little doubt that the processing of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon on 11 September 2001 and the ensuing Afghanistan war both in the media and in the minds of the public took place on a basis of anti-Islamic enemy images for throughout history. Those enemy images formed the foil against which the media's processing of the Afghanistan War updated individual fragments of an already well-established image of Islam. This is how German philosopher Herbert Marcuse once defined the role and function of enemy images: "Language not only defines and damns the enemy, it also produces him; and this product does not represent the enemy as he really is, but rather how he must be in order that he fulfil his function for the establishment." Only a few years ago, in the 1990/91 Gulf War, anti-Islamic enemy images were updated, as analyses of the press reporting at the time show (cf. Table 1, next page) and as outlined particularly strikingly by Christina Ohde in her monograph *Der Irre von Bagdad* (The Lunatic from Baghdad)[11]. What empirical social science – in its description of the method of qualitative content analysis – calls the dimension of "involuntarily-revealed content" is evident in the so-called "slips" of the US American president and the Italian prime minister. When the one spoke of a "crusade against terrorism" and the other presumptuously claimed that western culture was superior to Islamic culture, PR advisors were able to correct these statements later and apologise, yet because of their very spontaneity these claims reveal the real, though not publicly sanctioned, thoughts of the speakers.

About a year after the US American Afghanistan War, the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, made a similar anti-Islamic Freudian "slip". Again, it was a (western[12]) state leader who involuntarily unmasked himself with an image of Islam that would seem to be fundamentally coloured by a deep hatred. After the hostage drama at a Moscow theatre led by an armed Chechen group, a French journalist at a press conference in Brussels on 11 November 2002 asked President Putin the following a question: "Are you not making war against the Chechen people under the cover of a war against terrorism?" To which Putin replied: "If you want to become a radical, welcome to Moscow. We have groups

who can carry out a circumcision on you. I will ask that group to carry out the circumcision so that you have nothing left." Of course, the official Russian interpreters quickly noticed how embarrassing Putin's reply was and simultaneously "improved" it: "Welcome to Moscow. We are a multi-religious and multinational country where everything is allowed and tolerated."[13]

While Islam scholars all over the world warn against such distorted images of Islam in the western media, pointing out almost in despair how senseless the image of Arab irrationalism, of Islamic backwardness or of a typically Islamic fundamentalism is (and also draw attention to the fact that the term fundamentalism is useless for an analysis of Islam anyway), in the meantime violence and peace researchers and social scientists have also long since been working on the construction of such anti-Islamic enemy images. In the critical processing of the Huntington Debate, this is happening first and foremost because political scientists have begun to define the two dimensions of culture and religion as irrelevant quantities in the settlement of conflicts, as no more than ideological exaggerations of social power differences. Such a view equips every Muslim with a religious non-identity. Secondly, anti-Islamic enemy image are showing up among those social scientists who apply their methods and concepts for analysing German society (quasi a-cultural and instrumentally neutral) to the analysis of non-European societies on a 1:1 basis. In a raging methodological criticism, Lena Inowlocki was thus able to prove the Bielefeld social scientist Wilhelm Heitmeyer and his book *Verlockender Fundamentalismus* (The Appeal of Fundamentalism) guilty of survey fundamentalism[14], of constructing the problem of "Turkish youths".[15]

Table 1. Friend-Enemy-Images in the British Press during the 1990/91 Gulf War

Friend	**Enemy**
We have the army, the air force, the navy /reporting instructions / communiqués.	They have a war machinery/censorship/ propaganda.
We take out/suppress/eliminate/neutralise /dig in.	They destroy/kill/creep into their holes.
We start the first attack/a preventive measure.	They start a surprise missile attack/no warning.
Our men are boys/lads.	Their men are troops/hoards.
Our boys are professional/ fight with courage/are careful/reliable/heroic/damned good/young heroes of the air/loyal/desert rats/resolute/brave.	Their troops are victims of brain washing paper tigers/cowards/despairing/in a corner/cannon fodder/bastards from Baghdad/blindly obedient/rabid dogs/ unscrupulously cruel.
Our boys are motivated by a mature sense of Duty.	Their soldiers are motivated by fear of Saddam.
Our munitions cause losses on both sides.	Their munitions cause civilian losses.
We fire precisely.	They fire at everything they see in the sky.
George Bush is in harmony with himself/ resolute/statesmanlike/confident.	Saddam Hussein is mad/stubborn/an evil tyrant/a completely mad monster.

Source: Becker, Jörg, "Kultur und Entwicklung – Gedanken nach dem Golfkrieg", in *Zeitschrift für Kulturaustausch*, No. 4/1991 p. 528.

On the German media landscape it is illustrated weeklies and magazines in particular, like *stern*, *Focus*, *Der Spiegel*, that warn against the "global power of Islam" ("Weltmacht des Islam") or "the mystery of Islam" ("Geheimnis Islam") in sensationalist cover stories and headlines. These print media achieve their impact with a mixture of pictorial idiom and symbols, threatening looking masses of people, angry men and veiled women. On 8 October 2001 the cover of *Der Spiegel* read: "Religious Madness. The Return of the Middle Ages" ("Der religiöse Wahn. Die Rückkehr des Mittelalters"). The face of Osama Bin Laden could be seen amid the burning World Trade Centre, masked soldiers with machine guns and a half moon. The *stern* followed this on 25 October 2001 with a cover page showing the small eye slit of a veiled women above hoards of warring horsemen. The text read: "New Series: The Roots of Hatred. Mohammed's Angry Heirs. 1,400 Years between Pride and Humiliation" ("Neue Serie: Die Wurzeln des Hasses. Mohammeds zornige Erben. 1,400 Jahre zwischen Stolz und Demütigung").

Der Spiegel in particular has long since ceased to be the flag ship of critical journalism which it styled itself as, on the contrary, it has become the intellectual organ of xenophobia and anti-Islamic feeling.[16] For example, the cover of issue No. 16/1996, carried a picture of a colourfully dressed young woman shouting and carrying a Turkish flag, with the headline "Foreigners and Germans: Dangerously Alien. The Failure of a Multicultural Society". ("Ausländer und Deutsche: Gefährlich fremd. Das Scheitern der multikulturellen Gesellschaft"). In front of young schoolgirls at a Koran school and a group of serious looking young boys with cudgels, the flag-waving Turkish woman becomes a symbol of nationalist incitement. Meantime, there is method in this kind of editorial behaviour at *Der Spiegel*.

In the early 1990s the psychologist Ute Gerhard drew attention to how *Der Spiegel* handles images, with particular reference to the xenophobic cover page of the issue dated 6 April 1992. The title "Asylum – The Politicians fail" ("Asyl – Die Politiker versagen") printed in large letters on a red band is mounted on a photograph showing a mass of people storming a gate guarded by two policemen. The messages are clear: "storm", "overpowered" and "the boat is full".[17] A comparison between the various cover pages on the theme of Islam in wide circulation magazines and magazine of marginal importance shows that the perceptions are similar. Even small circulation magazines like *Spektrum* or the German Bundeswehr's internal leadership magazine *Information für die Truppe* (IFDT) use the same clichés and anxiety projections as the others.

The English newspaper *The Guardian* drew attention to anti-Islamic media activities in the USA with the following example dating from 1999. When US American newspapers covered the crash of Egypt Air flight 990 over the Atlantic at the time, they were of the opinion that a fanatic Muslim pilot had committed suicide. That view taken by the US media was not even questioned when the Egyptian press published press photographs of the pilot with his daughter in front of Christian Christmas decorations.[18]

Media enemy images and bad images can have real consequences. Far in advance of 11 September 2001, the public opinion research institute EMNID indicated that Muslims in Germany meet with much greater reservations than the members of other religions. Whereas Jews were totally rejected by 11% of those questioned, Muslims were rejected by 20%.[19] For the period between 11 September and 19 October 2001 the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) in Vienna registered a significant increase in racist violence and a clear increase in hostility towards Islam in all the EU countries. And after 11 September 2001 more than half of the people in the USA were of the opinion that the enemies of the USA were "no better than animals"[20]

In its coverage of Islam after the 11 September 2001, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ)* fared more positively than *Der Spiegel*. For example, contrary to the homogenizing trend in many of the mass media, the 22 October 2001 edition of the *FAZ* carried the following reports, all of which constitute a more nuanced debate with Islam: In search of moderates in the Taliban; disapproval of the US American military attacks by the APEC countries; an altogether positive acknowledgement of the Muslim mosques in Hamburg; an endorsement of the peace plans of the Pakistan Muslim League; religious tolerance in Morocco; and a long article on Iran's religious-political balancing-act between the USA and the Islamic world. Another example is the full page article on Ignaz Goldziher, the German founder of a branch of Islamic studies, and a detailed review of a new Turkish novel, both in the culture section of the weekend edition of the *FAZ* dated 10 November 2001.

How are these differences in the Islam image of *Der Spiegel* and the *FAZ* to be explained? The reader of *Spiegel* or *stern* can be assumed to be a modern liberal – hedonistic, libertarian, metropolitan – concerned with a universalist state based on the rule of law, more a republican oriented citizen than a German, someone who regards religion as the opium of the people, a reader interested more in equality than difference, a recipient who on hearing the catchword multiculture mainly thinks of tourism, music and food. Behind the *FAZ* is a conservative reader, who from a self-assured position in a (Christian) religion can perhaps throw up a more stable bridge to Islam than the atheistic-enlightened *Spiegel* reader, a reader who as a well-off manager possibly has broader cultural experience than other people and has learnt, pragmatically, that business can also be done with people of different cultures and ethnicities. "Who dares to interpret the faith of others when his own has become alien to him?" This problem of inter-religious ethics was already familiar to Albert Schweitzer in the 1920s in far away Africa.[21] What could distinguish the *Spiegel* reader from the *FAZ* reader is the degree of alienation from the Christian faith; this could at the same time explain the difference between the images of Islam put forward in both media.

The US American secret services failed all along the line, both in connection with the overthrow of Shah Reza Pahlevi by Ayatollah Chomeini and in the run-up to the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. They failed, above all, because the Arab culture and the religion of Islam are completely

unknown to them. Even though after the Iran debacle of 1979 the US American government decided to considerably expand and promote the faculties of Oriental Studies at US American universities, these activities do not seem to have given rise to qualitatively new or better policies towards the Islamic states. There is also not much sign of a better US American foreign media policy. Whereas the US American military radio station Maanta targeted at the Somali population during the intervention in Somalia of 1993 broadcast mainly in English with not a single Somali involved in the programming, during the Afghanistan War the government of George W. Bush was obviously keen to take Muslim sensitivities into account. This was made clear by a demonstrative visit by President Bush to a US American mosque, in his speech to Congress on 21 September 2001 in which he praised the goodness and peaceableness of the teachings of Allah[22], in the fliers written in Pashtu or Dari dropped on Afghanistan which began with the slightly old-fashioned address, "To the noble people of Afghanistan", and in the contract given by the Pentagon to an advertising agency, The Rendon Group (TRG), to eliminate the impression in the media in the Islamic world that the US American military action was basically aimed at Islam. (Interestingly enough, on its Internet site the TRG Group speaks of "information as an element of power". Among the clients of TRG, apart from the US government, are the governments of Haiti, Kuwait and Panama.) Such Islam-friendly signals from the USA, however, are not bearing fruit in the Muslim world. Anyone who has no direct access to Arab and Muslim newspapers can read on the Internet how totally differently the Afghanistan War is perceived by Muslims and by people in the USA or western Europe (www.newspapers. com; www.ummah.org; www.markazdawa.org). Hatred of the USA has grown immensely – in Asia and the Near East Osama Bin Laden has become a mythical hero and pop icon like Che Guevara, visible everywhere on T-shirts and posters.

Based on the mirror image theory put forward by David J. Singer in his analyses of the enemy image in the early 1960s[23], peace researchers have known for some time that "friend" and "enemy" are evaluated as a mirror image, that they are relegated to a "good" and a "bad" camp. The late Swiss political scientist Daniel Frei summarises: "The mutual reproaches are largely similar: Each side accuses the other of striving for world dominance, of being motivated by an insatiable drive towards expansion, of not being worthy of trust, of politically exploiting the means of power, of planning a nuclear attack and of misrepresenting and slandering the respective opponent."[24] The rhetoric of US President George W. Bush is coloured by such dichotomies. In a speech to the Congress[25] he said that, "This is the battle of civilisation" and that "the civilized world is rallying around America", while the US Senate made 40 billion US dollars available for a "war against evil in the world". Federal Chancellor Gerhard Schröder seconded Bush by saying that the New York terrorist attack was a "declaration of war on civilized nations"[26]. In the *FAZ*, Günther Nonnenmacher even spoke of a "final showdown between Good and Evil"[27]. With some justification, Amartya Sen, the Indian Nobel Laureate for Econom-

ics in 1998, criticised that this dichotomising view was based on a homogenisation drive in the one or other direction which can never do justice to the countless internal differences on both sides.[28] Any such division of the world into a "civilized" and an "uncivilized" part not only widens the gaps, it also adheres to a more than fatal colonialist tradition adopted by the North towards the South. Osama Bin Laden also consolidates dichotomising thinking, as if he had read the works of David J. Singer and Daniel Frei. In one of his videos broadcast by the Al Jazeera TV station, he declared that "The world is divided into those people who were happy about the attacks on the unjust giant America and those who condemn those attacks."[29]

In her comments published in the *FAZ* the Indian writer Arundhati Roy summarised the well-grounded findings of peace research: "If Osama Bin Laden did not exist, the Americans would have to invent him. […] He is the dark double of the American president."[30] And a number of months later the Iranian president Mohammed Khatami argued in a similar fashion when he claimed that the USA and the Taliban "were the two blades of a very dangerous pair of scissors"[31]. Yet what was possible to say without reprisals in developing countries like Iran and India after 11 September 2001, was not possible in the public domain of an industrial country like Germany. When the TV commentator Ulrich Wickert compared Osama Bin Laden with George W. Bush, in an opinion column of the magazine *Max* in early October 2001, and went on to write that, "Bush is not a murderer or terrorist. But the thought structures are the same.", the conservative opposition party immediately demanded that he be dismissed from his position with the ARD television channel, whereupon Wickert exercised self-criticism. Freimut Duve saw this particular case as an occasion to express his worries about freedom of the press in Germany.[32]

The Rhetoric of War and Violence

After the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon on 11 September 2001, the language used in the western mass media became unbridled. The tone in the yellow press was particularly blood thirsty – as if intoxicated by its own war-mongering. It lacked even the merest hint of distance, doubt, and reflection. This motivated the German journalist Johannes Nitschmann to speak of a state of emergency in journalism: "The Riders of the Apocalypse are on the road. In German newspaper offices and broadcasting stations the barbaric terrorist attacks on the USA have unleashed a terrible hubris. At editors' desks, the superlative has replaced prudence. 'Let us not deceive ourselves, it is the Third World War' thundered the *Bild* newspaper. […] War rhetoric was the order of the day. In a large graph, the popular *B.Z.* newspaper in Berlin […] provided its readers with the objectively most appropriate deployment plans for a US American counter attack on Afghani-

stan."[33] Equally unbridled, indeed unbearable, was the live coverage by a WDR radio reporter from the besieged Masar-I Sharif fortification early on 25 November 2001: tank fire, detonations, nervous cries, a ringing telephone in the background, etc. What really mattered here was that the report was live, first-hand, direct.

Table 2. Headlines in the Express, Cologne and in the Hürriyet, Istanbul, from 12-23 September 2001

Day	*Express*	*Hürriyet*
12.9	War on America	Like the Third World war
13.9	Is there going to be a war?	The next day
14.9	We are behind you!	These are the murderers
15.9	400 Germans Missing	Ecevit: We will act accordingly
16.9	Catastrophe profiteers	(Not issued that day)
17.9	No Revenge!	Hand over Laden in three days, otherwise there will be war
18.9	Britney Spears cancels concert in Cologne	He flees with his four wives. Only 48 hours to go.
19.9	They are threatening Holy War	Last day for Laden
20.9	Our anti-terror commando	Atta in Istanbul
21.9	The Mass Murderer	Now he is like APO (Abdullah Öcalan)
22.9	There would be a blood-bath	They did a test flight one week previously
23.9	They are going to get him	USA: Turkey chooses us

The list (cf. Table 2) of the respective daily banner headlines on the front page of the *Express* from Cologne and *Hürriyet* from Istanbul show how particularly evident the rhetoric of war and violence was, The newspaper *Bild* screamed "The Attack" in seven centimetre-high letters on the cover of the 8 October 2001 issue, while the *Express* called on its readers to "Kill bin Laden" on 22 October 2001 in four centimetre-high letters. But because incitation to murder is normally an indictable offence, the *Express* preceded its headline by two lines in smaller letters: "President Bush. Secret order to the CIA". That the lives of friend and foe are evaluated differently in war was clear not only in that call to murder made in the yellow press, but also in the normal German press. On 12 October 2001, for example, a dpa-correspondent (Deutsche Presse Agentur – German Press Agency) wrote the following: "The missions of the long range bombers and fighter jets taking part in the air attacks were relatively lacking in risk. […] Now there has been a shift to military helicopters, special ground troops and light infantry involving the threat of loss of life."[33] Did the journalist not realise that the "threat of loss of life" already existed in phase 1 of the air attacks (indeed had to exist, in compliance with all war logic) – but "only" for the "others", of course, and not for "our own people".

On twelve successive days the most important words in the *Express,* Cologne, were: war, catastrophe, revenge, Holy War, commando, terror, murder, death and blood-bath; the parallel headlines in the Turkish *Hürriyet* were: Third World War, attack, terrorists, murder and war.

A comparison between the German and the Turkish yellow press shows a striking homogeneity in the language and views; the front page headlines were almost interchangeable. This similarity of language and view, even across borders and cultures, shows that the rhetoric of war quickly results in the blurring of differences and differing positions, the prohibition of disagreement. And if the media coverage of international politics is one dimensional, flat, lacking in contradiction, homogenous and harmonious due to the economic dominance of just four globally-operating press agencies and only two globally-operating picture agencies, then obviously this applies all the more so in times of catastrophe and war.

Immediately after the attack on New York, the US American Foreign Secretary Colin Powel declared that American "was at war" and thereby set off an unfortunate dynamism, not only in terms of international law and allied policy, but also in terms of psychology and the media. To say you were "at war" created a mass media war psychosis, goaded the expectation that military action be taken, legitimated the use of violence without any ifs and buts, and granted the terrorists a new kind of dignity, giving them the legitimacy of a "real" warring party, which they did not have until then.

Patriotic Rhetoric

On 11 September 2001 patriotic journalism made a comeback in the USA. (Had it ever really left?) It reappeared in the public domain, in the media, on television and in the newspapers, in the form of flags, bunting, wreaths and celebrations, holding hands, declarations, oaths and big speeches, emotions and tears, accusations of guilt. To the extent that, initially, these were spontaneous and direct reactions to the terrorist attacks, one would not wish to criticize them. By their very nature, reactions to shock are traumatic and thus eschew the know-all perspective of outsiders. What is more, in a debate on what is called patriotic journalism one must take into consideration the completely different cultural-political climate of patriotism and nationalism in the USA, as compared to Germany, for example. Having said this as a partial explanation and a partial excuse, nevertheless the self-assured patriotic journalism in the USA has meantime taken on pathological features.

This kind of journalism expresses just one opinion, namely, the official opinion of the US government. It is an either-or, a yes-or-no journalism. It is also a journalism of censorship and self-censorship. And it is a time of intellectual hunting, reminiscent of the agitation against "un-American activities" in the McCarthy era. The caricaturist Garry Trudeau took back his Bush cari-

catures, Barbara Streisand removed anti-Bush gags from her homepage, and Susan Sontag had to put up with being reproached with "moral confusion and strained relativisation" in a critical article she wrote[35], thus being counted among the "America haters"[36].

Patriotic journalism is also kitschy journalism – as has been known in Germany since the war journalism during the First World War. At Bloomingdale's department store a jazz band played *American the Beautiful*, in a two-page newspaper ad a famous designed sported a pullover with the US American flag, the Stars and Stripes turned up on sweet packages, wallpaper, curtains and shower curtains, and patriotic songs like the *Star Spangled Banner* in a version by Whitney Houston and *God Bless the USA* by Lee Greenwood topped the charts.[37]

A specific form of patriotic journalism was also evident in Germany in the form of a "We-are-all-Americans" attitude. Whereas at the beginning of the First World War in August 1914 the German Kaiser Wilhelm II had emphasised that he knew of no parties any more, just German brothers standing steadfastly side by side in their concern for their dear German fatherland, this same kind of "truce" became the political credo not only of Federal Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, and even more so of Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, but above all of the television stations and the press. Heribert Prantl, head of the domestic affairs section of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*: "Criticism of the American government would be possible, but it is not expressed much." He had never experienced such a lack of criticism as in the first weeks after the attacks. Instead, "the word 'war' was being used with a certain enthusiasm."[38]

Patriotic journalism in Germany was evident mainly in effusive expressions of solidarity with the USA. It became clear, for example, in a new company principle decided on at the Axel Springer publishing house under the impact of the terrorist attacks. All the employees of that media concern had to declare in writing that in future they were also in agreement with the following guideline, namely, "support of the transatlantic alliance and solidarity with the United States of America as part of the free community of values". (Since the early 1950s all employees of that publishing house have had to declare themselves willing to "support of the right of the people of Israel to exist".) The journalist Franziska Augstein made a pointed objection to the German government and the German media: "The federal government calls it solidarity, for half the globe it must sound like arse-licking. […] For all their solidarity, the German politicians [and the German media, J.B.] are unable to demonstrate that the policy of the United States holds water. The rhetoric of this war against terror is too confused and to alarming for that."[39]

Patriotic journalism brooks no digression from the right path: In German media you would need a magnifying glass to find statements like the one made by the fashion designer Wolfgang Joop, that he regarded the Twin Towers as a symbol of capitalist arrogance and did not miss them[40], or by the British novelist John Le Carré, who called Tony Blair the "eloquent white

knight of a difficult transatlantic relationship"[41]. A rare exception were the notes, even printed in red, below the headline "Contradictory Opinions on Afghanistan ("Widersprüchliche Meldungen aus Afghanistan"), i.e., the section of the *Financial Times Deutschland* where the journalistic and legal principle of *audiatur et altera pars* was taken seriously because "enemy" news reports were being printed without a commentary.

State Censorship

After September 11, 2001, what only the baddies (i.e., the others) usually do, has become common practice in the USA: state censorship, censorship-like measures, and binding agreements between private media and state authorities are now common in the media in a country where, traditionally, higher legal status is ascribed to freedom of expression than to human dignity, for example. The Grenada War of 1983 was the last US American war in which journalists were free to take part. Since the Gulf War of 1990/91, the principle applied is one of careful selection of journalists by the military. Divided into groups (so-called pool reporters), journalists are allowed to be present at carefully selected military actions. All their reports are censored before publication.

The following examples from the latest US American media policy illustrate various forms of censorship, agreement, and political pressure:

- In early October 2001, the six largest US news broadcasters decided to exercise self-censorship: ABC News, CBS News, NBC News, MSNBC, Cable News Network and Fox News Channel gave in to pressure exerted on them by the US American government not to broadcast videos of Osama Bin Laden and the terror organisation al-Qaeda in full or without a commentary. The six promised to censor possible hate tirades against the USA.[42]
- After intervention by the State Department, an interview with the Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar was not broadcast by the US American foreign radio station Voice of America.[43]
- In an explicit response to "unpatriotic" speeches by the TV announcer Bill Maher on the ABC talk show, two companies withdrew their advertising spots.[44]
- Several US American newspaper journalists were dismissed without notice by their publishers because of their criticism of the US government's conduct of the war.[45]

Such forms of censorship did not, and do not exist in Germany, yet here too mainstream journalism, as a specific form of anticipative censorship, predominated.

As regards the USA, on 15 September the publicist Susan Sontag spoke of a "false unisono in the commentaries"[46] and a month later the historian, social scientist and peace researcher Norman Birnbaum remarked that, "US democracy seems to be suspended. The media are mainly to blame for this.[…] the columnists in the most important newspaper offices apparently want to outdo each other in their martial tone. The attack on Afghanistan, that much is clear, is not enough. And so the debate is on whether Iraq, Iran or perhaps Syria should be next. […] Since 11 September US American civil society seems to have turned into a kind of religion. The president performs as the pontifex maximus, the religious teaching celebrates the sacred nation, the eschatology applies purely to today. In this blend […] everything that digresses is annoying, indeed unnatural. This applies not just to the media, but also to politics. The latter has lost all its vitality. In the Senate, all, literally all criticism of President Bush's leadership style has been silenced. There are no more debates about political views and objectives, to say nothing of debates about alternatives."[47]

Larry Flint, US American publisher and defender of press freedom, has meantime taken the US American Defence Ministry to the Supreme Court because the media had to work under restrictive, i.e., unconstitutional conditions in Afghanistan.[48]

Informational Repression

In democratic states based on the rule of law, information, communication and the media are regulated by numerous laws to the protection of: freedom of expression and freedom of the press, data protection and the right to informational self-determination, information access rights, the right of journalists to refuse to give evidence, letter and postal confidentiality – to mention just some of the most important democratic rights. All informational rights in many western industrial nations were considerably restricted and repressive measures implemented in the whole information sector as a result of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the proclaimed priority being the interests of national security over human rights. The following are some examples:

- Since the start of the Afghanistan War, open TV channels, introduced in Germany in the early 1970s to promote citizen participation, are being strictly monitored by the state media authorities, especially non-German language programmes and in particular programmes in Urdu, Arabic and Turkish.
- Since mid-November 2001, in addition to the new rights granted by the US American Congress, the US authorities are permitted to bug telephone calls and read e-mails, to listen into conversations between

defence lawyers and their clients without the permission of a judge, if there are sufficient grounds to believe that this could prevent acts of violence or terrorism.

- The US American government has drastically restricted the Freedom of Information Act which allowed citizens access to and insight into government files.

- New anti-terror laws in the US allow US prosecution authorities to apprehend foreign computer hackers even when they attack a computer outside the USA. The only legal condition that must apply for the authorities in the USA is that part of the illegal act must have taken place in the USA. The fact that during the transfer the data was routed via the USA is sufficient for this. And this applies to more than 80% of all computer communications worldwide.

- For a sum of 2 million US dollars monthly, and for an unlimited period of time, the Pentagon has secured all rights to the images taken by the world's best commercial satellite Ikonos, owned by the Space Imaging company, thereby securing an exclusive and unlimited image monopoly, so to speak, and ignoring all market laws and all ideas of media pluralism.

- In Germany, the resolution on the processing of biometric data (finger or hand prints, face geometry, eye colour, iris features, three dimensional hologram photos) for inclusion in identity papers presents great problems from the constitutional viewpoint, not because of the additional processing of an individual identity feature, but because of the associated possibility of digitally processing a whole population via the national reference files required for such procedures. Whereas in Germany it is still not sure whether such a central file will ever exist, in the USA it is already an agreed fact.

- After 11 September 2001 a database was created in Great Britain in which all the telephone and internet communications of all citizens are stored. Despite considerable reservations on the part of British data protection experts, almost all investigation authorities have meantime almost unrestricted access to the "communication-prints" of suspected persons, and not just those suspected of terrorism.

Terror strengthens the state apparatus, but, as experience has shown (especially in dealing with the Red Army Fraction in Germany in the 1970s), it does not help at all in the battle against terrorism. Instead it leads people in highly technologised societies to believe they are being protected from danger and violence (which is impossible), drastically restricts all freedoms in the information sector and usually maintains those new restrictions, even when terrorism is no longer an acute threat.

Hollywood and the Afghanistan War

Cinema is a lot of things simultaneously: fantasy, dream and nightmare, regression and anticipation, accelerator and catalyst, image machine and psychological mise-en-scène. None of the dramaturgic features of the current media processing of the terrorist attacks and the subsequent Afghanistan war are alien to cinema. Airplane attacks on skyscrapers, war against radical Muslims in Afghanistan and anti-Muslim prejudices: The Hollywood dream factory has long since been familiar with all three as ideological clichés.

Towering Inferno,1975, was a film shocker in which suicidal Muslims flew passenger planes into the Pentagon and the towers of the World Trade Centre. In John Frankenheimer's *Black Sunday*, 1977, a female Palestinian terrorist forces a pilot to fly a Zeppelin loaded with 500 kilos of plastic explosives into a crowded football stadium. In 1988 Edmund Zwick's *State of Emergency* continued that vein of horror films. A series of terrorist attacks by radical Islamists results in the imposition of martial law in the USA. Tanks roll across the Brooklyn Bridge, Arab-Americans are interned in camps. And in the film *Die Hard*, 1995, the whole of Manhattan is cordoned off after a bomb attack. In *Independence Day*, by the German director Roland Emmerich, extra-terrestrials threaten the World Trade Centre and the White House goes up in flames. And shortly before 11 September 2001, the German film director Joachim Grüninger completed an advertising film for the German telecommunications services provider Telegate in which a passenger plane pierces the billboard of a skyscraper.

Since when has Afghanistan been the subject of a film (in the northern industrial countries)? Afghanistan turns up as a monumental mountainous setting, with wild and fierce looking men, in the 1953 film *King of the Khyber Rifles* and in T*he Man Who Would Be King*, a Kipling version filmed in 1975. More exciting in the current context is, of course, *Rambo III* with Sylvester Stallone, 1987. In that film, John Rambo helps Afghan horseback warriors against the Russian invaders by bombing their fortresses and having Russian bellies full of vodka burst in front of the camera.

Only a lay person could be surprised at its blend of Hollywood and politics, film and government, reality and fantasy. The symbiosis between Hollywood and the Pentagon is particularly familiar to communications researchers and has been well documented. Between 1940 and the attack on Pearl Harbour in December 1941 alone, that is to say, in just a few months, Hollywood produced almost 40 films about the war in Europe. In the whole period from 1939 to 1945 the US American film industry produced 180 so-called anti-Nazi films (including *Casablanca* with Humphrey Bogart), while at the same time making enormous profits. It is this successful collaboration which the US American government wants to rekindle. In early November 2001, at the initiative of the Bush government and under the auspices of the Motion Picture Association, 50 representatives of the film and television studios gathered in Los Angeles to plan a support campaign for the govern-

ment. This involved advertising and entertainment films and live performances by artists for soldiers – the Walt Disney concern was the first to announce artistic activities of this kind.

Advertising Losses

Advertising has two tasks to fulfil in a capitalist economy. First, it has the difficult and constant economic task of driving production and consumption, even in completely saturated markets; it does this, among other things, by acting mainly anti-cyclically. Second, in the political sense, advertising fulfils an ideological function that stabilises the system. Both functions fall off in situations of catastrophe and war. This was more than evident during the Afghanistan War.

At the ideological level, for example, a very definite break was noticeable in the so-called fun society. While the pleasure metropolis of Las Vegas registered enormous drops in turnover leading to hundred of employees being dismissed in that city, the Walt Disney entertainment company experienced a significant profit reduction in the last quarter of the 2000/2001 business year due to the terrorist attacks, the war, and the associated weak state of the economy. Declining audience figures and, above all, decreases in advertising revenue reduced the result by 68% to 53 million US dollars. Thus the quarterly turnover sank by 5%.

If one defines television as an instrument which, through advertising, leads specifically targeted buyer groups to a programme designed specially for them, then the economic dimension of this medium clearly emerges. In the face of catastrophes and war, the viewers' interest in serious TV news coverage increases and that in entertainment decreases.[49] Just one day after the 11 September 2001, therefore, the advertising revenue of the private TV stations with their large portion of entertainment programmes sank drastically from almost 39 million DM to only 10 million DM. All the western TV stations reduced the number of entertainment programmes, especially those with scenes of violence. The ARD and ZDF garnered quite a large number of viewers with their news programmes Tagesschau and Tagesthemen, while at the same time losing millions of viewers in and around their entertainment programmes. In the USA, many TV stations lost two-digit millions of dollars in advertising revenue in just one week. Programmes like comedy shows or action films that attract advertising were postponed. In Germany, advertising magnets like the magazines *Der Spiegel*, *stern* and *Focus* lost between ten and 50 advertising pages more or less over night.

Fun is out! Laughter literally sticks in your throat.
Laughter can be a source of release, laughter can ridicule the powerful, laughter can transcend. But this is not the concern of a TV fun society, with its regressive humour. Instead, the latter is bent on distraction, on avoiding inner

emptiness and boredom, on narcotization and dumming down instead of enlightenment, on an inhuman removal of the taboos surrounding eroticism, on aggressive instinct discharge, a perfect world and false promises of sweet happiness, ultimately on ideological disguises (competitions and quizzes) and on various stimuli to consume. Learning theory concepts show that catastrophes and wars can have the potential to bring a radical rethink and a new beginning. Will the apocalypse of New York and the end of the hedonist TV fun society bring about such a rethink? One has every reason to doubt it.

As graphically illustrated by Umberto Eco in his novel *The Name of the Rose* (1980), entertainment and laughter can also be anti-state and anti-authority. Nothing could have confused the divine order of the Middle Ages more than the knowledge of the existence of a manuscript by Aristotle on laughter. Embroiled as he is in the mass media TV entertainment of our day, the individual has nothing more to laugh about. Liberating, even anarchist laughter has given way to a state-preserving, affirmative smile. Public knowledge is disappearing to the advantage of entertainment. The show must go on. The German Patent Office has meantime received dozens of applications to patent terms like Bin Laden, Taliban, or 11 September for merchandising products like writing utensils, T-shirts or records, and talk shows are being looked at again on television. The political atmosphere of stability and harmlessness is back.

Radios in Afghanistan

The widespread impression that media communication structures were absent or non-functioning in Afghanistan under the Taliban is false. Quite apart from various forms of oral communications, Afghanistan under the Taliban also had western technical mass media such as newspapers and radio. The Taliban newspaper *Etefaq-i Islam* published in Herat in the west of the country underwent a clear political revaluation after the USA began its war. This newspaper got its material from the Afghanistan Islamic Press Agency, which disseminated pro-Taliban news around the clock. Despite the successful bombardments of the Taliban state radio, Radio Sharia, in Kabul by the US American air force in the very first days of the war[50], that station was still able to continue broadcasting its full politico-religious programme through numerous local stations. Until early October 2001, the Northern Alliance had a strong medium wave radio station, Takhar, which could be received very well all over Afghanistan in the evening, but which then went silent and was only to be heard via the Internet (www.payamemujahid.com/radio).

The USA was present in Afghanistan in two different radio programmes. Radio Voice of America (VOA) reached about 80% of the Afghan radio audience, according to its own data. Furthermore, the US military had flying

radio stations in operation, the so-called Commando Solo. A so-called Peace Radio was supposed to be working here. Connoisseurs of the scene, however, spoke about mistrust and competition between VOA and Commando Solo, above all, because the new head of VOA ignored the political intervention by the State Department and broadcast the criticised interview with the Taliban leader Omar one day later (albeit in an edited and very shortened version). During the war, people waited in vain for Radio Free Afghanistan, the long announced US freedom station. German journalist Roland Hofwiler of the *Tageszeitung*, described what Commando Solo broadcast as "crude propaganda"[51] and summed up as follows: "The Taliban have a wide range of media at their disposal of which they avail themselves purposely and effectively for anti-enemy propaganda. The Americans and the Northern Alliance listen and look on almost without taking any action."[52]

The most exciting third force in this radio war came from Iran. First, there was TV Badakhshan, which could only be received in Feyzabad in the north-eastern province. The news block was produced by the Voice of the Iranian Republic. It contained film material from Iran, but also took footage from the BBC World Service. Then there was Radio Mashhad, a local radio station belonging to the official Voice of the Iranian Republic, which broadcast in Persian and in the Afghan languages around the clock and was regarded as equally credible by the Northern Alliance, exiles in Pakistan and Iran, and even part of the Taliban; it was probably the most popular radio station in Afghanistan. Why was this radio station so successful? Because, despite all the criticism it broadcast of the deplorable state of affairs that prevailed, it clearly defined itself as a station for the Islamic world, castigated western culture, demanded that all Muslims unite, and was thus welcomed by millions of people. And a quasi one-man news agency, namely, the Afghan Islamic Press run by Mohammed Jakup Sharafat in the Pakistani border city of Peschawar was able to thrive on exactly the same reputation.

The Arab TV Station Al Jazeera

"And the storms will not abate, especially not the airplane storms […] until you retreat in defeat from Afghanistan, put an end to your support of the Jews in Palestine and the siege forced upon the Iraqi people, leave the Arab Peninsula and cease to support the Hindus against the Muslims in Kashmir."[53]

Such statements by Osama Bin Laden's al-Qaeda network could scarcely be found on the western mass media, but were certainly broadcast on the private TV station Al Jazeera in Qatar (www.Aljazeera.net). Although that TV station had received the first Ibn Ruschd Prize for Free Thought in 1999 in Berlin, in recognition of its efforts to promote free and daring thinking in the Arab world, and although the US American Foreign Ministry had praised the station because of its free reporting, the situation changed suddenly with

that ministry's report of 2000 on the global human rights situation published in early October 2001.

Four days before the outbreak of war on 7 October 2001, i.e. on 3 October 2001, the US American Secretary of state Colin Powell had asked the Sheik of the Emirate of Qatar, Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, to put pressure on the Al Jazeera TV station not to broadcast any further interviews with or videos of Osama Bin Laden. Powell had been particularly angered by the fact that Al Jazeera had broadcast a 1998 Bin Laden interview several times, and that the station had falsely claimed that Bin Laden troops had captured members of US American special units in Afghanistan. Both the Sheik of Qatar and the directors of Al Jazeera successfully resisted this pressure.

The television station Al Jazeera was founded in Qatar in 1996. There were two main reasons for its foundation: 1. Like the television station Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) founded in 1991, which is closely linked with the Saudi Royal family and broadcasts free-of-charge from London, Al Jazeera was also an Arab defensive reaction against the western television monopoly exercised by CNN during the Gulf War. The western mass media were not to have an interpretation monopoly over Arab affairs again, especially not on questions of war and peace. 2. From the very outset, Al Jazeera was conceived as being in opposition to state controlled television stations in the Arab world. Because of its understanding of Islamic pluralism, Al Jazeera came into conflict with almost all Arab governments.

In the meantime, Al Jazeera reaches almost 36 million Arab viewers every evening at prime time, can be received practically all over the world, has reached the economic break-even point, has plans for a stock-exchange listing, and has established itself in the Arab region as a highly professional TV broadcaster in the midst of otherwise mostly state-controlled television stations.

This station must surely be the most credible and popular TV station for political news in the Arab countries. During the new intifada in Palestine, which has lasted almost three years, Al Jazeera achieved unexpected popularity because not only did it take a clear stance in favour of the Arab world and Islam, it also allowed very different voices to be heard, including Israeli politicians. A long time ago, the Taliban government in Afghanistan had made an offer to CNN, Reuters, APTN and Al Jazeera to open branches of their TV stations in Afghanistan. Whereas the western TV stations rejected the offer out of lack of interest in the country, Al Jazeera accepted and has since opened two TV studios, in Kabul and Kandahar.

Whereas in the last weeks of the year 2001, the US American government and the western mass media liked to give the impression that Al Jazeera was no more than a broadcaster of Osama Bin Laden videos, the facts say something different:

- After the first Osama Bin Laden video was broadcast, Edward Walker, former deputy US American secretary of state for the Near East, was

given the opportunity to make his comments, after which the station broadcast a statement by a Muslim clergyman who criticised all violence as non-Islamic.

- Al Jazeera broadcasts several programmes with titles like "More than just one Opinion", or "One opinion, and then another". These programmes are journalistically professional and controversial rounds of discussions on themes of Arab interest.
- Many of the journalists working for Al Jazeera are Arabs who were gratefully taken over by the station from the BBC when the latter closed its BBC Arabic TV programme for financial reasons. Al Jazeera says of itself that it has built up all its programming on the basis of western journalistic principles.
- CNN and Al Jazeera are by no means just competitors and opponents on a globalised TV market. On the contrary, directly after 11 September 2001 both stations had even agreed a long-term exclusive cooperation contract on exchanging programmes and the joint use of resources.

This agreement did not mean that a global player like CNN had given up its monopoly on the interpretation of global images. It meant that it had to acknowledge that regional monopolies like Al Jazeera existed and could work better in the regional context than a global player. In the eyes of Mohammed Jasmin Al-Ali, director of Al Jazeera, this means that, "The difference between CNN and Al Jazeera is that CNN first sees everything from an international viewpoint and only then looks at Asia or the Near East. We, however, first look at the Arab and Islamic connections, and only then think of international issues."[54]

Just how much a TV station like Al Jazeera annoys and exasperates the global US American dominance of the media is illustrated by the US parliament's so-called Initiative 911. These figures refer not just to the national telephone number in the USA for emergency calls, written as "nine-eleven" they not only stands for the date 11 September 2001, but also for the 500 million US dollar project of an Arab-language satellite TV station. That station's future target group is young and mainly anti-American-minded Muslims. The programmes are to be broadcast in 26 languages and received in about 40 Islamic countries.

A War without Images

In war-time, the battle for heads is decided not by troops, but by journalists, above all, by photographers, camera teams and media strategists. That has always been the case. Thus the perception of wars (comparable only to top

class sport competitions), especially of individual battles or victories, is almost always linked with a single image. An icon. This applies to D-Day in the Second World War, just as it does to a few photographs of the Vietnam War, it applies to the Spanish Civil war as it does to the US American intervention in Somalia. In the latter case it was the image of a US American soldier dragged through the streets of Mogadishu and brutally killed by Somali civil war militias, to the cheers of the mob. War is always a war with images.

By contrast, the Afghanistan War was characterised by the fact that it appeared in the large mass media (TV and print) as a war without images. Neither victims nor perpetrators were visible. Death and suffering had no face. This was the result of two quite contrary conditions. One must first keep in mind the religiously-grounded image prohibition of the Hadith (not the Koran) under the radically Islamist Taliban. Just as Allah remains invisible and is only revealed in the text of the Koran, angels cannot enter a house where there is a picture of a human being or an animal. For this reason hundreds of pictures in the National Museum of Kabul were destroyed under the Taliban and the Buddha statues in Bamian blown up in Spring 2001. For that same reason a general prohibition on photographs was imposed by the guardians of religion and morality in Afghanistan under the Taliban, and no official photograph exists of Taliban head Mullah Mohammed Omar. Second, during that war an image prohibition was imposed by the USA in the form of the restrictive working conditions for journalists, especially photo-journalists. To quote US General Chief of Staff Richard Myers: "We are being informed about some of the invisible operations." But there will be "other invisible operations of which you will see no film footage."[55] In other words, the US military (not CNN) preserved an exclusive right to the images and their interpretation. What was visible and what was not visible, therefore, lost any aspiration to authenticity and, as an image, was as arbitrary as a non-image.

Yet this war without images, as envisaged by the info-war strategists in Washington, did not work for at least three reasons: First, man apparently has an anthropological (or else historically-grown) need for visual knowledge. If only official or propaganda images are available during a war, then somehow counter-images make their own very particular way into the public domain. This is how the German comic specialist Andreas Platthaus argues in his analysis of new kinds of comics dealing with the Bosnian war.[56] Second, the videos broadcast by the Arab TV station Al Jazeera showing Osama bin Laden broke through all the anti-image strategies. Because there were so few videos of Osama Bin Laden, and because they were only rarely shown in the West or else were commented on and censored, and because they have such an old-fashioned, rigid and patriarchal pictorial aesthetic, they attained an iconographic significance in the global public domain as a whole, to say nothing of the Arab world, which was far superior to that of the images broadcast by the Pentagon on CNN, in short, the modern images. Third,

the Internet vehemently withstood the image prohibition. Although the various image prohibition strategies also impacted here, to the extent that in that medium too there was scarcely any information or propaganda about the Afghanistan War. But where there is no reliable information or images, fantasy reigns supreme in the form of so-called funny pictures, flash animations, interactive games and war songs. In the state of virtual bloodthirstiness, gimmicks played a one-person piece against one man on the Internet. Compared to this virtual fantasy world of the Bin Laden adventurers and hunters, the oh so very German world of the illustrated magazines seemed sluggish, unable to come up with anything better than the idea of blaming Bin Laden for the death of Princess Diana.[57]

Compared to the global media "victor" in that war, i.e., Osama Bin Laden, who through that very war became possibly the most famous person worldwide, compared to him and his few videos broadcast by Al Jazeera (but scarcely seen in the industrial countries), the media impact of the amateur videos of Bin Laden found by the US Americans in Afghanistan and later broadcast was negligible. That video tape was regarded worldwide as US American material. As such, it gave rise to the very thing that any qualified communications scientist could have predicted: Scarcely any interest was shown in the Arab countries in this material, while in NATO the same video was generally regarded as Bin Laden's admission of guilt for the mass murder on 11 September 2001.

Summary

In the view of most international law experts, the NATO war against Yugoslavia over Kosovo was clearly illegal. The statements frequently heard in that connection that even international law changes in the course of time, scarcely obscure the legal principle that law has to be enacted by a sovereign (be it national or international). That is to say, in no way does the law somehow change, and above all, not of itself. And contrary to official statements by the US and the German governments, there were also many reservations and doubts under international law about the NATO war in Afghanistan.

In its resolution of 12 September 2001, the UN Security Council may well have established that a threat to world peace existed, but not a threat of armed attack. Yet only an armed attack can be the reason for military self-defence. Although that resolution also established that according to Article 51 of the UN Charter the right to self-defence existed, the text of the resolution did not refer to the concrete case of Afghanistan. The UN Security Council resolution of 28 September 2001 also only established a threat to peace, but not an armed attack. Even if all international legal doubts had been allayed by the two resolutions in question, there were other legal reservations about

NATO conducting a war, as all its military measures were only to be used to fight terrorism, and not to demolish the dominance of the Taliban. Furthermore, only attacks on military and not on civilian targets were in conformity with international law. Finally, there were and still are considerable legal doubts as to whether a case for a NATO alliance really existed, as article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty also presupposes that a state suffers an armed attack (and the NATO wording of 13 September 2001 concerning an attack "from without" is not in conformity with the treaty). What is more, international law and insurance experts will have an exciting battle ahead of them. While lawyers from the USA and NATO are very interested in defining the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre as war, while at the same time refusing to recognise the Taliban fighters sent to Guantanamo on Cuba as prisoners of war and instead calling them "illegal fighters" outside the scope of international law, in terms of insurance law the interest of the owner of the World Trade Centre building is the opposite. The world's large re-insurance companies will only pay for the damages of 11 September 2001 if the attack is defined as a terrorist attack and not as an act of war.

In addition to these legal reservations, there are considerable political ones. So far, there is no publicly known and legally-viable evidence that Osama Bin Laden and his al-Qaeda network were responsible for the terrorist attacks in the USA that September, nor can it be assumed that the war on Afghanistan contributed to solving the terrorism problem. NATO did not have clear war objectives, nor were or are any realistic political strategies recognisable for a civil Afghanistan after the war. Above all, what is missing is a precise and possibly painful analysis of the causes of international terrorism. Were such an analysis to indicate that the ideal breeding ground for terrorism lies in the hopelessness engendered by poverty in the Third World, then the Afghanistan War will have been totally counter-productive, will therefore have played into the hands of international terrorism instead of helping to eliminate it.

It was precisely because of this lack of legal and political legitimation that the media war around Afghanistan was so intense, that anti-Islamic enemy images existed, that binary views of good and evil predominated, that censorship, lies, propaganda, generalisations, glorifications, and in particular a media rhetoric of war and violence, a blind rhetoric of patriotism and alliance proliferated. These were both frightening and scarcely conscious, let alone mocked and criticised with the asperity of a Karl Kraus.

So what remains to be done?

If this question is answered with reference to the poem by the famous German author, journalist and war reporter Theodor Fontane *Das Trauerspiel von Afghanistan* (The Afghanistan Tragedy) (1848), written on the occasion of the first Afghan-British war of 1842, then the future looks dismal. All the

13,000 British soldiers died at the Khyber Pass in 1842, so Fontane ends his poem as follows: "Die hören sollen, sie hören nicht mehr, vernichtet ist das ganze Heer, mit dreizehntausend der Zug begann, einer kam heim aus Afghanistan." (Those who should hear, can hear no more, the whole army is destroyed, the expedition began with 13,000 man, only one returned from Afghanistan.) Friedrich Engels came to similar conclusions as Fontane in his report of 1857 on the unsuccessful British military campaign in Afghanistan. He too reports that the European were not in a position to successfully confront the Afghans "on the open field of battle".[58]

The question of meaningful action can also be answered by quoting another German poet, the 1999 Nobel prize laureate Günter Grass: "I doubt that the West can muster the energy […] to really shape global ideas and to include the Third World as an equivalent partner. If that were done, it would be a decisive step towards pulling the carpet out long-term from under the feet of terrorism, towards drying it up."[59]

Whereas the Afghanistan War seemed to have ended victoriously for the USA in late 2001, in retrospective, after a three-month war, many questions have to be put to the media. Did the media inquire insistently enough as to who waged that war, NATO, the USA, the "community of nations"? Did the media inquire insistently enough as to who was the opponent in this war, Bin Laden, the Taliban, al-Qaeda, Afghanistan, Iraq, 60 terrorist states? Did the media inquire insistently enough about the aims of the war? Was it about terrorism? What terrorism? Who defines terrorism? Was it possibly about the control of gas and oil in the Caspian region? When and how was the war to qualify as "successfully" over? What were Europe's main interests in that war? To have a pacifying impact on the USA or to accustom itself to a new militarised foreign policy?

There are two further questions of major importance to be put to the media: Given that the Northern Alliance succeeded in driving the Taliban out of more than two thirds of Afghanistan in only ten days, from mid-November 2001, what was the military sense of the preceding six-week period of heavy US bombardments in Afghanistan. Were there possibly no military reasons for this six weeks of bombing, only reasons to do with a global psychological war, that is to say, with an info war? What exactly is one to think of the concrete image which the public made for itself, indeed could not avoid making, of a mighty, rich, internationally-networked terrorist, if that terrorist and his whole al-Qaeda network could be defeated in such a short space of time?

It is one thing when US government representatives think out loud in public about attacking Iran. It is quite another thing when a German daily newspaper calls for such a war to be started as soon as possible: "After that, Iraq comes into question, one way or the other. Whether Saddam Hussein was directly involved in the attack on 11 September is not really relevant."[60]

Germany is one of very few countries whose penal code contains a special article, § 80a, by which public incitement to an aggressive war is penalised by

at least three months' imprisonment. Why is the public prosecutor not taking legal action against the journalists who called for a war against Iraq?

The Basic Law of the Federal Republic of German recognises only three tasks for which the German Bundeswehr can be deployed: to defend the country, to help in catastrophes, and in what is called an inner emergency. Why is the German public prosecutor not taking legal action against those politicians who are calling for a "preventive" attack on Iraq, which is contrary both to international law and to our Basic Law?

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49. In the case of the war in Kosovo, the *Handelsblatt* documented the TV-viewer preferences. Cf. N.N.: "In Kriegszeiten schnellen die Einschaltquoten der News-Sendungen in die Höhe", in: *Handelsblatt*, 13 April 1999, p. 43.
50. In wars over the past years more and more radio and televison stations have been put out of action by enemy fire or even destroyed by bomb attack. The following is an unsystematic list of such military actions.
    Military occupation of the TV station in Pale by NATO-troops in October 1997; successful bombing of the headquarters and studios of the Serb radio and television corporation in Belgrade by NATO planes on 23 April 1999; successful bombing of Radio Sharia in Kabul by the US-American airforce on 7 and 8 October 2001; successful bombing of the offices of the Arab television station Al Jazeera in Kabul by the US-American airforce on 11 November 2001 (including the subsequent transportation of an Al Jazeera journalist to the prison camp at Guantanamo in Cuba); successful destruction of the offices of the BBC in Kabul by unknown persons on 12 November 2001; shelling and partial destruction of the Palestinian radio station Voice of Palestina in Ramallah and its antennae in Al-Bire by the Israeli army on 13 December 2001; that Palestinian radio station was blown up by Israeli soldiers on 19 January 2002.
    Without legally examining these military operations in details, it would seem possible to claim in general that they were all in contravention of international law (1 Supplementary Protocol to the Geneva Convention).
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The 'War on Terror' declared by President George W Bush after the terrible events of September 11, 2001, has already had profound consequences on world political developments and global opinion. Media are – either actively or passively – actors in the resultant propaganda war and can as such influence public opinion.

Globalization processes imply transnational mediated flows of meaning at the same time as the perceived meanings vary between cultures and countries. That media divide globally in the coverage of the War on Terror is not only obvious when comparing American and Arab media, but also between the U.S. and Western European media. This has partly to do with the difficult demands on journalists and media as to how to manage the flood of propaganda and the threats to professional integrity and standards.

How images of the U.S. and the Others are portrayed by media in various countries after September 11 and the attack on Afghanistan is at the focus of this volume. The book contains a collection of essays by media researchers and journalists with backgrounds from a number of countries.

This is a follow-up to a larger project titled 'Journalism and the New World Order' focusing on the Gulf War 1990-1991. Two volumes have emerged from this project: *Gulf War, National News Discourses and Globalization*, edited by Stig A. Nohrstedt & Rune Ottosen, published in 2001 and *Studying War and the Media*, edited by Wilhelm Kempf & Heikki Luostarinen, in 2002.

The present volume on media and the War on Terror will be followed by a fourth volume on the War in Iraq 2003.

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